

3.0 LAND USE

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the Land Use section is to establish a framework that considers existing and future land use patterns and growth that complements transportation investments. Two policy goals of the Transportation Plan address land use:

Goal 5 – Economic Development

The transportation system should support and enhance economic development within the region.

Goal 7 – Integration with Land Use Policy Plan

The Transportation Plan should support and complement the adopted land use plans.

Decisions about where growth will occur and on the use of land determine the character of the community, its economic vitality, traffic conditions, and demand for public services and infrastructure. Understanding and strategically managing the relationship between land use and transportation is key to maintaining and improving the quality of life of a city.

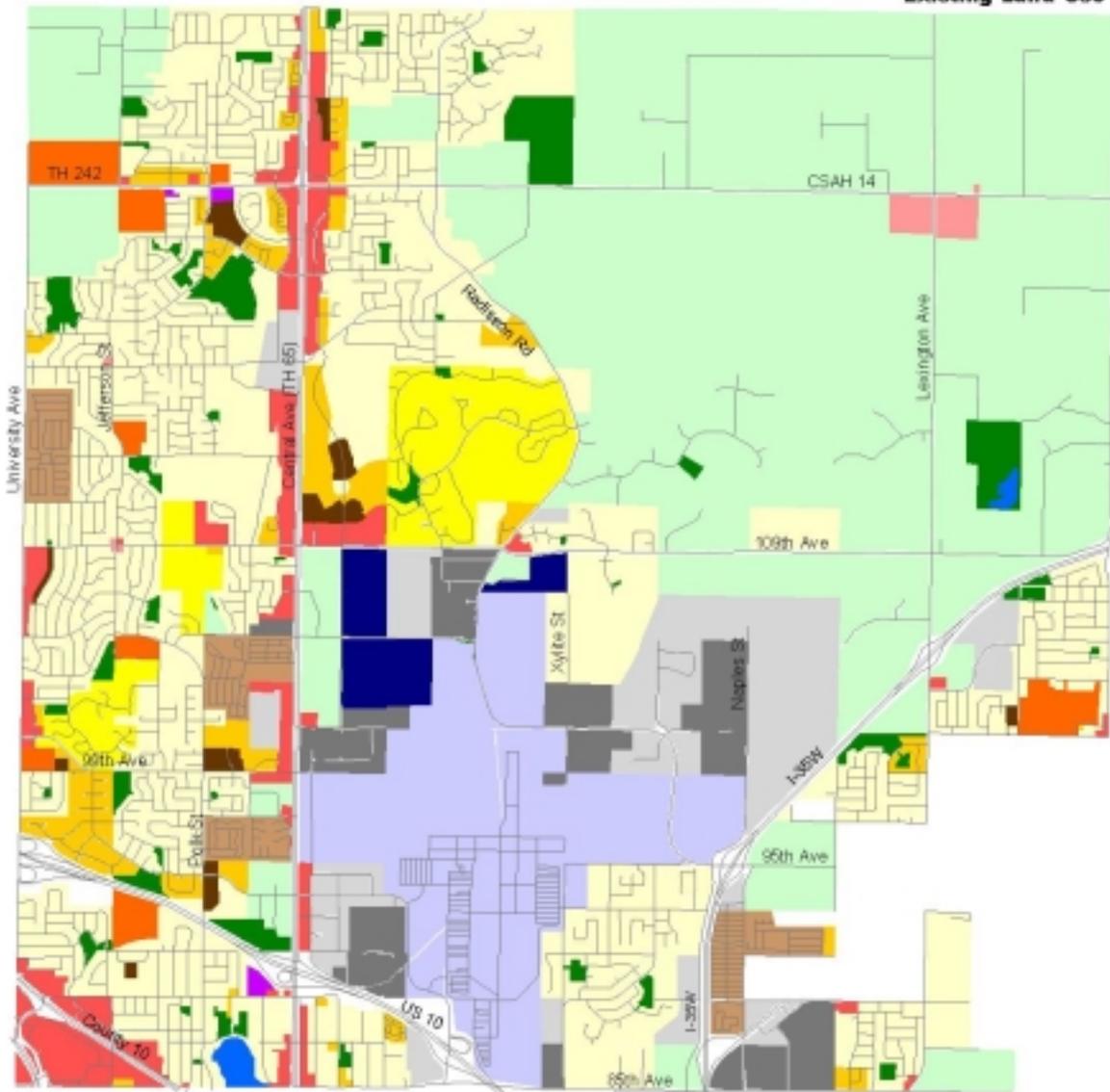
There is an interdependent relationship because transportation services must be available to provide access before land can be developed, but the demand for development also creates a demand for access, which in turn increases requests for improvements to the transportation infrastructure.

