

January 2011

City of Northfield



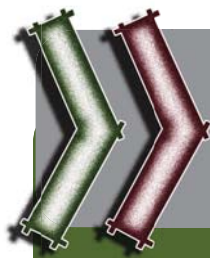
Business & Industrial Park

Master Plan



Executive Summary





The Master Plan

North Site

South Site



The Development Guidelines



The Implementation Plan

Introduction

Background and Purpose

The Northfield Business and Industrial Park Master Plan process was conducted to develop a vision for the expansion of commercial business development within the City based upon recommendations originating in the City's Comprehensive Plan and Economic Development Plan. The 2006 Northfield Comprehensive Economic Development Plan identified a lack of industrial space and land resources to accommodate future business expansion within the city limits and recommended the City initiate the several strategies to diversify the City's economic base. These strategies formed the foundation of the master plan:

- » Make land available for business expansion
- » Identify preferred development sites
- » Develop a plan for future business and industrial growth
- » Develop marketing and recruitment strategy
- » Concentrate on the needs of existing businesses
- » Maintain Northfield's quality of place
- » Maintain and enhance the existing downtown
- » Attract and retain talent
- » Increase range of housing options
- » Create entrepreneurial and innovative startup opportunities
- » Take steps to integrate city's growing Hispanic/Latino population

Additionally, the following industries were identified as having the highest potential for success in Northfield:

- » Logistics
- » Specialty Manufacturing
- » Environmental Technologies
- » Healthcare/Medical Services
- » Professional/Technical Services
- » Information Technology

As a result of the recommendations proposed in the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, the City of Northfield identified the need to annex additional lands into the City for future business and industrial growth along with the need to develop a plan and guidelines for each parcel of land. In 2009, the City annexed approximately 530 acres of land from Greenvale Township and identified another approximately 450 acres of land in Bridgewater Township for potential annexation to accommodate future business and industrial growth. Subsequently, the Northfield Economic Development Authority initiated a master planning process and created a Steering Committee to guide the planning process for the business and industrial sites.

The Master Plan guides the planning, public investment, and future development of the two study areas by providing a 20-30 year vision and expectations for future development along with strategies for implementing the plan. The planning team, with direction from the community and Steering Committee, developed a preferred plan layout for each site and specified the necessary infrastructure to support the anticipated development demands for each site at full build-out. The Master Plan considers existing City utility infrastructure, the City's utility expansion plans and the landowner's future intentions for their lands. Additionally, the Master Plan takes into consideration long-range planning efforts and capital improvements in and around the study area.



The Process

The master planning process was inclusive and strategic. The process included extensive input from stakeholders, city representatives, members of the local business community and the general public, providing the planning team with valuable project information, goal setting, idea generation, concept review and plan direction. The following discusses key steps in the planning process:

Market Analysis

The planning team conducted a thorough analysis of market conditions examining the potential for industrial or business park development on the two candidate parcels, over the next twenty years, in order to inform the planning effort and assess the potential viability for industrial and office development in the Northfield Area. The market report analyzes current and projected trends for industrial, office and associated uses in the Northfield Area over the near and long term. The report provides profiles of comparable industrial and business park developments around the country and concludes with an estimate of potential demand and absorption in Northfield over the next twenty years. The study included interviews with local business leaders and real estate brokers to gain an understanding of local market conditions and business drivers in the Northfield marketplace. The results of the market study provided the planning team with a targeted land use program and planning strategies.

Site Analysis

The master planning effort included an investigation of existing and proposed site conditions to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and constraints each candidate parcel offered for industrial and business park development. The site analysis was informed by prior investigative studies and reports such as the Natural Resources Inventory (2005), Comprehensive Sewer Study (2007), Comprehensive Water Study (2006), Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan (2007) and the Draft Northfield Stormwater Ordinance (2010), Parks, Open Space, and Trail System Plan (2008), and the Northwest Northfield Highway Corridor Study Report (2008). The results of the site analysis are summarized in an Opportunities and Constraints Map prepared for each site, identifying developable land areas, potential site access, sensitive landscapes requiring preservation and so on.

Goal Setting

An important plan shaper is the establishment of community goals and objectives for the development of industrial and business park uses on the two candidate sites. Goal setting included a thorough examination of prior planning studies and City policy documents, including the Northfield Comprehensive Plan (2008), Northfield Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (2006), St. Olaf Non-Core Lands Study (2007), Northfield MN Energy Task Force Report (2008), Northfield Land Development Code (DRAFT) (2009) and the Northwest Neighborhood Transportation Task Force Recommendations (2002). Each of these documents identifies goals and objectives for future land development and infrastructure improvements that were summarized and confirmed with the Steering Committee. Additionally, the planning team developed and refined the project goals and objectives through community input.

Visioning

The City and planning team conducted a Strategic Visioning Charrette. The intent of the charrette was to explore context and site issues, opportunities, desired outcomes and potential solutions and strategies for future business and industrial park development on each candidate site. The charrette was a collaborative planning workshop, in this case, designed to harness the talents and energies of the planning team along with members from the EDA, Steering Committee, stakeholders with input from the community to create and discuss preliminary master plan concepts. The purpose of the charrette was to achieve the following:

- » Kick start the creative planning process
- » Explore and discuss potential master plan alternatives for the business park site(s)
- » Capitalize on the history and knowledge of key stakeholders and members of the community
- » Build consensus for preliminary master plan concepts
- » Develop preliminary land use programs, concept drawings, diagrams, design principles and strategies

The planning team generated three options for the North Site and two options for the South Site during the charrette, concluding with a pin-up forum open to the community to provide the planning team with feedback on the preliminary concepts.

Concept Development

The preliminary concepts developed during the Visioning Charrette provided the foundation for further concept planning. The planning team, working with the Steering and Technical Committees, developed alternative plan concepts for each site, exploring potential land uses, circulation systems, site organization, open space concepts, stormwater management strategies, and so on. Each concept was prepared sufficiently for meaningful review of the sites potential to adequately address the programmatic needs for business and industrial growth. Each concept also explored a mix of alternative land uses (for example, housing, civic and retail) in order to support the business and industrial uses planned for each site and provide more sustainable development solutions.

