PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall at 540 West Hills Circle
Roll Call: Meier, Springer-Gasner, Rooks, Eickhoff, Wilson, Peake, Effertz

1. **Planning Commission Agenda**
   1.a. Planning Commission Agenda - September 24, 2024
2. **Roll Call: Meier, Springer-Gasner, Rooks, Eickhoff, Wilson, Peake, Effertz**
3. **Approval of Last Meeting Minutes**
   3.a. Planning Commission Minutes - August 27, 2024
4. **Public Hearings**
   4.a. Imagine Owatonna 2050 Comprehensive Plan
      4.a.1. Draft Comprehensive Plan (Link to view online)
      4.a.2. Owatonna Comp Plan Process (Memo)
      4.a.3. Owatonna PC Open House Summary
5. **Downtown Parking Committee Requests**
6. **Other Business**
   6.a. Updates on Previous Items
7. **Next Meeting - October 8, 2024**
8. **Adjournment**

Owatonna Planning Commission Agenda

Tuesday, August 27, 2024
5:30 PM
Charles S. Crandall Center at West Hills*

Roll Call: Meier, Springer-Gasner, Rooks, Eickhoff, Wilson, Peake, Effertz

1. Approve minutes of the September 24, 2024 meeting

2. Public Hearings

    A. Imagine Owatonna 2050 Comprehensive Plan

3. Downtown Parking Committee Requests

    A. None

4. Other Business

    A. Updates on Previous Items

5. Next Meeting – October 8, 2024

6. Adjourn

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR AUGUST 13, 2024

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. in the Crandall Center – Chambers with Chairperson Kelly Rooks conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Mark Meier, Kelly Rooks, Rachel Springer-Gasner, John Eickhoff, Nick Peake, and Mark Wilson. Commissioner Dave Effertz was absent. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke, Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon, and Senior Administrative Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Meier to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 13, 2024. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Vine Street Parking Lot – Hour Designation was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) He said the City is currently out to bid on the Vine Street Parking Lot. Overall, they will be reconstructing the parking lot, adding stormwater, adding lighting, adding landscaping similar to Cedar Avenue, as well as a trail along Vine Street with parking on the street. When the new lot is constructed, there will be 160 parking stalls as well as 15 parallel stalls on Vine Street, which is a 25 stall increase in this area. At this time, staff is recommending two different designations for this parking lot. They are recommending two hours for the east half of the parking lot and 24 hours for the west half. It will keep it roughly the same as what is there now, but adding stalls. The parallel parking stalls will stay the same designation—two hours on the street. One of the concerns has been allowing for maintenance. Generally, 24 hour lots have no parking one night a week with no parking from 2 to 6 am. The City is recommending that they post when they are clearing the lot, but are trying to make it more user friendly for this lot. The two-hour parking is no parking any night, so that will be left as is. The lights will be similar to what is on Cedar Avenue. There will be a greenway along the west side US Bank that will be a public access to Broadway Street. Staff is recommending these changes become effective post construction. Eickhoff asked if the alleyway next to US Bank will have lighting. Kruschke said yes, there will be two lights. Eickhoff asked if there would be grass along the narrow strip between the trail and the street. Kruschke said the trail will be right behind the curb. Eickhoff said he would like wider stalls but noted that it was probably too late. He asked if they were adding any EV charging stations. Kruschke said they are not physically constructing any EV stations with this, but the conduit is being laid so they can easily install it if they want to. Eickhoff asked how they would prevent someone parking in the 24-hour lot indefinitely and asked if there were any restrictions on how long someone could park there. Kruschke said that they will mark cars. There are ramifications through the police department—they are able to ticket and tow as needed. Eickhoff asked how they would prevent people who live across the street from parking in those stalls overnight. Kruschke said that this is a public parking lot and there is a need for a 24-hour parking lot in this area. There are a lot of apartment units on Broadway and Bridge Street. Those residents use this lot and we need to accommodate them. We can't regulate who parks there. It's a public lot, so first come, first served. If it becomes an issue, it's something they can look at. At this point, the City is not charging for any public parking. Wilson questioned the maintenance in the 24 hour lots and said that typically that one night a week is when they catch the people who park there multiple days. Kruschke said they're not recommending one night a week on this lot, but they will be marking tires and checking that daily. We're relying on enforcement. Springer-Gasner recommended changing two-hour to four-hour. There are a lot of businesses that have clientele who use the current four-hour lot. Peake said that was his question as well. What is the justification for going to two-hour? Kruschke said he doesn't have a strong opinion either way but recommended the two hour as that is what the majority was. Springer-Gasner said if we went with four-hour, that will make the downtown businesses happier. When you go over four hours, that changes the scope as employees might park there all day long. Rooks said they've talked in the past how they want people to spend time downtown. Two hours is not a lot of time, so she likes the four-hour change to allow