Travel demand is related to land use type and density of development. Trip making patterns, volumes, and modal distributions are largely a function of the location and use of land. Growth in population and employment influence travel patterns, and in turn the level of accessibility provided by the transportation system can influence population and job locations. Avoiding future congestion, therefore, requires careful attention to zoning and land use plans, in coordination with the strategic provision of transportation services.

3.2 Existing Land Use

A detailed Land Use and Zoning Plan is contained within the City of Blaine's Comprehensive Plan (June 2000). The Comprehensive Plan guides land use and zoning actions as Blaine develops and reviews future development activity. The Land Use Plan sets the general guidelines for uses and evaluating development proposals, whereas zoning is the legal means used by the City Council to implement the projected land use plan. Zoning situates land uses in the form of districts in relation to one another, defines the land uses that may be used in each district, provides adequate space for each development as well as ensuring that uses can be properly serviced by government.

**Figure 3.1
Existing Land Use**



PARSONS

Blaine Transportation Plan

The City of Blaine encompasses approximately 21,890 acres. Figure 3.1 shows the existing land uses within the city in the year 2000. The amount of land classified by each land use type is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Existing Land Uses

Land Use Type Category	Land Uses	
	Acreage	Distribution
Rural Residential	7150	36.6%
Mobile Home Residential	400	2.0%
Low/Medium Density Residential	6500	33.2%
High Density Residential	100	0.5%
Commercial/Office	700	3.6%
Industrial	1850	9.5%
Public	250	1.3%
Park	550	2.8%
Airport	1700	8.7%
Lake	50	0.3%
School	300	1.5%
TOTAL	19,550	100%

*Total acres for the entire city of Blaine is 21,890. Total acreage discrepancies are due to road acres not included in totals.

The predominant land use by acreage is residential with significant commercial/office and industrial uses. The Anoka County-Blaine Airport also occupies a significant percentage of land within the City.

Residential – The existing residential development is fairly equally divided between rural and low/medium density residential. Rural residential properties do not have city sewer and water connections.

Commercial/Office and Industrial Land Uses – Commercial/office and industrial land uses comprise approximately 13% of the City’s total area. The distribution pattern of commercial parcels is along principal arterials or linear strips. Smaller groups of retail and commercial businesses are located in strip malls or along arterials as a buffer for residential land uses.

Blaine has eleven areas of industrial concentrations and is home to nearly 1,300 businesses, including Aveda Corporation, Bermo, Inc., Dayton Rogers Manufacturing Company and the Northtown Shopping Mall. A recent City land inventory indicates that there are approximately 1,631 acres of land available for industrial and commercial development.

Aviation - Land designated for aviation use is occupied by the Blaine-Anoka County airport, and comprises nearly three square miles, or 1,900 acres. The airport is one of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area's busiest reliever airports.

