



2. LAND USE

Direction for future growth, development, and redevelopment of the city.

INTRODUCTION

The land use plan is a central focus of the comprehensive plan. It provides direction and guidance for how land uses, infrastructure, and related elements fit within the geographic context of the community. It provides direction for how growth should be accommodated, including character, scale, and intensity. Additionally, it also guides new development proposals and investments.

As Hopkins is a fully developed community, all development effectively will be redevelopment. Sites will be transitioned to new uses, aligned with overall city goals. This both increases the complexity of development (in terms of appropriate context and incremental change), as well as the benefits (in terms of connecting to and strengthening an existing vibrant community).

See **Appendix B1** for additional land use information, maps, data, and calculations including allocation of growth through 2040. Based on the guidance for future land use type and intensity provided in this chapter, the City of Hopkins has adequate land to accommodate all planned growth through 2040, while meeting other stated land use goals and policies.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES



GROWTH IN A FULLY DEVELOPED CITY

Any new development in Hopkins will occur within an area with existing character and context. Redevelopment may be more logistically challenging than greenfield development, though it may also yield greater benefits, locally and regionally.



GEOGRAPHIC BARRIERS

Hopkins' land is divided up by a number of barriers, including major highways and superblock style development. This limits walkability, bikeability, and overall community cohesiveness. There is an opportunity to create new connections through investments in redevelopment and infrastructure.



EDGE CONDITIONS

Hopkins is surrounded by other developed communities. As such, there is a substantial need to coordinate with other jurisdictions on edge conditions and neighborhoods/character areas that span boundaries, to ensure consistency and continuity where possible.



AGING BUILDING STOCK

As a city that is fully developed, Hopkins has a substantial inventory of aging building stock. This means there will be continued needs for maintenance, reinvestment, renovation, and (as appropriate) replacement. This is particularly true for building types (such as industrial) which may be considered outdated or obsolete by modern standards.



RETROFITTING WALKABILITY AND BIKEABILITY INTO TRADITIONAL SUBURBAN PATTERNS

A portion of Hopkins developed during post-WWII decades, when auto-oriented suburbs did not prioritize accommodating pedestrians and bicycles – or building in patterns where people could walk or bike to school, shopping, jobs, transit, or other destinations. Retrofitting improvements that add in those features will take time and effort, especially as redevelopment happens incrementally.



POPULATION SHIFTS AND CHANGING NEEDS AND PREFERENCES

A dominant trend – both locally and nationally – is the overall aging of the population. This has a host of implications for land use, including changes in the type of housing needed, goods and services demanded, and reliance on non-auto transportation options. Additionally, younger residents who are now reaching adulthood have shown interest in different land use patterns – particularly more walkable and mixed use districts.



ADDRESSING PRESSURES ON AFFORDABILITY

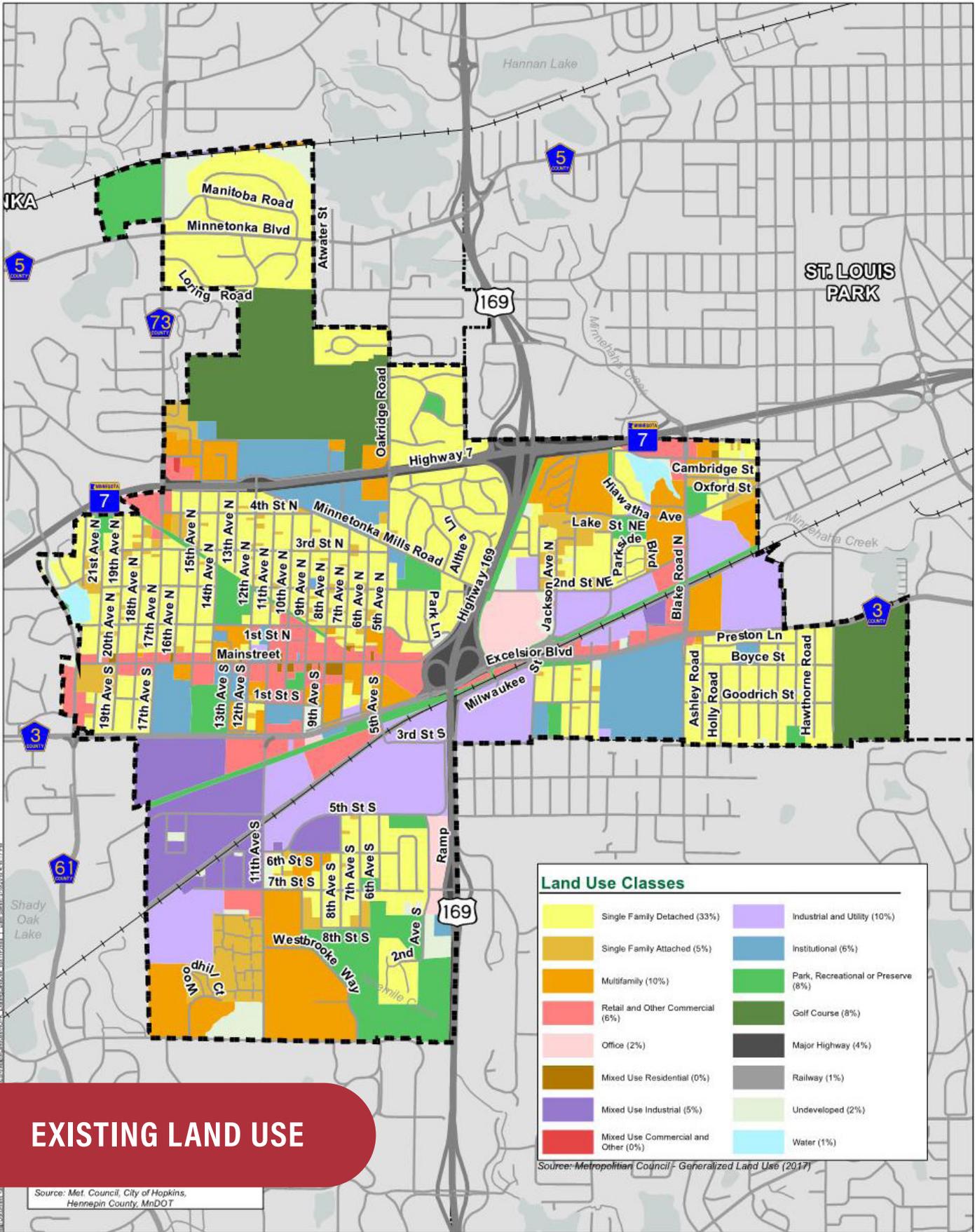
Hopkins is located in a highly desirable location that is likely to have an upward pressures on property values. This has implications for both housing affordability and commercial/retail space affordability, among other impacts. This will need to be addressed to ensure that existing residents and businesses are able to continue to afford to stay in Hopkins.