people to spend more time downtown. Springer-Gasner said they could keep some two-hour stalls. Kruschke said they would prefer just two designations in the entire lot because they want less signage overall. A motion was made by Springer-Gasner and seconded by Peake to recommend City Council approval to amend the Vine Street parking lot designation to a four-hour designation on the east half of the lot and a 24-hour designation on the west half of the lot noting that the Street Department will notify when they are shutting the lot down for maintenance. Eickhoff clarified that the street parking would remain at two hours. Kruschke said that was correct—the time limit for street parking would not be changing with this request. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Review was presented by Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon. (Refer to report on file.) She said that we have reached an important milestone in the Comprehensive Plan process—not only is up for draft comment, but it includes an implementation chapter. This is the back bookend to the Comprehensive Plan. The front bookend is the vision and the back bookend is the roadmap of how to reach the vision. The implementation chapter includes all of the strategies and all of the chapters. They have charted them and assigned them a timeline, a priority, and an owner, which is all importation information for staff and commissions. Staff has held numerous meetings with Department Heads to help appropriately prioritize and assign owners so that staff is confident and comfortable with the level of study that has been applied to each strategy. The timelines are short-term (5 years), medium-term (5-10 years), long-term (10+ years), and ongoing. They have also assigned priorities: high, medium, and low. The implementation matrix will help staff and board support going forward. An annual review by the Planning Commission is the most typical way to check in on the Comprehensive Plan. That review is important because it helps us assess our needs; Comprehensive Plans can be amended and should be updated on a regular basis. She said if it's fair to summarize the next five years, it will look like ordinance changes, infill development, and planning for node creations (focus areas). There are some environmental changes and practices. The Draft Comprehensive Plan is open for public comment. People can email comments to Greg or submit them online at www.owatonna.gov/imagine2050. There will be an open house on September 24 from 3:30 – 5:15 pm in the Council Chambers, before the Planning Commission meeting where they will be making a recommendation to City Council. She asked the Commissioners for their reactions. Eickhoff said he really likes it. It will be a lot of work, but he likes that it keeps people accountable. He asked about the budget. Zidon said often times Comprehensive Plans don't account for budget. Kruschke said they have put in a budget request for the ordinance amendment next year. Department Heads will take this into account. This helps with setting priorities. We've never really had anything like this before. Some are things we're already doing, some of it is brand new. Some of these things open up grant funding opportunities as well. Zidon said that a painless way to do this is to assign $, $$, or $$$. We might not have the ability to fund the project in a five-year time frame. It might mean we can't hire a consultant for a project. Kruschke said that there are some immediate goals. He said he wanted to introduce this framework to them today. Springer-Gasner said she likes it. It's thorough and easy to follow. Rooks asked how the Planning Commission would be involved. Zidon said that they could have an annual report, or quarterly report. Folks could get creative with a dashboard. It can be really creative. She asked the Commissioners to think about what would be useful for them to stay involved and keep tracking progress. Kruschke said he would envision them easing into it. We'll probably have more of an annual meeting in the April / May timeline. He's not expecting the Planning Commission to be volunteering eight hours a week on this. They can help hold staff accountable. Some of it will take partnerships and City Council will have to be on board as well. We can iron it out going forward. Zidon said it's important to take time to celebrate the milestone—we're close to the end. Eickhoff asked how the online input would be communicated. Kruschke said that there will be an engagement summary at the September 24 Planning Commission meeting. We have time to look at the comments. As we go through this process, a member will change X in the plan to a Y, and the Commission will vote on it. We'll have a public hearing that night as well. If there are certain items that you wish to be

changed, we'll go through that. He recommended going through the document prior to the meeting. It's not a lot of new information. He said that the Draft Comprehensive Plan has been sent to the Commissioners digitally, but if they would like a printed copy, let staff know and we will take care of that.

Final Plat of Oak Hill Addition, which is a 2.05± acre tract of land requested to be rezoned PUD by Jolayne Mohs / Owatonna Hope Center Inc. and located at 134 Southview Street SW, was presented by Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke. (Refer to report on file.) A motion was made by Meier and seconded by Springer-Gasner to recommend City Council approval of the Final Plat of Oak Hill Addition with the following conditions:

1) The final plat shall be recorded within 60 days of the approval.
2) The title opinion shall be approved by the City Attorney prior to recording of the final plat.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Kruschke said that City Council approved both of the items at the last meeting.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 10. There are currently no items for that meeting, so that may be cancelled. The September 24 meeting is scheduled for the public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan with an Open House run by Stantec before the meeting (3:30 to 5:15 p.m. with a presentation by Stantec at 4:00 p.m.). Commissioners are not expected to be at the entire Open House, but are welcome to come if they are able and willing. Stantec will be running the open house and staff will be available.

Kruschke said that, unfortunately for us, Planning Specialist Ashley Zidon has discovered her dream job and will be leaving us next week. He thanked her for all of her work on the Comprehensive Plan, saying that it would not have been possible to make it to this point without her.

A motion was made by Meier to adjourn and seconded by Meier at 6:08 p.m. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

_____

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager

733 Marquette Avenue, Suite 1000, Minneapolis, MN 55402

MEMORANDUM

TO: Owatonna Planning Commission
FROM: Phil Carlson, AICP, Senior Planner, Stantec
DATE: September 24, 2024
RE: Comprehensive Plan Process – Public Hearing & Recommendation

INTRODUCTION

The Planning Commission has been involved in the *Imagine Owatonna 2050 Comprehensive Plan* process since we started on the plan in the summer of 2023. The Plan is now ready for final review and adoption and the Planning Commission has an important role, outlined in Minnesota statutes – see excerpt at the end of this memo (most communities call their planning body the planning commission, but the official term in statute is "planning agency").

Prior to this Planning Commission meeting there will have been another open house for the community to review key features of the Plan, hear a brief presentation, ask questions, and review complete copies of the Plan.

PROCESS

The Planning Commission could call on City staff or myself to make a few brief introductory remarks about the Plan before opening the public hearing. The hearing could be opened and comments taken from those in attendance. When all have had a chance to speak the hearing should be closed and the Commission can deliberate. You may discuss among yourselves and ask questions of City staff or myself. The Chair could then ask for a motion that might include the following:

> *I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council adoption of the Imagine Owatonna 2050 Comprehensive Plan dated August 2024.*

If there are specific revisions or additions that the Commission wishes to make to the Plan those should be included in the motion.

Comprehensive Plan Process – Public Hearing & Recommendation

MINNESOTA STATUES

462.355 ADOPT, AMEND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

. . .

Subd. 2.**Procedure to adopt, amend.**

The planning agency may, unless otherwise provided by charter or ordinance consistent with the municipal charter, recommend to the governing body the adoption and amendment from time to time of a comprehensive municipal plan. The plan may be prepared and adopted in sections, each of which relates to a major subject of the plan or to a major geographical section of the municipality. The governing body may propose the comprehensive municipal plan and amendments to it by resolution submitted to the planning agency. Before adopting the comprehensive municipal plan or any section or amendment of the plan, the planning agency shall hold at least one public hearing thereon. A notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be published once in the official newspaper of the municipality at least ten days before the day of the hearing.

