

V. LAND USE

The City of East Bethel is bordered by the communities of Oak Grove, Ham Lake, Linwood Township, a portion of the City of Columbus Township, as well as a small portion of St. Francis and Bethel. While most of these communities are experiencing a continuing growth trend, East Bethel, located along State Trunk Highway 65 (TH65) (a major transportation corridor which runs north-south through Anoka County), is becoming an especially attractive area for new residential and business growth.

Over the past decade, the City has experienced increased interest in commercial development along TH65. Since the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, additional service and retail uses have been developed. Public and institutional property occupies only about one percent of the City. Parks, private recreation, and open spaces, including Cedar Creek Natural History Area and the Sand Hill Crane Natural Area, account for approximately 17 percent of the gross acres in the City, nearly equal to the amount of existing residential areas. Vacant or rural areas account for roughly 54 percent of the gross acres in the community. Table V-1 and Figure V-1 illustrates existing land uses in East Bethel as provided in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan; Table V-1A illustrates the 2006 existing land uses. Significant land use changes occurred as 102 acres of future commercial was changed to industrial land.

Table V-1. 2000 Existing Land Use Breakdown

	<u>Total Area¹</u>	<u>Total Wetland</u>	<u>Net Area²</u>
Rural Residential	20,521	9,970	10,551
Agricultural	516	168	348
Public / institutional	296	60	236
Park / private recreation / open	5,118	2,592	2,526
Commercial	263	77	186
Industrial	93	11	82
Major water bodies	1,977	1,977	0
Right-of-way	<u>1,648</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,648</u>
Total	30,432	14,855	15,577

¹ Area in acres

² Area with wetlands removed

Table V-1A. 2006 Existing Land Use Breakdown

	<u>Total Area</u>¹	<u>Total Wetland</u>	<u>Net Area</u>²
Rural Residential	20,521	9,970	10,551
Agricultural	516	168	348
Public / institutional	296	60	236
Park / private recreation / open	5,118	2,592	2,526
Commercial	161	25	136
Industrial	195	11	184
Major water bodies	1,977	1,977	0
Right-of-way	<u>1,648</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,648</u>
Total	30,432	14,803	15,629

¹ Area in acres

² Area with wetlands removed

Insert growth mgmt plan map

Existing Land Use Districts

Agriculture

Agriculture is limited in the City due to soil limitations and declining agricultural support services. There are, however, areas of the community that are currently zoned agriculture and/or participating in the agricultural preserves program. These areas will continue to be designated as agriculture until such time when the community and the landowner determine that another designation would be appropriate. Allowable density in standard agricultural areas is a maximum of 1 residential unit per 10 acres, while the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves Program requires that participants' land be zoned at a density no greater than 1 home per 40 acres.

Residential District

The City's current Growth Management Plan designates the majority of the City for low-density rural residential development. This includes existing developed low-density residential areas, the vast majority of vacant land not designated as park and open space, and cultivated lands not specifically designated as agriculture. The minimum lot size in the Rural Residential area is two acres, with a density not to exceed one unit per two and one-half acres. The two and one-half acre density standard is consistent with the Metropolitan Council's permanent rural area densities, if the amount of wetland, floodplain, lakes, and recreation/open space acreages are calculated in with the remaining developable land.

Commercial and Light Industrial

The purpose of commercial and light industrial land use designations is to identify appropriate locations for such uses and to accommodate future potential development. The City encourages new opportunities as well as the expansion of local businesses and services that meet the needs of a growing community. Business development is targeted within the TH65 corridor, which will require restricted access to the highway and adequate intersection spacing for frontage and backage roads which connect side roads intersecting TH65.

East Bethel currently has four commercial land use designations:

Convenience Center - The Convenience Center designation is established to provide limited retail, service, and convenience shopping opportunities for the commuting and resident population.

Neighborhood Center - The Neighborhood Center designation is established to allow primary retail shopping opportunities and professional office space within the community.

General Services - The General Services designation is established to provide areas in the community that are appropriate for businesses requiring larger land areas, such as for outside storage of merchandise or materials, or for display of merchandise.

Future Commercial - The Future Commercial designation areas are intended to identify and preserve long-range business expansion along TH65.

East Bethel does not currently have specific distinct industrial district classifications. Some limited industrial uses are permitted in the general services commercial district.

Current Zoning Categories

RR Rural Residential District – The RR District is intended and designed to accommodate residential land uses at low densities that promote the rural character of East Bethel. Residential uses within this district rely upon individual on-site sewage treatment systems and private wells rather than public facilities.

NA Non-livestock Agricultural District – The NA District is established to allow agricultural activities not involving the raising of livestock that are compatible with adjacent rural residential land uses and which promote the rural atmosphere of the community until such time as the land may be developed for other appropriate rural uses.

A Agricultural District – The purpose of the Agricultural District is to allow agricultural activities that are compatible with adjacent rural residential land uses and which promote the rural atmosphere of the community until such time as the land may be developed for other appropriate rural uses.