MAJOR FACTORS

Major factors to consider when planning for land use in Hopkins include:

- **Creating complete communities.** There is increased interest in creating and enhancing complete communities – where residents can conveniently meet daily needs without having to make long trips. While it is not feasible or desirable to structure all neighborhoods this way, it is a potential model for making places more livable.
- **Transitioning from auto-oriented to transit/bike-pedestrian oriented development.** There is an increased interest in growing in ways that are walkable, bikeable, and transit friendly. This means including development patterns that are often more compact and intensive (in terms of housing units and jobs) than in the recent past. A key opportunity in this area is new development planned for the three Green Line Extension light rail station areas.
- **Diversity as strength.** The diverse mix of land uses in Hopkins contributes to its resiliency as a community. Rather than a monoculture of uniform housing and commercial types, this mix ensures that fluctuations in market and preferences won't unduly impact a large proportion of the city's fabric.
- **Building a sustainable city.** Sustainability is an important value throughout this plan. In terms of land use, it has implications from the small scale (e.g. how buildings are constructed and maintained) to citywide (e.g. responsible use of resources, preparing a community to respond to climate change). Some related topics are addressed in more depth in other elements.
- **Maintaining supporting systems and public services.** Land use bears a close and vital relationship to public infrastructure, utilities, and services. The City will need to plan and invest responsibly in these systems – both to maintain existing facilities and to provide new ones in response to changing and expanding needs. This is addressed in more depth in other elements.



LAND USE: MAPPING PLACE TYPES

The City of Hopkins' land use direction goes beyond a standard land use approach in mapping future land use, to incorporate a place type approach. This is beneficial for a community like Hopkins where uses and densities are not segregated into separate areas, but mixed together to create vibrant urban places. Designating places provides an opportunity to show how individual uses fit together to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. While some of these designations describe areas that are already in existence, others are more aspirational – such as the transit station areas, where significant investment in development, infrastructure, and placemaking is needed to create the type of place envisioned by the plan.

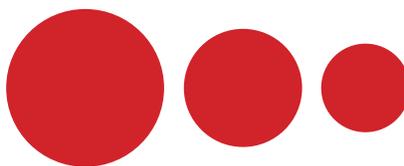
KEY FRAMEWORKS

NEIGHBORHOODS



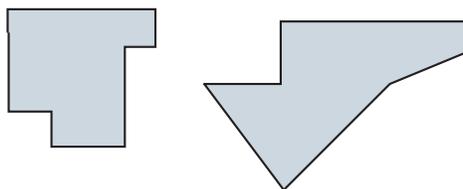
Neighborhoods are predominantly places to live. Neighborhoods can be exclusively residential, however they can also have a small share of supporting uses such as a school, retail, or place of worship.

CENTERS



Centers are places throughout the city where there are a mix of uses that benefit from proximity to each other. Centers come in a variety of scales and they tend to blend in and transition from surrounding Neighborhoods or Districts.

DISTRICTS



Districts are areas of the city with a range of specialized uses. Districts often have specialized uses and needs and may be dominated by a single user such as a campus.

