LOOKOUT DRIVE AREA PLAN

May 2023



Prepared by: The City of North Mankato

Community Development Department

NORTH MANKATO
MINNESOTA

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INTRODUCTION

In late 2021, the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) began a corridor study of Lookout Drive to examine potential roadway functionality improvements. At the same time, the City of North Mankato began this Lookout Drive Area Plan for an understanding of area served by the roadway.

Lookout Drive connects US Trunk Highway 14 and Highway 169 serving many residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational uses. It's also a major connection between Upper and Lower North Mankato carrying personal vehicles, freight traffic, and transit. The planning area is diverse, containing various land uses including residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional with close proximity to many parks and various other recreational uses.

As with other locations in the community, the City has developed a vision for the area surrounding Lookout Drive based on research and findings from this and previous, related planning efforts combined with the needs and desires expressed through the public process.

Plan Purpose

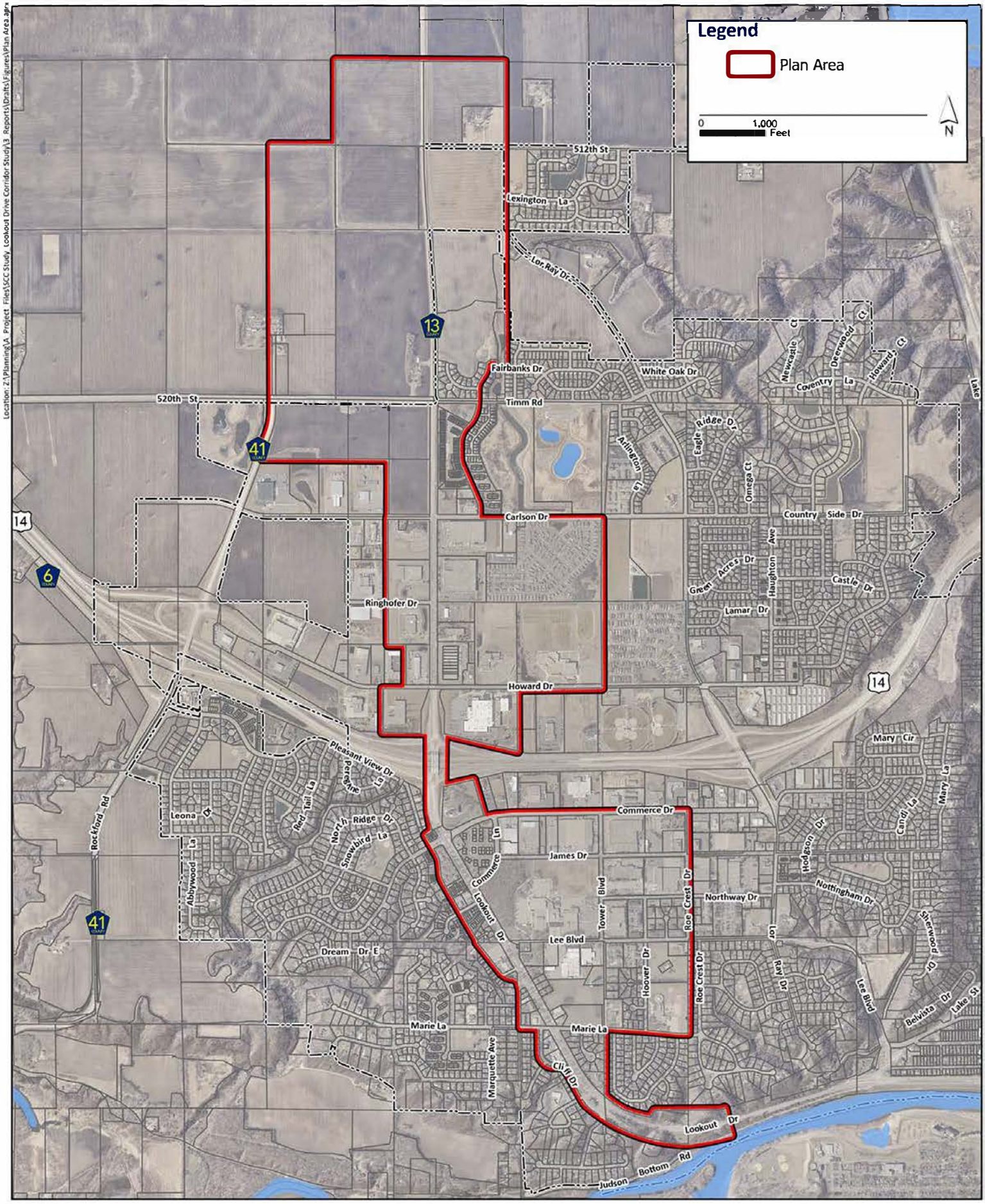
The City of North Mankato has developed this study to:

- Achieve a shared vision for the future of Lookout Drive and surrounding area among the City, citizens, and stakeholders.
- Identify opportunities for housing, economic development, non-motorized transportation, and area design.
- Provide a framework for investment in Lookout Drive and the surrounding area.

Guiding Principles

As the community pursues improvements to the planning area, the following guiding principles should be considered:

- Recognize opportunities for the development of vacant properties within the planning area.
- Understand the market potential and desire for additional commercial-retail amenities.
- Understand the need, for Lookout Drive to serve as a freight corridor connecting Highway 169 to Highway 14 and surrounding industrial uses.
- Improve pedestrian safety and connections in the planning area, particularly those providing access to area schools and the SCC campus.
- Consider how additional housing options in the planning area can serve the needs of the city and of SCC students wishing to live closer to campus.
- Consider improvements to the area including innovative public art, streetscaping, and other aesthetic components that contribute to enhanced area design.
- Foster development that responds to goals identified in regional planning efforts to make the Greater Mankato area a regional hub.



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Lookout Drive Area Plan

Figure 1: Plan Area

January 2023

Previous Studies

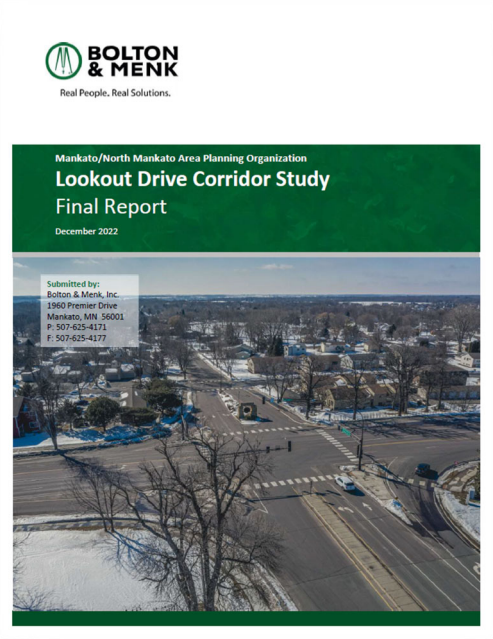
The following North Mankato planning efforts identify and document issues and needs in the planning area that informed this plan, including:

- 2015 North Mankato Comprehensive Plan (and 2023 Draft Comprehensive Plan Update)
- 2015 North Mankato Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan
- 2018 North Mankato ADA Transition Plan
- 2019 Commerce Drive Area Development Plan
- 2020 Northwest Growth Area Study
- 2022 North Mankato Housing Study
- 2022 Lookout Drive Corridor Study

All listed studies and plans can be found on the City of North Mankato website.

Coordination with the Lookout Drive Corridor Study

The Lookout Drive Corridor Study was adopted in December of 2022 and was a partnership between the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO), the City of North Mankato, and Nicollet County. The Study was developed concurrently with the Lookout Drive Area Plan and information from each was considered for both processes.



The Corridor Study includes a review of existing conditions pertaining to demographics, land use trends, transportation network characteristics, and existing traffic conditions. It also provides projected traffic conditions, identified transportation system needs, and improvement alternatives with a phased implementation plan.

This plan builds on that Study, going into more depth on land use trends while providing insight on observed patterns in housing, economic development, non-motorized transportation, and area design.

Greater Mankato 2040 | Transforming Tomorrow Together

In April of 2023, Greater Mankato Growth (Greater Mankato's chamber of commerce) held "Think Tank" sessions as part of the Greater Mankato 2040 (GM2040) planning and visioning project. It was aimed at exploring the future strategic positioning of the Greater Mankato region, and creating an enduring, collaborative vision and roadmap to the future. A fundamental premise is that the world is changing fast, and we need bold thinking to help envision how this region will thrive over the coming decades. The process explored how the region should evolve and transform, and what its unique position is in a Midwest and global context.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public input was instrumental in the development of this plan and included a steering committee engaged periodically throughout the process at key milestones, a public visioning survey, south central college student and faculty survey, pop-up events at the North Mankato Farmer's Market, and a public open house. Input received through these exercises was shared with the Lookout Drive Corridor Study project team as necessary. Results from public involvement meetings and surveys are included in **Appendix A**.

Steering Committee

A steering committee made up of 18 business representatives and property owners along Lookout Drive and two city officials who were engaged periodically during the planning process to provide input on plan initiatives, public outreach materials, and methods. Steering Committee Meeting Minutes are included in **Appendix A.1**.

Surveys

A. Public Visioning Survey

In February of 2022, City staff solicited input on the Lookout Drive Area Plan area through a public visioning survey. 146 surveys were completed by residents. This input was shared with the Lookout Drive Corridor Study Team for consideration. A full summary of input received through the survey is included in **Appendix A.2**.

Generally, the City wished to learn how respondents use Lookout Drive and the surrounding area, how they feel about the area today, and their vision for the future of the area. Nearly 80% of 146 respondents said they live in the area and travel it daily. 17% frequent businesses in the area while others visited for various reasons.

Participants were asked to provide a word or sentence describing how they feel about the planning area north and south of Highway 14 separately, given varying contexts. They were then asked to provide their vision for each moving forward. Respondents used words like "industrial," "boring," "underutilized," "open," and "empty" when describing the area north of Highway 14 today. In the future, respondents wish to see an inviting area that is vibrant, safe and diverse (see **Figure 1**).

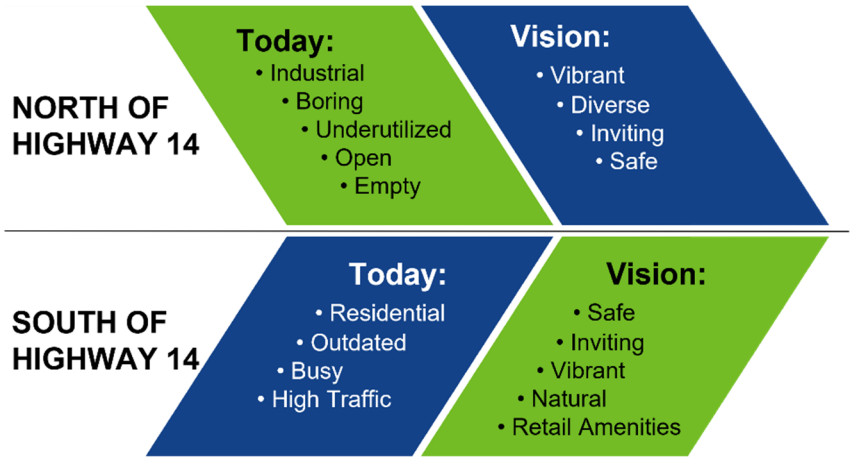


Figure 1. Themes from the Public Visioning Survey Administered in February 2022.

Respondents viewed the area south of the highway as primarily residential with outdated buildings and high traffic volumes. The vision for this area includes safe transportation networks with safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The vision also includes a vibrant and inviting area that includes a strong natural environment and added retail amenities serving the area.

B. SCC Student & Faculty Survey

SCC is a major presence in the planning area providing many jobs and serving 2,731 students at the North Mankato campus. This includes 1,231 attending physically and 1,500 online. City staff administered a survey to faculty, staff, and students of the college to understand needs pertaining to transit, housing, and area serving retail amenities. There were 10 responses to the survey. Survey results are included in **Appendix A.2**.

Participants were asked to indicate their proximity to campus, how they travel to and from campus, improvements they would like to see near the campus and whether they would like to live closer to campus or not. Only two respondents live within walking/biking distance to campus while others drive. None of the respondents ride transit but one indicated they would if a route existed between Minnesota State University, Mankato (MSU) and SCC in the middle of the day.

Two respondents suggested they would like to live in multi-family housing located close to campus if available, but most prefer where they live now. Two and three-bedroom apartments were preferred by respondents. Some stated that potential amenities that would attract them to live near campus would include a grocery store, gym, coffee shop, affordable rent, more dining options, and others.

Note: At the time of this study, SCC was administering another survey of students and faculty to broaden the response and better gage interest in housing amenities. Data from that survey was unavailable but discussions with SCC representatives indicated a desire for housing options near campus do exist.

Pop-Up Events

City staff joined project staff from the Lookout Drive Corridor Study at a booth in the North Mankato Farmer's Market on two occasions. Feedback received was generally focused on Lookout Drive transportation facilities and issue identification therein. However, there were some that spoke of the need for more retail amenities in the area. Several mentioned improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to improve safety from a SRTS stance and for general recreation and use. Minimizing roadway width, reducing traffic speed, and streetscaping on the corridor were also discussed as desirable improvements to the corridor that would enhance the planning area.

Public Open House

A public open house was held in late July 2023 to present the plan to the public and solicit input on the plan draft prior to City Council adoption. Generally, participants supported higher density housing, would like to see more retail amenities both north and south of the highway, wish to see safer off-street trails with better connectivity, and, while some opposed, most value the addition of public art and gathering spaces. An open house summary is included in **Appendix A.3**.

VISION

City staff used input received through the public process to develop the following vision for the Lookout Drive Area Plan area:

"Lookout Drive provides access to a thriving business environment with a strong industrial presence, an array of area-serving commercial-retail amenities, and innovative housing options in an area that is safe, inviting, and creatively designed."

HISTORY

In 1935, the land on the Nicollet County side of the Minnesota River was purchased by the City of Mankato for $300 as an addition to Sibley Park. This included the cliffs or “palisades” of the bluff and a large, wooded area on top. Sources say plans for the park included a parking lot and a bridge across the Minnesota River, as well as stairs and paths up the bluffs. This would have been known as Palisades Park. However, in 1938, plans were presented to the Common Council detailing city property in Nicollet County being taken for construction of a new highway. In 1940, the State of Minnesota took control of the property and began the construction of Highway 14. **Figure 2** depicts the "Drive Way North Sibley Park" which existed prior to construction of Highway 14 at the base of the Palisades. The depicted roadway is likely the location of today’s Judson Bottom Road.



Figure 2. Historic "Drive Way North Sibley Park." *Source:* A book entitled “Mankato’s Lost Parks”.

The following pictures show progression of Highway 14 roadway construction and surrounding development from 1938 (when plans for Palisades Park began to diminish) to present day. The new roadway operated as Highway 14 until the early 1970’s when construction began for what we now know as U.S. Trunk Highway 14 to the north. The remnants of old Highway 14 then became known as today’s Lookout Drive.

In 1982, the scenic lookout on Lookout Drive in North Mankato was built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), an employment and infrastructure program created by President Roosevelt in 1935. Today, Lookout Drive provides a major thoroughfare in the City connecting Lower North Mankato to Upper North while also connecting Highway 169 to Highway 14.

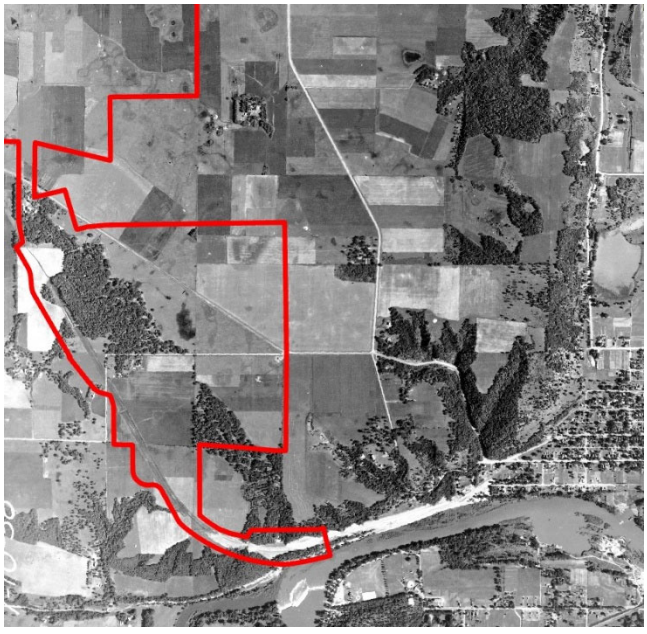


Figure 3. Lookout Drive circa 1938.

*The roadway appears to be a dirt road; likely the “Drive Way North Sibley Park” depicted in **Figure2**. The planning area is undeveloped agricultural land.*

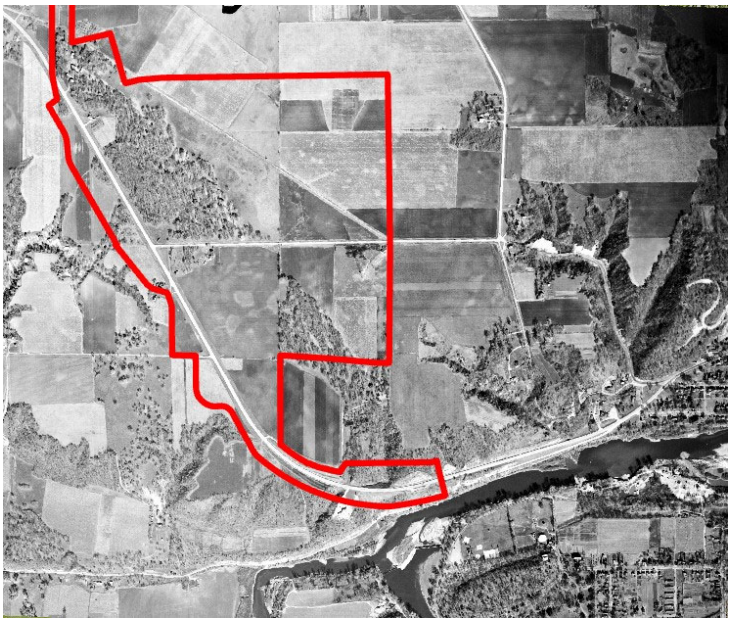


Figure 4. Lookout Drive circa 1949.

Old Minnesota Highway 14 is constructed. The planning area remains undeveloped agricultural land.

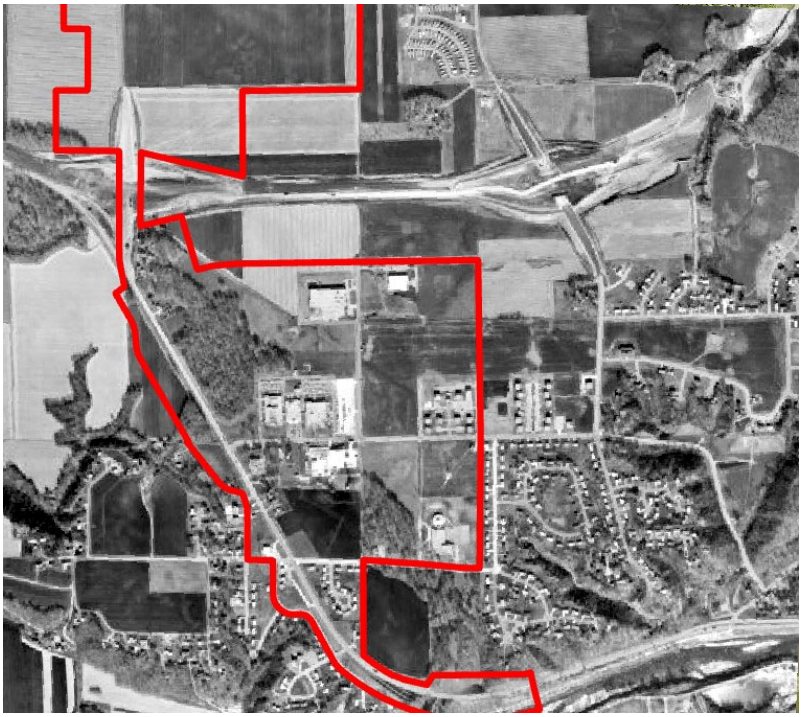


Figure 5. Lookout Drive circa 1973.

The new U.S. Highway alignment is under construction. Residential and industrial development is underway along and nearby Highway 14/Lookout Drive.