Alternatives Review

Once concepts had been developed sufficiently, they were reviewed - through a series public processes - to gain consensus on the most desired qualities and characteristics of each plan. The review input provided the planning team with direction regarding development program, planning themes, design concepts and strategies.

Plan Development

The planning and review of concept alternatives provided the City with a look at different approaches to developing an employment-based, mixed-use business park on each candidate site. The planning team worked with the Steering Committee to settle on a direction for the Master Plan based upon the input received on the preliminary concept alternatives. Upon agreement of key plan initiatives and ingredients, the planning team worked in further detail on the development of a master plan for future development of each site, providing recommendations for types, locations and densities of various land uses, roadway alignment and design criteria, stormwater management strategies, parks, trail and open space planning. Draft plans for each site were developed sufficiently to project estimated costs and benefits of each plan including costs for public improvements, potential job creation and estimated tax revenue generation.

Plan Review

When draft master plans for each site had been developed sufficiently, they were reviewed - through a series public processes - to gain input on the direction of each plan regarding development program, planning themes, design concepts and phasing strategies.



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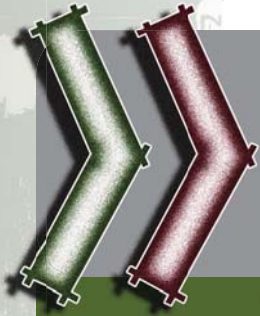
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The Master Plan

North Site

South Site

Input gathered during the planning process and direction from the Steering Committee resulted in the preparation of preferred master plans and recommendations for the future development of each candidate site. The preferred plans combine the most desired features from the preliminary alternatives, including the mix, layout and location of land uses, roadways and open spaces. Each plan illustrates a unique business park concept that provides opportunities for employment based development while protecting sensitive natural resources. Each concept is designed to create value by creating distinction in the marketplace and capitalizing on the unique assets inherent to each site as well as those assets unique to the City of Northfield.

The Master Plan provides a 20-30 year vision and development framework to achieve differentiation in the marketplace by promoting sustainable business park development that fits the context of the Northfield community. The plan supports the existing community and is sensitive to the scale and historic patterns of development in Northfield. The plan is intended to complement, rather than compete with existing businesses and destinations in Northfield, particularly downtown. A mix of land uses are recommended to blend with and support the heavy emphasis of employment uses, creating a more sustainable and amenitized business park to attract potential developers and businesses.

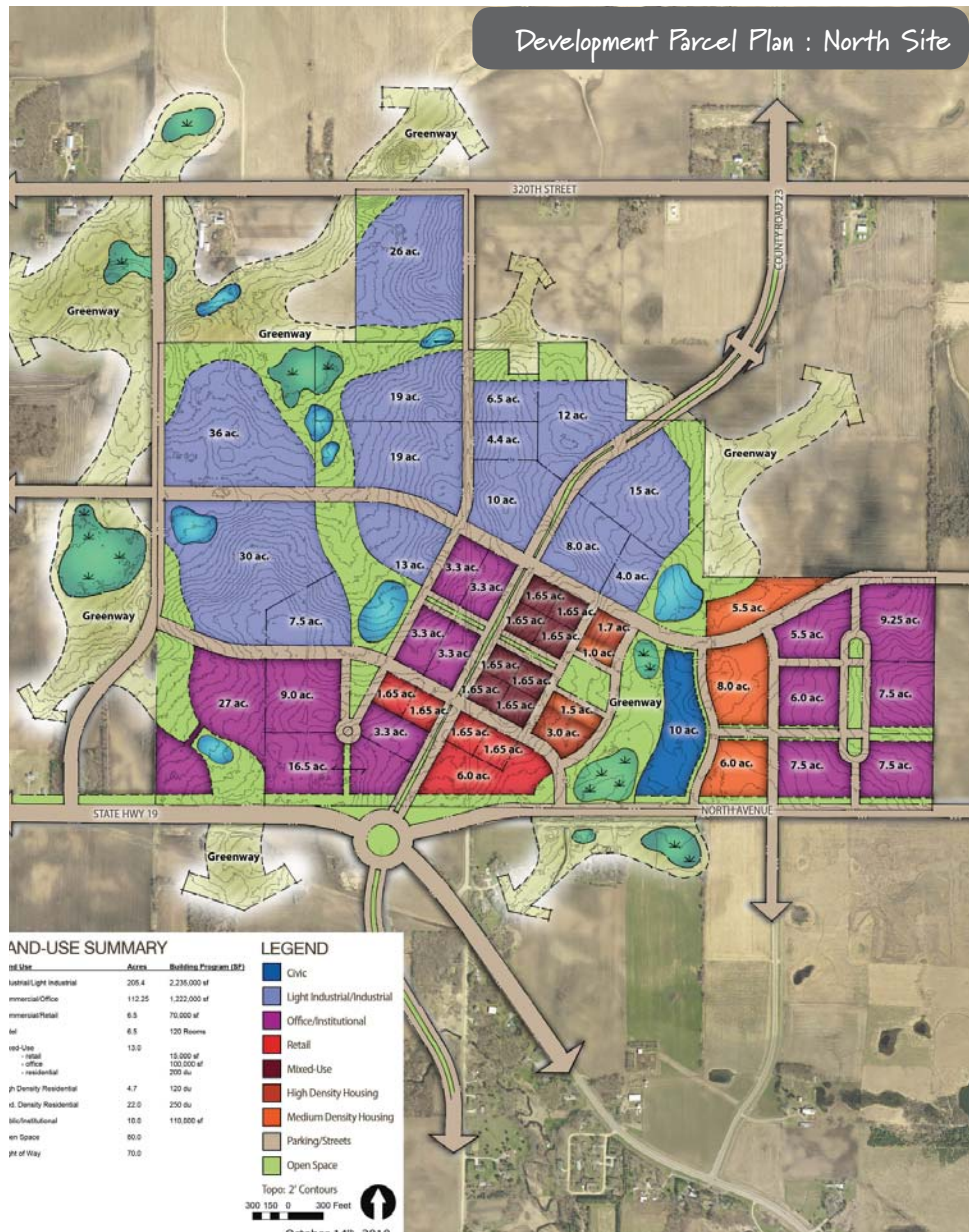
The plan includes a description of design concepts, future land uses, necessary services and public improvements, parks, trails and other amenities intended to create a distinctive business park in Northfield. The plan includes development guidelines, providing more detailed recommendations regarding expectations of quality and desired development practices, promoting sustainability and low impact design. The Master Plan also includes strategies for implementing the plan recommendations, including phasing, public finance and marketing strategies.