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PLACE TYPES

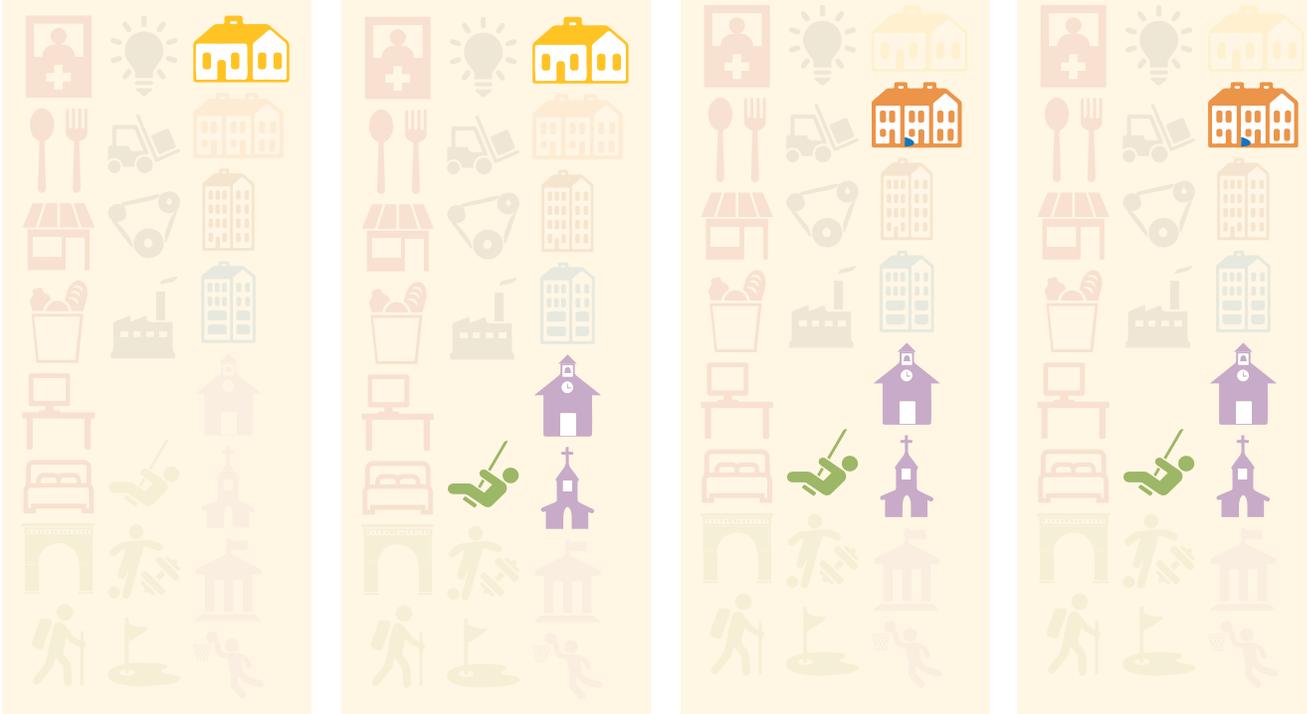
ESTATE

SUBURBAN

TRADITIONAL

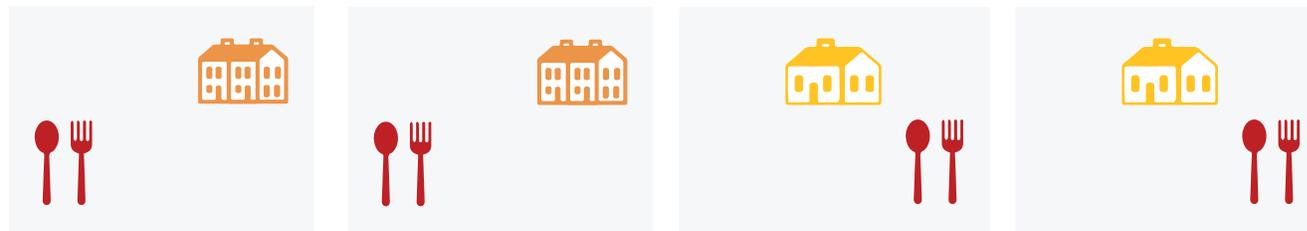
GENERAL

PRIMARY LAND USES

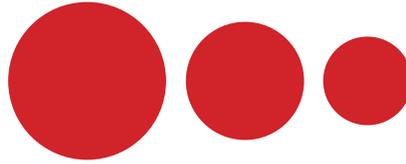


SECONDARY USES

Supporting uses



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PLACE TYPES

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

ACTIVITY CENTERS

DOWNTOWN CENTER

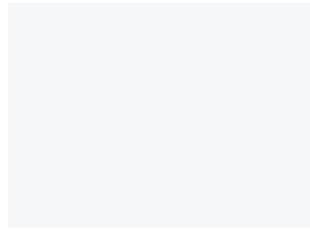
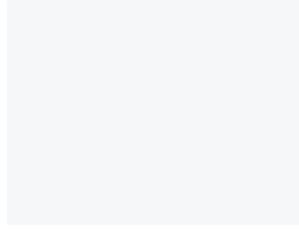
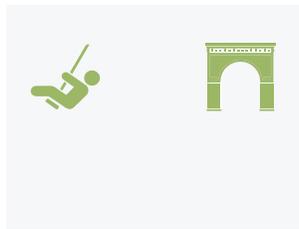
OPEN & SOCIAL SPACE