Figure 6. Lookout Drive circa 1980.

The new U.S. Highway alignment is completed. Residential, commercial, and industrial development continues in Upper North Mankato, extending to the north side of the new Highway 14 and west of Lookout Drive.

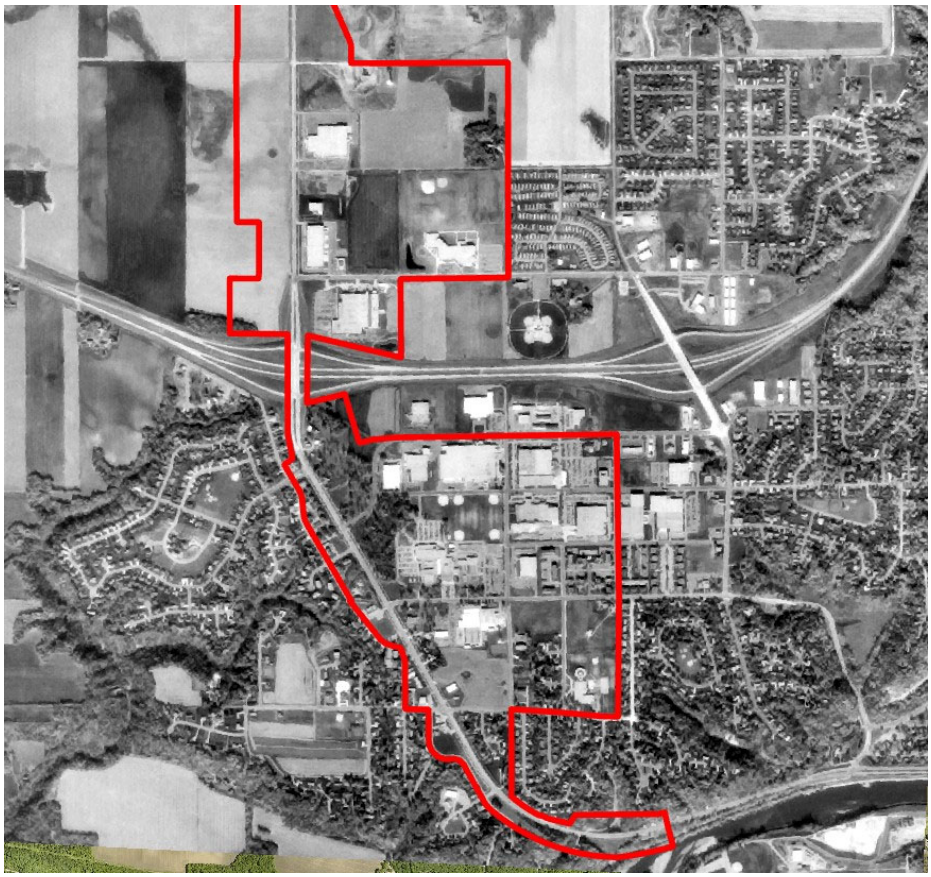


Figure 7. Lookout Drive circa 1996.

Residential, commercial, and industrial development continues in Upper North Mankato. The area south of Highway 14 is almost fully developed and continues to develop to the west. The Northport Industrial Park is beginning to develop around Lookout Drive north of the Highway.

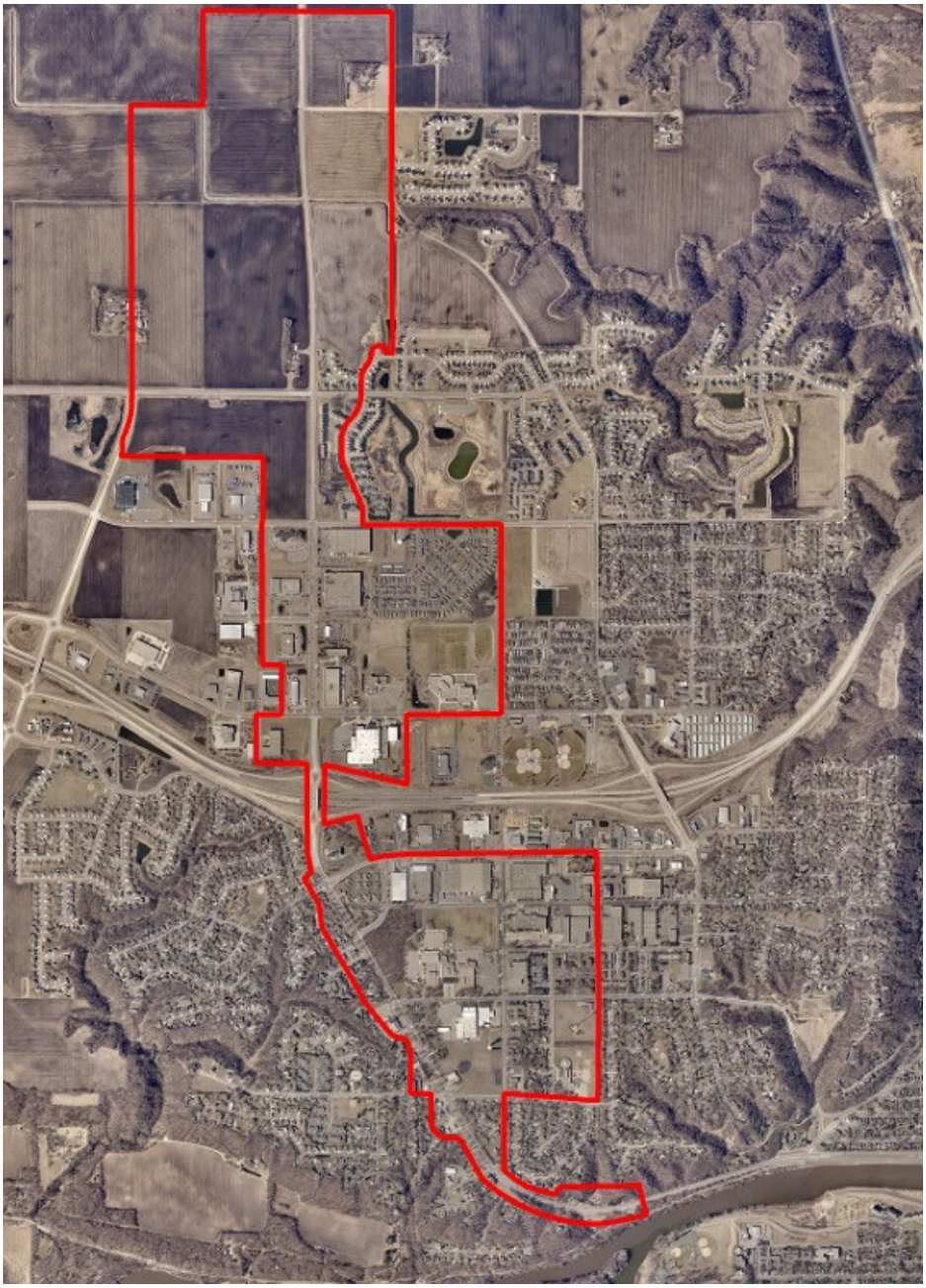


Figure 8. Lookout Drive circa 2022.

A new interchange has been installed at the junction of Highway 14 and Nicollet County Highway 41. Residential development continues south of Highway 14 to the west and north of the Highway. The Northport Industrial Park continues to develop to the north/northwest.

HOUSING

Existing Housing

Various residential housing types exist along Lookout Drive throughout the planning area. North of Highway 14, medium and low-density residential development occupies land east of Highway 13. This is primarily north of Carlson Drive and is anticipated to continue north. Medium and low-density residential lines the western side of Benson Park in the form of townhomes with some single-family detached homes. Single-family residential is anticipated to continue to the north and east.

Just east of the planning area, the City anticipates infill residential development that will close the gap between the Reserve Neighborhood and residential uses along Timm Road in the near term. The conversion of Lor Ray Drive in 2022 from a narrow county road to an urban section with sidewalk and trail will better connect this area to the community and is anticipated to spur growth.

South of Highway 14, Lookout Drive is lined with higher density residential including several townhomes and apartments on the west side of Lookout that border single-family neighborhoods to the west. Some patio homes are located along Commerce Lane/Commerce Drive on the east. The area south of Marie Lane is primarily low-density residential. Residential land uses are depicted in **Figure 9**.

Housing Demand

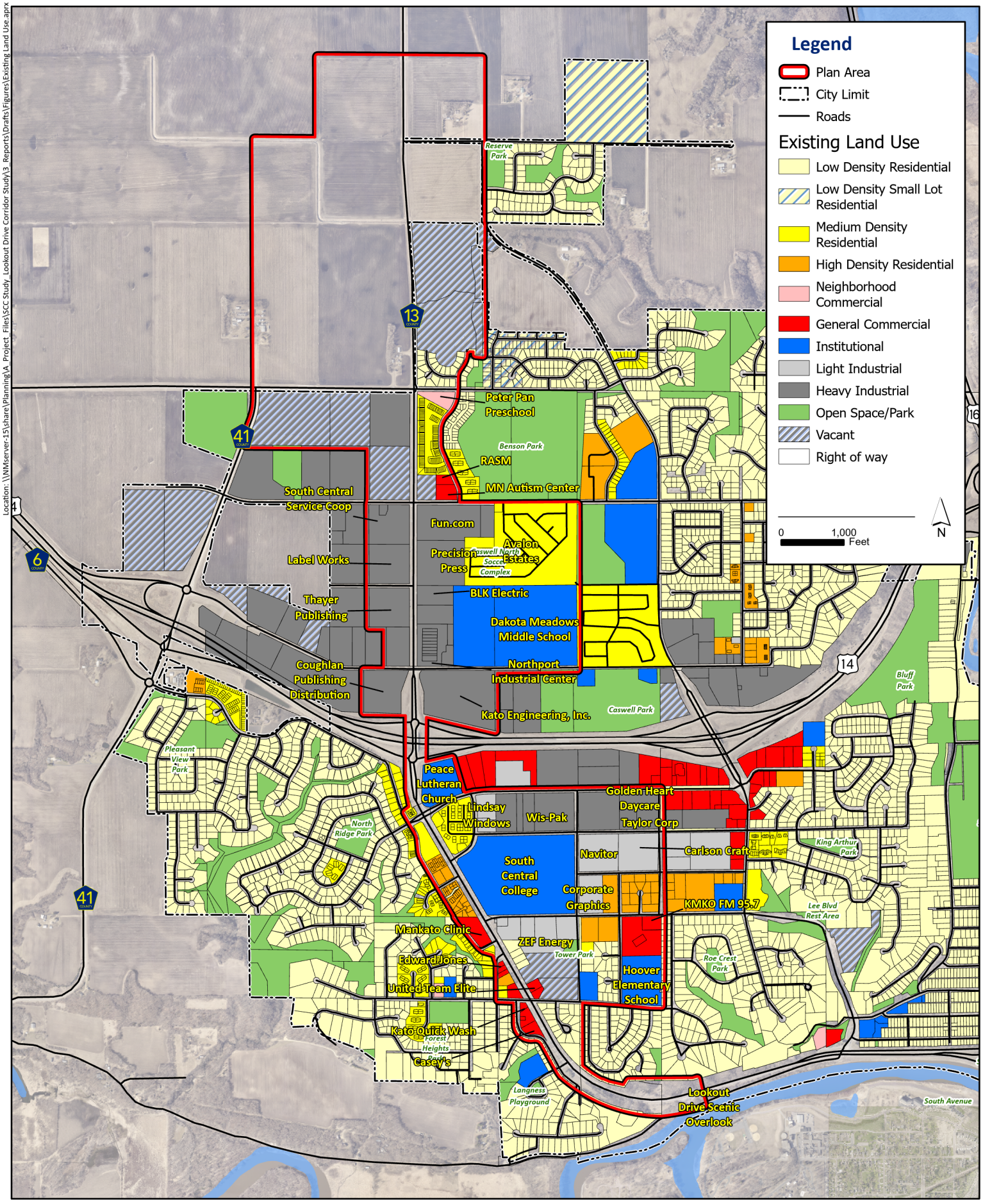
Table 1 shows the distribution of residential property types in Upper North Mankato, most of which is located within 1 mile of the Lookout Drive Corridor. Information is derived from Nicollet County and North Mankato GIS data as well as the North Mankato Housing Study completed in 2021. Data show there were 2,629 single-family homes in Upper North Mankato and demand is high in the City, as it captured 32% of single-family residential development in the Greater Mankato Area. There were several active single-family residential developments in Upper North During this planning effort.

The Housing Study also found that the construction of higher-density, single-family attached and multi-family housing units, units most likely to be rented, has lagged in comparison to other Greater Mankato communities. The Study the indicates the demand for rental housing is high despite the lag in construction. Upper North currently contains over 1,053 rental units and the existing rental inventory has extremely low vacancy rates with all multi-family unit types (i.e. market rate, tax credit, and subsidized) at nearly full capacity. An inventory completed in late 2020 showed that the average price of a two-bedroom apartment in Upper North was $837 per month.

Table 1. Residential Land Use Characteristics - Upper North Mankato

Type	Qty.
Low Density Residential (Single-Family; 1-5 DU* per acre)	2629
Medium Density Residential (Multi-Family; 5-10 DU* per acre)	510
High Density Residential (Multi-Family; 10+ DU* per acre)	142
Approximate Number of Rental Units	1053
Average Monthly Rent for 2-Bedroom Apartment	$836.78

**Dwelling Units*



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Lookout Drive Area Plan

Figure 9: Existing Land Use

July 2023

Future Housing Opportunities

Upper North Mankato is the growth area for the City with various residential developments active in the north and west city limits. Through the Housing Study process, the City set targets for annual housing growth intended to spur population growth in the community. This includes increasing housing unit construction from 50 units per year to 74 units per year overall, constructing 35 single-family detached (low density) homes, 14 single-family attached (medium density), and 25 multi-family units (higher density) annually. Anticipated additional residents will bring new workforce, new families with children, and others seeking to call North Mankato their home, in turn increasing the need for additional commercial and industrial development in the community.

As mentioned, residential growth is anticipated to continue into growth areas north of city limits/east of Highway 13 (Lookout Drive) as depicted in **Figure 10** and **Figure 11** on the next page.

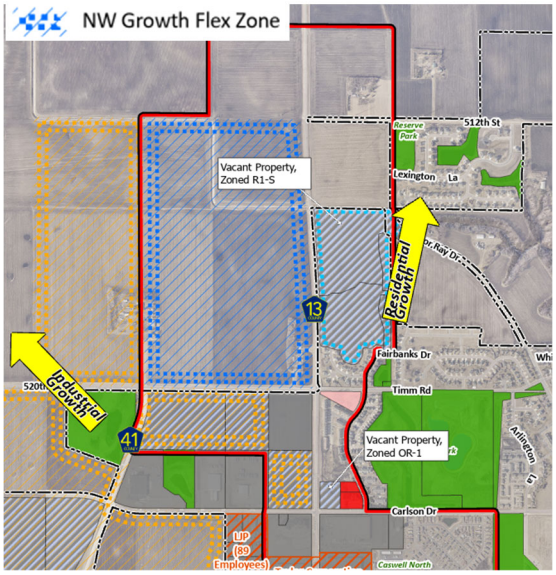


Figure 10. Northwest Growth Study Flex Zone; a transition zone between lower density residential, commercial, and industrial land uses.

C. Multi-Family and Student Housing Needs

The vacant agricultural land just north of the Northport Industrial Park, west of Highway 13 is identified in the City of North Mankato's Northwest Growth Plan as a residential, commercial, industrial flex zone which is anticipated to provide a transition between low-density residential east and heavy industrial west. This area, along with others nearby, may have some potential for higher density residential in the future (**Figure 10**).

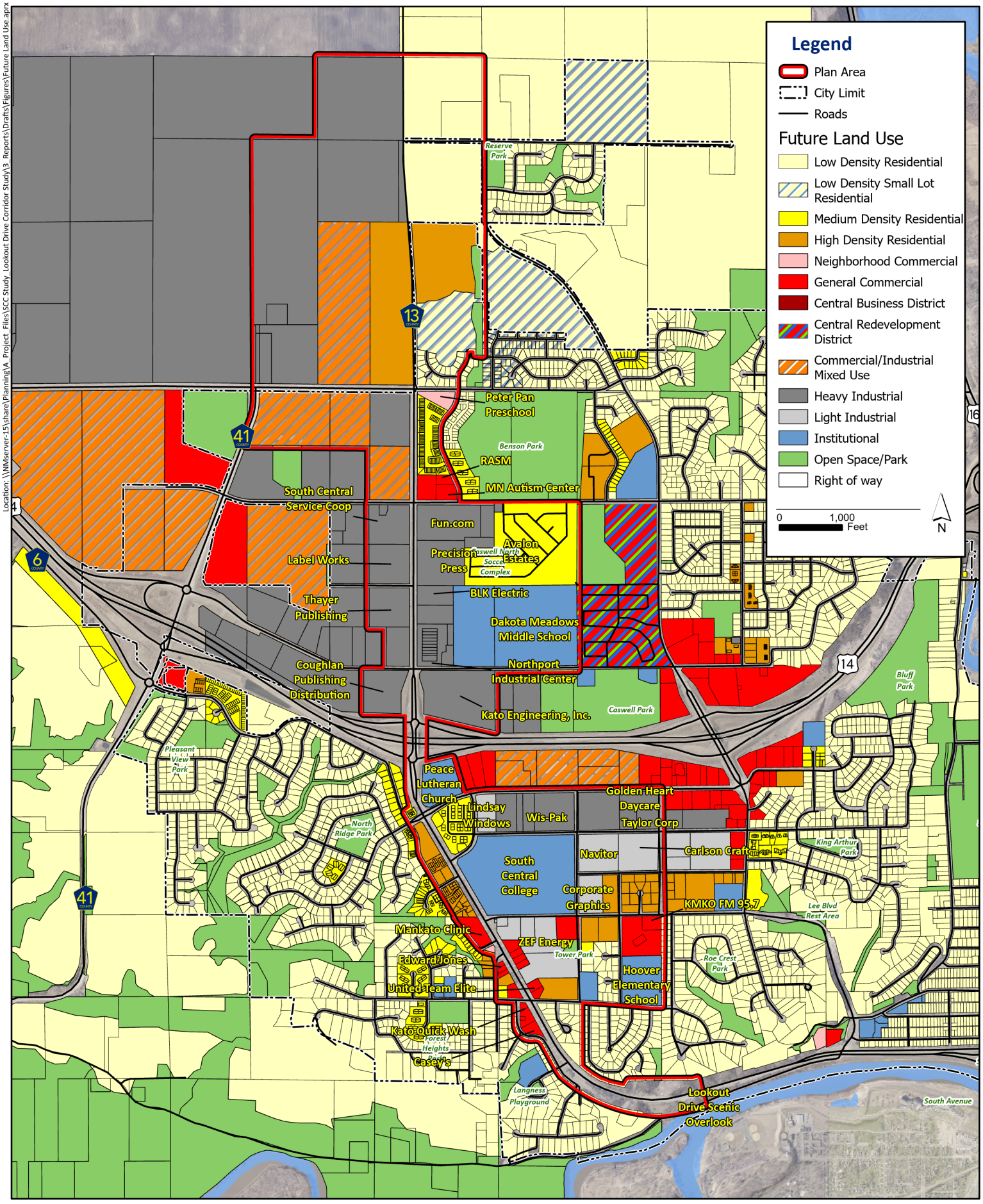
South of Highway 14, the southern portion of vacant land east of the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection is prime for multi-family residential development. The land is zoned *R-4: Multiple Dwelling* and is ready to accommodate high-density residential development (**Figure 11**).

Participants in both the Lookout Visioning Survey and SCC Student, Faculty, and Staff Survey were asked about perceptions of the need for more multi-family housing options to accommodate both residents and students that wish to live near the campus. While Visioning Survey responses showed "*Add more affordable, higher-density housing options"* as the lowest ranking area improvement, at least 19 (12.8%) participants did rank it in their top 3 choices. Attracting neighborhood retail, better walkability/bikeability, and more greenspace were the top three picks among all users (see **Figure 12**).

As mentioned, the SCC survey only received 10 responses. However, four (40%) participants identified more *"More Multifamily Housing Options Near Campus"* in their top three choices which ranked fourth overall in the ranking. Retail amenities, bus shelters and pedestrian/bike crossing signals on Lookout Drive ranked in the top three overall in that survey (see **Figure 13**).