North Site

Plan Concept

The North Site is planned as a sustainable, mixed-use employment district. The plan is primarily intended to develop as an office and industrial park however, it promotes a more urban development pattern and diverse mix of land uses than a typical business park. The greater mix of uses and more compact development pattern is intended to create a more sustainable, healthy and attractive business park that is compatible with historic scales and patterns of development in Northfield. The plan also includes amenities such as parks, ponds, trails and open spaces, intended to attract and retain business development in Northfield. The mix of uses and highly amenitized plan is designed to differentiate the Northfield Business Park from others in the competitive market area and create a distinctive employment district in Northfield.



Land Use

The mix of land uses are in support of the goals of Northfield's Comprehensive Plan. They are designed to create a framework for a future employment district with a mixed-use center. The land uses support the concept of sustainable development and create a more distinctive business park where people can work, live, shop and play. The following land uses are incorporated into the Master Plan:

Mixed-Use/Commercial Retail

The greatest variety of land uses are located at the center of the project along County Road 23. The Master Plan identifies sites at the core of the business park to accommodate higher density housing, professional office, small-scaled retail uses and lodging accommodations. These uses are intended to complement the employment-based uses and help to create a vibrant mixed-use environment within walking distance of all other uses on the site.



Light Industrial/Industrial

The master plan proposes larger scaled industrial uses located to the north and the west of the mixed-use center and office parcels, on large, open sites that can accommodate large building floor plates and have good access to the trunk roadway system but do not dominate visibility from Highway 19. The industrial zone is intended to provide industrial uses that will provide living-wage jobs for members of the community. The plan provides the opportunity for industrial uses that complement Northfield's existing industrial clusters and agricultural activity.



Key Elements

- » Limited areas are dedicated to accommodate mixed-use development
- » Land uses include high density residential, professional office, shops and services
- » Residential uses are intended to provide workforce housing
- » Supports retail and service uses intended to complement industrial and employment uses. Appropriate uses may include: convenience stores, restaurants, fueling stations, banks, clinics, day cares, athletic clubs and the like
- » Oriented to pedestrian scale with buildings located close to the street and parking located behind the building
- » Intended to support multiple retail/service tenants with no single tenant or use occupying the entire site
- » Limited vehicular oriented uses and design elements

Key Elements

- » Supports light industrial and industrial uses such as office showroom, manufacturing, assembly, warehouse, energy production, food processing, research and development
- » Limits industrial activities from producing excessive noise, odor, light and vibration
- » Provides flexibility in parcel sizes
- » Located to limit outside industrial activities from view along SH 19

Master Plan - North Site

Key Elements

- » Supports office uses such as research and development, technology, professional services, and corporate headquarters
- » Provides flexibility of parcel sizes
- » Buildings and site development present an attractive appearance into Northfield
- » Located to screen industrial uses from view along SH 19

Office/Institutional

The master plan provides flexible areas to accommodate future employment needs of the community by providing large development sites located on relatively flat and unencumbered land. The parcels identified for office uses are intended to support a range of office tenants such as corporate campuses and professional services that will provide good paying jobs for community members and attract and retain college graduates.



Key Elements

- » Housing cannot include single family detached types
- » Housing must be developed as either apartments, condominiums and/or townhomes
- » Live/work types of housing developments are encouraged
- » Housing should be seen as an opportunity to provide workforce housing near places of employment. As such, housing should not be developed in early phases of development – thresholds of employment development should be established and built before housing is developed
- » The plan provides specific locations for housing development related to employment uses and open spaces

Housing

Medium and higher density residential areas are located in the Master Plan to provide workforce and lifecycle housing opportunities within the business park. It is estimated the employment uses on the north site could generate over 5,000 jobs at full build out. Providing places for future employees to live nearby helps the development achieve greater measures of sustainability. The types of housing products envisioned include apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Live/work types of housing developments are encouraged.



Civic

The plan includes places for civic uses, along the greenway and within walking distance of the mixed-use center.



Key Elements

- » Civic uses should support the goals of the community and the employment district
- » Civic uses are ancillary to the employment uses
- » Specific uses should complement other civic uses in Northfield

Open Space

The open space system is an important distinguishing element and attractive amenity to the Master Plan. It creates a framework for development organized around public spaces and greenways, unique to the business park. It includes a comprehensive system of parks, trails and natural open spaces connected to the regional system of greenways and trails as planned for in Northfield's 2008 Parks, Open Space, and Trail System Plan. The open space plan is also designed to accommodate regional stormwater management needs, which are discussed in further later in the document. Key features of the open space system include the following:

Greenways

The greenways are located along existing drainage corridors and connect to the planned regional greenway system and adjacent open space preserves. The greenways provide linear open spaces and effective landscape buffers between planned land uses. They contain trails/multi-use paths to provide open space for passive recreation and connections to regional trail networks. They also provide potential areas for treating stormwater discharge. The greenways should be sized appropriately to accommodate stormwater management needs, trails and wildlife movement.

Parks

The plan includes parks and public green spaces to provide outdoor places for social gathering and recreation. Park and recreational amenities are included in the Master Plan to contribute to the daily health and quality of life for those who live and work within the development. The parks are located central to clusters of development, providing an open space framework to build around.