PRIMARY LAND USES

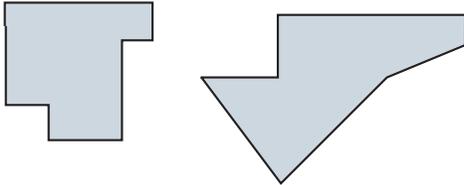


SECONDARY USES

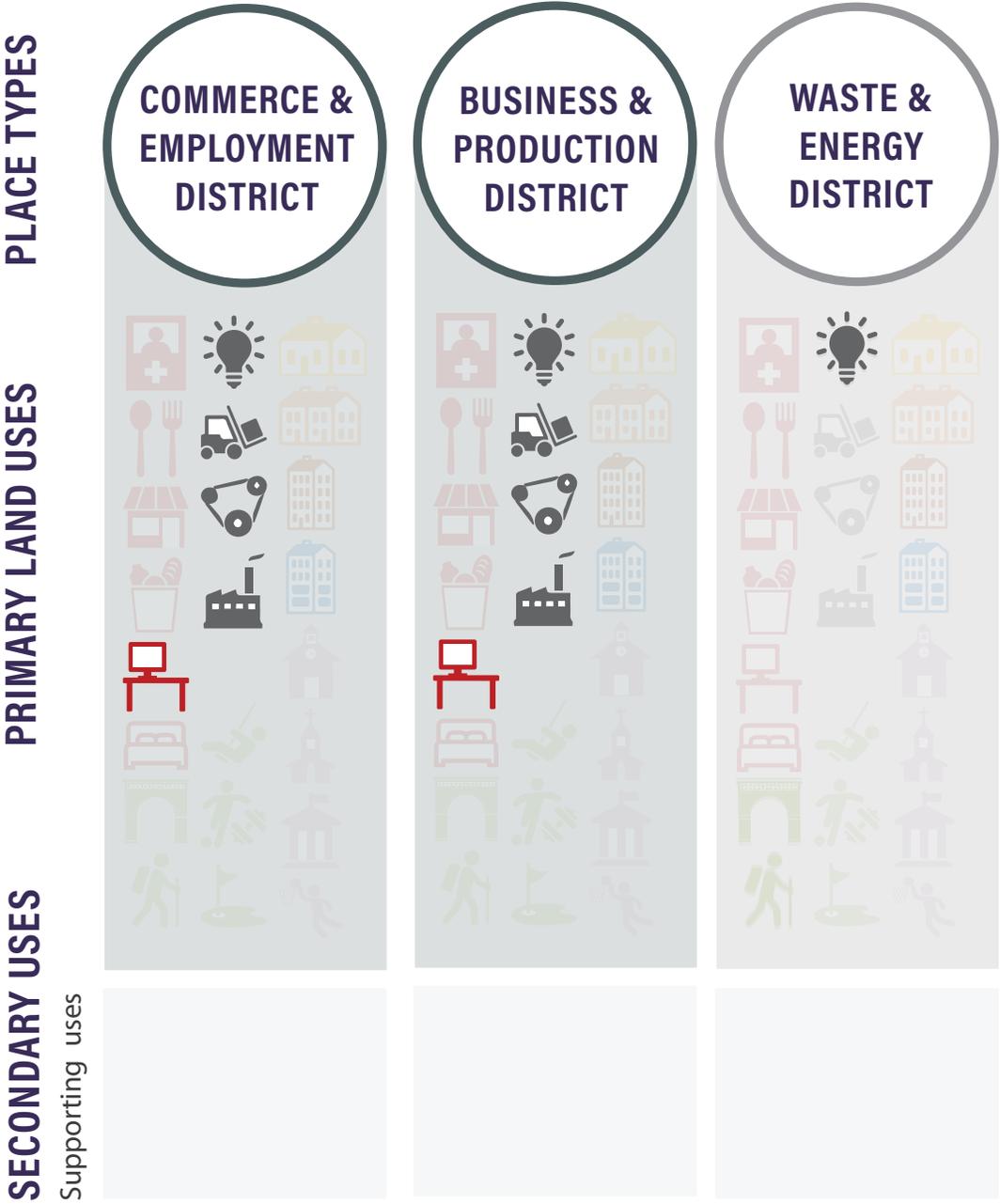
Supporting uses



DISTRICTS



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Future Land Use

In the coming years, redevelopment will be the focus in Hopkins for growth and development, since only a few undeveloped parcels of land remain. Redevelopment plans focus on several key opportunity areas in the city, particularly the Green Line Extension station areas. This includes adjacent areas in Downtown Hopkins and the Blake Road Corridor.

The vision for growth and development in these areas is transformational. Land use will move beyond traditional suburban patterns of segregated uses into the development of vibrant, walkable, mixed use communities. These areas are more than the sum of their parts, combining places to live, work, shop, recreate, and socialize within the context of a **complete, sustainable, and resilient community**. They have a distinct sense of place and support both transit and non-motorized travel through land use patterns that reduce dependence on single occupancy vehicles. They are envisioned as being home to people of all ages and incomes, to accommodate everyone who wants to live in the city. As outlined in this plan, this vision is built on connections between the built, natural, economic, and social environments.

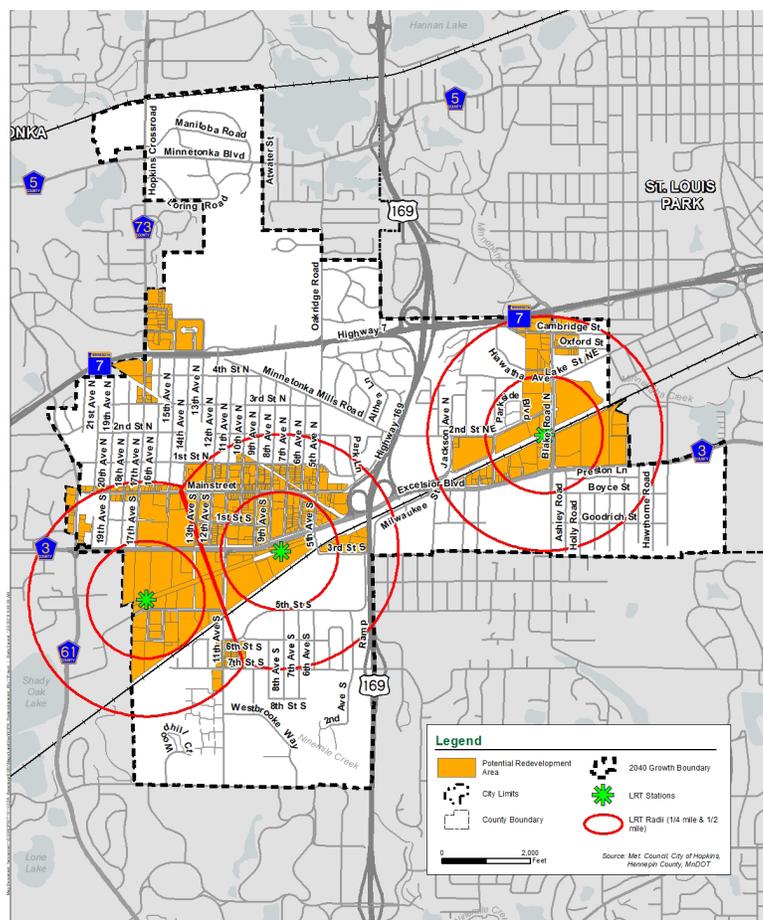
To support this vision of community, it is necessary to move beyond more traditional categories of land uses. The new future land use framework provided here divides the city into a series of mixed use categories that are focused on creating distinct and livable places. The future land use map shows the geographic distribution of these categories, as well as guidance for residential dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Appendix B1 contains additional Future Land Use background information, maps, and calculations.