CC Convenience Center District – The CC District is established to provide limited retail, service, and convenience shopping opportunities for the commuting and resident population.

NC Neighborhood Center District – The NC District is established to allow primary retail shopping opportunities and professional office space within the community.

GC General Services Commercial District – The GC District is established to provide areas in the community that are appropriate for businesses requiring larger land areas, such as for outside storage of merchandise or materials or for display of merchandise.

P/I Public/Institutional District – The P/I District is to provide areas that are primarily under ownership by units of government, public and private educational institutions, churches, hospitals, libraries, cultural facilities, and other similar non-profit institutions.

SM Shoreland Management District – The SM District allows the City to manage the use of shorelands that affect public health, safety, and general welfare by controlling pollution, lot sizes, the placement of structure or lots, and any alteration of shoreland areas.

FM Floodplain Management District – The purpose of the FM District is to regulate the use of creeks, associated waterways, drainage ways, and adjacent property for flood protection and relief.

Proposed Land Use Categories

This section of the Comprehensive Plan identifies specific land use changes in zoning types and designations for managing growth and development in East Bethel. These land use categories are the foundations upon which the City's regulatory controls such as zoning and subdivision ordinances are based. This portion of the plan illustrates several concepts for residential growth, business development, mixed use development (MUD), and other land use designations. These concepts are provided on the following page in Figure V-2: Future Land Use Map.

Inconsistencies between existing land uses and the growth management plan do not imply that every land use will eventually conform to these designations or that all land will be developed. However, the City will tailor regulations to implement this plan as much as is practical, balancing the needs and interests of both individuals and the community as a whole.

The City intends to build upon and preserve the existing character of the community. The Growth Management Plan identifies the location of specific land uses that will guide the development of the City through the year 2030. Land use categories set the stage for plan implementation strategies and the need for substantial amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The majority of the land is designated as low/medium density residential, while appropriate portions of the community are designated for continued agricultural and commercial and industrial opportunities. The City may choose to amend the Future Land Use Map or the description of these designations if community needs or goals change prior to the year 2030.

The proposed land use and zoning categories discussed in this chapter were developed based on the implementation of municipal services within specific areas of the community. A “phasing” or “staging” plan for construction of these services is illustrated in Chapter VII, Figure VII-2. The plan reflects implementation in 5 year increments to the year 2030.

In order to further define and shape orderly growth and development and create an environment where compatible land uses exist together, the City is redefining the residential and commercial designations and establishing industrial classifications.

Widespread wetland areas in the City complicate land division that could be cost-effectively served by central wastewater services, even if such services were available. The area identified as Low Density Residential as illustrated on the Future Land Use map reflects portions of the City that are far outside of the Urban Reserve. The City of East Bethel intends to maintain these areas as rural, and believes that regional wastewater service would not be appropriate. It appears that the increase in revenues from a 1:10 density to a 1:2.5 acre density exceeds the increased costs of services for the higher density in the City. For all of these reasons, the City believes the current 2.5 acre density standard is appropriate. Further analysis of future residential development suggests that a 2.5 acre lot standard may yield a community-wide density that is consistent with regional policy. This is due primarily to the large percentage of land that cannot be developed because of environmental constraints and land that is held in public ownership for ecological, educational, or recreational purposes.

INSERT **FIGURE V-2** – Future Land use

Figure V-3: Proposed Growth Strategy provides an illustration of the area within the City that will remain Diversified Rural, as well as areas that are transitioning into Rural Growth Centers.

INSERT FIGURE v-3: PROPOSED GROWTH STRATEGY

Land use definitions are provided as follows.

Residential

Residential uses are intended to guide housing and neighborhood developments to provide the widest variety of housing stock and land use densities. Higher densities in areas of the City will provide for a variety of housing for residents of East Bethel.

Agriculture

The agricultural area is designated to low density agricultural uses and limited residential uses. Minimum parcel size is 1 unit per 10 acres while the Metropolitan Agricultural Program requires that participants' land be at a density no greater than 1 unit per 40 acres. Agricultural uses have a "right to farm."

Low Density Residential (1 unit per 10 acres)

The land use will consist of detached single family homes on a variety of lot sizes with the minimum gross density of 1 unit per 10 acres. The areas are difficult to serve with municipal services and will be so in the foreseeable future.

Low/Medium Density Residential (3-4 DUA)

The land use in this area will consist of detached single-family homes. The minimum density allowed in sewered areas is 3 units per acre. At this time, lot size in this district is determined by the availability of public water and sewer.

Medium Density Residential (4-6 DUA)

The intent of this designation is to reflect the character of a rural setting on the fringe of an urbanized area. This low/medium density residential allows a mix of single-family and attached/detached townhouses at a more typical single-family density. The density range is 4 to 6 dwelling units per acre (DUA) with an intended average of 5 units per acre. At this time, lot size in this area is determined by the availability of public water and sewer. Land use areas remaining primarily rural include Low Density Residential land uses. These areas make up approximately 20 percent of the total area within the City. Growth forecasts for the Low Density Residential areas of the City are estimated in Table V-2 below.