Stormwater Ponds and Infiltration Areas

Stormwater treatment is proposed to be managed in the open space areas as part of a regional stormwater management system. Areas have been identified to accommodate stormwater infiltration and ponding based upon an analysis of projected stormwater discharge flows created by the development. The infiltration areas and ponds are located within the greenway system and within landscape easements identified for development parcels.



Trails

Trails are an important aspect of the open space system. They offer alternative routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to move within and through the development. The plan identifies a comprehensive and complete trail system that includes sidewalks and multi-use trails. The trail system connects users to the regional trail system and destinations within the business park.

Transportation

The Circulation Plan identifies connections for multiple modes of transportation to the City's existing and planned transportation system. The plan provides for the needs of a variety of modes of transportation including trucks, automobiles, public transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. The alignments and designations in the plan are conceptual and subject to further study.

Vehicular Circulation

The Circulation Plan identifies a connected and comprehensive system of streets that are connected to the regional street network. These "complete streets" are intended to provide the ability for vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian movement within the same corridor.

The trunk street system includes a future County Road 23, State Highway 19 and North Avenue. The plan identifies an alignment of County Road 23 that is consistent with alignment recommendations identified in the 2008 Northwest Northfield Highway Corridor Study Report. County Road 23 is planned as a future 3-lane arterial, based upon projected traffic flows created by the development of the business park and

anticipated traffic moving through the site at full build out.

The plan also anticipates a Minnesota Department of Transportation study on State Highway 19 will occur within the next 2 years. The SH 19 study may include several roadway improvements to the highway, including an improved intersection with the future CR 23. An improved intersection between SH 19 and CR 23 is essential to provide safe and convenient access to the business park.

Other roadways in the street system include a series of collectors, parkways and local access streets. These secondary streets provide efficient movement of trucks, cars bicycles and pedestrians. They are connected to the City's network of existing and proposed off-site streets.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Each street is envisioned as a "complete street", providing the infrastructure to accommodate all modes of transportation including bicycles and pedestrians. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic is accommodated and encouraged in the plan to provide alternative modes of transportation and recreational use. The plan includes a comprehensive trail and sidewalk system to complement the streets and provide the infrastructure for alternate modes of transportation.

Stormwater

The north site, approximately 530 acres, will be served by four regional stormwater management facilities consisting of paired wet detention and infiltration basins. The stormwater facilities serving the north-central portion of the site are incorporated into the greenway system and occupy naturally occurring low areas. In addition to providing stormwater management it proposed to be a principal conveyance for storm- and flood-waters. A total area of 40-acres of land are identified to accommodate stormwater management facilities. The implementation of low-impact stormwater management strategies are encouraged to reduce the impacts on the site due to development.

Utilities

Extension of public utilities will be instrumental in developing the north site to the density and land uses identified in the Master Plan. Extension of sanitary sewer and water will benefit the North Site and complete looping of the City's water system. In addition extension of these utilities may provide opportunities for growth/expansion beyond the current city limits. Extension of these utilities will be dependent on development phasing but in general utilities will be extended from east to west.

Key Elements

- » Safely and effectively accommodate semi-truck, public transit and delivery vehicles
- » Provide pedestrian sidewalks and/or multi-use paths along all roadways
- » Plan for bicycle traffic on roadways. Provide designated bicycle lanes or multi-use trails along arterial and collector routes and plan for shared facilities on local streets
- » Establish a streetscape design that identifies the district as a unique part of the Northfield community including uniform landscaping and streetscape



South Site

Plan Concept

The South Site is located along two attractive and environmentally sensitive creek corridors – Heath Creek and Spring Brook. The historic agricultural use of the adjacent lands has had an impact on the environmental quality of the creeks. Future development of the site offers the opportunity to restore and enhance the environmental quality of Heath Creek and Spring Brook. The Master Plan recommends the site be developed as an environmentally sensitive business park, organizing development parcels and establishing development guidelines to protect and enhance the two creek corridors. Protected and restored creek corridors will create a healthier and more diverse landscape, wildlife habitat and movement corridors. The concept is to develop the site as a unique and high quality corporate business park that gets its identity from the quality of the natural environment that surrounds it. The plan also includes a mix of workforce housing, retail and civic uses to support employment uses and create a more distinctive business park.



Land Use

The mix of land uses focus on high quality corporate office uses, creating a distinctive business park that gets its identity from the environmentally unique site assets. Office parcels are set back several hundred feet from the creek channels and positioned so they front onto the open space and take full advantage of natural landscape views. Complementing the office uses, the plan incorporates a mix of other support uses, including retail, civic and housing. Retail parcels are positioned at the project entry off Decker Avenue where good access and visibility are critical. Civic land uses are located at the confluence of the two creeks. Housing is located to buffer existing residential uses from future office uses. Ultimately the specific land uses should complement the unique environmental quality of the site.

Commercial Retail

A small amount of retail activity is envisioned as an ancillary use to the primary employment uses. Retail should be small scaled and service the needs of the development. It should not be designed or developed as a destination retail environment that might compete for business with downtown Northfield.



Office/Institutional

The master plan provides flexible areas to accommodate future employment needs of the community by providing large development sites located on relatively flat and unencumbered land. The parcels identified for office uses are intended to support a range of office tenants such as corporate campuses and professional services that will provide good paying jobs for community members and attract and retain college graduates. Office uses are located along the central parkway and off 100th Street East. Each parcel is sited to take advantage of the unique natural landscape features on the site. These natural features are seen as an attractive amenity that can and should be enhanced to distinguish the business park.