D. GM2040 Think-Tank Session Recommendations for Housing.

The GM2040 Think-Tank identified housing availability as a key driver for community adaptation to next generation livability. Participants in the process generated a list of initiatives aimed at achieving



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Lookout Drive Area Plan

Figure 11: Future Land Use

July 2023

the preferred "Regenerative and Synergistic" regional model that will strategically position the region for future success in the face of a potentially unprecedented pace of change. Among initiatives generated by participants in that process was an expressed desire to stimulate innovative housing solutions. This could be innovation in higher density housing options that include characteristics and amenities that are future-oriented to attract and retain talent in the community. This should be considered in future housing development conversations between the City and developers, and included in future planning initiatives in North Mankato.

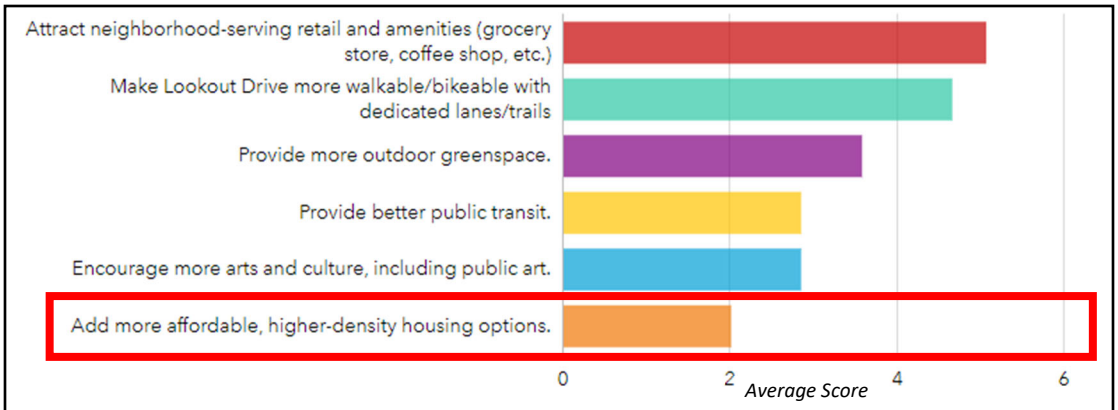


Figure 12. Lookout Drive Area Improvement Ranking from Visioning Survey.

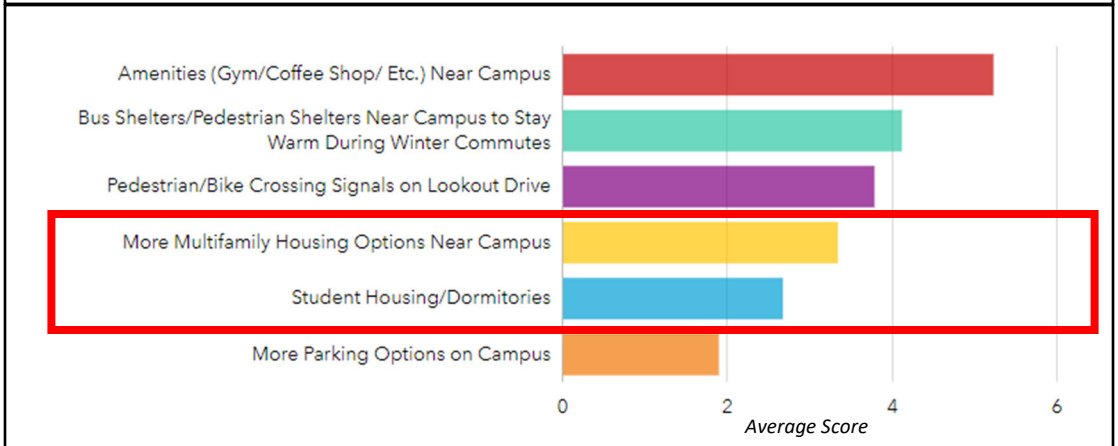


Figure 13. Lookout Drive Area Improvement Ranking from SCC Student, Faculty, and Staff Survey.

**Each choice in a Ranking question receives a score based on its rank. By default, if the Ranking question has five choices, the choice ranked first gets a score of 5. The choice ranked second gets a score of 4, and so on. Choices from all responses are ranked by their average score. The choice with the highest average score is the most preferred.*

In their Comprehensive Campus Plan, South Central College states that, "a large portion of SCC land is underutilized due to overgrown wooded area." The Plan considers options for the potential future development of a community/residential life building specifically for college use or future housing development with potential for student housing (**Figure 14**). As depicted in **Figure 15**, the SCC campus is close walking/biking distance to area retail on Lookout Drive, Commerce Drive, and Lor Ray Drive. That makes it an ideal location for students living near or on campus.

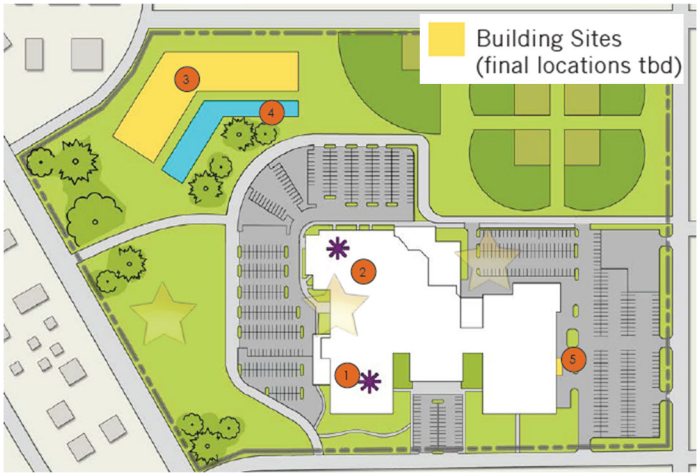


Figure 14. South Central College Master Plan showing long-term development. The structure footprint shown in yellow is reserved for future development. Options include a standalone community/residential life building for campus use or housing development.

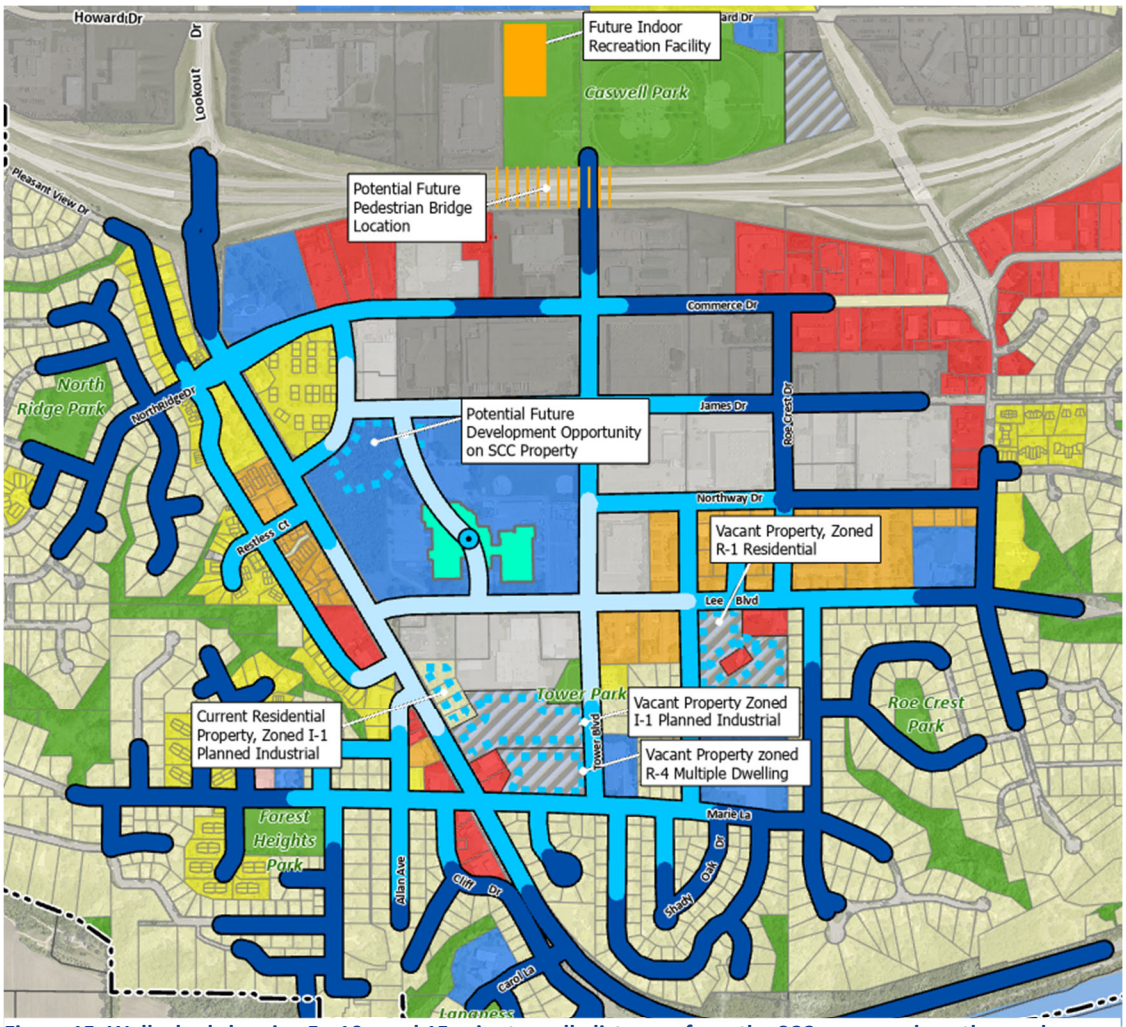


Figure 15. Walk-shed showing 5-, 10-, and 15-minute walk distances from the SCC campus along the road network.

E. Mixed-Use Development and Multi-Family Housing

Through the process, many expressed a desire to include multi-family in mixed-use development with retail amenities on the first floor and apartments above. Attracting neighborhood-serving retail and amenities such as a coffee shop, grocery store, etc. was ranked first in both surveys among the total 158 participants. An optimal location for this may be the aforementioned vacant land on the north side of Marie, east of Lookout. This location is also optimal as Lookout Drive carries Mankato Transit Route 5, the fixed bus route that traverses North Mankato and connects to the Greater Mankato system. The City will continue to target increased multi-family housing development to serve that need in the community along with other types of housing as well.

Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1. Maximize and diversify housing options and livability surrounding Lookout Drive.

Objective 1.1: Increase the quantity and diversity of housing stock in the planning area to help the City meet the housing targets set in the 2021 North Mankato Housing Study.

Policy 1.1.1: Target medium- and high-density, multi-family development in the planning area.

Objective 1.2: Ensure housing is located within walkable and/or bikeable distance to commercial-retail amenities, services, and the SCC campus.

Policy 1.2.1: Target mixed-use development that combines commercial and residential uses.

Policy 1.2.2: Support efforts to incorporate affordable housing options that meet the needs of the community and the SCC Student population.

Objective 1.3: Use varying housing densities and mixed commercial/industrial uses to transition from single-family neighborhoods to the Northport Industrial Park.

Policy 1.3.1: Consider amending the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code to create a Residential/Commercial/Industrial Flex Zone allowing a mix of multi-family housing, commercial, and light industrial uses to transition between lower density residential and heavy industrial uses.

Objective 1.4: Ensure housing options support a growing workforce.

Policy 1.4.1: Target affordable workforce housing options to support new industrial uses in the planning area.

Goal 2. Provide attractive and desirable residential properties that are well-designed.

Objective 2.1: Consider residential building designs that enhance planning area aesthetics.

Policy 2.1.1: Ensure structure design contains elements that visually enhance appearance and improve design characteristics in the planning area.

Objective 2.2: Stimulate innovative housing design.

Policy 2.2.1: Work with developers to target innovative housing solutions that include characteristics and amenities that are future-oriented to attract and retain talent in the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Existing Conditions

Many opportunities exist for economic development along Lookout Drive/County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13 in the planning area. The following narrative and **Figure 18** describe trends and opportunities in economic development in the planning area.

A. Commercial & Industrial Development

North of Highway 14

The City's primary industrial location is the Northport Industrial Park, north of Highway 14 along Lookout Drive. The Park contains 25 industrial buildings supplying over 1,300 jobs. The City continuously purchases, prepares, and markets land for industrial expansion in the Park. A market analysis completed in late 2020 as part of the City's Northwest Growth Plan suggests that industrial growth in the Park is anticipated to continue, stating it is well positioned for growth given its large parcel availability, access to Highway 14 and regional connections, suitability for development with flat/uncontaminated land, and supportive public sector environment. Many vacant lots still exist within City limits in the park that are prime for industrial development.



Figure 17. Lookout Drive Commercial District surrounding the intersection of Lookout Drive and Marie Lane.

South of Highway 14

Commercial uses are primarily located south of Highway 14 in the planning area which is mostly built out. However, opportunities remain for some new development and redevelopment, primarily surrounding the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection. The Lookout Drive Commercial District (**Figure 17**) is located here and is one of the City's four commercial districts. Four residential lots on the east side of Lookout Drive, adjacent to ZEF Energy, are guided for future commercial development.

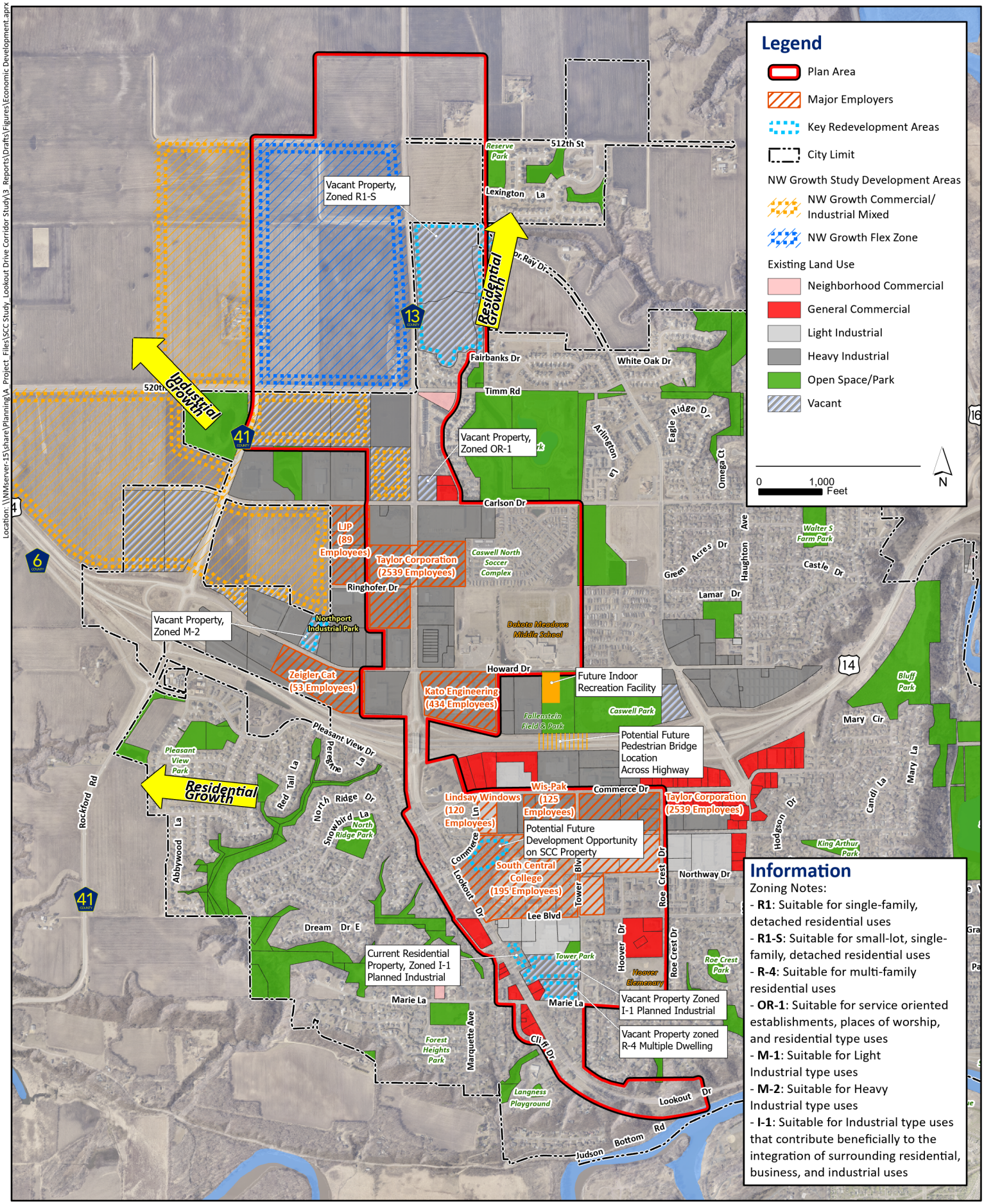
B. Employment

A major goal for the City of North Mankato is attracting and retaining jobs. Data shows there are 97 businesses in the planning area employing an estimated 2,974 people. While not all those employees live in North Mankato, that number suggests there are enough jobs in the planning area for 43.7% of the working population in the City. **Table 2** and **Figure 19** provide a summary of businesses in relation to population within the planning area.

Table 2. Business Summary

Description	North Mankato (City)	Study Area	
		#	% of City
Area (sq. mls.)	6.38	1.63	25.5%
Total Businesses	307	97	31.6%
Total Employees	6,801	2,974	43.7%
Total Residential Population (2020)	14,275	1,645	11.5%
Employee/Residential Pop. Ratio*	0.48	1.81	-

Source: *Esri Business Analyst; MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)*
**Number of Jobs per each resident*



Location: \\NMserver-15\share\Planning\A_Project_Files\SCC Study_Lookout Drive Corridor Study\3_Reports\Drafts\Figures\Economic Development.aprx

NORTH MANKATO MINNESOTA

Lookout Drive Area Plan

Figure 18: Economic Development

July 2023

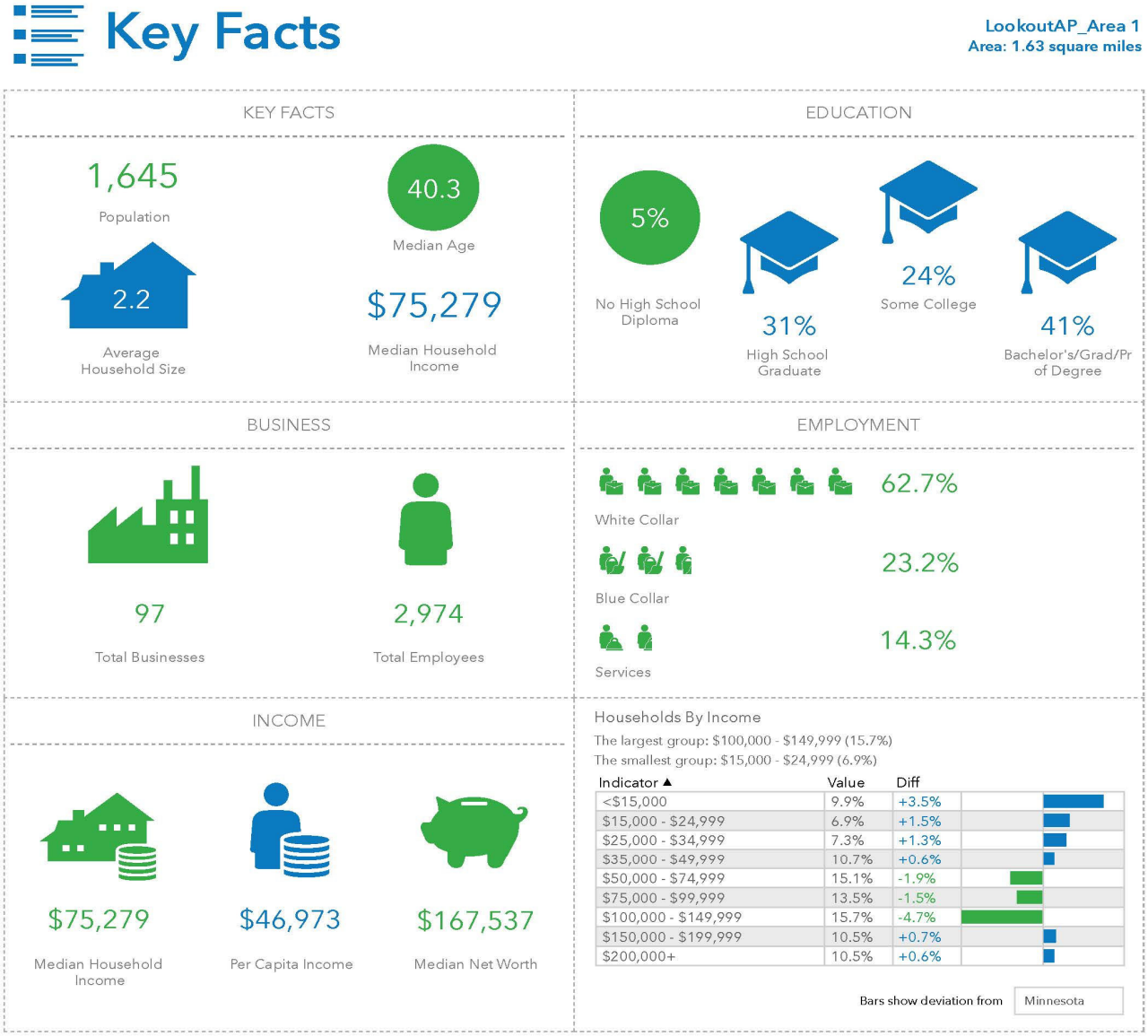


Figure 19. Key Demographics for the Planning Area

Table 3 shows population estimates provided by Esri within a 5-, 10-, and 20-minute drive-time from the planning area along with Esri's projected 2027 population. While Esri projects the population within five minutes will decline in the next five years, growth is anticipated as you travel further from the planning area. It should be noted that the City of North Mankato anticipates population growth trends will continue for the City overall.