Growing the City

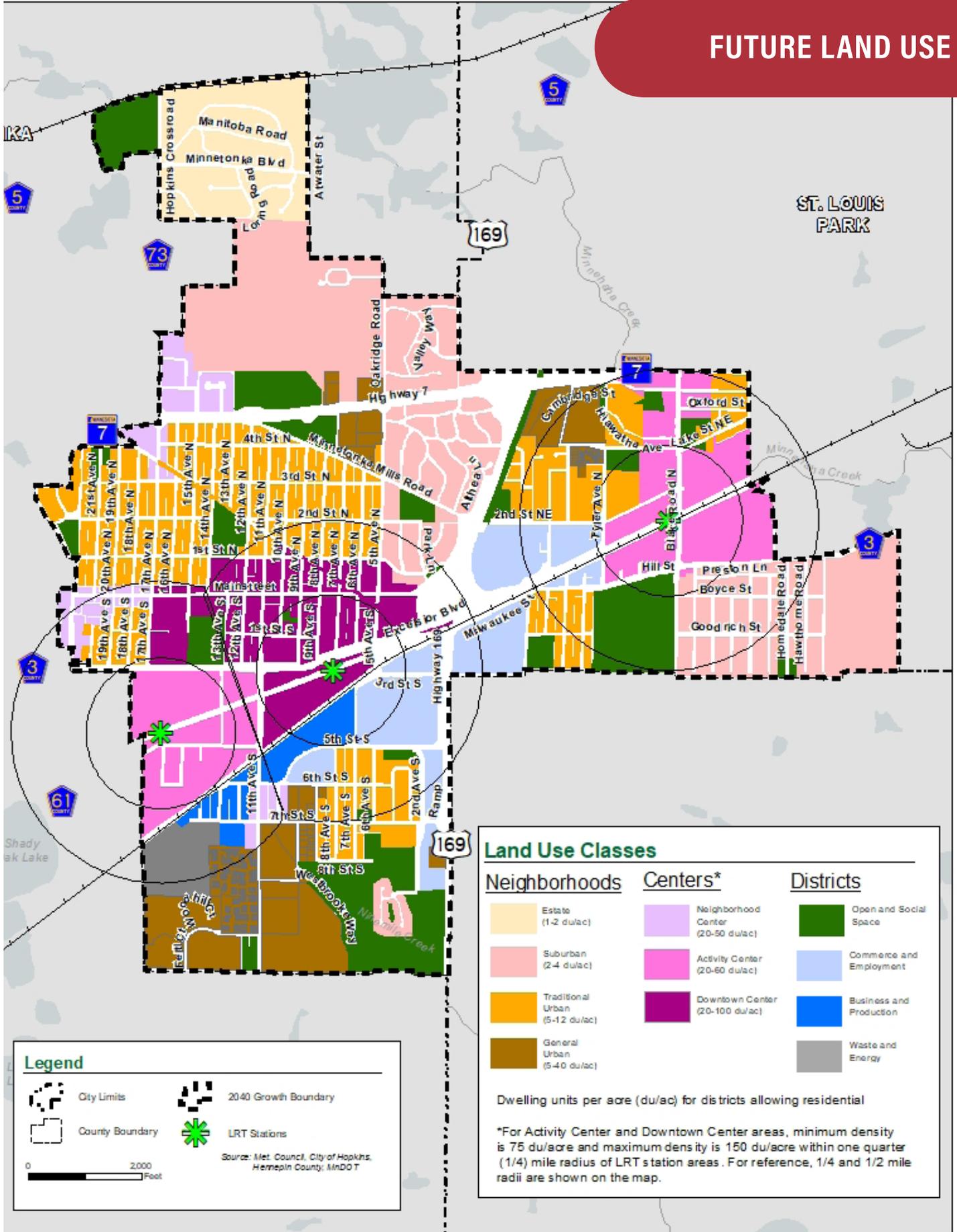
As a developed community, growth in Hopkins will need to be accommodated on existing sites that have been identified for redevelopment. Redevelopment areas were selected based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Guided for higher density infill development
- Located within designated [Green Line Extension](#) transit station areas, or other areas well-served by transit
- In some cases, site is currently underutilized, with lower densities of residents and jobs compared to potential development opportunities

It is not anticipated that the City will seek to acquire and/or redevelop all of these sites. Most development will happen via private sector activity, and many of these sites may remain unchanged for the foreseeable future. This exercise just establishes what areas may have potential to accommodate planned growth. Additional background information, charts, and calculations can be found in Appendix B1.