Key Elements

- » Support retail and service uses intended to complement employment uses. Appropriate uses may include: convenience stores, restaurants, fueling stations, banks, clinics, day cares, athletic clubs and so on
- » Oriented to pedestrian scale with buildings located close to the street and parking located behind the building
- » Intended to support multiple retail/service tenants with no single tenant or use occupying the entire site
- » Limited vehicular oriented uses and design elements

Key Elements

- » Supports office uses such as research and development, technology, professional services, and corporate headquarters
- » Parcels are positioned to protect Heath Creek and Spring Brook stream corridors
- » Provides flexibility of parcel sizes for a range of tenants
- » Intended to attract corporate office uses

Master Plan - South Site

Key Elements

- » Housing cannot include single family detached types
- » Housing must be developed as townhomes
- » Housing should be seen as an opportunity to provide workforce housing near places of employment. As such, housing should not be developed in early phases of development – thresholds of employment development should be established and built before housing is developed
- » The plan provides specific locations for housing development related to employment uses, existing off-site housing and on-site open spaces

Housing

Medium density residential areas are included in the Master Plan to provide workforce and lifecycle housing opportunities within the business park. It is estimated the employment uses on the south site could generate over 4,000 jobs at full build out. Providing places for future employees to live nearby helps the development achieve greater measures of sustainability. The residential uses are located adjacent to existing off-site residential areas off 90th Street East and provide a buffer use between existing residential uses and future employment uses.



Key Elements

- » Civic uses should support the goals of the community and the employment district
- » Civic uses are ancillary to the employment uses
- » Specific uses should complement other civic uses in Northfield
- » Civic uses should be sympathetic to the environmental quality of the two creeks
- » Civic uses should project an attractive appearance along Armstrong Road

Civic

The master plan provides sites for civic uses located at the intersection of the central parkway and Armstrong Road. Some ideas discussed for this site included a performing arts center, environmental education center, or nature center related to the confluence of the two creeks. The civic use sites are located at the confluence of the two creeks to provide a use that can be sympathetic to the special hydrology and natural systems of the creeks. The civic use can provide additional attraction and identity elements to the business park, helping to distinguish it from the competitive market.



Open Space

The design concept proposes a high quality open space system and landscape restoration of the two waterways that exist on the site. Heath Creek and Spring Brook are the major landscape features of the south site. Each creek corridor is protected by the Northfield Stormwater Ordinance, which requires significant setbacks for development. The master plan respects these requirements and recommends further protection and restoration measures. Low impact stormwater management strategies should be encouraged or required to reduce the potential impacts to water quality and temperature on the creeks. Restoration measures should be implemented to enhance the environmental quality of these unique landscape features. The open space system provides much of the land dedicated to accommodate stormwater infiltration areas and detention ponds. The locations of these are closely related to existing drainage patterns. Key features of the open space system include the following:

Greenways

Linear greenways along each creek form the dominant open space patterns on the site. Major wildlife and trail corridors connect the two creek greenways. The greenways provide linear open spaces and effective landscape buffers between planned land uses and existing adjacent uses. Multi-use trails are proposed within the greenways to connect site destinations and link to the regional system of trails. Incorporating environmental and interpretive trail features within the greenways can add value to the open space system and raise awareness of the importance of environmental stewardship.



Parks

The plan includes parks and public green spaces to provide outdoor places for social gathering and passive recreation. Park and recreational amenities are included in the plan to contribute to the daily health and quality of life for those who live and work within the development. The parks are located along the central parkway and at the center of the residential cluster.

Stormwater Ponds and Infiltration Areas

Stormwater treatment is proposed to be managed in the open space areas and within development sites. Areas have been identified to accommodate stormwater infiltration and ponding based upon an analysis of projected stormwater discharge flows created by the development. The infiltration areas and ponds are located within the greenway system and within landscape easements identified for development parcels.



Trails

Trails are an important aspect of the open space system. They offer alternate routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to move within and through the development. The plan identifies a comprehensive and complete trail system that includes sidewalks and multi-use trails. The trail system connects users to the regional trail system and destinations within the business park.

Transportation

The Circulation Plan identifies connections for multiple modes of transportation to the City's existing and planned transportation system. The plan provides for the needs of multiple users including trucks, automobiles, public transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. The alignments and designations in the plan are conceptual and subject to further study.

Vehicular Circulation

Vehicular access and circulation is provided for by existing and proposed street systems. The site's transportation network anticipates future improvements to Decker Avenue as County Road 23 improvements are made north of the site. Other street improvements are informed by recommendations made with the 2008 Northwest Northfield Highway Corridor Study Report. Primary access points into the site are proposed off Decker Avenue and Armstrong Road. Secondary access points into the site are proposed off 90th Street East and 100th Street East. The roadway system includes collector and local street routes. A major vehicular roadway collector is the wide landscaped parkway winding its way through the center of the site, mimicking the flow of the two creeks.

The parkway is envisioned to include a wide, planted median, designed to collect and infiltrate stormwater runoff. It also carries the bulk of the traffic to and from the Decker Avenue to Armstrong Road, connecting the business park to the regional roadway system. The parkway provides primary access to each of the office parcels.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Each street is envisioned as a “complete street”, providing the infrastructure to accommodate all modes of transportation including bicycles and pedestrians. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic is accommodated and encouraged in the plan to provide alternate modes of transportation and recreational use. More on the design of each street can be seen in the street cross sections. A comprehensive network of multi-use and low impact walking trails complements the street and sidewalk network, connecting uses and destinations on the site and to off-site trail systems.



Key Elements

- » Safely and effectively accommodate semi-truck and delivery vehicles
- » Provide pedestrian sidewalks and/or multi-use paths along all roadways
- » Plan for bicycle traffic on roadways. Provide designated bicycle lanes or multi-use trails along collector routes and plan for shared facilities on local streets
- » Establish a streetscape design that identifies the district as a unique part of the Northfield/Bridgewater Township community including uniform landscaping and streetscape elements

Stormwater

The south site, approximately 450 acres, is planned to be served by six regional stormwater management facilities consisting of paired wet detention and infiltration basins. A total area of 38-acres of land is designed to occupy stormwater management facilities. The actual amount of land required to construct and maintain the stormwater facilities is expected to be approximately 20% larger, due to topographic features of the south site.