Table 3. 5, 10, and 20-Minute Drive Time Market Area Demographics.

Demographic	5-Minut Drive Time			10-Minute Drive Time			20-Minute Drive Time		
	2022	2027*	Growth	2022	2027*	Growth	2022	2027*	Growth
Population	15,774	15,628	*-1%*	53,256	53,819	1%	94,264	95,155	1%
Population 18+	12,696	12,574	*-1%*	43,943	44,267	1%	76,173	76,579	1%
Households	6,833	6,804	0%	21,722	22,059	2%	36,410	36,930	1%
Median Household Income	$66,427	$77,782	17%	$63,537	$76,466	20%	$69,097	$79,977	16%

Source: *Esri Business Analyst*
** Projected to 2027 by Esri*

Table 4 identifies the distribution of businesses and jobs based on the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The planning area is strongest in manufacturing with 11 businesses employing 1,550 workers or 52% of the area workforce. Information (Publishing) and retail trade are two other strong economic sectors with a combined 20 businesses employing roughly 730 workers or 24.6% of the area workforce.

Table 4. Employment by Industry in the Study Area based on the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

Industry	Businesses		Employees	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1	1.0%	3	0.1%
Utilities	1	1.0%	3	0.1%
Construction	4	4.1%	10	0.3%
Manufacturing	11	11.3%	1,550	52.1%
Wholesale Trade	3	3.1%	31	1.0%
Retail Trade	10	10.3%	305	10.3%
Transportation & Warehousing	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Information	10	10.3%	424	14.3%
Finance & Insurance	5	5.2%	18	0.6%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	5	5.2%	44	1.5%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	6	6.2%	112	3.8%
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation	3	3.1%	34	1.1%
Educational Services	3	3.1%	158	5.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	10	10.3%	109	3.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2	2.1%	30	1.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	2	2.1%	31	1.0%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	10	10.3%	64	2.2%
Public Administration	3	3.1%	46	1.5%
Unclassified Establishments	7	7.2%	0	0.0%
Total	**96**	100%	**2974**	100%

** **Source:** Esri Business Analyst*

Top Employers

The area chamber of commerce, Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. (GMG), maintains a list of the area's top employers of which nine are within the planning area. Among them is Taylor Corporation, Mankato Clinic, Kato Engineering, Capstone, Lindsay Windows, Wis-Pak, KEYC, and South Central College. Job growth is anticipated to continue as the Northport Industrial Park continues to develop and additional commercial activity takes hold. **Table 5** identifies these and other employers included in GMG's Top 70 Employers in the Greater Mankato Area. Major employers were also identified previously in **Figure 18**.

Table 5. Top 70 Employers in Greater Mankato*

Employer	Employees	Employer	Employees
Taylor Corporation	2,200	Lil Bee's Learning Center	80
Mayo Clinic Health System	1,871	Alltech (2019)	76
Minnesota State University, Mankato	1,600	Eide Bailly	74
Mankato Clinic	751	Pioneer Bank	73
Gustavus Adolphus College	580	United Prairie Bank	71
Walmart Distribution Center	545	Buffalo Wild Wings	62
Blue Earth County	475	City of North Mankato	61
Kato Engineering; subsidiary of Nidec	434	Schmidt Siding and Window	61
Johnson Outdoors	360	Oak Terrace Assisted Living of North Mankato	60
E I Microcircuits	300	The Free Press Media	60
City of Mankato	287	Volk Transfer	59
Nicollet County	277	Xcel Energy	59
Creation Technologies	275	Americare Mobility Van Inc.	57
Cambria	252	Laketown Electric Corporation	53
Jack Link's	249	Ziegler Cat (2020)	53
Minnesota Valley Action Council	230	St. Peter Food Co-op & Deli	52
Federated Insurance	209	All American Foods, Inc. (2019)	52
South Central College	206	Ardent Mills	50
MRCI	201	KEYC	50
Consolidated Communications	200	True Value Distribution Center	50
Monarch Healthcare Management	187	Waste Management (2019)	50
Maple River Schools	172	Ecumen - Mankato & St Peter	45
Dotson Iron Castings	155	First National Bank of Minnesota	42
MEI - Total Elevator Solutions (2020)	152	Kato Roofing, Inc.	40
Associated Finishing	130	Minnesota Valley Federal Credit Union	39
Wis-Pak of Mankato, Inc (2019)	125	RE/MAX Dynamic Agents	37
Lindsay Windows	120	House of Hope, Inc.	36
Associated Finishing Inc	130	APX	35
ISG	110	Birchwood Cottages	35
Vetter Stone	103	Rasmussen University	35
Coughlan Companies/Capstone	100	Carlson-Tillisch Eye Clinic	34
Schwickert's Tecta America (2019)	100	CLA (Clifton Larson Allen)	34
The Orthopeadic & Fracture Clinic, P.A.	99	VINE Faith in Action	33
LJP Waste Solutions	89	Brunton Architects	30
Industrial Fabrication Services	85	Kato Moving and Storage	30

Source: *Greater Mankato Growth. Those highlighted are located in the planning area.*

Future Market Potential

Existing businesses provide service options for healthcare, specialized clothing production, financial assistance, auto repair and maintenance, and some general convenience. Participants from both the Visioning Survey and the SCC Student, Faculty, and Staff Survey expressed a desire for more amenities (i.e. grocery store, restaurant, other convenience businesses, coffee shops, ice cream shop, strip mall, etc.) in various locations in the planning area (**Figure 20**). Commerce Drive commercial/retail does provide a business district nearby that includes some of the requested amenities, however many wish to see more along the Lookout Drive Corridor. Some students, faculty, and staff suggested that these amenities might attract them to live near campus along with more affordable rental units.

The previously mentioned Northwest Growth Area Study Market Analysis identifies market potential for several of the mentioned retail uses including feasibility of locating a grocery store in the area, the potential for restaurants, and other uses. Locating a grocery store in Upper North has been studied previously and is repeatedly requested by residents. The market analysis states that demand exists in

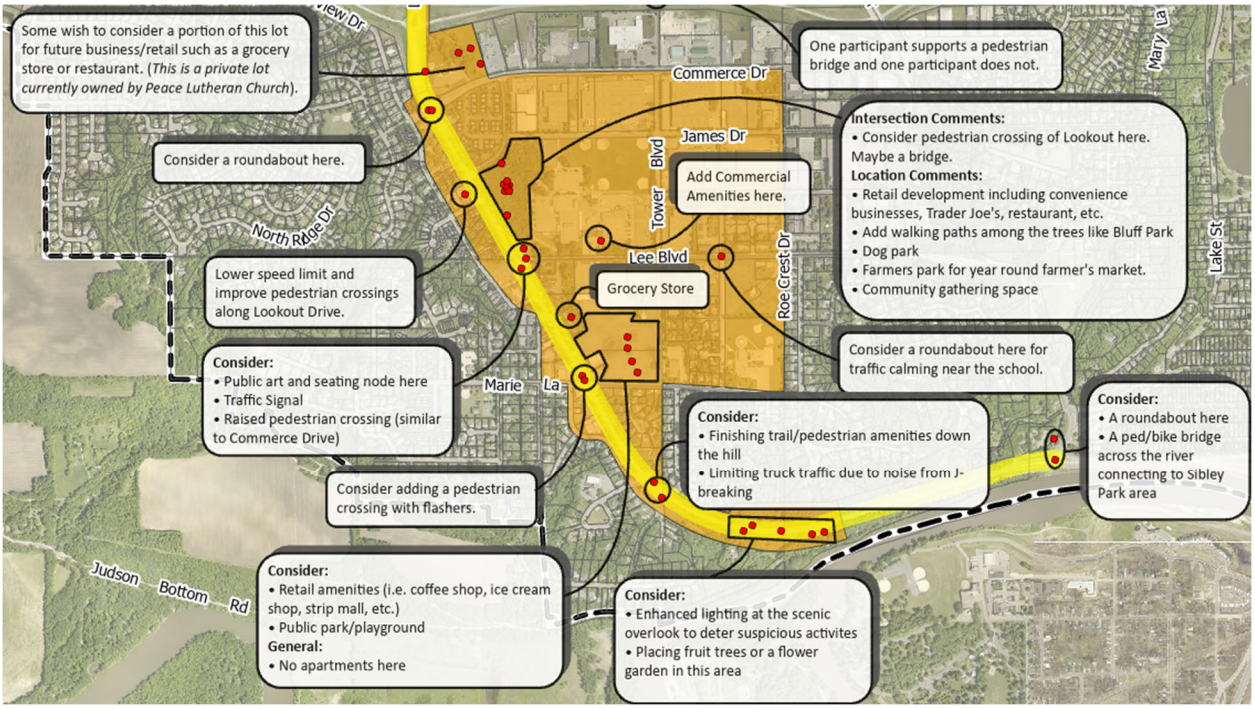


Figure 20. Input gathered through the community-wide Public Visioning Survey. Full figure included in Appendix A.2.

the area to support a grocery store of roughly 25,000 sq ft. The City has since been marketing the area to grocery stores to explore prospects.

Many would like to grow Lookout Drive into a major business district, suggesting there are opportunities for new, innovative development to match recent investment on such properties as the Mankato Clinic location. Some would like mixed use development with amenities such as retail and restaurants mixed with apartments that could serve students and provide a new sense of energy to the area.

C. Retail Demand Outlook

A Retail Demand Outlook Report was generated by Esri for the same Retail Trade Area (*hereafter referred to as the "trade area")* used for the Northwest Growth Area Study Market Analysis (**Figure 21**). City staff felt it was appropriate to use this already defined area as it will also be served by new businesses in the planning area. The report contains household-based consumer spending data for the trade area. Data includes forecasted 2022 consumer spending and 2027

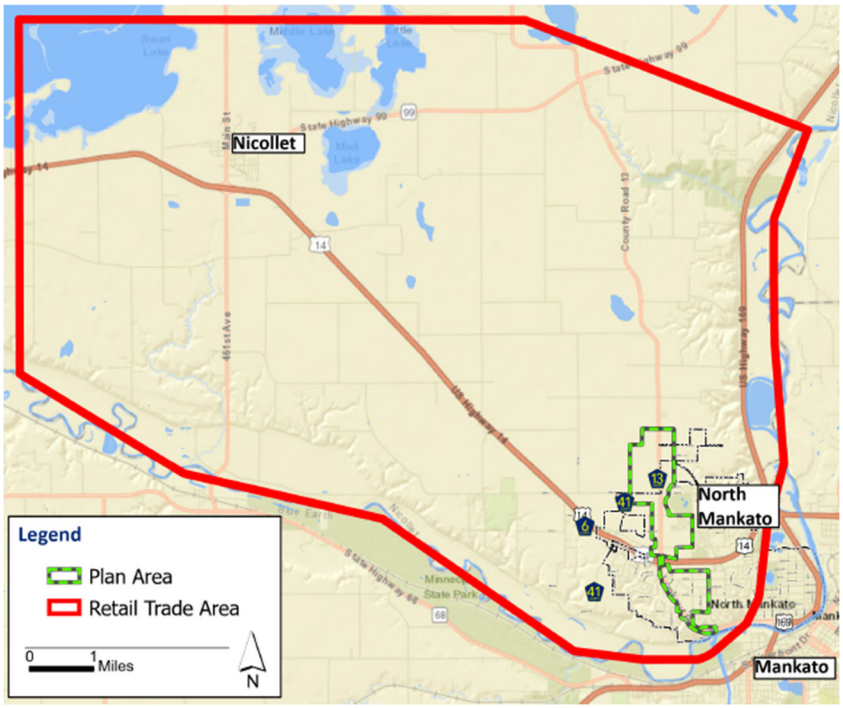


Figure 21. Retail Trade Area defined in the 2020 Northwest Growth Area Study.

forecasted demand for select consumer spending variables which is derived from 2018 and 2019 Consumer Expenditure Surveys from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data show significant projected spending growth in the trade area over the 5-year period in Apparel and Services ($2.3M), Entertainment and Recreation ($3.5M), Food ($9.9M), Home Maintenance and Remodeling Services/Materials ($3.9M), and Vehicle Fuel/Maintenance/Repairs ($3.8M). The full Retail Demand Outlook Report is included in **Appendix B**.

D. Development and Redevelopment Opportunities

Figure 18 illustrates opportunities for development and redevelopment within and around the planning area. The potential for new development north of Highway 14 has been well documented and is extensive with vacant land within and around the Northport Industrial Park. South of the highway, opportunities are scarcer.

There is vacant land south of ZEF Energy, between Lookout Drive and Tower Boulevard which is zoned I-1 Planned Industrial. This land is suitable for industrial type uses that contribute beneficially to the integration of surrounding residential, business, and industrial uses. Multi-family residential development could be accommodated in this zoning district if it is directly associated with an industrial use. Just south of that is the vacant land zoned R-4 Multiple Dwelling and is suitable for multi-family residential. As discussed, some envision mixed commercial and residential uses on this site which would require a zoning change to accommodate.

A string of residential lots along Lookout Drive, just north of the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection is currently zoned I-1 Planned Industrial but is guided for commercial use in the Future Land Use Plan (identified in **Figure 18**).

As mentioned, the South Central College has wooded land in the northwest quadrant of their property they've identified in their Master Plan as underutilized. This land could be a redevelopment opportunity.

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1. Continue to target Northport Industrial Park growth.

Objective 1.1: Continue trends in job creation by attracting new industry.

Policy 1.1.1: Continue to purchase and prepare land for industrial development in the Northport Industrial Park.

Policy 1.1.2: Consider incentives for industries considering locating in the Northport Industrial Park.

Goal 2. Expand the number and variety of businesses on Lookout Drive

Objective 2.1: Explore opportunities for new development and redevelopment within and around the planning area.

Policy 2.1.1: Encourage and facilitate commercial and/or mixed-use development on vacant and underutilized properties by working with property owners and interested developers.

Policy 2.2.2: Continue to grow the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection as one of four major business districts in North Mankato.

Policy 2.2.3: Target new innovative types of commercial and mixed-use development in the planning area.

Policy 2.2.4: Target commercial development that responds to the forecasted demand identified in the trade area.

NON-MOTORIZED CONNECTIONS

Existing Conditions

Various non-motorized facilities are located in and around the planning area with many along or intersecting Lookout Drive. The following describes existing and proposed connections along with system gaps and barriers. **Figure 22** illustrates non-motorized connections.

A. Connections

Various sidewalks and on- and off-street trails connect Lookout Drive to nearby parks, schools, businesses and existing and proposed recreational facilities. Lookout Drive itself includes trail and sidewalk on both sides for most of its extent within the planning area. North of Highway 14, Howard Drive, Carlson Drive, and Timm Road each have multi-use trails intersecting facilities on Lookout Drive. These connections provide access to Benson Park, the Caswell North Soccer Complex, Dakota Meadows Middle School (DMMS), and the Caswell Park Sports Complex.

Facilities on Commerce Drive, North Ridge Drive, and Marie Lane south of Highway 14 connect Lookout Drive to Hoover Elementary School, Pleasant View Park, North Ridge Park, Tower Park, the Commerce Drive Business District, and several residential neighborhoods.

North Mankato Trail Loop System

There are several loop trails in the North Mankato Trail System that intersect Lookout Drive in various locations. North of Highway 14, the “Gran Fondo” and “Prairie” loops cross now CSAH 13 (Future Lookout Drive) at Timm Road. South of Highway 14, the Prairie Loop intersects with the North Ridge Loop and the Commerce Trail at Lookout Drive’s intersection with North Ridge Drive/Commerce Drive. Here, the Prairie Loop continues south to Marie Lane where it then turns east. Trail segments on Lookout Drive and Marie Lane will be improved in 2024 with a Hoover Elementary SRTS project.

B. System Gaps and Barriers

System Gaps

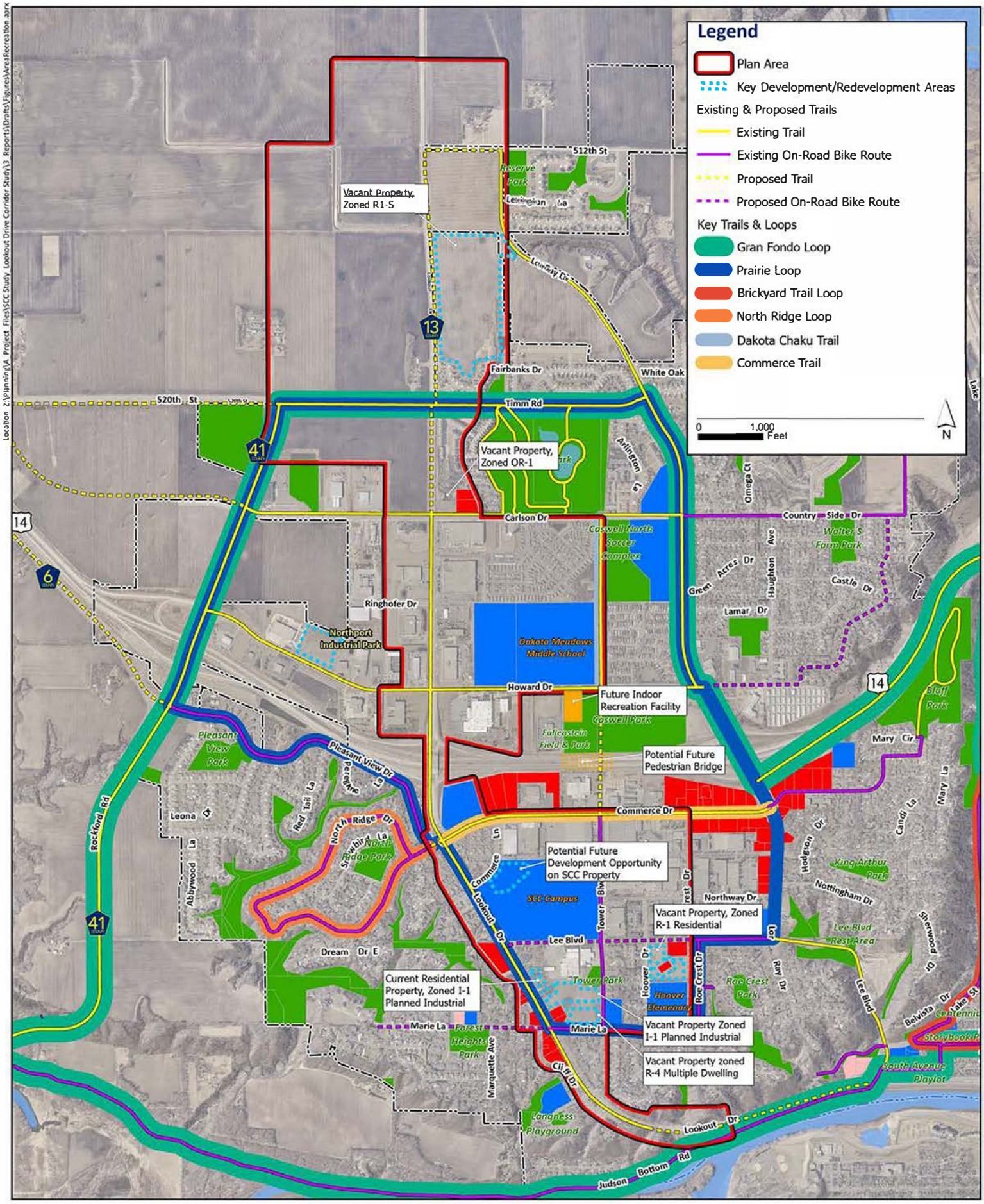
The most notable gap in the system within the planning area is perhaps south of Carol Court extending to the Lookout Drive/Lee Boulevard (south) intersection. The potential for this trail connection has been studied extensively in the past, most recently in the Lookout Drive Corridor Study. This is discussed more in the Area Design section.