Table V-2. Growth Rate – Low Density Residential

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Household²</u>	<u>Total Population²</u>
2006	960	2,803
2010	997	2,911
2015	1,048	3,060
2020	1,103	3,221
2025	1,158	3,381
2030	1,218	3,557

¹ Land use area based on Future Land Use Map dated June 2006

² Projections are based on an assumed 1% growth rate in the Low Density Residential areas

Commercial

Commercial land uses are important to guide retail and services developments as the City grows and the retail markets evolve over time. Compatible land uses and certain densities are as equally important in commercial district designations from design, city services, and transportation perspectives.

Limited Business – This land use is intended to service the basic needs of neighborhoods that do not have the convenient access to retail areas in the City. These types of uses include service stations, convenience stores, and entertainment. The lot size for this district is not to exceed 2 acres.

Central Business – This land use is intended for limited retail/office/entertainment uses. These types of uses accommodate professional and administrative offices, restaurants, limited retail, and housing units when located above the street level floor. There is no minimum on lot sizes. This will encourage a higher density of commercial development.

Highway Business – The intent of this designation is to provide commercial areas that serve the highway traveling public as well as serve the needs of the people who live or work in and around the City. Lot sizes in this district are larger to accommodate typical highway commercial uses which include retail stores.

Mixed Use (4-6 DUA) – The mixed use area is intended to create a focal point in the community that embodies the principles of transit-oriented, pedestrian, and mixed use development. The MUD contains a distinctly different development pattern, with more urban structure of streets and blocks, than the suburban and rural patterns typical of urban fringe communities. The MUD has underlying land uses that serve to provide a “mixed use” core area, commercial workplace, neighborhood dwelling units, and parks/open space areas. The density range for residential dwellings range from 4 to 6 per acre with an intended average of 5 units per acre.

Light Industrial

I Light Industrial – The Light Industrial District is intended and designed to provide areas of the City suitable for activities and uses that are industrial in nature. Industrial uses within this district are limited to those that do not generate noise, odor, vibration, or other discharge discernable from areas outside the parcel on which the use is located. This category is aimed towards industrial uses that are lower in intensity of activity such as offices, warehousing, research laboratories, and light manufacturing.

Zoning Categories

The City of East Bethel has various proposed zoning districts. Each zoning district has specific minimum lot sizes, allowable uses, etc. These districts include the following:

A Agricultural District – This zoning district has a minimum lot size of 10 acres. The primary use of this district is for agricultural uses: growing crops, raising livestock, etc. Some of the agricultural zoned parcels have their land engaged in long-term agricultural uses in

which minimum lot sizes are 40 acres. It is the intention of the City to develop policies to preserve agriculture within the confines of the City.

RR Rural Residential – The minimum lot size is 2.5 acres with an overall gross density of 1 unit per 10 acres. Uses in this district rely upon on-site sewage treatment systems and it is unlikely public utilities will become available.

R1 Single Family – Lot size is determined by availability of sewer and water. Without water and sewer, lot size is 1 unit per 10 acres; with water and sewer, 3 units per acre is allowed.

R2 Single Family and Townhome – Lot size is determined by availability of water and sewer. Without water and sewer, 1 unit per 10 acres is allowed; with water and sewer, 4 to 6 units per acre are allowed. This district allows for a mix of attached and detached housing units with a minimum of 60 percent detached and a maximum of 40 percent attached.

B1 Limited Business – Lot sizes in this district are not to exceed 2 acres. Businesses are intended to serve local neighborhood patrons.

B2 Central Business – Lot sizes in this district are determined by the availability of water and sewer. Without water and sewer, 1 unit per 10 acres is allowed; with water and sewer there is no minimum. This district is designed to encourage high-density commercial development. Business activities include retail, office, and multi-tenant structures.

B3 Highway Business – Lot sizes in this district are determined by the availability of water and sewer: without water and sewer, 1 unit per 10 acres is allowed; with water and sewer, a minimum of 1 per 23,000 square feet is allowed. This district is intended to provide commercial areas serving highway-traveling public. Business activities include medical uses, retail, and wholesale.

I Light Industrial – Lot sizes in this district are determined by the availability of water and sewer; without water and sewer, 1 unit per 10 acres is allowed; with water and sewer, 1 unit per 2 acres is allowed. Business activities include manufacturing, industrial condominiums, and medical science uses.

P/I Public/Institutional District - This district is to provide areas that are primarily under ownership by units of government, public and private educational institutions, places of worship, hospitals, libraries, cultural facilities, and other similar non-profit institutions.

Overlay Districts

PUD Planned Unit Development District – The PUD is intended to promote the efficient use of land and promote cost-effective public and private infrastructure systems.