IMAGINE OWATONNA

2050 Comprehensive Plan

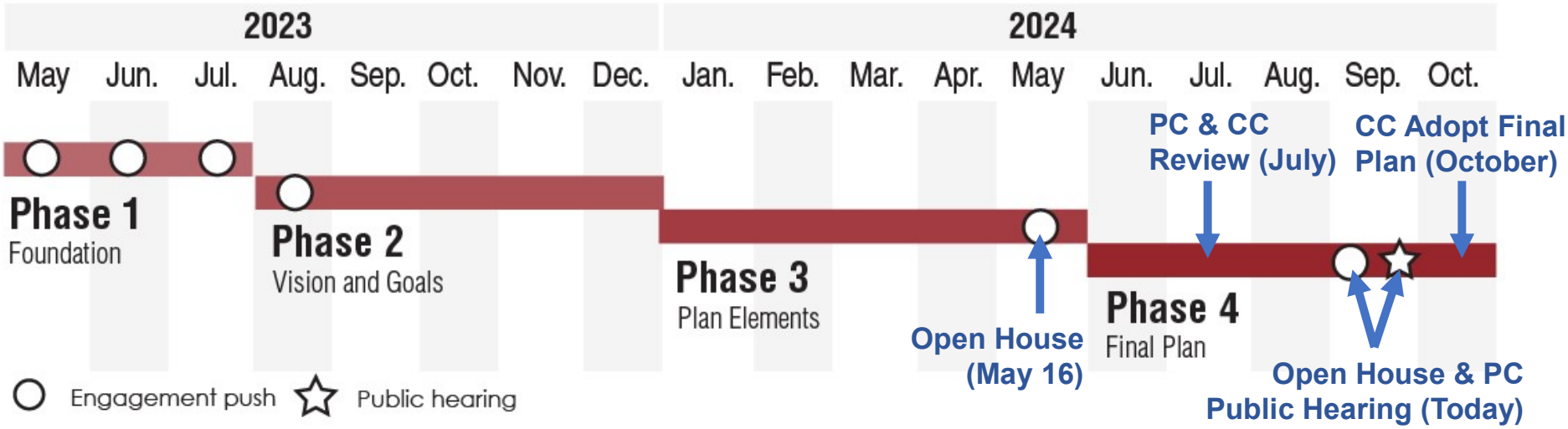
Open House &
Planning Commission Public Hearing
September 24, 2024

- Comp Plan Process/Schedule
- Vison & Guiding Values
- Engagement Summary
- Key Themes
- Plan Elements
- Next Steps

IMAGINE OWATONNA

2050 Comprehensive Plan

- Phase 1: Foundation/Background Report Complete
- Phase 2: Engagement/Focus Groups + Vision & Goals
- Phase 3: Prepare Plan Elements/ Chapters
- Phase 4: Final Plan (June-October 2024)



Vision for 2050

Owatonna is strategically located at the crossroads of I-35 and US 14 with opportunities for all. Residents and businesses thrive, with easy access to work, shopping, high quality education, and recreation. We are better together, welcoming and diverse, creating a quality of life unparalleled in Southern Minnesota.

Guiding Values

- Owatonna strives to be a community with opportunity for all to live happy, healthy, successful lives
- Owatonna is both traditional and progressive, keeping its historic strengths and embracing new opportunities
- Our city is innovative and supportive of its residents and businesses, helping all to succeed in Owatonna
- Owatonna residents are determined and passionate about the city as a place to live, work and play
- Owatonna will utilize its resources efficiently and effectively

Imagine Owatonna: 2050 Comprehensive Plan

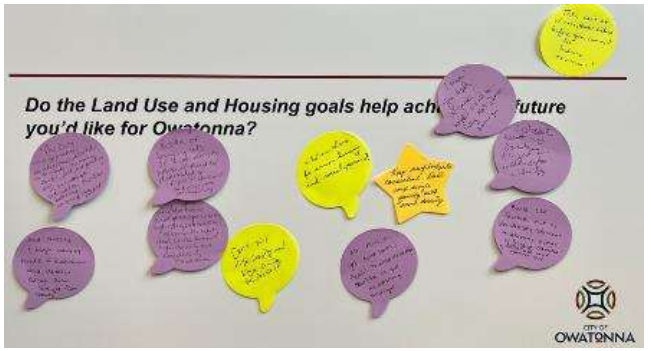
Engagement Summary

Focus Groups
- High School students
- Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Community
- Somali Community
- Seniors
- Park Board
- Non-Profits
- Alternative Learning Center

Community-wide
- Downtown Thursday
- Steele County Fair

May 16 Open House
- 50+ attendees
- Maps, boards, presentation
- Written comments
- Written surveys
- Six-word stories
- Q/A