North of the highway, the existing three-lane roadway configuration from Highway 14 to Carlson Drive is planned to continue north of Carlson Drive as development occurs and transition of the roadway from rural to urban becomes necessary. This conversion will continue pedestrian/bicycle facilities on each side of the CSAH 13.

Upper North Mankato lacks a direct, north-to-south trail connection. It’s anticipated a future pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Highway 14 will complete this connection as discussed further in this section.

System Barriers

A 2021 SRTS Parent Survey distributed to parents of DMMS students showed that crossing major roads, including Highway 14, Commerce Drive, Lookout Drive, Howard Drive, and Lor Ray Drive, was a major deterrent for parents allowing children to walk to school. However, children within a 2-mile radius of the school are still ineligible to ride the bus. This means that several large residential



NORTH MANKATO MINNESOTA

Lookout Drive Area Plan

Figure 22: Non-Motorized Connections

January 2023

neighborhoods have residents that are forced to drive children or have them walk or bike to school. Similarly, participants in the Highway 14 Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study suggested that crossing highway ramp intersections can be dangerous and is undesirable.

Public input for this plan and the Lookout Drive Corridor Study shows that residents perceive Lookout Drive as a barrier to safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. This input comes from a wide array of responders, not just parents of children who would otherwise walk/bike to school. While the Corridor Study did recommend improvements to Lookout that could alleviate issues, there is much uncertainty as to when improvement implementation might occur. Minor, spot improvements to the roadway to improve signal timing and the quality of pedestrian/bicycle crossings are anticipated to occur in the short term, while major road improvements that would reduce the number and width of lanes are longer-term improvements. It should be noted that these improvements are recommended and are not necessarily going to be implemented as prescribed in the Corridor Study. Alternatives are described in the Area Design section.

The North Mankato ADA Transition Plan also identifies various deficiencies in the sidewalk and trail system that will need to be removed to allow safe access and crossings by all users. Some deficiencies will be fixed with the Hoover Elementary School SRTS Project in 2024 while others are included in a prioritization schedule in the plan as well as street reconstruction/resurfacing projects identified in the City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Future System

New system connections will be pursued per the City's Trail System Plan as development occurs and/or refinements to the system are necessary. ADA improvements will continue to be prioritized through updates to the ADA Transition Plan and CIP projects. Through these efforts, gaps identified north of Carlson Drive, south of Carol Court, and streets adjoining Lookout Drive will be prioritized and barriers to safe and efficient access to facilities removed.

A. Facilities with Potential to Increase Non-Motorized Transportation Usage

Planned Indoor Recreation Facility

An indoor recreational facility is proposed to be located north of Fallenstein Park in the Caswell Park Sports Complex. This facility is anticipated to provide basketball, tennis, and other fitness facilities along with opportunities for programs from the Taylor Library and other area entities. This will undoubtedly draw non-motorized traffic from area residents.

Proposed Highway 14 Pedestrian Bridge

A future pedestrian bridge crossing Highway 14 from Commerce Drive to the Caswell Park Sports Complex is a proposed addition to system that would complete a major north/south connection with opportunities for enhanced area recreation and safer routes to schools. As mentioned, a feasibility study was completed for this bridge and it has also been mentioned in many other plans. The bridge would allow for a major north/south connection in Upper North.

A pedestrian bridge in this location could provide residents both north and south of Highway 14 and, potentially, SCC students access to:

1. A new indoor recreation facility for fitness, programming, and recreation activities
2. DMMS and/or Hoover Elementary School
3. Sporting events at Caswell Park

4. Fallenstein Park and the North Mankato Splash Pad
5. Retail and service amenities in the Commerce Drive Business District
6. An additional recreational trail route
7. Benson Park

If the City decides to pursue a dedicated pedestrian bridge over Highway 14 in this location, it will be important to improve connections to and from nearby residential neighborhoods. One idea that could supplement the pedestrian bridge and connect neighborhoods south of the highway would be to provide a trail underpass of Lookout Drive. This could be located south of its interchange with Highway 14 and connected to a new trail on the south side of the Highway that connects to the bridge. **Figure 23** depicts a conceptual pedestrian bridge along with an east/west trail expansion of the Bluff Valley Trail that exists east of Lor Ray Drive. Trail underpasses are shown for Lor Ray Drive and Lookout Drive to maximize safe access for neighborhoods.

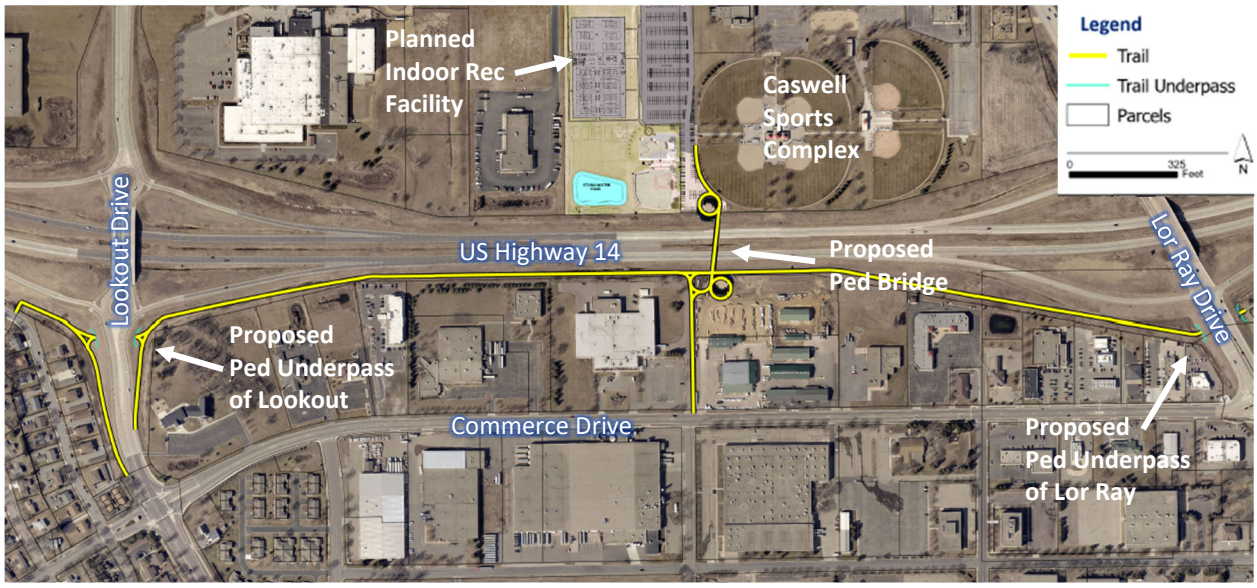


Figure 23. Proposed Highway 14 Pedestrian Bridge location and conceptual east/west trail extensions.

Multi-Family/SCC Student Housing

If higher-density multi-family and/or student housing options are constructed in the planning area, it would undoubtedly increase non-motorized activity in the area. The City will need to ensure higher-density housing facilities are well connected to the sidewalk and trail system.

Non-Motorized Connections Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1. Ensure Lookout Drive non-motorized facilities connect seamlessly to the North Mankato Trail System and other priority facilities.

Objective 1.1: Ensure sufficient on- and off-road trail and sidewalk accommodations connect Lookout Drive to area schools, parks, and other recreational facilities nearby.

Policy 1.1.1: Finish trail/sidewalk connections to priority locations identified in the North Mankato Trail System Master Plan.

Policy 1.1.2: Plan for trail/sidewalk connections from Lookout Drive to priority facilities in newly developed and redeveloped areas as they occur.

Policy 1.1.3: Remove system barriers that prevent safe non-motorized travel along and across Lookout Drive by removing ADA non-compliant barriers identified through the ADA Transition Plan and implementing recommended short- and longer-term improvements identified in the 2022 Lookout Drive Corridor Study.

Policy 1.1.4: Update the SRTS Plan, improving facilities that connect to area schools.

Objective 1.2: Ensure area residential neighborhoods are connected to priority facilities in and around the Lookout Drive Area Plan area.

Policy 1.2.1: Consider a grade-separated, off-road trail connection from residential neighborhoods west of Lookout Drive to area schools, parks, and other recreational facilities east of Lookout Drive.

Policy 1.2.2: Continue pursuit of a pedestrian bridge over Highway 14 that would facilitate safer routes to area schools, recreational facilities, and commercial amenities as well as complete a major north/south trail connection in Upper North Mankato.

Policy 1.2.3: Ensure higher-density residential uses are well connected to the North Mankato Trail System.

AREA DESIGN

As previously mentioned, participants in the public process describe Lookout Drive north of the highway as industrial, boring, underutilized, etc. and south of the highway as residential, outdated, and busy. Some participants wished to see the planning area infused with seating areas and public art while others wish to see a safer, more inviting pedestrian and bicycle environment along and across Lookout. And, as with other areas in the community, the City strives to incorporate these attributes. The following narrative discusses considerations for enhanced safety, streetscaping, traffic calming, public gathering, and structure design along and around lookout drive.

Streetscape

A. Roadway Design

The Lookout Drive Corridor Study identifies issues and provides short-term, longer-term, and opportunity-driven improvement recommendations to alleviate those issues on the corridor. Transportation needs identified in the Corridor Study used to develop improvement alternatives include:

1. The need to improve safety and complete gaps in pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
2. The desire to right-size the roadway to meet vehicle demand.
3. The desire to slow traffic to increase safety and decrease vehicle noise.

Improvement alternatives were generated in response to these needs for each study segment. **Figure 24** illustrates Corridor Study segments and recommended typical sections from the Lookout Drive Corridor Study. Improving ADA facilities per the ADA Transition Plan is a short-term recommendation for all roadway segments.

North Segment

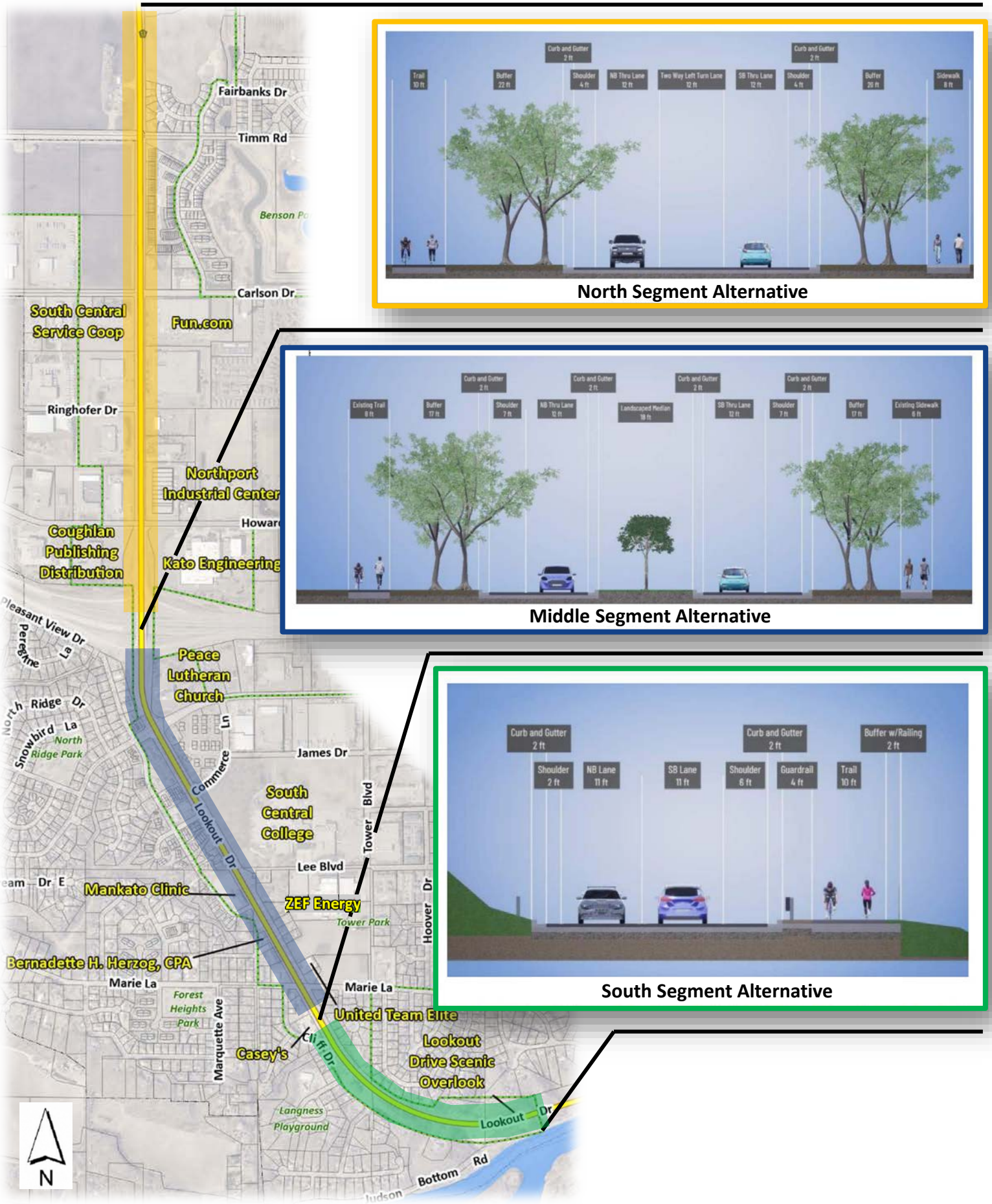
This segment passes through the Northport Industrial Park and some higher-density residential uses north of Highway 14. Improvement in this segment includes a continuation of the three-lane section existing today as development occurs along CSAH 13 and the roadway is converted from rural county road to urban. The Lookout Drive/Howard Drive intersection may transition to a roundabout..

Middle Segment

Lookout Drive is often characterized as a roadway that is too large for its context, specifically south of Highway 14 where today the roadway is a five-lane section with center turn lane. As the former Highway 14, the roadway may have utilized that width. However, its well documented that its width is now seen by many as a barrier to non-motorized transportation and a nuisance to neighboring residential who are unhappy with vehicle noise and high speeds along the roadway.

The middle segment of the Corridor Study from Highway 14 south to Carol Court is recommended to receive highest level of improvement, including a lane reduction that would decrease the number of lanes and increase amenity space in the pedestrian realm. This would improve non-motorized transportation safety by reducing the distance pedestrians and bicyclist need to cross and providing pedestrian refuge in center medians. Narrowing the roadway will also slow traffic speeds naturally and is a necessary step in lowering the posted speed limit on the roadway.

Figure 24. Lookout Drive Corridor Study Recommended Alternatives



South Segment

Citizens have long requested a dedicated pedestrian/bicycle trail traversing Lookout Drive hill from Carol Court to the southern intersection of Lee Boulevard. Options are shown for this trail addition.

B. Corridor Enhancement Opportunities

There are some desirable qualities along the corridor such as large boulevards where off-street, non-motorized facilities are located with mature trees lining the roadway (**Figure 25**). This provides ample space to accommodate seating nodes with benches and public art features along with other desirable streetscaping amenities.



Figure 25. Tree-lined boulevard along Lookout Drive south of Highway 14.

Participants in the public process support these features and some local businesses even offered to assist with costs associated with the installation of small parklets or seating nodes.

A comprehensive strategy for streetscape improvement and beautification incorporates elements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, lights, trees, planting beds, trash receptacles, decorations, and seating nodes which all help to establish a balanced and attractive mix of amenities along a corridor. These amenities and more are identified on the following page along with several recommendations for potential location of these elements in the following **Figure 27**.



What is a Seating Node?

A node is a place where people gather. This often occurs at the intersection of two or mor paths of travel. A widening of the sidewalk and a concentration of site amenities including are common design features of a node along a roadway.

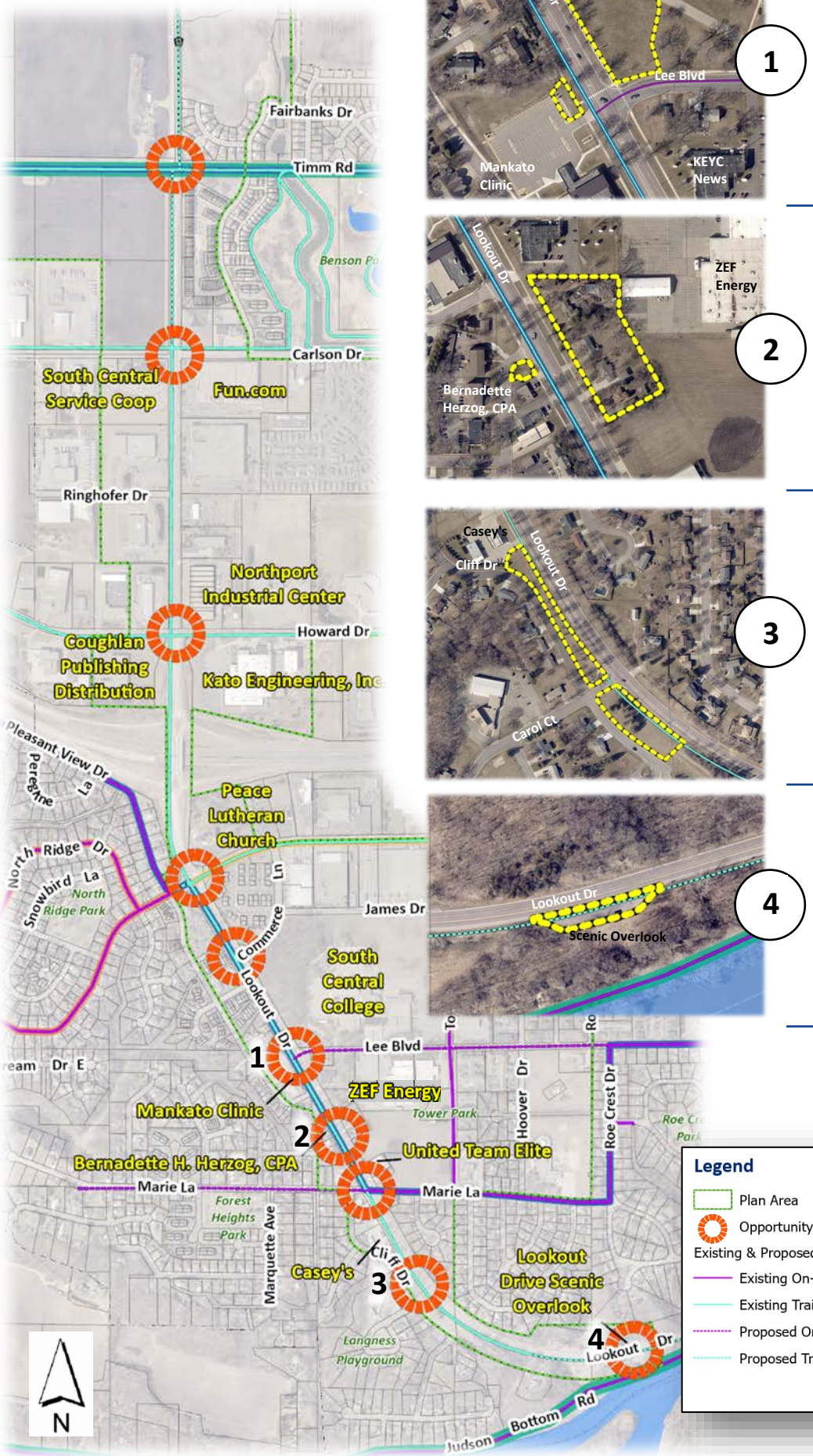
Nodes have been incorporated previously along Commerce Drive and in the Central Business District on Belgrade Avenue.