Utilities

The South Site is not currently within the City of Northfield city limits. The City is considering annexation of the property and development of the South Site will be dependent on successful annexation. If and when the property is annexed it can be served by public utilities. Extension of public utilities will benefit the South Site and complete looping of the City’s water system. City water and sanitary sewer are located in close proximity to the site. The City is currently evaluating system upgrades independent of development of the South Site. Development of the South Site may accelerate the schedule of system upgrades. Extension of these utilities will be dependent on development phasing but in general utilities will be extended from east to west.





The Development Guidelines

The Master Plan borrows from organizational characteristics found in historic Northfield, the campuses of Carlton and St. Olaf, and the surrounding agrarian landscape. Clear organization, axial relationships, and a hierarchy of public space orders the layout of building sites and open spaces. Northfield's traditional patterns of development are recalled through smaller blocks, narrower streets, and public gathering spaces and buildings designed to support a vibrant streetscape. It is imperative that the design of the proposed site infrastructure, landscape, architecture and site details be of high quality and that these elements be visually and functionally coordinated with the existing agrarian landscape as well as elements found within the city of Northfield to establish a sense of continuity and identity that is consistent with the city and the region. The mission of these Development Guidelines is to create a commonly understood set of expectations for the character and quality of Northfield's Business and Industrial Park.

Intent and Purpose

The intent of the Business and Industrial Park Development Guidelines is to aid private development in the creation of a high quality and aesthetically unified Business and Industrial development within the city of Northfield. These guidelines are intended to establish a business-industrial park that will demonstrate innovation and high levels of environmental and economic performance. Used in conjunction with basic principles of good design, applicable jurisdictional regulations, recommendations in the Master Plan, and staff assistance, these Development Guidelines are intended to expedite the approval process and facilitate the development of quality projects within the Northfield Business Park.

The Development Guidelines are designed to guide and monitor development, individual sites and buildings, roadways, landscaping, and all other site improvements. A process has been established to review site planning, architecture, landscape design, lighting, and signage for conformance to these Development Guidelines, in addition to encouraging excellence and innovation in development. All private development on the Northfield Business and Industrial Park property shall be subject to the design specifics contained herein.

General Objectives

The general objectives of the Northfield Industrial Park Design Guidelines are to:

- » Promote a functional and attractive environment
- » Ensure a high quality development
- » Protect and enhance private property values and investments
- » Protect public investments
- » Preserve the character of Northfield
- » Employ Sustainable Design practices

In achieving these objectives, such development is anticipated to be more competitive than in a conventional business-industrial park and to be more ecologically sensitive at the same time.

How the Guidelines are to Be Used

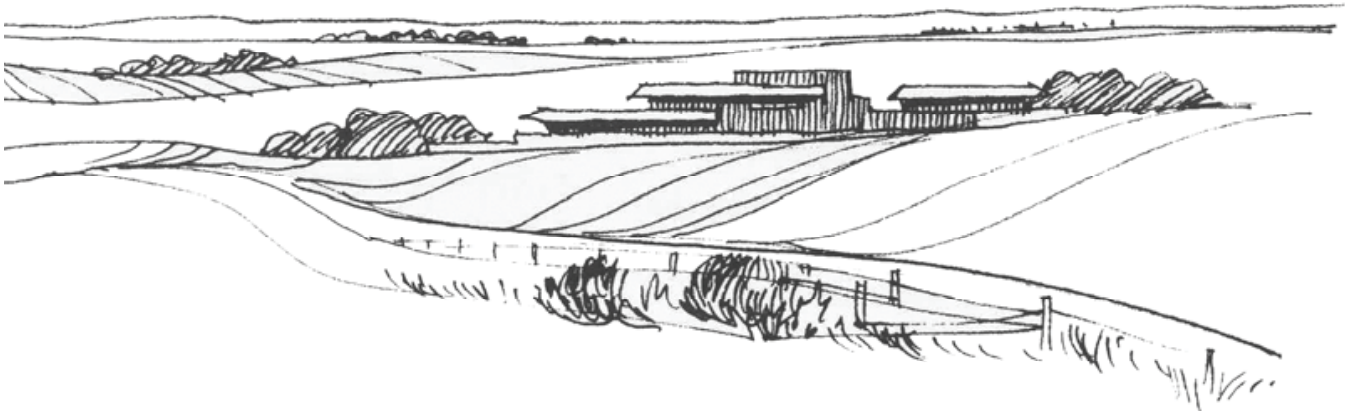
The guidelines will provide direction to designers, developers, City staff, City commissions and decision makers regarding the City's expectations for design excellence at the Northfield Business and Industrial Parks.

The guidelines provide review agencies with an implementation and planning tool that can be used to judge the merits of proposed projects at each of the business and industrial parks, informing the design review and approval of individual development projects.

Relationship to other Planning Documents

Used in concert with the City of Northfield Zoning Ordinances and applicable building codes, the development guidelines provide City staff, decision makers, and private interests a common basis for the evaluation of design and development issues during the design review and approval process for individual private development proposals.

Once adopted by City Council, the City will incorporate specific guidelines that support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan into the City's Land Development Code, providing the City with additional policies for enforcing the goals and guidelines outlined in the Northfield Business and Industrial Park Development Guidelines.





- » Site Planning
- » Building Mass and Character
- » Parking and Circulation
- » Landscape
- » Gateways and Access
- » Lighting
- » Signage

Character/Sense of Place

The sense of place found in a community, from either the intrinsic character of a place or the meaning people give to it, greatly influences the quality of life of those who inhabit that place. Existing patterns of human development illustrate that the character of a place and sense of attachment people have to it can be altered and affected by quality of planning and design. By drawing upon the best from the past and the present, we can plan healthy communities that will successfully serve the needs of those who live and work within them. The term healthy community implies the presence of a vibrant social infrastructure that is directly related to the built and natural environment and its overall sense of place. Such planning for healthy communities should adhere to certain fundamental principles for site planning, parking and circulation, building mass and character, landscape design, lighting and amenities.

The City of Northfield is a unique and beautiful place. The character and sense of place of the Northfield Business and Industrial Park should be compatible with the existing character of the Northfield. The Master Plan includes specific development guidelines that address character and sense of place.