FUTURE LAND USE

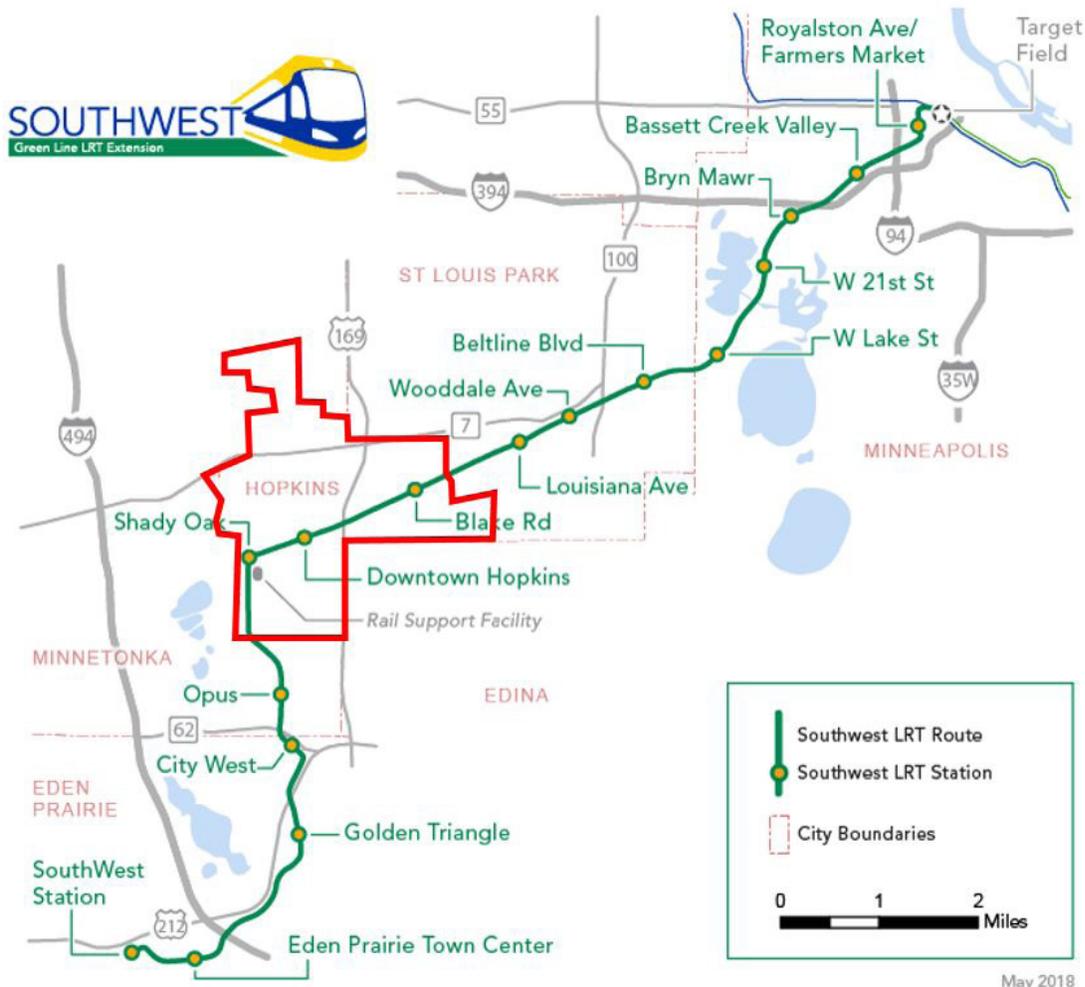


Transit Oriented Development

There are three planned [Green Line Extension](#) transit stations in Hopkins: Downtown Hopkins, Shady Oak, and Blake Road. While all three fall under the Centers typology as shown above, they also have distinctive elements that relate to their role as transit station areas.

Consistent with Metropolitan Council guidance for transit station areas, this plan establishes a minimum 50 units/acre density for mixed use districts within one quarter mile of the three planned transit platforms. Moderately lower (minimum 20 units/acre) densities are guided for the periphery of the station areas. The City will work with Metro Transit and other partners to ensure that lower intensity uses such as surface parking lots are not the long term future for sites adjacent to station platforms, as this will significantly reduce the achievable densities in these areas.

In general, the expectation is that the most intense development will be focused around light rail stations. Market forces may seek contemporary auto oriented development along high capacity roads at the periphery of these areas. High quality design, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and thoughtful use of open space will be important to blend future growth into the existing development pattern. The station areas have specific plans that provide additional planning details for the area within ½ mile of each station, summarized in Appendix B1. Accompanying graphics from station area plans show focus areas for redevelopment immediately around the station platforms. Further information on Transit Oriented Development and station locations is outlined in Appendix B1.



GOALS AND POLICIES

Accommodating Growth

Growth remains an important pursuit of the city. It is necessary to increase the tax base in order to continue to provide high quality services to the city's businesses and residents. While the city is fully built out, the next ten years offer the opportunity to redevelop land more efficiently and to introduce density in select places throughout the city – namely in the designated centers and districts described in this plan.

As the city grows its population and employment, there are opportunities to develop additional pedestrian-scaled commercial and mixed use destinations, particularly around planned transit stations. The city's proposed future land use plan designates land use types of varying scale to be located throughout the city to meet this need. Their resulting urban form is human-scaled and walkable, with an emphasis on creating a distinct sense of place.