Online: May-September 2024
- 88 survey responses

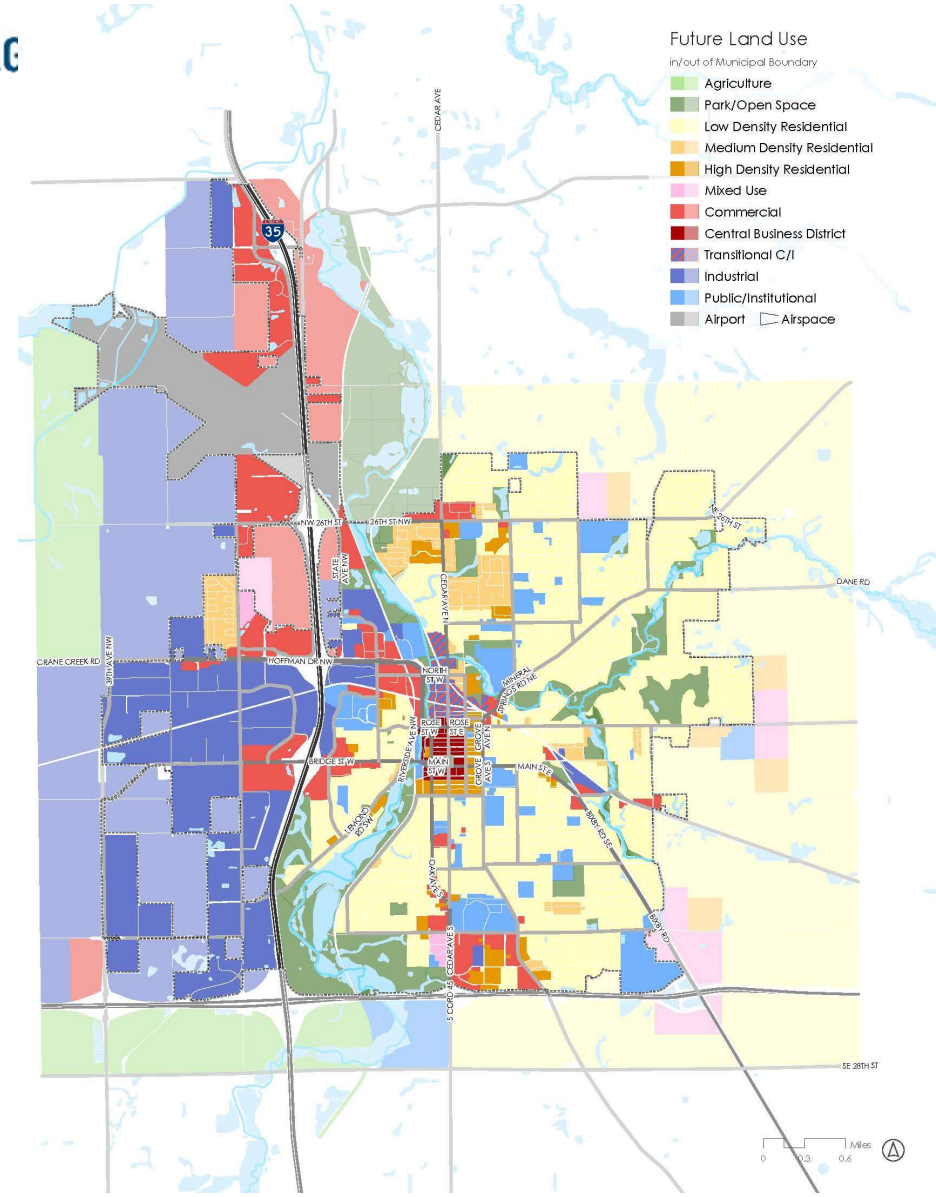


Key Themes

Downtown
Housing
Economic Development
Transportation
Parks and Trails

Land Use

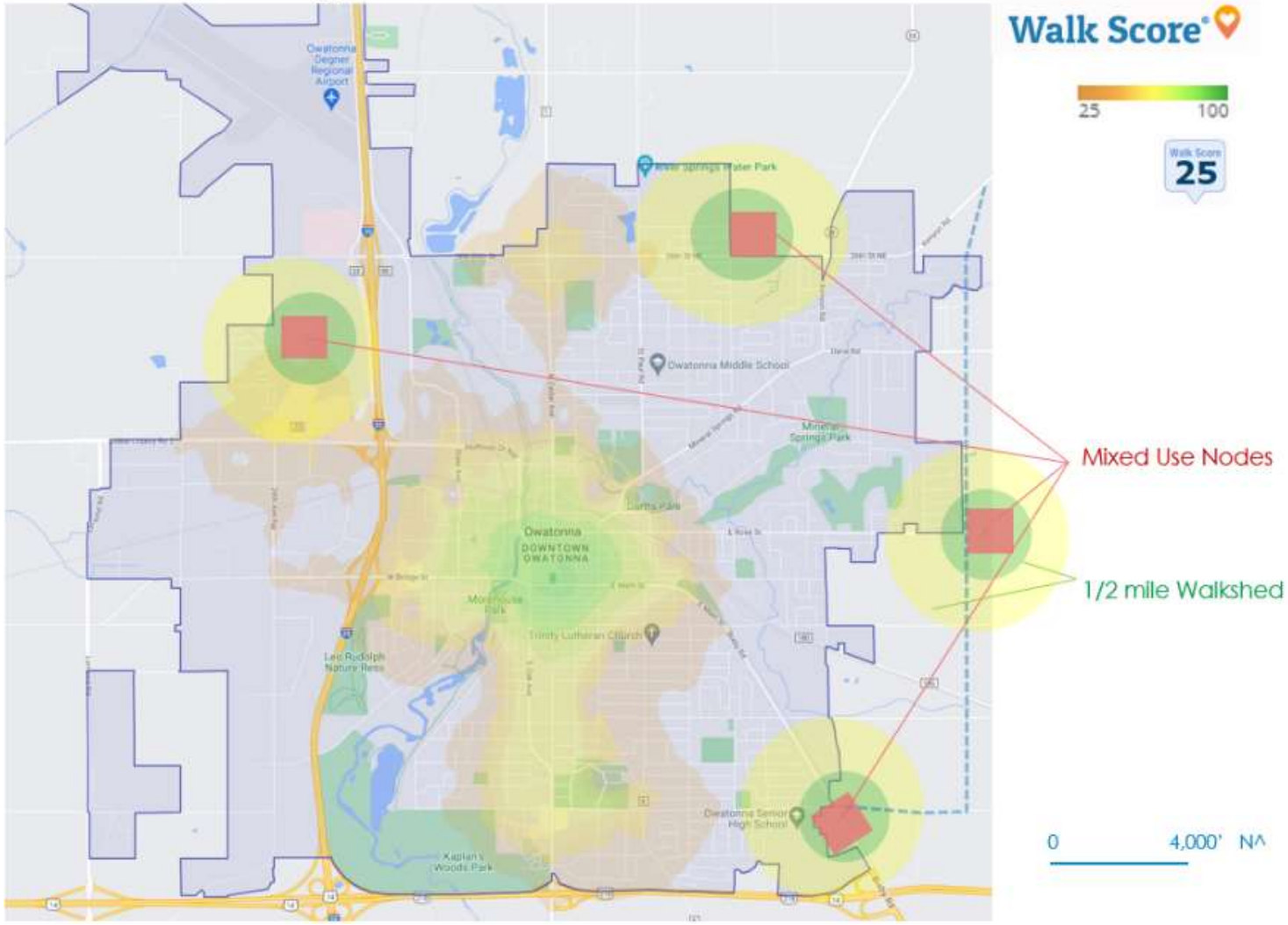
- Owatonna is a growing city and should continue to plan for growth in new areas of the city.
- The city has many natural amenities, such as the river, where redevelopment could be prioritized.
- Owatonna needs more places to shop, especially in small commercial nodes near neighborhoods.
- Residents appreciate the focus and momentum in downtown and would like this to continue, while retaining the city's history and character.