Figure 26. Existing Seating Node on Commerce Drive built in response to recommendations from the Commerce Drive Area Plan.

Corridor Enhancement Opportunities - Streetscape Elements

Wider Sidewalks & Multi-use Trail	Sidewalk and trails are an essential element in a street profile and, in accordance with ADA accessibility guidelines and best practices, should be provided on all streets in urban areas. Pedestrian connectivity and the walkability of a community has been shown to have a positive impact on land values and the desirability to live and work in an area. Sidewalks should be 6-feet minimum in width and multi-use trails, 10-feet. Pedestrian routes should be buffered from traffic where possible.	 
Enhanced Lighting	Lighting contributes to safety, function, and character of a roadway. “Typical” roadway lighting functions as a safety measure to illuminate and improve visibility of all users at intersections and crosswalks. Enhanced lighting includes pedestrian-scale lighting with potential aesthetic treatments which contribute to the character and brand of a community.	  
Street Trees	Planting trees in the public right-of-way have several benefits in addition to their ecological importance. Large mature street trees are found to be the most important indicator of attractiveness in an area. Property values, energy costs savings, and perception of safety have all been shown to increase along tree lined streets. Several considerations - including utility conflicts, sight-lines, and pollutants - need to be taken into account when locating trees along a roadway.	  
Planters/Planting Areas	Plant material contributes to local character, traffic calming, and pedestrian-scale enhancements. These areas can be at-grade, raised, or in moveable planters. They can be located in the boulevard or behind the back of walk. Ongoing maintenance needs, pollutant exposure and sight-lines are all considerations that need to be taken into account when identifying location of planting areas and the plant material itself.	  
Branding & Wayfinding	Developing a consistent look, or brand, of a neighborhood or community contributes to the creation of a unique sense of place, arrival, and of community. Wayfinding helps to guide residents and visitors to local and regional destinations and is often incorporated within a branding package. Directional signage, gateway structures, banners and site furnishings are all elements that can contribute to a community brand.	  
Site Amenities (Benches, Waste Receptacles, etc.)	Benches, waste receptacles (trash and recycling), bicycle racks, bicycle fixit stations, and bollards are all examples of site amenities. These elements contribute to user-experience and corridor character. Groupings of site amenities ~~of~~ occur at intersections or gathering spots.	  

Figure 27. Lookout Drive Corridor Enhancement Opportunities





Opportunities to incorporate public art and/or seating nodes exist at various intersections like this one on Lookout Drive. The City should begin discussions with Mankato Clinic and SCC to gage interest in implementing amenities in the locations shown left.

Business owners along Lookout Drive have expressed interest in beautification. Businesses located near the identified green space in the top left of the picture would support a parklet in that location. The area to the right is targeted for future commercial use and could accommodate public art or a seating node in site design.

Casey's, who owns the northern lot shown left, has suggested they may be able to contribute to costs of a node and/or public art implementation in that location. The City-owned lot to the south is an opportunity for usable public space also.

Locations like this scenic overlook on Lookout Drive are low-hanging fruit when it comes to locations for public art.

Structure Design

Participants in the public process did not comment on the architectural cohesiveness of buildings along Lookout Drive. However, there are things to consider for industrial type buildings north of Highway 14, commercial type buildings south of Highway 14, and existing and potential multi-family type residential buildings along the corridor.

A. Industrial Buildings

The North Mankato Port Authority has made every effort to ensure high quality construction materials are used on industrial buildings in the Northport Industrial Park. This is made possible through negotiations during land sales from the Port Authority to industrial interests. The City has historically purchased and prepared land for industrial development and has provided incentives to developers such as connections to city utilities and roadway extensions. In return, developers are asked to use higher-quality materials in the construction of industrial buildings that include concrete and other masonry products to avoid barn-type metal buildings with corrugated steel panels which are perceived to look substandard over time.





Figure 28. Examples of industrial buildings using high-quality materials in the Northport Industrial District. Source: Google Maps, https://bluestarps.com/

However, not all land in the Northport Industrial Park is sold to developers by the City. Some purchase from private owners which removes the City's ability to negotiate materials. The City should establish design guidelines for the industrial park, similar to those established for the CBD to encourage developers to continue using higher-quality materials in the future.

B. Commercial Buildings

Commercial properties along the corridor are vary auto-oriented and lack cohesive architectural design. If the City wishes to establish this as a major business district in the community, they'll need to encourage developers to create aesthetically pleasing commercial buildings that better utilize large properties and add to the character of the area.





Figure 29. Examples of existing commercial buildings on Lookout Drive. Source: Google Maps

The City should also consider design guidelines for commercial development to encourage cohesive design. This could be accomplished by establishing an overlay district to control design elements. When possible, commercial developers should consider mixed-use properties with commercial on the ground floor and residential dwellings or office space above. **Figure 30** provides examples from nearby Mankato.



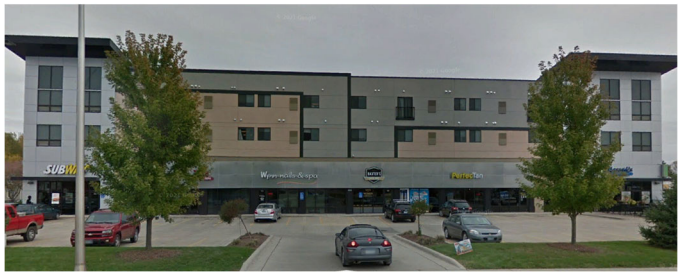


Figure 30. Examples of area mixed-use development with commercial on the ground floor and residential above. Source: Google Maps.

C. Multi-Family Residential

The planning area does have some higher-density residential along Lookout Drive and side-streets. Recent investments have been made to improve many of these properties. Examples are shown in **Figure 31**.

However, there is a new wave of apartment complexes being developed in many cities, including the Mankato area, that incorporate innovative design features. The City should target multi-family development that includes innovative design features moving forward. One example could be the complex shown in **Figure 32** below.




Figure 31. Existing multi-family dwellings along Lookout Drive.



Figure 32. New multi-family development in the area. Source: Google Maps

Area Design Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1. Implement improvements identified in the Lookout Drive Corridor Study to accommodate increased traffic, improve user safety, and enhance area aesthetics and vitality.

Objective 1.1: Implement short-term improvements for all segments of Lookout Drive recommended in the Lookout Drive Corridor Study.

Policy 1.1.1: Improve ADA deficiencies along the corridor listed in the North Mankato ADA Transition Plan.

Policy 1.1.2: Implement spot pedestrian crossing and safety improvements identified in the Lookout Drive Corridor Study for all segments of Lookout Drive.

Objective 1.2: Convert CSAH 13 north of Lookout Drive to an urban three-lane section from a rural two-lane.

Policy 1.2.1: Examine traffic patterns on CSAH 13 as development occurs to effectively plan the conversion of CSAH 13 from a rural section to an urban section.

Objective 1.3: Reconstruct Lookout Drive south of Highway 14 to Carol Court, reducing the number of lanes and improving user safety.

Policy 1.3.1: Look for funding opportunities to assist with implementing longer-term recommended improvements.

Objective 1.4: Add a multi-use path to Lookout Drive between Carol Court and Lee Boulevard (south).

Policy 1.4.1: Look for funding opportunities to assist with constructing a multi-use path in this location.

Goal 2. Implement a comprehensive strategy for streetscape improvement and area beautification.

Objective 2.1: Incorporate streetscape elements that enhance the character and safety of Lookout Drive.

Policy 2.1.1: Incorporate streetscape amenities such as lighting, public art, street furniture, planters, trees, etc. that will improve the character of the Lookout Drive Corridor.

Objective 2.2: Ensure new development and redevelopment incorporate aesthetically pleasing, architecturally cohesive design that improve area character.

Policy 2.2.1: Consider providing structure design guidance by establishing an overlay district to encourage developers to use high quality materials when constructing industrial facilities continuing trends in the Northport Industrial Park.

Policy 2.2.2: Consider providing structure design guidance by establishing an overlay district that could be applied to community business districts outside of the CBD to promote innovative commercial development throughout the city.

Policy 2.2.3: Encourage multi-family development that incorporates innovative or enhanced design features to improve area aesthetics.

APPENDIX A – Public Involvement

APPENDIX A.1 – Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

South Central College Area Plan/Lookout Drive Corridor Study

Steering Committee Meeting #1

October 5th, 2021 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Meeting Summary

Attendees: Roxy Traxler – SCC; Tim Anderson – SCC; Heather Peterson – Fun.com; Michael Mulvihill – Taylor Corp.; Steve Hatkin – Mankato Clinic; Ralph Bade – Casey's; Tim Hartwig – Peace Lutheran Church; Therese Coughlan (and others) – Coughlan Companies; Brian Sowers – U.S. Bank Rep; Jim Whitlock – City Council Member; Sandra Oachs – City Council Member; Matt Lassonde – City Planner

1. **Introductions (5 mins)**

2. **Project Background and Overview (15 mins)**
    a. MAPO Lookout Drive Corridor Study
    b. SCC Area Plan

- *Matt described to the group that there are two plans running concurrently including the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization's Lookout Drive Corridor Study and the City of North Mankato's Lookout Drive/South Central College Area Plan.*
- *The presentation slides are attached to this summary and provide background and overview information.*

3. **Project Schedules (5 mins)**
    a. MAPO Lookout Drive Corridor Study
    b. SCC Area Plan

- *Matt walked the group through project schedules stating that both processes will run through September 2022*
- *Matt mentioned upcoming public engagement for the Lookout Drive Corridor Study is beginning on October 11th with the Farmer's Market Pop-up Event and a virtual open house extending from October 14th to October 31st.*

4. **Discussion/Q & A (15 mins)**
    a. Issues Identification
    b. Visioning

- *Matt facilitated discussion with the group beginning with the following questions:*

    - *What strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and/or threats (SWOT) do you see within the study area (Lookout Drive/South Central College Area Plan related)?*
    - *What concerns/issues do you have with transportation along Lookout Drive (Lookout Drive Corridor Study related)?*
- *Summary of SWOT Related Questions pertaining to the Lookout Drive/South Central College Area Plan:*
    - *Development:*
        - *Questions arose regarding area housing and amenity needs.*
            - *What is the status of market rate apartments in the area to accommodate students? What is the appetite of students to want to live on/near campus?*
                - *If built, would students fill them?*
                - *The group suggested engaging students.*
                - *City staff to reach out to SCC and discuss engagement options.*
                - *Others suggested polling other area businesses for their thoughts on additional multi-family in the area.*
                - *One asked if an inventory has been taken of vacancies in the area. Matt mentioned that the city is completing a housing study at this time which will be done soon and will provide an inventory and vacancy status of area multi-family.*
                - *The group agreed there are several good walkable multi-family development examples in the area that could be presented to the public as options for potential implementation.*
            - *Would a mixed-use development work, similar to University Square on the Minnesota State University, Mankato campus? The group stated this would provide students and locals with amenities and apartment options while potentially serving as a catalyst for other similar development in the area. Vacant land at the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection, south of MICO, may be a good option for this.*
    - *Area Design:*
        - *Ralph B. requested that a pedestrian/bicycle rest area/node be considered on the grass area south of the store on Lookout Drive. Ralph B. suggested the Casey's foundation may be able to commit some funding for implementation. This is a good opportunity for public art similar to what has occurred on Commerce Drive.*

- *Summary of transportation related questions (Lookout Drive Corridor Study Related):*
    - *Freight Traffic:*
        - *Fun.com stated semis entering/exiting property swing into the center turn-lane for a wide turn; vehicles traveling behind often don't recognize that the trucks are still turning right and will attempt to pass in the thru-lane. Crashes have occurred due to this movement and uncertainty.*
        - *Semis using Commerce Lane often back up to Lookout Drive and on James Drive.*
    - *Pedestrian/Bicycle:*
        - *Crossings on Lookout Drive are few and far between south of Highway 14; One participant suggested the study team consider signalized pedestrian crossings in that stretch similar to what exists on Stoltzman Rd. at West High School.*
        - *Councilmember Oachs suggested there is significant pedestrian/bicycle movement up the Lookout Drive hill from Lee Boulevard. Some suggested that additional multi-family development will likely generate more, and the city should consider accommodations for that traffic.*
    - *Transit:*
        - *One stated that the transit stops at the junction of Lookout Drive and Howard Drive do not have shelters; in the winter months, crossing guards, pedestrians, and bicyclists should be able to go into a shelter.*
        - *SCC reps suggested that student bussing is an issue as lots of students travel to/from SCC on the bus. North Mankato recently examined and rerouted bus transit through the city. Will need to engage students to fully understand issues.*
    - *Traffic Operations:*
        - *Some suggested the southbound lanes merging in front of Casey's store cause vehicles to speed up and "race" to get in front of each other as they approach the downhill slope to Lower North. Casey's management considers this a major safety issue for vehicles exiting/entering their property and for vehicles traveling through in general. Ralph B. suggested making the right thru-lane a dedicated right-turn lane for accessing businesses beginning at the traffic signal at the Lookout Drive/Marie Lane intersection.*
        - *Ralph B. also asked if Casey's northern access could be converted to an "enter only" access and the south an "exit only." This would require discussions with Matt's Auto Lab as they depend on the northern access for customer traffic.*

- *Environmental:*
  - *Councilmember Oachs asked if the study team has considered hillside erosion on Lookout Drive hill. Matt mentioned he'd make the ravine master plan completed by the city available to the project team for their consideration.*

5. **Next Steps (5 mins)**
   a. SCC Area Plan Existing Conditions Research
   b. Focus Group Meetings – In-Person; Throughout October
   c. Lookout Drive Corridor Study Open House – Virtual; October 14th – October 31st
   d. SCC Area Plan Visioning Survey – Online; Early- to Mid-November
   e. Steering Committee #2 – In Person or Online?; Mid-November

- *Matt made reference to next steps while presenting the project schedule during the presentation.*

South Central College Area Plan/Lookout Drive Corridor Study

Steering Committee Meeting #2

March 28, 2022 @ 1:00 PM

AGENDA

Attendees: Roxy Traxler, Matt Raker, Bryan Sowers, Michael Mulvihill, Heather (*Fun.com*), Matt Lassonde

1. **Project Updates (20 mins)**
    a. Lookout Drive Area Plan
        i. Visioning Survey results overview

- *City staff provided an overview of the Visioning Survey results and maps for the plan drafted to date.*
- *There were comments on the importance of big ideas like the potential pedestrian bridge over Highway 14 from Commerce Drive to the Caswell Sports Complex. The commentor suggested the bridge is a great idea and should be considered along with a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Highway 169 connecting North Mankato to Mankato.*
- *There were concerns that a bridge across Highway 14 wouldn't be accessible. City staff assured facility design would be accessible.*
- *There were questions about whether small parks/art nodes were being considered; City staff mentioned several locations where the City is looking to integrate including near Casey's, near Herzog CPA, potentially near the SCC campus and other locations. This would require further discussion with all property owners to gauge interest.*
- *During the map review, staff discussed development opportunities on vacant land and on some underutilized properties. Participants in the Visioning Survey identified a vacant portion of the Peace Lutheran Church property as a possible location for commercial opportunities. Also, the SCC future plans show a portion of the northern part of the property that might be an opportunity for housing or commercial development in the future. Staff suggested that either of these ideas would require significant discussion with property owners on their vision for the future of their properties.*

        ii. Draft Vision and Guiding Principles Review

    b. MAPO Lookout Drive Corridor Study
        i. Virtual Open House

- *City staff presented the issues identified through the corridor study and provided an overview of the alternatives being generated. Alternatives north of Highway 14 are primarily development-driven (will occur as the area develops and need arises). Options*

south of Highway 14 are aimed to alleviate traffic concerns and pedestrian movements in the near term.

- *City staff mentioned that much of what the groups are hearing through public input is that pedestrian/bicycle movements along and across Lookout are unsafe and/or lacking, noise from traffic is an issue, and traffic speeds are high.*
- *City staff mentioned that one of the goals of the study was to identify what Lookout Drive will be in the future. Will it be a truck corridor that remains much like it is today? Or will it be a pedestrian friendly corridor with slower traffic speeds and safer accommodations?*
    - *There was support expressed for an improved pedestrian bicycle environment and potentially rerouting truck traffic from Lookout to the highways. This raised concerns about how rerouting trucks from Lookout might increase truck pressure on Lor Ray and/or Lee Boulevard in the future. Staff suggested concerns would be addressed with the traffic study team.*
    - *Pedestrian/bicycle safety going down Lookout hill from Carol Ct to Lee Blvd was also a topic of discussion. Staff presented options from the Corridor Study that would provide a barrier between vehicle and ped/bike traffic on the south side where there is currently a shoulder frequented by users. Staff will continue to develop concepts for ped/bike safety in that section with the Corridor Study project team.*

2. Discussion/Q & A (20 mins)

- *Most of these items were discussed during the presentation of materials.*

a. Is there any input in the Visioning Survey results you support or would like to comment on? Do you have other ideas/perspectives that weren't captured?
b. Changes to the Guiding Principles and/or Vision Statement?

- *Time didn't permit review of the Guiding Principles and Vision Statement.*

c. What types of area design elements (think streetscaping; wider boulevards, grass median with trees, locations for public art and seating nodes, etc.) should be incorporated into the design?
d. What is the future of Lookout Drive?
    i. Will/should Lookout be a pass-through thoroughfare focused on vehicle mobility rather than focusing on design and a multi-modal atmosphere?
    ii. Should roadway design focus be to accommodate more freight traffic targeting connections between Highway 14 and Highway 169/access to Mankato?
    iii. How does your business rely on Lookout?
    iv. Can/should there be a road diet with an improved pedestrian realm? If this occurred, how would this impact your business?
    v. Can/should trucks be directed/encouraged to use Highway 14/Highway 169 rather than Lookout Drive?

3. Next Steps (5 mins)

a. Lookout Drive Corridor Study Open House Comment Processing

b. SCC Area Plan Draft Plan – In Progress
c. Steering Committee #3 – TBD (April tentatively)

- *The Corridor Study team is now processing the results of the virtual open house which will be considered along with the feedback received from this group and the recent Visioning Survey.*
- *City staff updated the group on next steps for the Corridor Study which will coincide with the Area Plan; Another round of public engagement will occur sometime in the summer.*
- *City staff will update the draft Area Plan and share with the steering committee in the coming months.*
- *Steering Committee participants are welcome to contact Matt Lassonde (507) 514-6456 at any time to discuss options or questions about either study.*

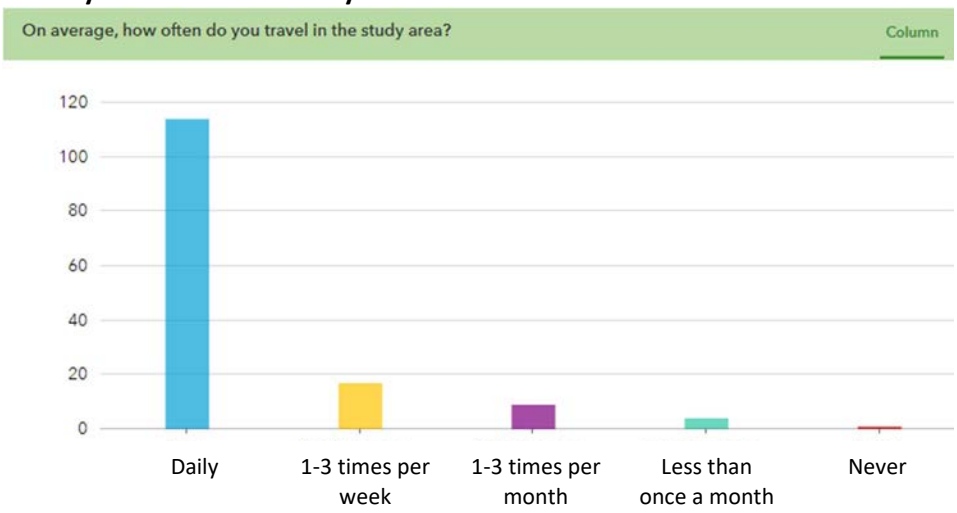
APPENDIX A.2 – Surveys

Public Visioning Survey

In February of 2022, City staff solicited public input on the Lookout Drive/South Central College Area through a community survey posted on the City website. Notifications were distributed through social media outlets as well as the Mankato Free Press newspaper. In total, there were 146 responses to the survey. The following outlines answers to the survey questions.