PBD Planned Business District – The purpose of this overlay is to establish standards for exterior architecture, design, landscaping, and signage of buildings that contribute to a community image of quality, visual aesthetics, permanence, and stability. It is the intent of the

PBD to promote a planned environment for integrated industrial, office, and commercial with design continuity and orderly development.

SNEA Significant Natural Environmental Area District – The primary purpose of the SNEA Overlay District is to protect resources and functional values that have been identified as providing benefits to the sustainability of the natural resource communities. The City has the right and responsibility to protect and conserve these areas.

SM Shoreland Management District – This district allows the City to manage the use of shorelands that affect public health, safety, and general welfare by controlling pollution, lot sizes, the placement of structure or lots, and any alternation of shoreland areas.

FM Floodplain Management District – The purpose of this district is to regulate the use of creeks, associated waterways, drainage ways, and adjacent property for flood protection and relief.

The City of East Bethel has developed the Proposed Zoning Map and Proposed Land Use Map as a “vision” that will enable policy leaders to best manage for the short- and long-term future of the community. The land uses depicted in the map represent the overall intention of the community to allow for well planned, manageable growth, yet preserve and build on the most important features the City has to offer.

The identification of Planned Unit Development (PUD) areas is intended to ensure that development incorporates the infrastructure and land use characteristics that most appropriately meet the needs of specific areas within the community. Furthermore, the PUD allows for the City to enforce specific design standards and other aesthetic features to ensure a consistent look and feel to new developments beyond what the land use and ordinances for the district require. The PUD allows the City greater flexibility and creativity when planning the City Center area, and to in essence avoid a mix of building types and structures that do not compliment one another.

The PUD area encompassing the potential City Center development, for example, indicates that additional thought and consideration will be given to this area as the City further identifies the location of potential new commercial, retail, and housing developments. Large retail stores, also referred to as “big box” development, may or may not be the most desirable addition to the community in this area.

The majority of commercial, industrial, and higher levels of residential densities are provided for along TH65, a major transportation corridor running through East Bethel. Accessibility is the primary factor in determining land use designations in these areas, and the ability to attract a variety of new development opportunities that will enable the City in its decision-making process as future proposals for development are presented.

A “buffer” will be created between land uses that allows for more concentrated development and the rural residential areas of the community. The buffer will provide for a more natural transition to the larger lot, rural areas of the community. City ordinances are designed to ensure buffer areas are incorporated into proposed development plans for review and approval by City Council primarily in areas where higher density residential would come in contact with existing lower density residential or environmentally sensitive areas.

Table V-3. Proposed Land Use Breakdown by Acres

Land Use¹	Total Area²	Total Wetland	Net Area
Limited Business	15	3	12
Central Business	486	56	430
Highway Business	414	79	335
Light Industrial	679	97	582
Low Density Residential	12,627	4,214	8,412
Low/Medium Density Residential	6,751	1,996	4,755
Medium Density Residential	748	174	575
Mixed Use Development	590	198	392
Natural Area	2830	981	1850
Park/Open Space	952	537	415
School	149	0	149
Public/Institutional	50	10	40
Agriculture	516	168	348
Lakes	1,977	1,977	0
Right of Way	1648	0	1648
TOTAL	30,432	10,488	19,944

¹ Land use based on Future Land Use Map

² Area in acres

Table V-3A is a comparison of the 2020 Land Use Plan designations with the 2030 Land Use Plan designations. In both the 2020 plan and the 2030 plan, residential development is the largest land use category along with Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. There is a significant increase in the amount of commercial and industrial lands available in the 2030 plan.

Table V-3A. Comparison of 2020 and 2030 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations

Land Use Type	2020 PLAN		2030 PLAN	
	Acres	Percent Total	Acres	Percent Total
Residential	20,521	67.4	20,421	67.1
Commercial	263	.8	1,210	3.9
Industrial	93	.3	679	2.2
Parks, Recreation & Open Space	5,118	16.8	3,782	12.4
Right-of-Way	1,648	5.4	1,648	5.4
Major Water Bodies	1,977	6.6	1,977	.7
Public Institutional	296	1.0	199	.7
Agriculture	516	1.7	516	1.7
TOTAL	30,432	100	30,432	100

Not all vacant land is developable. Factors affecting development include topography, wetlands, shoreland restrictions, stormwater ponding, right-of-way, and parkland dedication requirements. Table V-3B estimates a density for each residential category and the estimated number of new dwelling units over the next 25 years.