Mixed Use

Walkable neighborhoods centered on mixed use nodes

Owatonna Walk Score & Suggested Mixed Use Nodes



Example: Burnsville - Heart of the City

Example: Maple Grove – Arbor Lakes

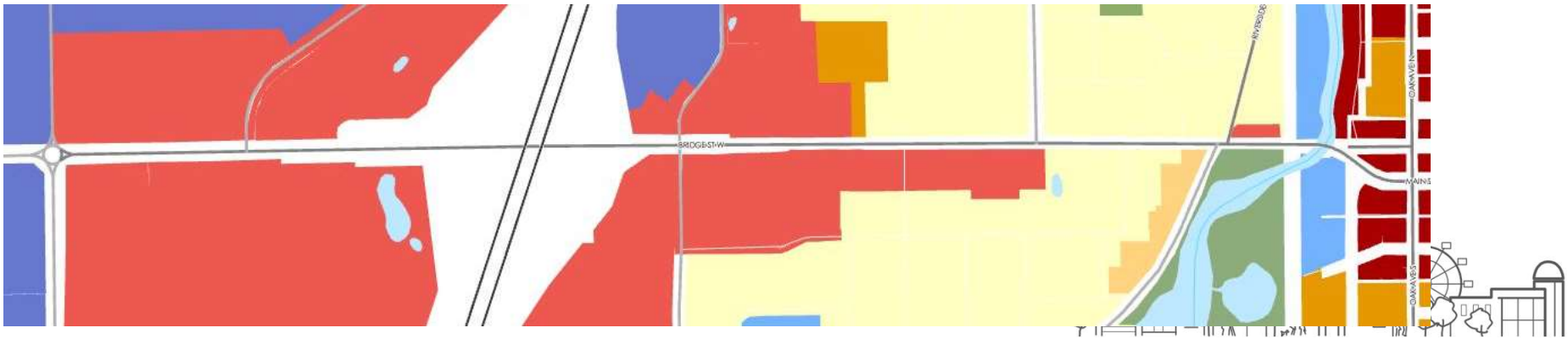
Example: Golden Valley – Downtown

Downtown

- Center of social, economic and cultural life
- 2019 Downtown Streetscape Study
- Emphasize historic character
- Partner with Chamber of Commerce
- Enhance connections
- Look for residential opportunities
- Explore more riverfront connections and development
- Post-pandemic work patterns

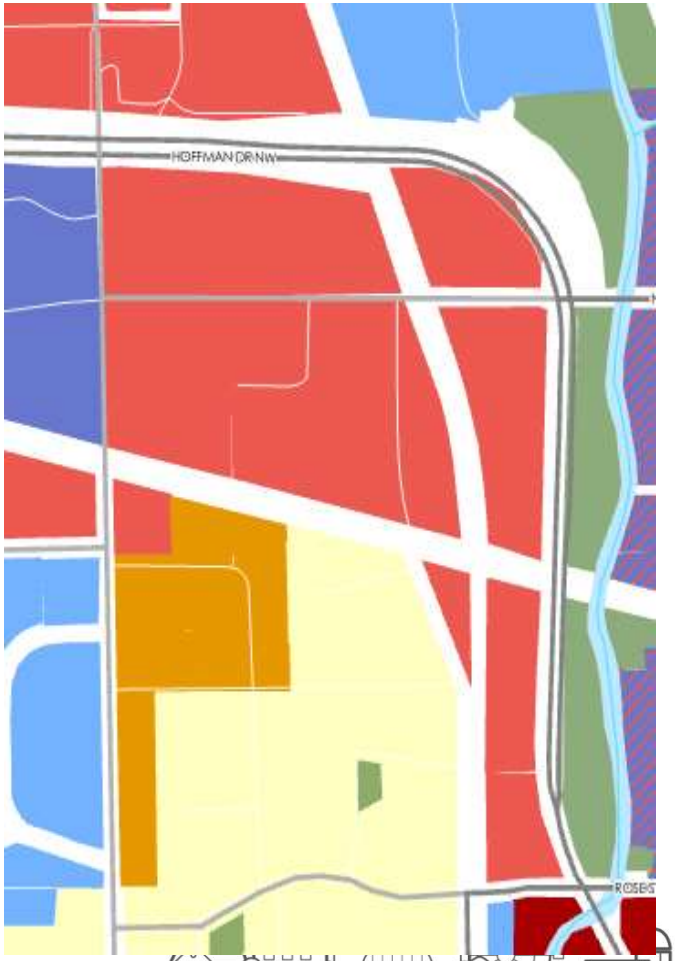
Focus Area A

- Bridge St corridor: 24th Ave NW to River
- Now: mixed Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Residential
- Proposed: Commercial west of I-35, Residential and Commercial between I-35 and the river