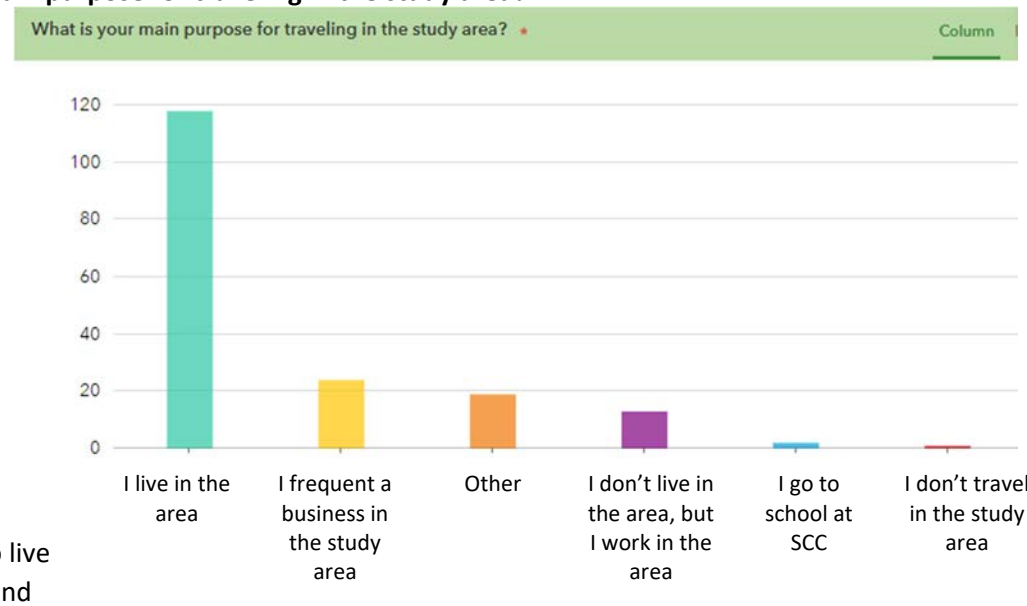
1. On average, how often do you travel in the study area?

79% of respondents travel in the study area daily. 12% travel in the study area 1-3 times per week, 6% 1-3 times per month, 3% less than once a month, and one respondent never travels in the study area.



2. What is your main purpose for traveling in the study area?

81% of respondents live in the study area. 17% frequent a business within the study area. 13% responded with “Other”; of these, the responses varied from “my kids attend school in the study area” to “visiting family who live in the study area” and



"exercise/walking". 9% of respondents work in the area, although they do not live there. 1% attend South Central College. One respondent never travels in the study area.

3. **Which businesses (if any) do you frequent in the study area?**

Casey's General Store was the most common response on Lookout Drive, and Kwik Trip was the most common response overall. Many respondents noted that they visit multiple businesses along Commerce Drive, especially Walgreen's, MGM, Big Dog, and Dollar Tree.

4. **In one word or short sentence, how would you describe the study area NORTH of Highway 14 today?**

The overwhelming majority of responses included the word "industrial." Other notable frequent responses were "boring," "underutilized," "open," and "empty." A few respondents used this space to note that they feel many people speed when they drive north of Highway 14 on Lookout Drive, which makes the roads feel unsafe.

5. **In the next 10 years (2031), what word or short sentence would you hope describes the study area NORTH of Highway 14?**

Many respondents highlighted the demand for a grocery store and other amenities in the study area north of Highway 14. Several addressed the need for Safe Routes to School for Dakota Meadows students. Quite a few used the words "vibrant," "diverse," and "inviting." There were mentions of making the area safer for pedestrians and bikers. A small contingent of respondents wants no change to the area.

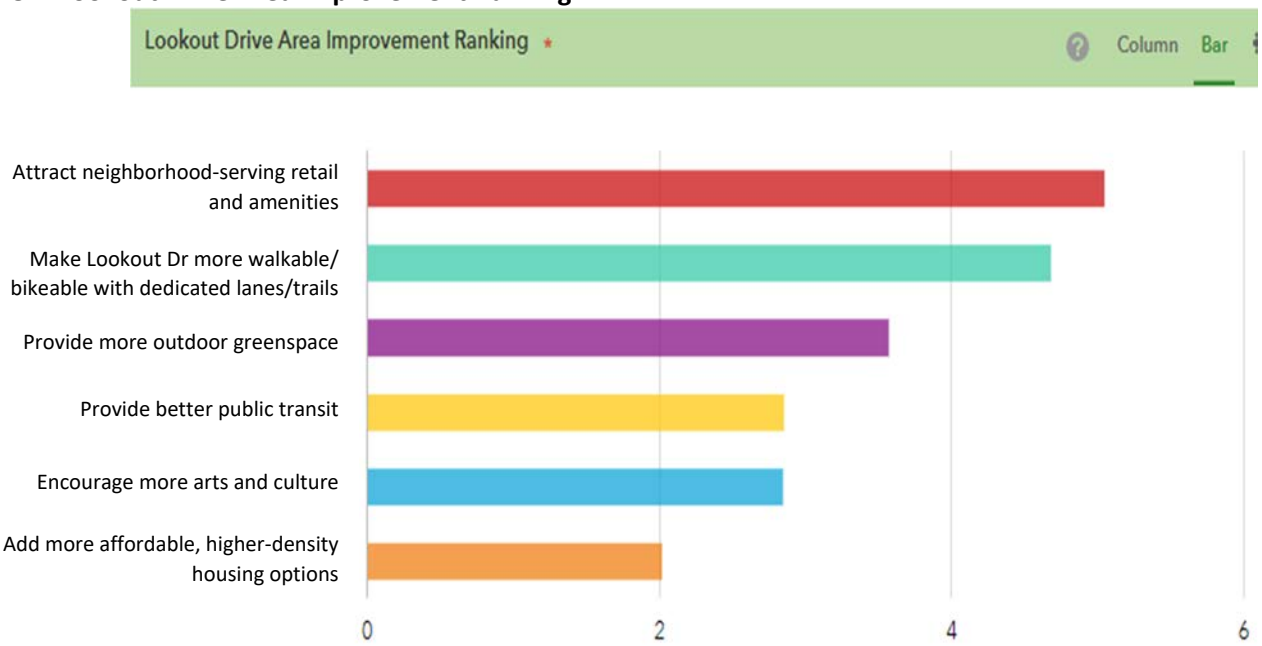
6. **In one word or short sentence, how would you describe the study area SOUTH of Highway 14 today?**

Many respondents used the word "residential" to describe the study area south of Highway 14. There were several allusions to this area as being "outdated" and "needing an update." Several respondents used terms like "busy" and "high traffic."

7. **In the next 10 years (2031), what word or short sentence would you hope describes the study area SOUTH of Highway 14?**

Responses were varied. A large number of respondents want the area to be "safe," "inviting," "friendly," and "vibrant." Many also spoke about wanting to keep the area "wooded," "green," and "natural"; but another contingent discussed wanting "amenities," "retail," and "new restaurants." There were some mentions of making the area "pedestrian/bike friendly."

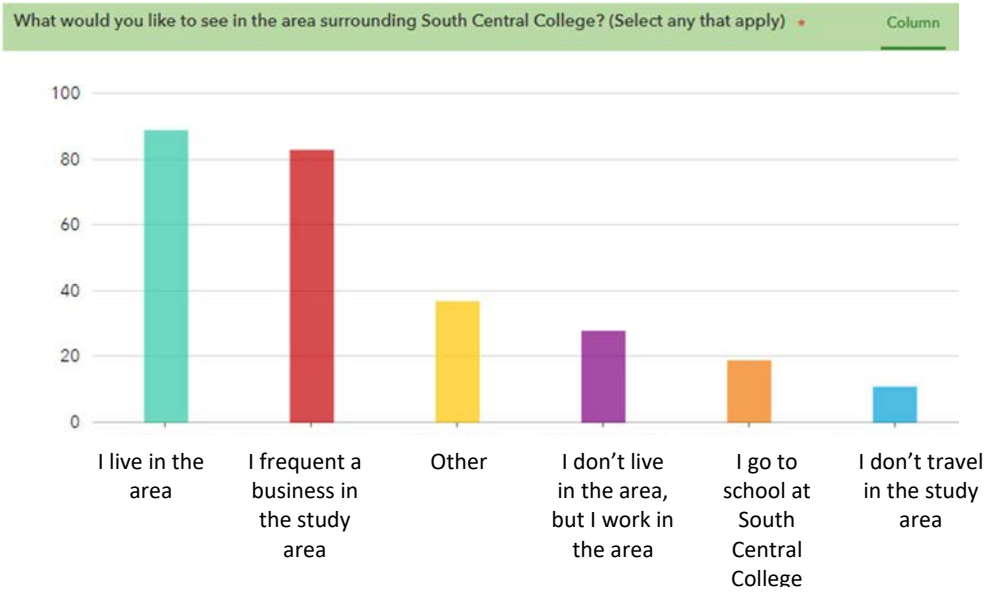
8. Lookout Drive Area Improvement Ranking



The top-ranked choice in this section of the survey was "Attract neighborhood-serving retail and amenities (grocery store, coffee shop, etc.). This was followed closely by the second-place choice, "Make Lookout Drive walkable/bikeable with dedicated lanes/trails." The third-place ranking was "Provide more outdoor greenspace." Fourth and fifth place were very even, with "Provide better public transit" narrowly edging out "Encourage more arts and culture, including public art." The least popular choice was "Add more affordable, higher-density housing options."

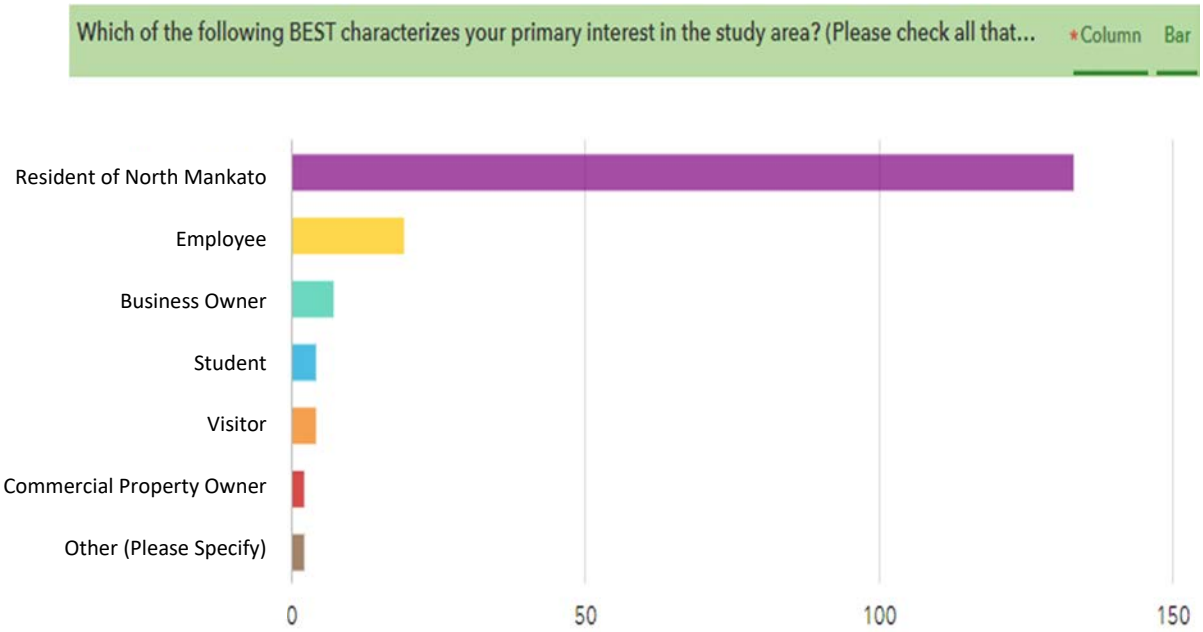
9. What would you like to see in the area surrounding South Central College? (Select any that apply)

89 respondents want to see additional retail amenities for students and residents. 83 would like improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities in and around campus. 37 wish SCC had athletic facilities. 28 would like to see off-campus housing for students and workers. 11 people wanted none of these things. There were 19



respondents who selected "Other." Several of these respondents stated that they enjoy the wooded area on/near SCC campus and would like that area to remain wooded. There were also mentions of expanding the farmer's market area and/or making it covered so that it can be used year-round.

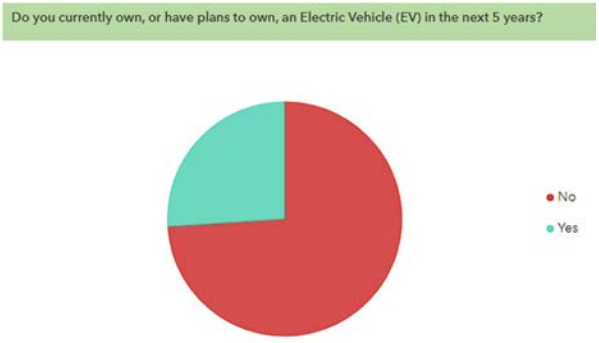
10. Which of the following BEST characterizes your primary interest in the study area?



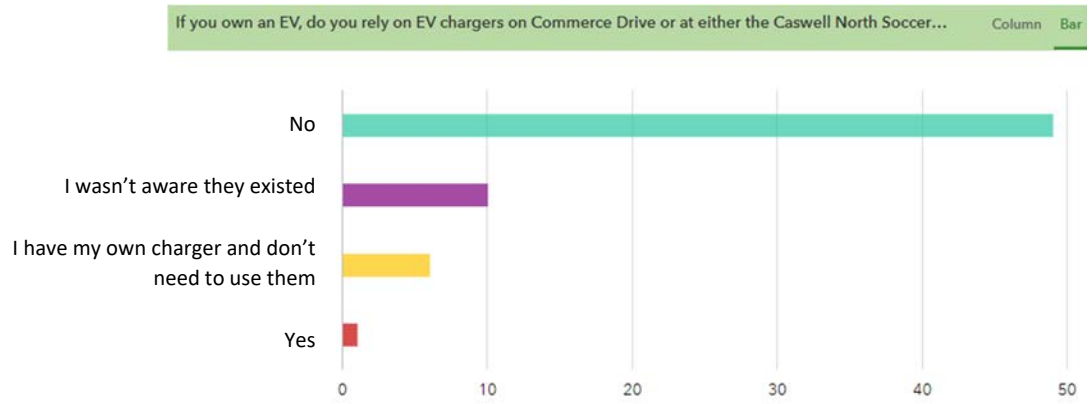
92% of respondents were residents of North Mankato. 13% were employed in the study area. 5% were business owners in the study area. 3% were students at SCC. Another 3% were visiting the area. 1% were commercial property owners. Of the two respondents who chose "Other," one attended church in the study area. The other was a former business owner whose business used to be in the study area.

11. Do you currently own, or have plans to own, an Electric Vehicle (EV) in the next 5 years?

72% of respondents have no plans to own an EV in the next 5 years. 26% either own or plan to own in the next 5 years. 3 respondents skipped the question.



12. If you own an EV, do you rely on EV chargers on Commerce Drive or at either the Caswell North Soccer Complex or Caswell Park?



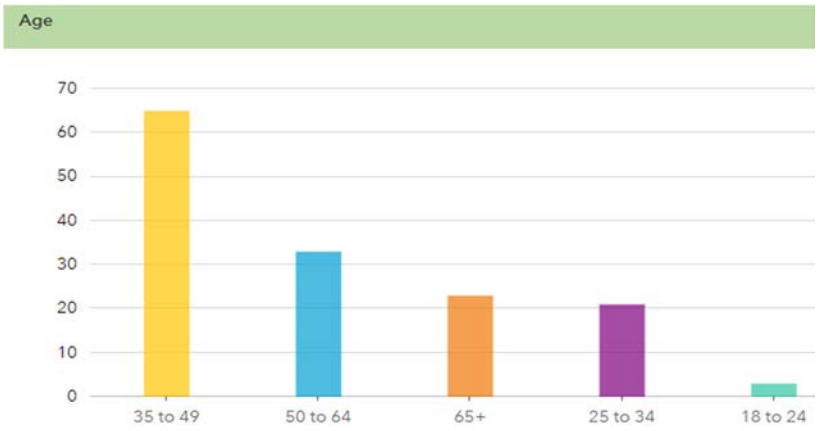
Of the 64 people who responded to this question, 49 of them do not rely on EV chargers at the places mentioned. 10 people were not aware these EV chargers existed. 6 people own their own chargers and don't need public EV chargers. Only one respondent uses the EV chargers at the places mentioned.

13. Please provide the zip code for your primary residence.

Nearly all respondents were from the 56003 (North Mankato) zip code. There were 6 respondents from 56001 (Mankato) and one respondent each from 56024 (Eagle Lake), 56074 (Nicollet), and 56093 (Waseca).

14. Age

45% of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 49. 23% were 50 to 64. 16% were 65+ years old. 15% were 25 to 34. 2% were 18 to 24.



15. Gender

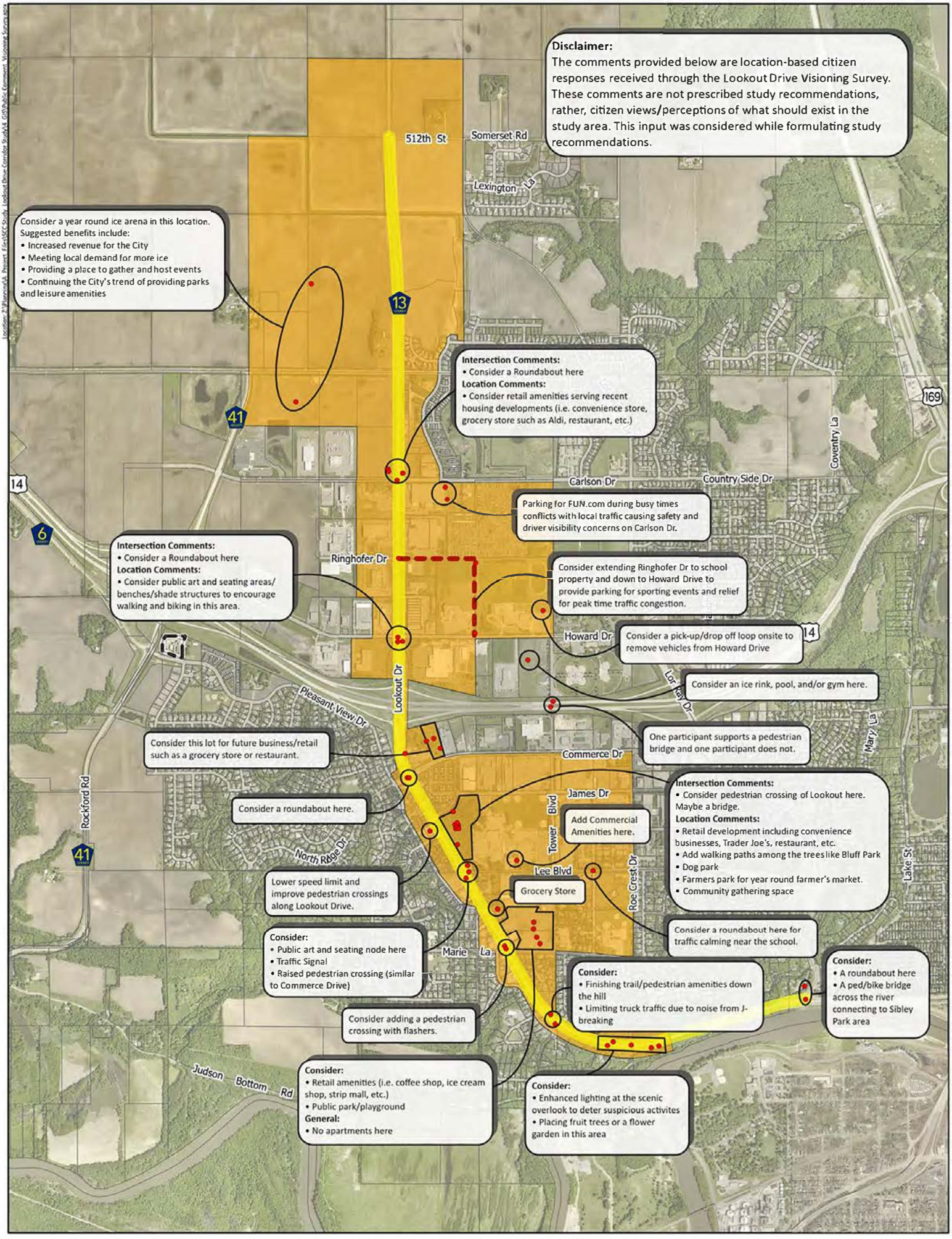
50% of respondents identified as Female. 45% identified as male. 5% preferred not to answer.