Table V-3B. 2030 Sewered Residential Land Availability

<u>Land Use Type</u>	<u>Net Acres¹</u>	<u>Approximate Density</u>	<u>Potential Net Units</u>
Low/Medium Residential	920	3 units/acre	2,760
Medium Residential	336	4 units/acre	1,344
Mixed Use Development	<u>199</u>	<u>5 units/acre</u>	<u>995</u>
TOTAL	1,455		5,099

In April 2005, the City of East Bethel implemented a 12-month moratorium on new development along the TH65 corridor. The moratorium provided the City an opportunity to determine how to best plan for and manage development, and the appropriate land use controls that would support its intentions. The moratorium was extended in April 2006 to allow for the completion and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the adoption and implementation of new and revised ordinances and land use controls will accompany the Comprehensive Plan adoption, and assist policy leaders and City staff in articulating clear and consistent direction as new projects and developments come forward.

Figure V-4 on the following page is the Proposed Zoning Map.

Insert Proposed Zoning Map Figure V-4

City Center

In 2005, the City of East Bethel authorized a study designed to look at the potential for a “city center” development within the community. The study considered various location alternatives, mixed land uses, and features that would help create a “sense of place” within the City. The City Center Plan that resulted from the study is a concept the City intends to pursue further. Additional research, discussions, and public involvement activities are necessary to ultimately help shape how a city center development should occur.

The East Bethel City Center Plan is an effort to create a location that will be strongly identified as the commercial and civic heart of the community, accommodate alternative forms of housing not found elsewhere in East Bethel, provide an initial base of users for the planned wastewater treatment plant and water purification systems, and possibly serve as a model of other development in the TH65 corridor of East Bethel.

The plan calls for intensive development around green spaces and water features in a square-mile study area with the emphasis centered on the intersection of TH65 and CSAH 22. The thematic idea is to create a special place that expresses East Bethel rather than just another common, suburban, auto-oriented development. Consequently, some of the major features include:

- A compact Main Street district with offices or residential over shops
- A town square flanked by a city hall and library
- Parkway roads
- Traditional housing designs that include front porches and rear garages, sidewalks, and street trees
- A variety of housing types including singles, townhouses, and apartments
- Greenways with streams, trails, and open space
- High quality design and materials in both private and public improvements

Implementation of the full City Center concept will involve a collaborative partnership between property owners, various public agencies, private developers, the City, as well as members of the community. Development of the site will likely occur over a 10 to 20 year period as anticipated growth within the community is realized.

The East Bethel City Council initiated the City Center planning process in the spring of 2005 utilizing the City Planning Commission as a committee to review plans and progress. A draft “City of East Bethel – City Center Plan” has been received by the City Council for comment. Several meetings, including two open house presentations to the general public, were held as part of the planning process to ensure community participation; feedback was incorporated into the design and location selection.

Three site locations along TH65 were identified and selected for further study, each encompassing 640 total acres (1 square mile) in size. The locations include:

- 221st Avenue (CR74)
- Sims Road (CR86)
- Viking Boulevard (CR22)

Each of these locations was weighed against the following set of criteria in an effort to formulate a recommended City Center location as part of the study. These criteria include:

1. **Municipal Utility Service:** The site should be located along TH65 between the southern border of the community and approximately 221st Street (CR74) to the north. The primary rationale for selecting this portion of the corridor is based on the implementation of municipal services in this area.
2. **Traffic Volume and Access:** Access is critical to the success of commercial areas, particularly “city center” type developments.
3. **Wetlands and Soils:** Areas with low amounts of wetland area are most desirable and should be a minimum of 200 acres total.
4. **Undeveloped Land:** The site should consist of at least 200 acres of undeveloped land, or land that can be economically redeveloped.
5. **Sewer Proximity:** Locating the City Center near the planned municipal sewage treatment plant toward the south end of the TH65 corridor would provide for development to occur sooner.
6. **Special Constraints:** Areas with soil contamination, land use restrictions, or wildlife displacement concerns should be avoided.
7. **Ownership:** Acquiring the land area necessary to support the City Center development is simplified when ownership of the property is in large tracts or parcels.

After careful review and consideration of each alternative location, the Viking Boulevard (CR22) site was determined to be most desirable due to efficient access and high traffic volumes, sufficiently large developable land, proximity to the proposed sewer treatment plant, and relatively few property owners to work with regarding land acquisition activities. Further study and a more detailed analysis is necessary to assess the costs associated with converting the area to urban use, specifically as it relates to the amount of wetland area and soil conditions.

The Land Use and Circulation Plan (Figure V-5) provided on the following page reflects the development at the preferred site location of TH65/Viking Boulevard (CR22). The Plan includes a square-mile area broken into four quadrants, each with somewhat differing land uses. The Land Use and Circulation Plan has been designed to compliment the unique characteristics of East Bethel as well as provide for a sense of identity separate from the general suburban environment. Features such as a relatively dense mixture of shops, housing, and civic facilities are arranged around a major open space and wetland system. Ultimately, the City Center will be a distinctive place with traditional characteristics, an attractive pedestrian environment, and a clearly identifiable heart of the City.