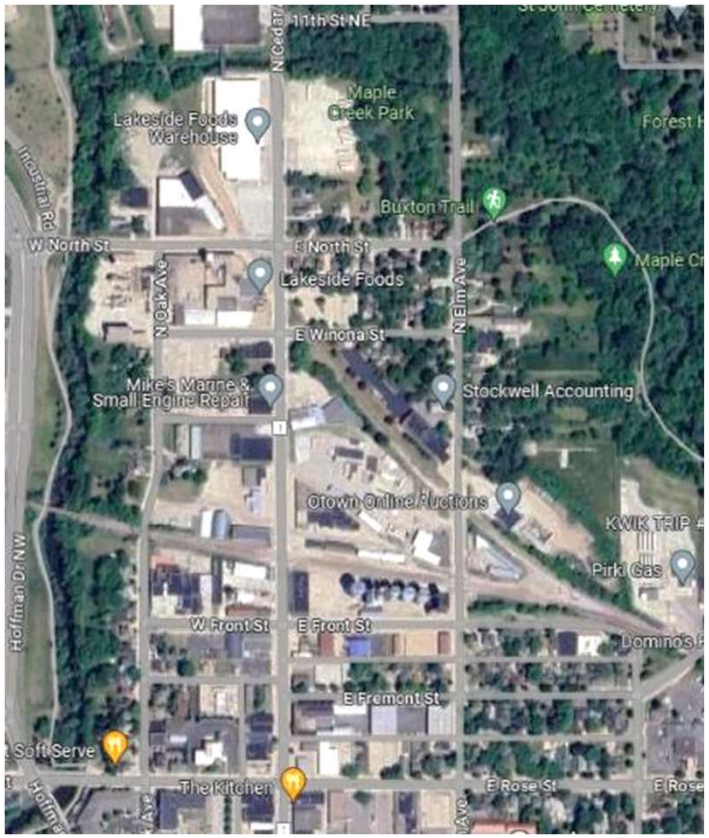
Focus Area B

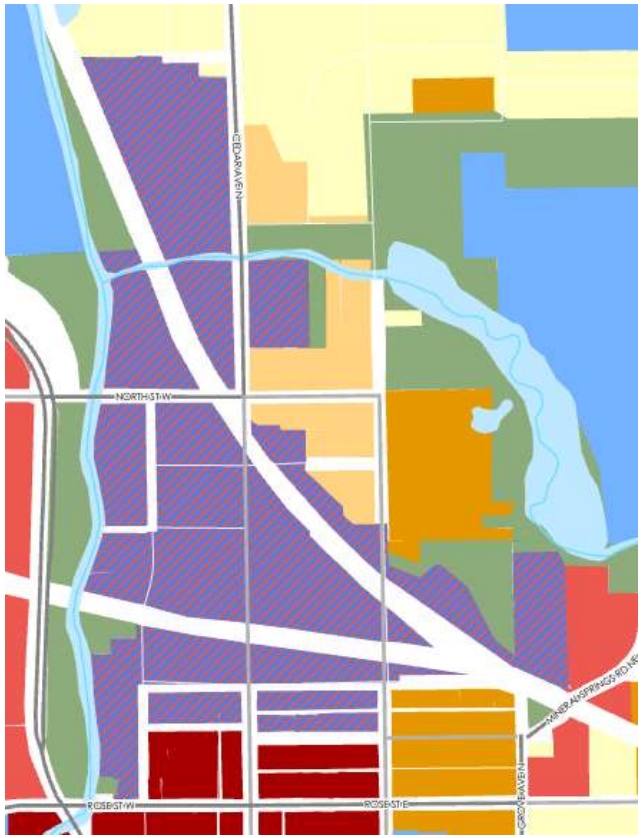
- S & W of Hoffman Dr to Glendale St, E of State Ave including Old Cemstone site
- Now: Mix of Commercial, Industrial, High Density, Low Density
- Proposed: Commercial north of RR tracks, Low and Medium Density Residential south of RR tracks



Focus Area C

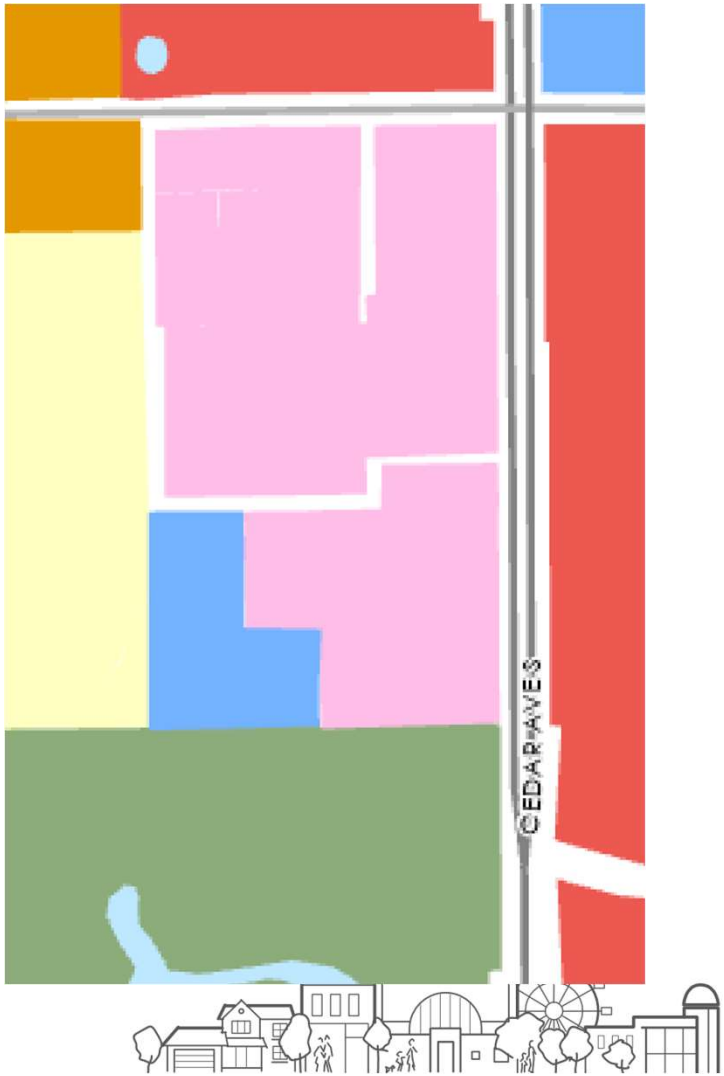
- N of Downtown: Rose St to 11th St NE, River to Grove Ave
- Now: Older Industrial& W of Hoffman Dr to Glendale St, E of State Ave
- Proposed: Transitional Commercial/ Industrial