Goal 1 Policies:

- Encourage the development of housing and employment in Neighborhoods, Centers, and Districts future land use categories, as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Encourage transit oriented development (development that emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and a broader mix of uses at densities that support transit) in areas with high quality transit service, especially within a quarter mile of light rail stations or high frequency bus routes.
- Plan for appropriate amenities, high quality design, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and open space in high growth areas, particularly in the Neighborhood Center, Activity Center, and Downtown Center future land use categories or other areas in close proximity to transit.
- Plan for the transition of low density housing and jobs areas into moderate to higher density mixed use areas, particularly in the Neighborhood Center, Activity Center, and Downtown Center future land use categories or other areas in close proximity to transit.

Goal 2 Policies:

- Encourage the transition of selected auto-oriented areas into Activity Centers, as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Plan for the introduction of Neighborhood Centers into select locations, as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Promote the development of high density transit oriented mixed use development around planned Green Line Extension light rail stations.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the community, particularly in the Centers future land use categories as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan or other areas in close proximity to transit.

GOAL 1

Welcome growth to the city by directing most of new housing and employment to the city's mixed use centers and employment districts, allowing for the continuation of the scale and character of Hopkins' existing neighborhoods.

GOAL 2

Create and develop mixed use centers and districts throughout the city, to support livability and community vitality.



GOAL 3

Maintain and diversify the city's strong employment base.

Employment and Mixed Use Areas

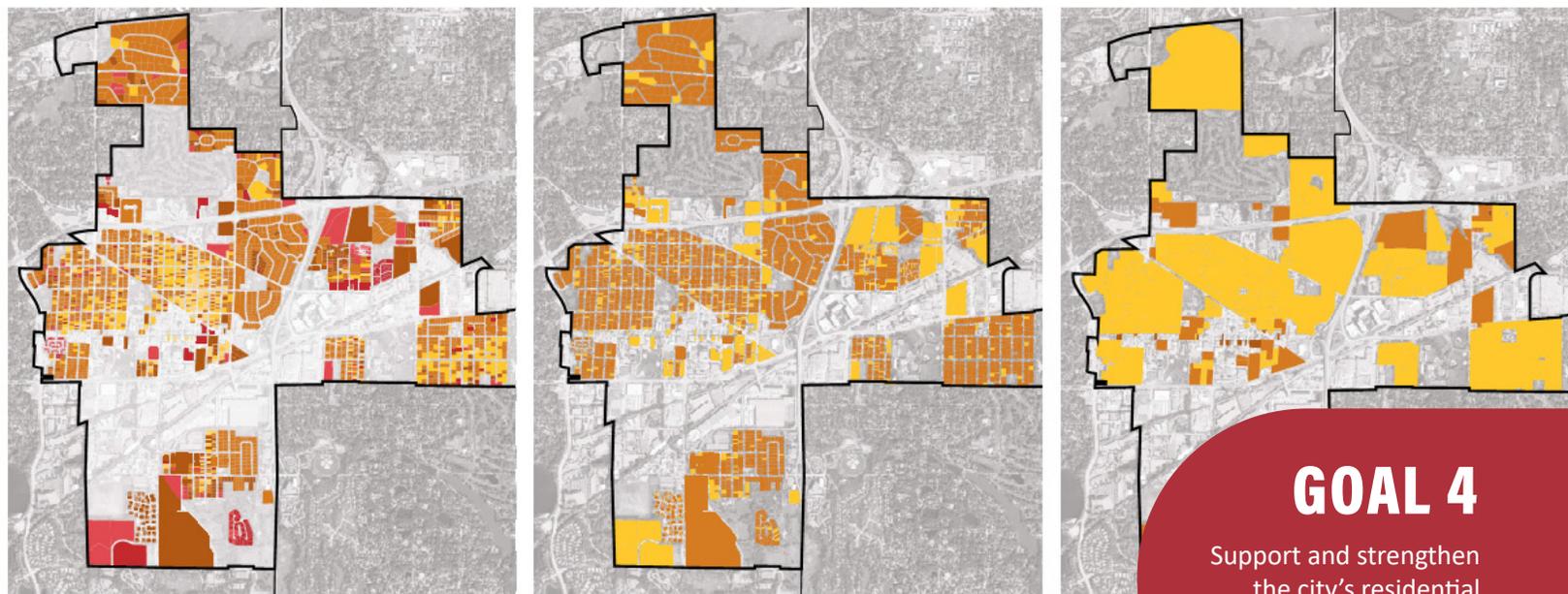
Due to its location along rail lines and highways, Hopkins historically has had a strong employment base, anchored originally by industrial uses. Over the past ten years, the composition of jobs in Hopkins has changed to include more retail and office jobs. This transition will likely continue, with the opportunity for light manufacturing, creative industries, and home-based businesses becoming more prominent throughout the city, not just in the industrial areas.

These uses are guided primarily to the mixed use centers and districts shown on the future land use map. In general, there is support to move to more development intensity in terms of jobs and activity, to make efficient uses of land and encourage transit use and walkability.



Goal 3 Policies:

- Encourage development of living wage jobs, especially in the Center and District future land use categories that parallel the railroad corridor or other areas in close proximity to transit.
- Encourage location and maintenance of arts and creative economy businesses in the Downtown area.
- Support small local businesses, particularly in the Centers future land use categories as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Encourage businesses and office uses with a considerable daytime population to locate in Downtown, to support retail and services businesses on Mainstreet.
- Encourage larger employers that draw employees from across the region to be in the most regionally accessible locations.



GOAL 4

Support and strengthen the city's residential areas with reinvestment and appropriate infill.

Residential Areas

One of the city's strongest assets is its diverse and relatively affordable housing, including a stock of single family homes and a variety of multifamily housing options. Growing the city will include maintaining existing residential areas, as well as adding housing in existing and new mixed use centers, particularly in proximity to transit stations.