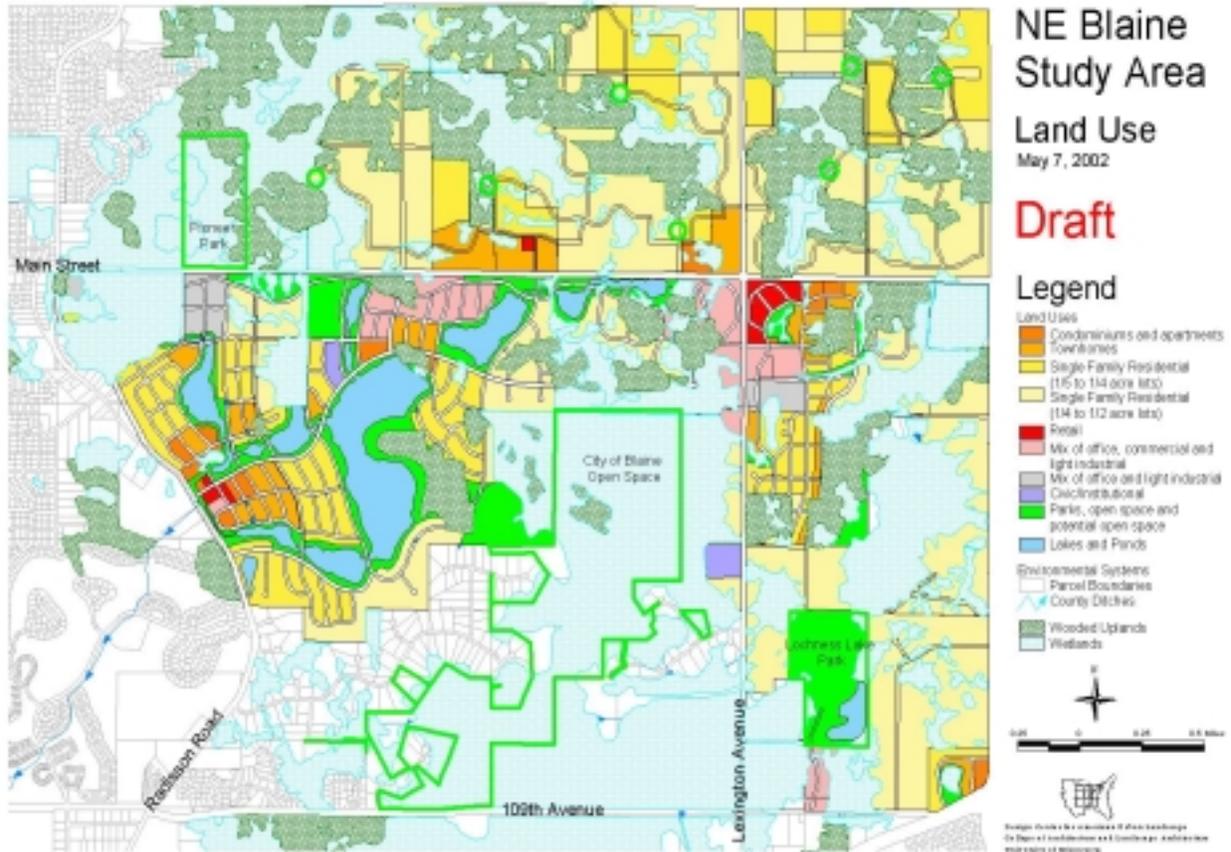
3.3 Future Land Use Plan

Since the early 1970's the population of the City has more than doubled from 20,573 in year 1970 to 45,124 in year 2000. The growth has been accompanied by changes in the land use patterns and transportation needs of the City.

The City of Blaine currently anticipates that it will grow to approximately 76,000 residents and 33,000 households by the year 2025. Retail employment is expected to grow from 5,000 in 2000 to 13,700 in 2025 while non-retail employment is anticipated to nearly double from 10,900 to 20,500.

Much of these increases will be accommodated in the developing northern and eastern areas of the City. Most of this development is outside of the existing Municipal Urban Service Area (MUSA) line and is classified as rural residential. In April 2000, the Metropolitan Council approved the City of Blaine's Comprehensive Plan, contingent on a citizen-based planning process for the Northeast Area that addresses livable community and smart growth planning goals for the region. The 5,000-acre Northeast Area is the subject of a long range planning study currently underway by the Design Center for the American Urban Landscape at the University of Minnesota and is scheduled to conclude in fall 2002. Figure 3.2 shows a land use plan for the Northeast Area as prepared by the Design Center for the American Urban Landscape.

Figure 3.2: Northeast Study Area



The full build-out projection and associated land uses for the study area as defined by the Design Center are:

- 64% Residential (10,990 units)
- 6% Retail/Office/Commercial/Light Industrial
- 10% Open Space
- 16% Wetlands
- 5% Open Water
- <1% Civic/Institutional

Based on the residential units assumed for the study area concept plan, potentially 25,000 new residents could live in the Northeast area.

Opportunities presented by the future development of the Northeast area are:

- Preservation of open space and natural amenities by clustering development and a mix of land uses types.
- Creation of a street network with multi-purpose roadways that support all modes of transportation while complementing the prevailing land use.
- Creation of transit-supportive land uses that are in vicinity of transit stops/stations.

The Design Center’s plan for the Northeast Area was incorporated into Blaine’s future land use plan as defined in the most recent edition of the Comprehensive Plan. The resulting long range (year 2025) land use plan for the City of Blaine is shown in Figure 3.3.