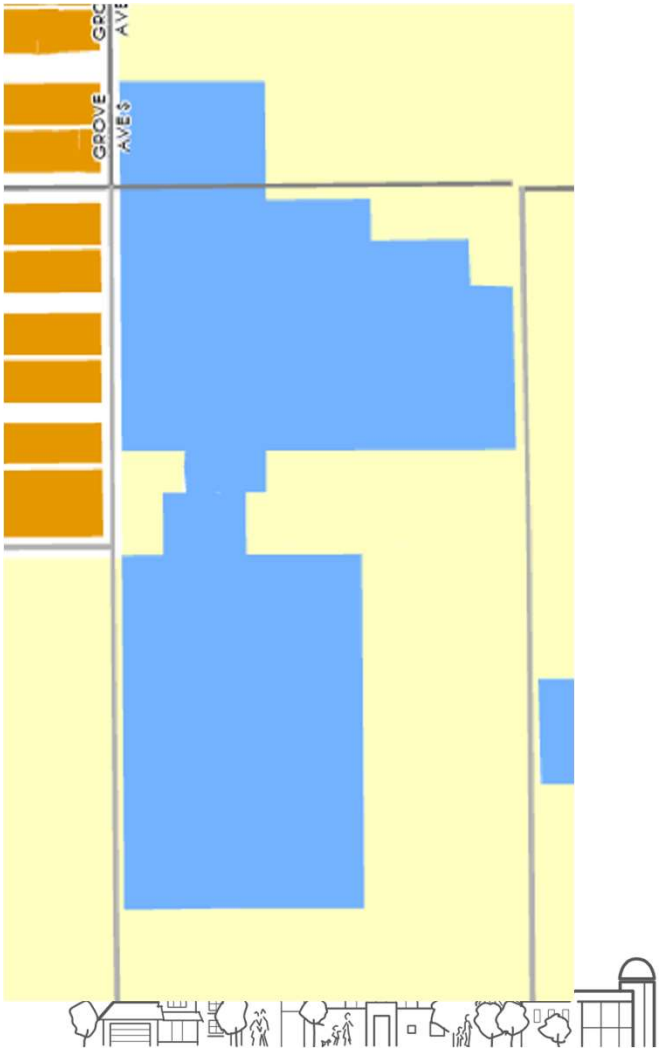
Focus Area D

- S Cedar Ave & 18th St SW
- Now: Older Commercial, Apartments, Cemetery, Residential behind
- Proposed: Mixed Use



Focus Area E

- Pillsbury Campus & Old High School
- Now: Institutional
- Proposed: Institutional



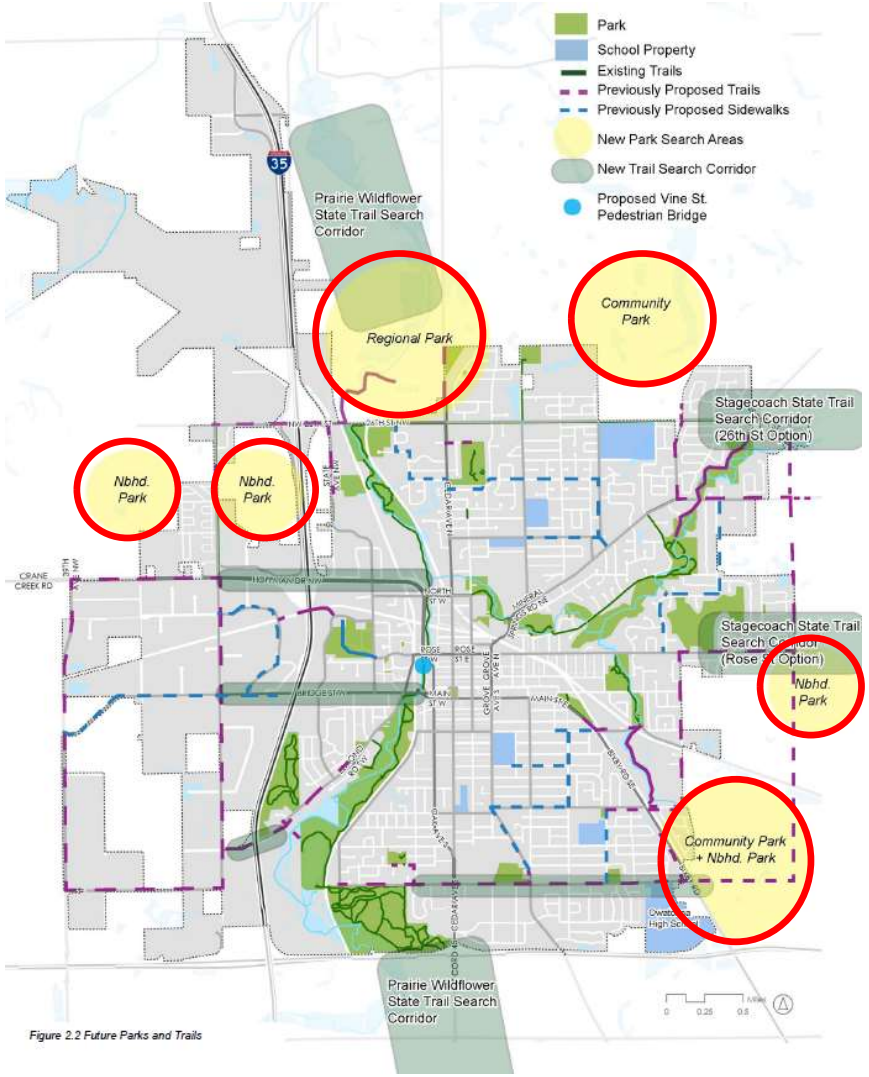


Figure 2.2 Future Parks and Trails

Search Areas	Description
Regional Park - North	The city should continue to explore land acquisition options to fill the need for a larger park in this area of the city and explore the potential for quarry reuse.
Neighborhood and Community Parks – North of 26th St at Hemlock Ave, Rose St and Future, 24th Ave and 18th St NW	The Future Land Use map includes planning for four new mixed use neighborhood nodes. These nodes should all be planned with new neighborhood park space.
Community and Neighborhood Park - Southeast	The southeast portion of Owatonna is lacking in park land and amenities. The city should look for space for both a neighborhood park, as well as a larger community park.