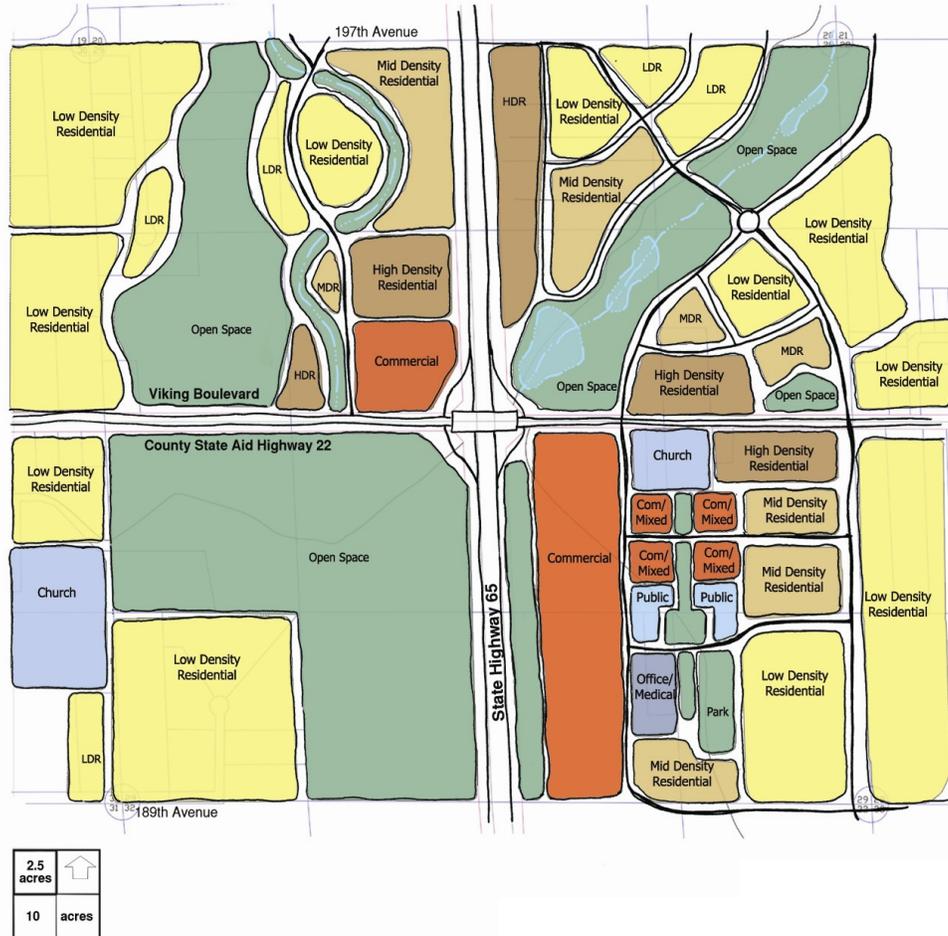


Figure V-5. Land Use and Circulation Plan

TH65 and Viking Boulevard (CR22) will be upgraded to accommodate the increased traffic, and three major neighborhoods will be created in the southeast, northeast, and northwest quadrants of the development area. The southwest quadrant will remain mostly in its current condition because of the major wetland.

Essential to the health and feasibility of the City Center will be the retaining and improving of the existing drainage system. The major wetlands in the northwest and southwest quadrants will be protected and additional drainage routes will be added for function as well as beauty. In the northeast quadrant, a broad greenway will border the existing county ditch. Within the Civic Core located in the southeast quadrant, drainage will be rerouted into more formal routes and incorporated into planned parks.

The City Center Plan incorporates neighborhoods, commercial development, residential development, and civic and social components as part of the overall concept. The Civic Core's southeast quadrant will consist of a variety of housing types and include the highest residential densities. The northeastern neighborhood will be less dense, and the northwestern neighborhood will be the least densely developed. All three neighborhoods are proposed to include relatively narrow local streets, sidewalks, street trees, and possibly alleys.

Housing will be located in close proximity to commercial and civic functions in the Civic Core. Each neighborhood will consist of mixed housing types in close relationship to one another so as to create variety and interest, and support the long-term viability of all types and cost levels.

Commercial development planned for the southeastern quadrant presents tremendous opportunities for a strong economic node within the community, as well as one that is sustainable; particularly given the location of TH65 – a major transportation corridor running north-south through the community. Approximately 60 acres have been planned for commercial use in the City Center. While most of the commercial acreage will be devoted to shops with pedestrian-friendly access and parking, shops with offices or housing on the second and/or third levels is also incorporated into the plan. These areas will be heavily landscaped with controlled signage, decorative lighting, and other amenities to create an attractive and inviting place to work, shop, and live.

Another important component of the City Center concept is the civic or public use area. It is designed to establish a visually appealing, psychological, and social heart of the community where people can gather for holiday celebrations and events such as “East Bethel Days.” Examples of civic components include a city hall, county library, town square and boardwalk, community amphitheater park, athletic center with meeting rooms, and greenways.