- » Stormwater Management/
Water Quality
- » Water Conservation

Water Resources

Clean water is becoming an increasingly scarce resource throughout the world. In order to seamlessly integrate stormwater and greywater management systems into the natural landscape, greenways that run adjacent to the natural lowlands should be preserved and developed into a system of parks, trails, and natural open spaces – also referred to in the Master Plan as “greenways”. Onsite stormwater management can help transform water at the source from a potential nuisance as polluted and erosive runoff from gutters directly to wetlands and sewers, into a resource for the environment and communities. In turn, it will beautify the landscape, support wildlife habitat, provide recreational amenities, and reduce the need for more sewage lines and treatment plants. Properly utilizing native plantings, shade trees, porous paving, rain barrels and cisterns, rain gardens and bioswales, and onsite greywater management systems are a few of the ways by which to help Northfield remain a sustainable and prosperous community. The Master Plan includes specific development guidelines that address water resources.



Energy Resources

Whether the term used is sustainable design, zero energy building, or green living, all refer to the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of buildings that are energy-efficient, healthy, and environmentally-friendly. Traditional building use consumes 40% of the total fossil energy in the US and European Union, much of which can be attributed to our reliance, almost exclusively, on fossil-fuel-dependant mechanical systems for heating and cooling in our newer buildings.

In the context of the Northfield Business and Industrial Park, energy conservation methods, a primary component of sustainable development, consist of strategies to reduce the amount of fossil fuels required for a building to function. Building at the business park presents an opportunity to incorporate green building strategies early in the design process and at an integrated systems level, which will provide both environmental and economic benefits. The amount of development projected for the Northfield Business-Industrial Parks provides a unique opportunity to promote more energy and resource efficient buildings, support greater recycling and waste reduction, and create greater synergies between adjacent business park tenants, integrating operations to create new value-streams. The Master Plan includes specific development guidelines that address energy resources.

- » Passive Energy
- » Alternative/Renewable Energy
- » By-product Synergies
- » Productive Landscapes

Utilities & Services

This section contains development guidelines to assist developers, engineers and contractors with the procedures and details needed to complete utilities and services, including service and loading, lighting, maintenance, and waste management projects within the business park. In general, utilities should be as unobtrusive as possible and pose the least possible resource impact; municipal or other utility systems outside the business park are to be used whenever economically and environmentally practicable; where possible and authorized, cost-sharing with municipalities and others shall be conducted in meeting new, expanded, or replacement utility needs. An exception to unobtrusive utilities are those that might be highlighted to reveal their function, such as those using renewable energy, an important aspect of education. The Master Plan includes specific development guidelines that address utilities and services.



- » Service and Loading
- » Utilities
- » Lighting (safety)
- » Maintenance
- » Waste Management

Construction Management

It is important that the new business park at Northfield be designed and operated to the highest standards of sustainable development. This view towards environmental protection, energy reduction, and material reuse also holds true for the construction process. To ensure that the intent of these guidelines are incorporated into the building process and that the natural landscape of Northfield is not unduly damaged during construction, the Master Plan includes specific development guidelines that address construction management.



- » Environment
- » Site Maintenance
- » Job-site Waste
- » Construction Storage, Parking, and Access
- » Signage





The Implementation Plan

The Master Plan identifies several strategies necessary for future development of the Northfield Business and Industrial Park sites. It will be important to engage the community with each step of the planning and development process to ensure that the vision being carried forward reflects the community's desires. Recommendations outlined in this section of the Master Plan focus on the North Site, as it is already annexed into the City of Northfield. Until the South Site is annexed into the City of Northfield, it has limited development potential.

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Implementing the vision of this plan may require amendments to the City's comprehensive plan. The Northfield Business and Industrial Park Master Plan can be adopted as a supporting document to the comprehensive plan or specific goals and policies can be included within the comprehensive plan to reflect the vision of the plan. The City's public facility master plans for water, sewer, and transportation which are supporting documents of the comprehensive plan may need to be amended periodically to identify projects necessary to allow for development of the area.

Phasing - South Site



Land Development Code

In order to facilitate development of individual properties, specific standards and controls will need to be in place to ensure the vision of the plan is carried through. The vision of this plan will be implemented through the City of Northfield's Land Development Code. The study area sites for the master planning effort are located in Floating Zoning District ED-F (Economic Development Floating District). The Economic Development Floating District (ED-F) is applied to areas of the city appropriate for employment with an urban campus type character with a focus on sustainable, high quality development that is designed in a way to preserve the city's natural resources while simultaneously promoting economic development. This district will provide opportunities for corporate administrative offices and medium sized research and development firms to locate in the city. Land uses within the district should be designed to minimize impact on any residential uses by appropriate buffering and overall subdivision design. High standards of appearance and design will be required and maintained with restrictions on outdoor storage and activities with undesirable characteristics. Amendments to the City's Development Code should be conducted upon adoption of the Northfield Business and Industrial Park Master Plan. Amendments will include specific recommendations and development guidelines outlined in the Master Plan document.

Annexation (South Site)

In order to consider development of the South Site it is strongly recommended that the City initiate an agreeable annexation approach with Bridgewater Township to bring properties into the City. Coupled with this approach will be the need to outreach to the community as annexations are voter approved. Until such time, business park development potential on the South Site will be limited.

Phasing

The primary intent of the Northfield Business and Industrial Park Master Plan is to communicate and detail the vision for the two candidate sites. With that said, it is important to identify strategies that will make the vision a reality. Successful implementation of the Master Plan will occur if all elements of the plan are considered throughout the implementation process and careful stewardship of the plans fundamental goals are adhered to and supported by community leaders. Many factors evolve over time and can change the priorities in implementing the plan. As funding becomes available the project scope will be refined, the budgets will be adjusted, and the order of development events may shift. Having the plan as a development tool will keep implementation on track as various other factors shift over time.