Goal 4 Policies:

- Conduct neighborhood level planning to further identify community character and planning priorities to create more complete, sustainable, and resilient neighborhoods.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of the community's detached single family housing stock, especially in the Estate Neighborhood and Suburban Neighborhood future land use categories.
- Consider methods to alleviate development pressure and affordability challenges in low density residential neighborhoods, particularly in the Traditional Neighborhood future land use category.
- Engage the community to explore how to increase the mix of housing types near transit corridors, parks, and the Centers future land use categories as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Promote maintenance and reinvestment of existing residential land uses that have experienced deferred maintenance, deteriorating property values, high vacancy rates, or have reuse opportunities.

Community Design

The character and design of Hopkins are fundamental to its unique identity and sense of community. The City Council Goals and Strategic Plan and many of the City's existing regulations and plans recognize the value of high quality urban design. Urban design pertains to the overall arrangement of buildings, space and infrastructure in the city and to the relationship between private investments and public spaces. Urban design contributes to the overall identity and usability of the city and it determines, in part, how the city is viewed and perceived, and how people interact with it.

As Hopkins continues to grow and redevelop, urban design will play an increasing role in people’s daily lives. It will also have a greater impact on the overall desirability and competitiveness of the city. High quality urban design that reinforces a strong public realm and creates places for healthy public life, will help create a more memorable, positive, efficient, and sustainable built environment.

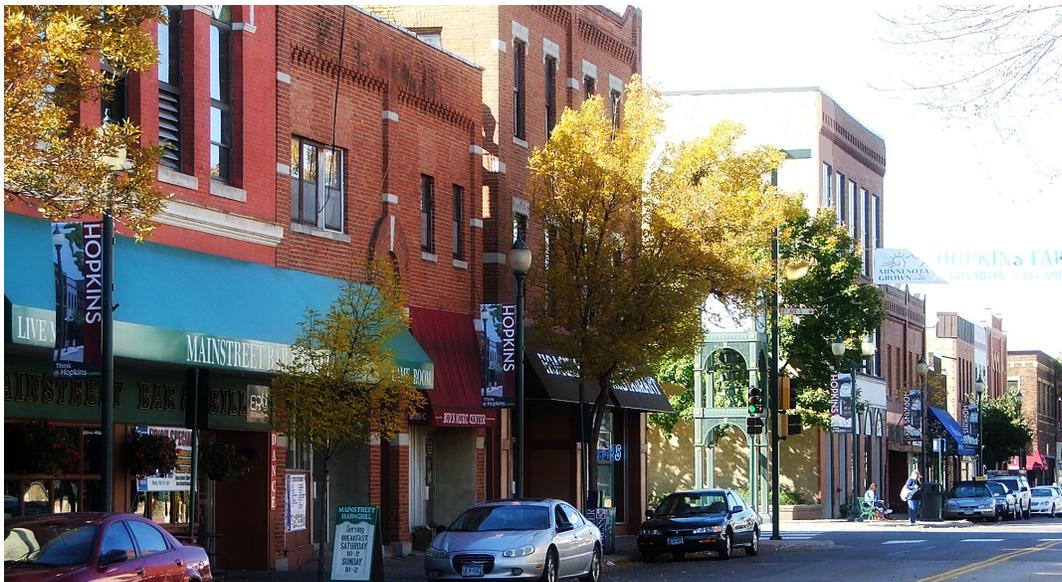
The compact nature of the city heightens the importance of urban design because buildings are closer, spaces are smaller, and people inevitably interact more frequently.

Urban design is also important in Hopkins because it can help ensure predictable edges and transitions between adjacent uses and districts. Due to the compact nature of the city, its density, and the desired proximity of different uses, much attention should be paid to the transition from one area to another – particularly between areas of different use, scale, and intensity. Successful transitions help integrate different uses and makes a city more accessible and desirable.

GOAL 5
Reinforce Hopkins’ unique identity and sense of community through high quality urban design.

Goal 5 Policies:

- Reinforce the distinctive characteristics of Downtown and existing neighborhoods by encouraging developments that are compatible in design and supportive within their context.
- Establish strong identities for emerging Centers and Districts as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan. Their identities should evolve from unique features of the area.
- Design streets, parks, and open spaces to encourage pedestrian activity, public gathering, and art in its various forms.
- Encourage creative placemaking throughout the city, particularly in the Neighborhood Center, Activity Center, and Downtown Center future land use categories as defined and designated in the comprehensive plan.
- Support community events hosted in public parks and facilities to help foster a sense of community and celebrate Hopkins’ distinct character and diversity. (See also Social Environment)
- Collaborate with stakeholders and other government agencies to ensure that Hopkins’ major entry points and corridors reflect its unique identity and sense of community.



Goal 6 Policies:

- Use urban design elements, building massing, land use strategies, and public realm improvements to provide appropriate transitions between developments – particularly those of different scale and intensity.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle continuity and connection between established and developing areas of the city.
- Carefully manage vehicular access and parking to minimize its impact on individual developments, the public realm, and the overall fabric of the community.

GOAL 6

Create appropriate transitions between areas of the city where there are potential incompatibilities in land use or scale.

GOAL 7

Encourage all public and private developments to be well-designed, durable, human-scaled, and pedestrian oriented.

Goal 7 Policies:

- Encourage all new projects to have a positive relationship to the street by orienting main entrances to the front of the property, connecting the front door to the sidewalk, and reducing parking between the building and the street as much as possible.
- Encourage all development projects to be durable and environmentally responsible.
- Encourage all developments to incorporate common spaces (interior or exterior) that help enhance the public realm and sense of community.