Transportation in and around the City Center is an extremely important factor that was also addressed as part of the concept. Access to the development will primarily be from TH65 via Viking Boulevard (CR22). Some improvements may need to be made to accommodate the increased traffic generated to/from the City Center at the Viking Boulevard intersection into the area. Long-term, TH65 is expected to be upgraded to a limited access freeway with an interchange at Viking Boulevard (CR22). Viking Boulevard, potentially a future east-west connection through Anoka County, will also be improved to a five-lane arterial roadway.

Civic Core Concept Plan

Based on the general Land Use Plan for the City Center, the following sketch reflects a more detailed design of the Civic Core area located in the southeastern quadrant of the development. This illustration provides an example of the possible arrangement of buildings, roads, parking, and conceptual landscaping.



Figure V-6. Civic Core Master Plan

- Access and circulation – a collector street loop will serve the Civic Core, with the primary intersection located approximately 1,000 feet from the east ramps of the future interchange at TH65. Left and right-turn lanes will be required at this intersection as well as the one located approximately 1,500 feet to the east. This loop will be sized to accommodate the significant amount of traffic that will be generated by the 500,000 square feet of commercial development plus 450 housing units.

- Commercial development – A major retail anchor store will be sought for the City Center. A variety of smaller retail buildings will fill out the remainder of the frontage. Parking lots should be landscaped to soften their appearance and divide them into smaller bays.
- Mixed-use development – The heart of the Civic Core will be the mixed-use, retail, office, and residential core. Access will be via a local street that runs between the two north-south collectors and is designed with parking bays, curb bump-outs, on-street parking, decorative sidewalks, generous landscaping, trees, seating, and banners. Parking should also be to the rear of the stores, and the buildings should have entrances both front and rear. These buildings may be two stories and include offices or housing on the upper level. Facades should have equal treatment on all four sides. A roundabout with landscaping or public art will provide a visual terminus at the eastern end of the compact mixed-use district.
- Public open space and plazas – The mixed-use “Main Street” will be bisected by a broad pedestrian walkway that leads to the Town Square. A future City Hall and Anoka County library may flank and partially enclose the Town Square adding to the civic importance of the location. The Town Square will overlook a water feature created from the existing drainage system. Along the stream, which drains to the northwest, will be a linear park and community amphitheater.
- Civic functions – Civic elements will include the Town Square, City Hall, county library, “Main Street” sidewalks, the north-south promenade, and the linear park. The proposed fitness center could include meeting rooms for use by the public.
- Attached housing – East and north of the Main Street core there will be a variety of mid- and high-density housing which should have doors and windows along public street sidewalks and parking to the rear of the buildings. Housing is important to the Civic Core as it will provide a base of pedestrians for the public spaces, customers for the Main Street shops, and 18-hour activity. Thus, the walk between the housing and the shops should be designed to be pleasant and safe, as should the entire sidewalk and trail system throughout the Civic Core.
- Detached housing – A neighborhood of single-family housing will be built east of the community amphitheater. In keeping with the overall spirit of the City Center as one of public place, these houses should have sidewalks, street trees, front porches, architectural detailing, garages that are recessed or may be accessed from an alleyway.
- Offices – Small office buildings may be located along the linear park. These may be one- or two-story buildings, perhaps owned on a condominium basis.
- Senior housing – Also overlooking the stream and community amphitheater may be a senior housing complex.

As part of the City Center Concept Plan, design guidelines have also been established and defined. A full summary and description of these guidelines can be found in Appendix A. City of East Bethel City Center Plan.

The full Land Use Plan, as well as the more defined City Center Plan, is intended to guide the future development of the community. They are designed to protect, preserve, enhance, and build upon the physical features of both the built and natural environment. Developed through a combined effort of East Bethel residents, landowners, city officials and business owners, the plan guides land uses through the year 2030. Many people will use the plan to learn about the community, its direction, and its vision. More importantly it will be used to assist and guide local decision-makers and City staff in the everyday business demanded of a growing rural community as it transitions into a Rural Growth Center.

Land Use Goal and Policies

Goal:

Strategically plan for growth areas while maintaining the “non-urbanized” character of the City.

Policies:

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan does not end with adoption. The City's land use controls, including the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, will ensure day-to-day monitoring and enforcement of the policy plan. As part of the planning process, the City will evaluate its land use controls and consider amendments to existing ordinances that eliminate inconsistencies within the Comprehensive Plan. The City will also work to enhance performance standards, protect public and private investments, and conform to mandatory State and Federal regulations. Examples include but are not limited to:

- The establishment of new commercial zoning districts and regulations.
- Clarification of development density standards in agriculture, rural residential, and future commercial areas.
- Changes in the Zoning Map reflecting Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments.
- The establishment of minimum standards requiring best management practices in all land disturbance activities.
- The establishment of other regulations needed to implement local watershed management planning.
- A review of cluster development and flexible lot sized alternatives and regulations.
- A review of other performance standards and general provisions which may be appropriate in implementing the Comprehensive Plan.
- Zoning Ordinance amendments for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The City will also establish a Capital Improvements Plan which will identify major capital expenditures necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan. These may include public investments in buildings, park and trail development expenditures, road construction and repair, vehicle and equipment purchases, and other planned capital expenditures.