The Master Plan identifies specific recommendations related to the phasing of development on each site. Recommendations for each phase address public improvement costs necessary to service the project sites for future business park development. These are costs that will likely require financial leadership from the City of Northfield. Some of the costs may be shared with state and county agencies, and the development community. Public improvement costs include the following:

- » Roadways
- » Utilities
- » Land Acquisition
- » Open Space/Stormwater Facilities
- » Fire Safety (water tower)
- » Site Grading

Each phase of the plan also addresses benefits that will occur as a result of public investments in the projects. Potential benefits include the following:

- » Sites Available for Development
- » Job Creation
- » Annual Tax Revenue Generation

Phasing - North Site



Developer interest in Northfield will rely on a few key projects to catalyze development on the North Site. The following includes a list of key projects that will catalyze development interest on the North Site:

Catalytic Projects

The following catalytic projects have been identified for the North Site and are presented in no particular priority. These projects have been identified since their planning, design and development will affect great change on the site and can build momentum for implementing the Master Plan. Other projects and recommendations that are included in the Master Plan can be implemented independently as funding and opportunities arise.

State Highway 19/County Road 23 Interchange

Improved access and visibility into the North Site is critical to the success of the future business park and to the ability to attract early development interest on the site. The project will require land acquisition and discussions with the jurisdictional state and county regulatory agencies to ensure coordination of design objectives and funding for interchange improvements can be realized.

County Road 23

The future alignment and development of County Road 23 is another critical component to the success of the Northfield Business Park. With a new and improved county arterial, the business park will attract future businesses and provide adequate access and circulation to development sites. Future land acquisition will be necessary to complete the roadway as planned to the north and to the south of the site. This project will require on-going coordination and negotiation with Dakota and Rice Counties.

North Avenue

North Avenue plays an important role, providing access to the Northfield Hospital and to future development sites within the business park. The extension of North Avenue and associated utilities is critical to the future success of the business park. It also provides necessary access to the hospital from SH 19. Design and engineering of utility extensions within the North Avenue right of way are already underway. These studies should continue westward as funding becomes available.

Public Finance

One of the keys to implementing the Northfield Business and Industrial Park Master Plan is the ability to finance the public improvements needed to facilitate the desired private development and land use. Given the scope and time horizon of the Master Plan, it is not possible to offer a specific implementation finance plan. Instead, this section of the Plan describes the critical improvements and finance tools needed to implement the Plan. It is intended to serve as a guide for future action by the City. Unless otherwise noted, the comments pertain to both the North and South sites.

Critical Improvements

The Plan identifies and estimates the costs of public improvements necessary to service development. Several general recommendations apply to financing these improvements. Careful financial planning is required. The Master Plan describes four phases of development and related public improvements for both the North and South sites. More detailed financial planning is needed to guide the implementation of the Master Plan. Some critical financial planning issues are:

- » How does the construction of infrastructure coordinate with development? What improvements should be built in advance of development?
- » The City has limited financial resources available to implement the Plan. These resources include utility reserves/revenues, utility connection charges and property taxes. Financial planning will help the City to evaluate the potential demand on these resources for improvement alternatives.
- » Financial planning is needed to evaluate the financial feasibility of initially providing improvements to both the North and South sites.
- » Current City policy requires the developer to build the infrastructure within a development area. This approach may not work in the business park area. Unless a “master developer” is willing to prepare larger areas for development, the City will face the need to build (and finance) the improvements needed to open land for development. Financial planning allows the City to better understand the financial implications of this approach.

The Master Plan offers several tools available to the City to take action toward financing public improvements. The following is a brief list of some of the strategies the Master Plan offers to fund these improvements:

Improvements	Funding Options
Utilities	Utility funds, issuance of bonds or both
Water Tower	Water utility funds, issuance of bonds or both
Stormwater Management Systems	Stormwater improvement district
County Road 23	Share costs with Dakota County General obligation improvement bonds State aid road bonds Special service district
State Highway 19 Interchange	Share costs with MnDOT General obligation improvement bonds State aid road bonds

Tools for City Actions

State Law provides a broad array of powers and tools that may assist the City in undertaking the public investments needed to implement the plan initiatives. The following is a list of potential finance tools that may be available for the City to fund public investments. Finance plans for actual projects should be made using appropriate technical and legal advice.

- » Special Assessments
- » Utility Revenues
- » Storm Sewer Improvement District
- » Street State Aid
- » Tax Increment Financing
- » Tax Abatement
- » Special Service District

Market Strategy

Speculative development is not practical in the immediate future. First efforts will be to seek companies who are looking for build-to-suit opportunities. It is critical that the initial development phases support the marketing of future phases. If the first users of the site are in conflict with the vision of the project articulated in marketing efforts, no momentum will be created and the site will not achieve its full potential. So, the need to find “early adopters” who buy into the principles of the master plan is an essential ingredient to the development strategy.

Differentiators

The factors that will attract the best buyers and tenants to this project are the things that make this site and this plan stand out in a competitive market – the differentiators. The primary differentiators that can be used to attract users are listed below:

- » Strong vision
- » City and community commitment
- » Co-Branding
- » Master Plan for an amenitized Business Park
- » Focus on sustainability
- » Strong, integrated design guidelines
- » Opportunities to integrate land uses
- » Synergies with existing companies
- » Aggressive use of State Programs

Strategies

Successfully marketing the Northfield Business and Industrial Park will require specific actions on the City's part. The primary strategies that can be used to attract users are listed below:

- » Promote the "Vision"
- » Create Business Incentive Programs
- » Seek Partnership Opportunities

Audiences

The audiences for the marketing effort are as follows:

- » City Government
- » Community Leaders
- » Lead Generators
- » End Users

Target Industries

The following target industries have been identified by the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan:

- » Logistics
- » Specialty Manufacturing
- » Environmental Technologies
- » Healthcare/Medical
- » Professional/Technical Services
- » Information Technology

In addition to these, two more industries have been identified through the planning process:

- » Utilities: energy generation
- » Real Estate Rental and Leasing: senior housing/managed care facility



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