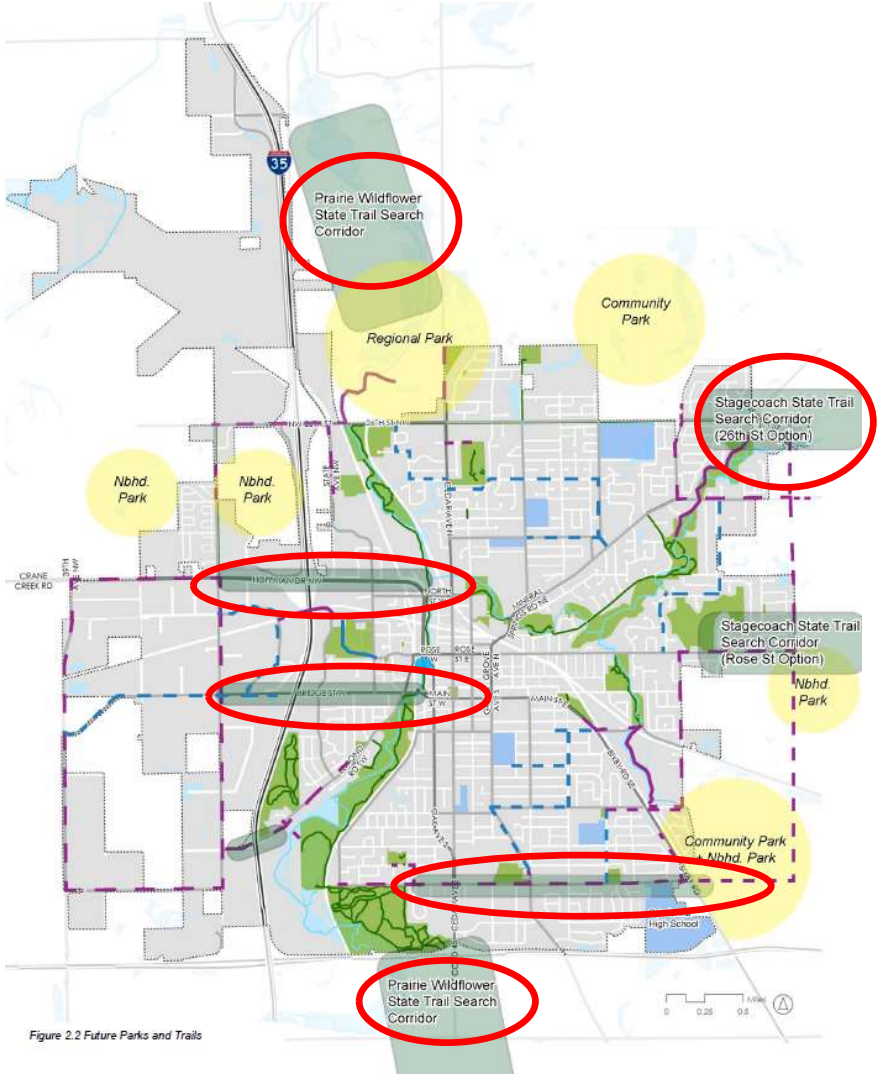


Figure 2.2 Future Parks and Trails

Search Areas	Description
State Trail Search Corridors – Prairie Wildflower (North-South) and Stagecoach (East)	Plan for designated State Trails
Bridge Street Trail	Addresses desire for connection between downtown and the industrial park.
Hoffman Drive Trail	Serves the commercial areas west of I-35 and the proposed residential growth area south of Hoffman Drive.
18th Ave Trail	Facilitates safe non-motorized connections to the high school and serve the proposed growth area east of Bixby Road.

IMPLEMENTATION

DOWNTOWN GOALS

HOUSING GOALS

Plan Goals and Strategies	Priority	Timeline	Responsibility
LAND USE GOALS			
Goal 1. Provide community facilities that meet the needs of residents and visitors today and into the future.			
a) Analyze the need for new or reimagined community facilities in Owatonna, prioritizing community engagement to understand the needs of the community.	M	>>>	Planning, Parks
b) Explore developing a regional destination community center to include an indoor swimming pool, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, meeting rooms, and other integrated uses.	H	5	Planning, Parks, CC, Administration
c) Explore developing other community facilities in coordination with other city departments and the Chamber of Commerce such as a tourism or welcome center, sports	M	>>>	Planning, Parks, Chamber, Administration

Priority

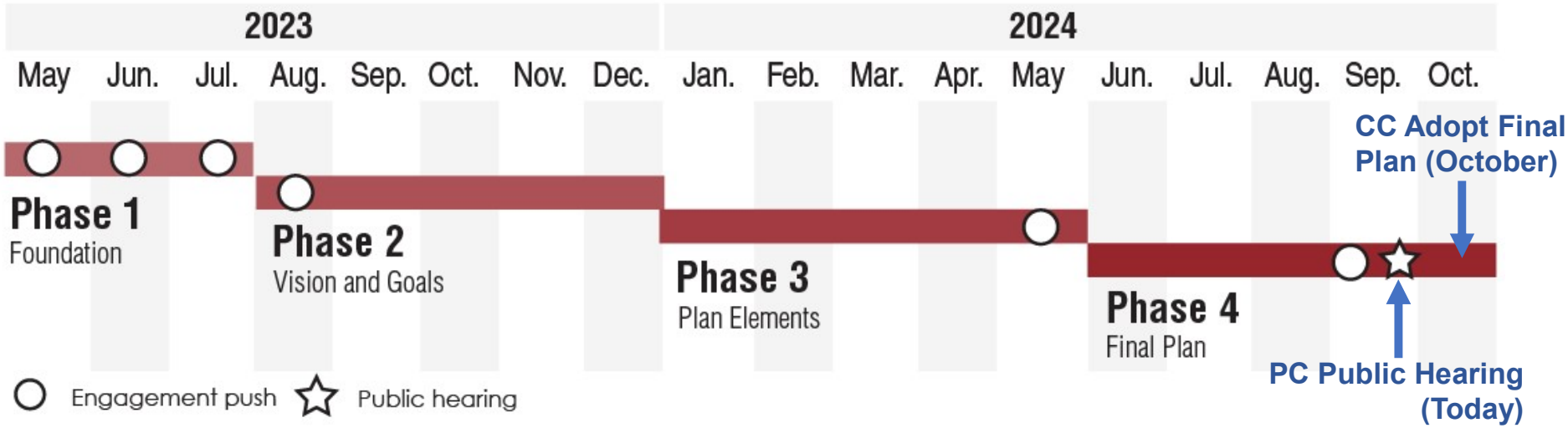
H	High
M	Medium
L	Low

Timeline

5	Short-term - 5 years
5-10	Medium-term – 5-10 years
10+	Long-term – 10+ years
>>>	Ongoing

Next Steps

- Planning Commission Public Hearing – September 24
- City Council Adopt Final Plan – October 2024



Questions/Discussion