Like the Comprehensive Plan, the capital improvements planning process is ongoing and subject to modification as appropriate. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be general and flexible; however, formal amendments to the plan will be required when land use elements or growth policies are revised.

Periodically, the City should undertake a formal review of the plan to determine if amendments are needed to address changing factors or events in the community. While a plan amendment can be initiated at any time, the City should carefully consider the implications of the proposed changes before their adoption. All amendments to the plan, other than housekeeping, must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council and affected local jurisdictions for review prior to implementation.

When considering amendments to this plan, the City will use the following procedure: landowners, land developers, the Planning Commission, or City Council may initiate amendments. The Planning Commission will direct staff or the planning consultant to prepare a thorough analysis of the proposed amendment. Staff or the planning consultant will present to the Planning Commission a report analyzing the proposed changes including their findings and recommendations regarding the proposed plan amendment.

A formal public hearing will be held on the proposed amendment. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will receive the recommendation from the Planning Commission and make a final decision on whether to adopt the amendment. Most amendments may require referral to the Metropolitan Council and other affected jurisdictions before local adoption.

Additional land use policies include:

1. Implement a plan that allows for urban growth.
2. Create separate zoning district(s) that identify various land uses including urban, commercial, industrial, etc.
3. Zone areas served by water and sewer improvements appropriately to allow for future expansion.
4. Manage growth within community through the development of a “growth management plan.”
5. Maintain integrity of zoning boundaries by requiring a 4/5 majority vote for any modification of ordinances relative to land use changes.

6. Provide opportunities for individuals to live and work within the community.
7. Plan development by incorporating “ghost plats” where appropriate to allow for reasonable opportunities for future expansion.
8. Protect the rural atmosphere in the City by maintaining and encouraging opportunities for continued crop production, sod farming, vegetable farming, tree farming, and compatible animal husbandry.
9. Provide for the orderly development of safe and efficient housing opportunities in the City.
10. Protect residential areas from incompatible uses.
11. Work with adjoining communities surrounding Coon Lake when implementing new land use/zoning ordinances to ensure collaboration and consistency.
12. Provide a variety of economic and development opportunities in the City.
13. Promote opportunities to expand employment and tax base in the City.
14. Promote business opportunities that will cater to citizens in the City.
15. Strengthen the viability of commercial and industrial areas by creating clusters of similar land uses.
16. Minimize land use conflicts by creating buffers when necessary.
17. Reduce strip development and prohibit unplanned developments or spot zonings or rezonings.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota Statutes 473.859, Subd. 2) requires that local comprehensive plans include a historic preservation section. Historic assets also help to promote community pride and create a sense of community. The City of East Bethel will create an inventory of historically significant features, landmarks, and buildings, and evaluate tools for preserving these areas and structures. Where feasible, the City will assist with the acquisition of historically significant sites or structures in order to provide educational or recreational opportunities.

Historic Preservation Goal and Policies

Goal:

Identify and classify significant historic resources; enforce policies to protect and conserve historic and cultural resources.

Policies:

1. Develop and maintain a Geographic Information System (GIS) on which historic sites are marked and cross-referenced.
2. Encourage the location of additional sites and background information.
3. Classify sites according to individual properties and districts that qualify for the National Register of state and/or local significance or could be potentially significant.
4. Identify areas with particular tourism potential based on historic, cultural, recreational, and other relevant resources.

SOLAR ACCESS PROTECTION

Metropolitan cities in Minnesota are required to include an element for protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems in the Comprehensive Plan. A solar access protection element is included in the Comprehensive Plan to assure the availability of direct sunlight to solar energy systems. Solar energy is an alternative means to energy. It has less impact on natural resources. Currently we need fossil fuels and nuclear power to heat or cool our homes and businesses. We also use this energy for fuel and automobiles. Increasing our usage of solar energy would decrease our reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear power. The purpose for including this section of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that direct sunlight access to solar panels is not subjected to shading from nearby trees, buildings, or other structures.

Solar Access Protection Goal and Policies

Goal:

Encourage the use of solar energy systems for the purposes of space heating and cooling and hot water heating in new residential developments.

Policies:

1. The City will review its Zoning Ordinance and consider appropriate amendments to exempt active solar energy systems from lot coverage and setback provisions.
2. The City will review its Code and consider appropriate amendments to require swimming pools be heated using solar or some other form of renewable energy resource, where possible.

3. Within Planned Unit Developments, the City will consider varying setback requirements in residential zoning districts as a means of protecting solar access.

AGGREGATE RESOURCES

There are no deposits of significant commercial potential in the City of East Bethel. The City does, however, allow mining and excavation as a temporary use with approval of a Conditional Use Permit.