Table 3.2 shows a comparison between existing and future land uses.

Table 3.2: Comparison of Existing and Future Land Uses

	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use	
Land Use Category	Acreage	Acreage	Percent Change
Rural Residential	7150	0	-100%
Mobile Home Residential	400	400	0%
Low/Medium Density Residential	6500	12350	90%
High Density Residential	100	100	0%
Mixed Commercial/Office	700	1750	150%
Industrial	1850	1850	0%
Public	250	300	20%
Park	550	550	0%
Airport	1700	1700	0%
Lake	50	250	400%
School	300	300	0%
TOTAL	19,550	19,550	

*Total acres for the entire city of Blaine is 21,890. Total acreage discrepancies are due to road acres not included in totals. Northeast neighborhood conceptual land use acres devised by U of M, Design Center has been incorporated into future acreage totals.

Notable differences between the existing and future mix of land use classifications are:

- The gradual conversion of all Rural Residential with associated increase in low/medium density residential.
- Increase in Commercial and Office uses.
- More lakes and ponds.

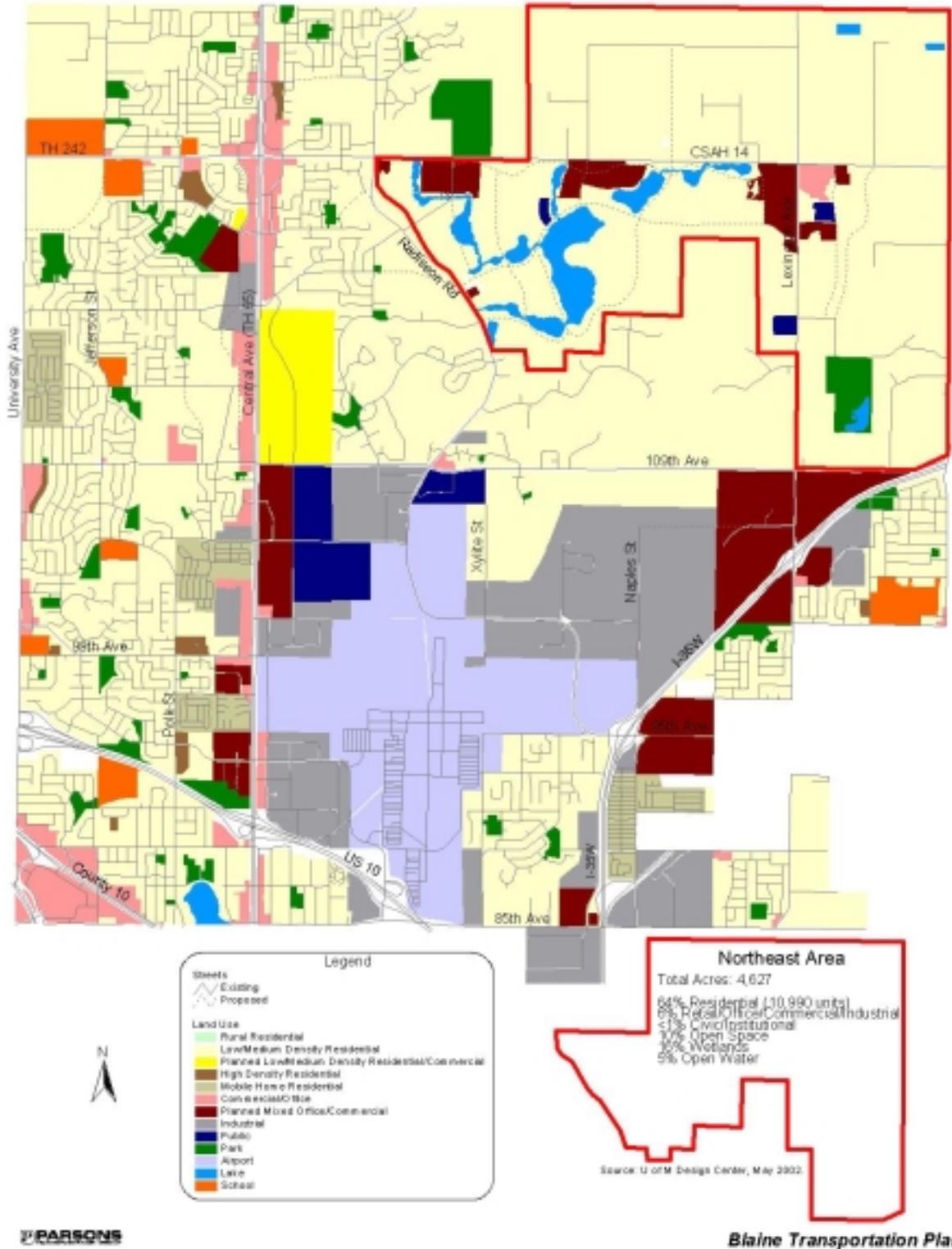
Some growth characteristics are:

- The twenty-five year projections indicate a greater growth rate in employment than population levels, although both rates are above Metro regional averages. By year 2025 there is a 69% increase in the resident population, or a 2% per annum growth rate. Over the same time period employment is projected to increase 114%, or a 3% per annum growth rate.
- Over a twenty-five year period there is no loss of population in the neighborhoods. The same neighborhoods comprise the majority of the City's resident population. Central Avenue, Pioneer, West Central, Cloverleaf, and Northtown neighborhoods comprise 40% of year 2025 population level. The North Central and Central area neighborhoods comprise 11% of total population. Compared to year 2000 population levels, this group of neighborhoods share of the City's overall population levels is less.

Full build-out of the Northeast Area will have the following results:

- Substantial new population growth is projected in the Northeast Area.
 - West Meadows and the area north of CSAH 14 will experience nearly 4,500 additional residents and comprise 23% of the City's total population by year 2025.
 - The area east of Lexington Avenue will add 8,411 new residents by 2025.
- Substantial new employment growth is also projected to occur.
 - West Meadows and the area north of CSAH 14 will generate nearly 3,722 additional jobs.
 - East of Lexington Avenue will generate 970 additional jobs.
 - The Pioneer area will generate 2,368 additional jobs.

**Figure 3.3
Future Land Use Plan**



PARSONS

3.4 Issues and Opportunities

There are a number of challenges and opportunities related to the interplay of land use, the location of growth, and transportation needs. The Transportation Committee has identified the following major issues:

Trunk Highway 65

As one of the major transportation corridors within the City of Blaine, TH 65 serves as a major regional commuting corridor and transportation route for Blaine residents and employees. The corridor contains a broad mix of land uses including single and multi-family residential, manufactured home communities, commercial properties, and light industry.

Opportunities along the corridor pertain to:

- Redevelopment of underutilized property and corners will provide opportunities for other types of development along TH 65. Infill developments and the redevelopment of underutilized properties will be critical to the strengthening of the corridor's economic vitality and may provide opportunities to improve the corridors transportation service levels.
- Changes in land use to reduce commercial properties along TH 65 may result in some reduction of trips along the corridor, however, this must be evaluated for the potential effect on the tax base. Industrial uses may also be appropriate in the TH 65 corridor to reduce trip generation rates.
- The addition of medium to high density residential properties may enhance the potential for transit within the TH 65 corridor.

Transit Supportive Land Uses

The pattern of development has a major impact on the type of transit service offered and its location. Such patterns as Transit Oriented Development (TOD) have proven effective. Transit service works best when tailored to the types of land use and the density of population, employment and commercial development in the areas it serves. Density of development affects the extent to which transit is used.

Generally, medium to high densities of at least 10 units per acre are necessary to support transit service with headways less than 30 minutes. Typical densities in Blaine are currently from four to seven units per acre. As the City develops at higher densities, opportunities for enhanced transit service may be realized. TOD strategies may accelerate implementation of transit service.

Establishing higher densities of mixed-use development supports the potential for extending transit service into areas to link multiple residential, commercial, and employment destinations. Discussion and recommendations on enhanced transit service and related transit oriented development (TOD) can be found in Section 6 of this Transportation Plan.

3.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations facilitate coordinated land use and transportation planning actions.

- The City of Blaine should promote integrated and coordinated local land use and transportation planning to ensure that adequate multi-modal transportation facilities are provided, especially in the developing Northeast Area.
- The City of Blaine should support land uses that reduce vehicular trip generation while enhancing opportunities for transit and non-motorized travel.
- The City should support regional efforts that promote higher densities and mixed uses near major transit centers and corridors.