16. Race

90% of respondents were White. 8% preferred not to answer. 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native. 1% chose “Other,” but provided no additional information.

17. Annual Household Income

37% of respondents reported their household income between $100,000 and $199,999. 32% reported $50,000 to $99,999. 11% preferred not to answer. 9% reported making more than $200,000. 8% reported $25,000 to $49,999. 1% reported making $24,999 or less.


Disclaimer:
The comments provided below are location-based citizen responses received through the Lookout Drive Visioning Survey. These comments are not prescribed study recommendations, rather, citizen views/perceptions of what should exist in the study area. This input was considered while formulating study recommendations.
512th St
Somerset Rd
Lexington La
Consider a year round ice arena in this location. Suggested benefits include:
• Increased revenue for the City
• Meeting local demand for more ice
• Providing a place to gather and host events
• Continuing the City's trend of providing parks and leisure amenities
13
41
14
6
169
Intersection Comments:
• Consider a Roundabout here
Location Comments:
• Consider retail amenities serving recent housing developments (i.e. convenience store, grocery store such as Aldi, restaurant, etc.)
Coventry La
Carlson Dr
Country Side Dr
Parking for FUN.com during busy times conflicts with local traffic causing safety and driver visibility concerns on Carlson Dr.
Intersection Comments:
• Consider a Roundabout here
Location Comments:
• Consider public art and seating areas/ benches/shade structures to encourage walking and biking in this area.
Ringhofer Dr
Consider extending Ringhofer Dr to school property and down to Howard Drive to provide parking for sporting events and relief for peak time traffic congestion.
Howard Dr
Consider a pick-up/drop off loop onsite to remove vehicles from Howard Drive
Lookout Dr
Consider an ice rink, pool, and/or gym here.
Pleasant View Dr
Consider this lot for future business/retail such as a grocery store or restaurant.
One participant supports a pedestrian bridge and one participant does not.
Commerce Dr
Mary La
Rockford Rd
Consider a roundabout here.
James Dr
Tower Blvd
Add Commercial Amenities here.
Intersection Comments:
• Consider pedestrian crossing of Lookout here. Maybe a bridge.
Location Comments:
• Retail development including convenience businesses, Trader Joe's, restaurant, etc.
• Add walking paths among the trees like Bluff Park
• Dog park
• Farmers park for year round farmer's market.
• Community gathering space
North Ridge Dr
Lee Blvd
Roe Crest Dr
Lake St
Grocery Store
Lower speed limit and improve pedestrian crossings along Lookout Drive.
Consider a roundabout here for traffic calming near the school.
Consider:
• Public art and seating node here
• Traffic Signal
• Raised pedestrian crossing (similar to Commerce Drive)
Marie La
Consider:
• Finishing trail/pedestrian amenities down the hill
• Limiting truck traffic due to noise from J-breaking
Consider:
• A roundabout here
• A ped/bike bridge across the river connecting to Sibley Park area
Consider adding a pedestrian crossing with flashers.
Judson Bottom Rd
Consider:
• Retail amenities (i.e. coffee shop, ice cream shop, strip mall, etc.)
• Public park/playground
General:
• No apartments here
Consider:
• Enhanced lighting at the scenic overlook to deter suspicious activites
• Placing fruit trees or a flower garden in this area

South Central College Student-Faculty-Staff Survey
Summary of Results

In February of 2022, City staff solicited input from South Central College students, faculty, and staff through an online survey. There were 10 responses to the survey, and the answers are summarized below.

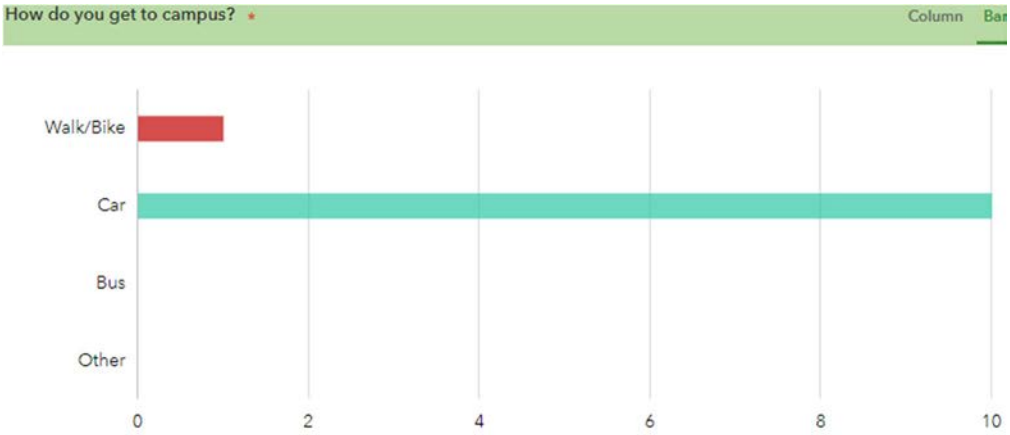
1. How far from the South Central College campus do you live?



2 respondents live within walking/biking distance. 2 respondents live in North Mankato, but too far away to walk/bike to Campus. 4 respondents live in Mankato, and 3 respondents live outside the Mankato/North Mankato area.

2. How do you get to campus?

All 10 respondents drive to campus in their own vehicles. In addition, one of the respondents sometimes walks/bikes to campus.



South Central College Student-Faculty-Staff Survey
Summary of Results

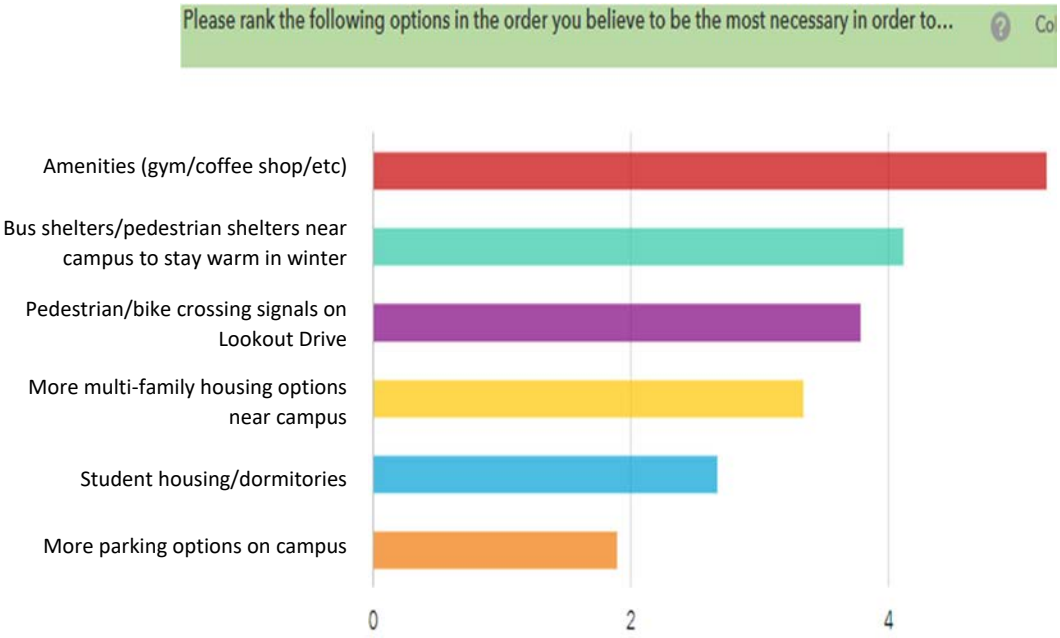
3. If you take the bus, please describe your experience bussing to campus. Have you had any issues?

None of the respondents currently take the bus. However, one respondent stated: "I would like to ride the bus from my class at MSU to SCC, but no such bus operates during the middle of the day."

4. In your opinion, what improvements could be made to Lookout Drive and the surrounding area in order to improve your commute to campus?

Notable responses to this question include a desire for more retail and dining options, a Trader Joe's, a drive-thru coffee shop, and improvements to pedestrian/bicycle crossing areas.

5. Please rank the following options in the order you believe to be the most necessary in order to improve the SCC Campus area.

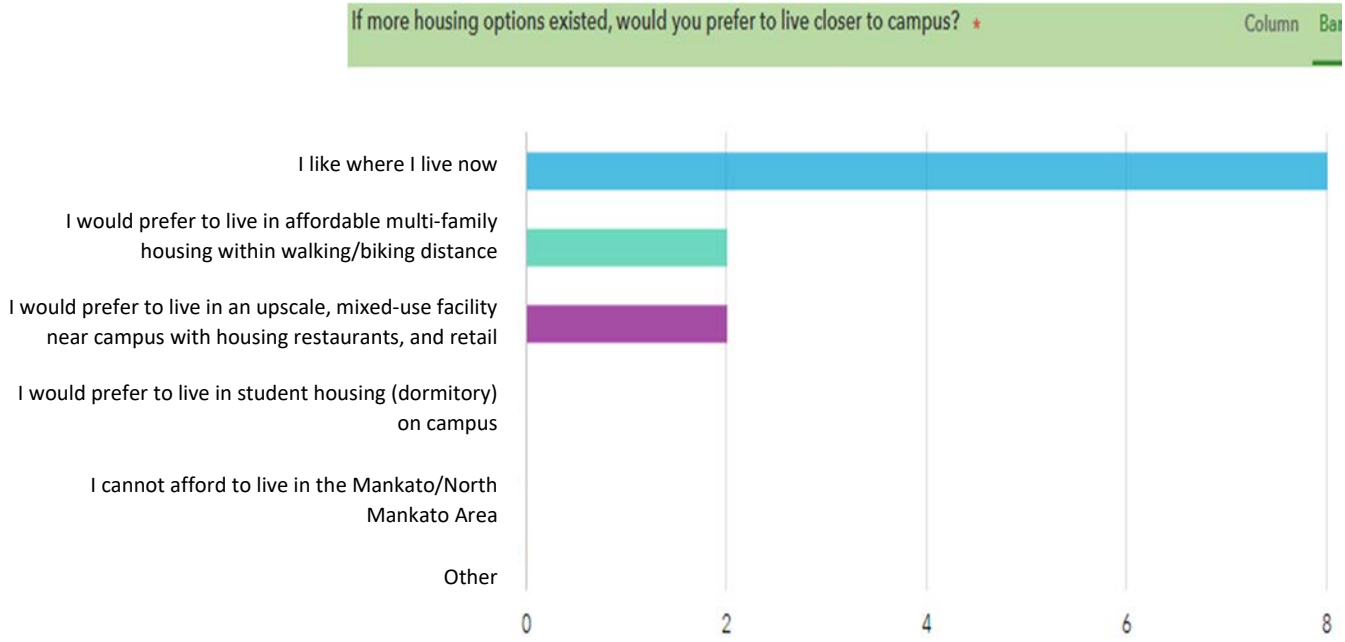


The top response was "Amenities (Gym/Coffee Shop/Etc.) Near Campus." Ranked second was "Bus Shelters/Pedestrian Shelters Near Campus to Stay Warm During Winter Commutes." In third place, "Pedestrian/Bike Crossing Signals on Lookout Drive." Fourth was "More Multifamily Housing Options Near Campus." Fifth place belonged to "Student Housing/Dormitories." In last place, "More Parking Options on Campus."

6. Please list any improvements not listed in question 5 above that you feel are necessary in order to improve the SCC Campus area.

Two respondents listed the need for a grocery store. There was also mention of more greenspace, a roundabout at the SCC entrance, secure bike parking options on campus, and weekend access to campus.

7. If more housing options existed, would you prefer to live closer to campus?



8 respondents chose "I like where I live now." Two chose "I would prefer to live in affordable multifamily housing within walking/biking distance," and two chose "I would prefer to live in an upscale, mixed-use facility near campus with housing, restaurants, and retail."

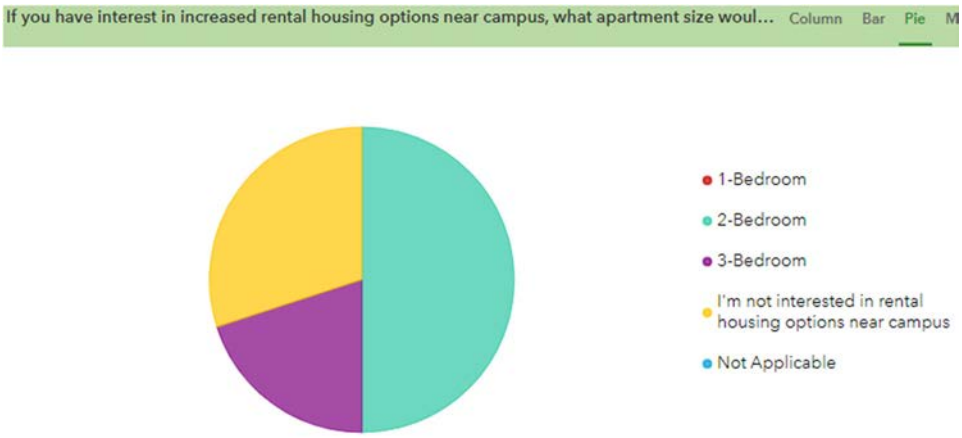
8. What amenities might attract you to live in multifamily housing near campus?

Grocery store (one respondent specified Trader Joe's), gym, and coffee shop were the most common responses. Also mentioned were: affordable rent, more dining options, entertainment venues, movies, bike parking, and covered (or underground) parking.

South Central College Student-Faculty-Staff Survey
Summary of Results

9. If you have interest in increased rental housing options near campus, what apartment size would you be interested in?

Five respondents would require a 2-bedroom apartment. Two respondents would need a 3-bedroom. Three respondents were not interested in rental housing options near campus.



10. Considering your answer to Question 9, could you afford market-rate rental housing ($650-$850) for an apartment?

All 10 respondents indicated that they could afford market-rate rental housing.

11. Please list any business you regularly frequent on Lookout Drive or Commerce Drive.

Kwik Trip, Walgreen's, Culver's, and Erbert & Gerbert's were the most popular responses, but many more businesses on Commerce Drive received mentions. There were no mentions of businesses on Lookout Drive.

12. Is there anything else you'd like us to know regarding the SCC Campus?

As there were only two responses to this question, both are included here:

"The current grocery items offered at Walgreens, Kwik Trip, Dollar store are convenient for the location, but these aren't full grocery stores so there are items I still need to go to Mankato to get. Often, the grocery items that are available at Walgreens are also more expensive. Kwik trip is nice that it offers the staples, like milk, eggs, bananas for a very decent price."

"external visuals are important, the college looks to much like a high school from the outside. maintain open space and green space. consider putting a nice walking path in the wooded area adjacent to campus"

APPENDIX A.3 – Open House Summary

2023 LOOKOUT DRIVE AREA PLAN

Open House Summary

August 2, 2023

A virtual open house was held to solicit public feedback on the Draft Lookout Drive Area Plan from July 12, 2023 – August 2, 2023. There were 17 participants in the virtual open house over the two-week period.

The following are comments received from participants.

Housing Related Comments

- One asked for more buildings to be closer together like a downtown environment.
- Some favored building higher density housing along Highway 13 as proposed in the plan. Some favored mixed commercial and residential as there is a need for commercial amenities with higher housing density in that location.
- One stated more apartments aren't needed. Another asked if there would be subsidies for contractors who want to build low-to-mid rent apartments because they are too expensive now.
- One stated that all housing must be focused on family friendly instead of apartments over businesses.

Economic Development Related Comments:

- Many would like a grocery store either along Lookout Drive, on Rockford Road, or near United Team Elite and the Dentist Office near Marie Lane. Some businesses mentioned include the addition of a Costco, Super Target, and more fast food options. Generally, participants agree that there should be more businesses along Lookout and Highway 13 and mixed-use development is welcome.
- One mentioned there is a need and opportunity for commercial retail on Highway 13 near Timm Road.
- One would like to see entertainment centers for children added to the mix.

Non-Motorized Connections Related Comments

- Many wish to see bike trails separate from roadways to improve safety.
- Some like ideas for trails under Lookout Drive and Lor Ray Drive. One wishes to see safer trails for children to get around without using cars. One expressed concern that trails wouldn't be used and there would be high maintenance needs. Some oppose a bridge over Highway 14.

- One requested improved walkability in Upper North. Another suggested crossing Lookout Drive is scary.

Area Design Related Comments

- Most like the idea of adding art along Lookout and feel visual appeal is important.
- A few don't support public art or seating nodes suggesting these types of amenities aren't used in other locations in the City.
- One opposes reducing lanes on Lookout Drive as proposed by the Corridor Study as there is no money for that and taxes are high enough.

General Comments

- One wants to stop adding roundabouts on streets.
- One would like to have an alternative connection from Lookout Drive to Rockford Road due to Judson Bottom Road closures.
- One would like to see better bus routes & more times they are available.

APPENDIX B – Esri Retail Demand Outlook

Retail Demand Outlook

NWG_RetailTrade 1
Area: 93.88 square miles

Prepared by Esri

Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Demographic Summary	2022	2027
Middleburg (4C)	56.4%	Population	13,157	13,200
Old and Newcomers (8F)	16.5%	Households	5,219	5,242
Green Acres (6A)	14.0%	Families	3,549	3,569
In Style (5B)	10.6%	Median Age	39.7	40.5
Prairie Living (6D)	2.5%	Median Household Income	$84,507	$97,167

	2022 Consumer Spending	2027 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Apparel and Services	$13,872,295	$16,149,807	$2,277,512
Men's	$2,634,681	$3,065,914	$431,233
Women's	$4,881,512	$5,685,144	$803,632
Children's	$2,081,393	$2,421,850	$340,457
Footwear	$3,224,953	$3,754,515	$529,562
Watches & Jewelry	$839,038	$977,091	$138,053
Apparel Products and Services (1)	$326,692	$380,606	$53,914
Computer			
Computers and Hardware for Home Use	$1,081,131	$1,257,782	$176,651
Portable Memory	$28,905	$33,671	$4,766
Computer Software	$59,626	$69,390	$9,764
Computer Accessories	$126,231	$146,910	$20,679
Entertainment & Recreation	$21,528,796	$25,072,586	$3,543,790
Fees and Admissions	$4,834,588	$5,636,485	$801,897
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)	$1,648,983	$1,922,212	$273,229
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips	$792,101	$923,017	$130,916
Tickets to Theatre/Operas/Concerts	$506,219	$590,743	$84,524
Tickets to Movies	$366,088	$425,861	$59,773
Tickets to Parks or Museums	$224,850	$261,714	$36,864
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips	$435,164	$508,022	$72,858
Fees for Recreational Lessons	$854,381	$997,010	$142,629
Dating Services	$6,802	$7,905	$1,103
TV/Video/Audio	$7,813,799	$9,095,820	$1,282,021
Cable and Satellite Television Services	$5,303,708	$6,175,952	$872,244
Televisions	$768,522	$894,101	$125,579
Satellite Dishes	$12,257	$14,238	$1,981
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players	$33,764	$39,317	$5,553
Miscellaneous Video Equipment	$102,044	$118,961	$16,917
Video Cassettes and DVDs	$52,946	$61,569	$8,623
Video Game Hardware/Accessories	$196,952	$228,836	$31,884
Video Game Software	$110,978	$128,895	$17,917
Rental/Streaming/Downloaded Video	$498,396	$579,377	$80,981
Installation of Televisions	$4,317	$5,025	$708
Audio (3)	$712,790	$829,649	$116,859
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment	$17,124	$19,901	$2,777
Pets	$4,901,153	$5,706,668	$805,515
Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies (4)	$803,664	$935,034	$131,370
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (5)	$750,191	$875,981	$125,790
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (6)	$1,261,377	$1,466,987	$205,610
Photo Equipment and Supplies (7)	$313,004	$364,282	$51,278
Reading (8)	$680,335	$792,425	$112,090
Catered Affairs (9)	$172,040	$200,480	$28,440
Food	$60,123,122	$69,984,703	$9,861,581
Food at Home	$35,429,038	$41,240,589	$5,811,551
Bakery and Cereal Products	$4,519,056	$5,261,266	$742,210
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs	$7,604,237	$8,852,931	$1,248,694
Dairy Products	$3,535,776	$4,116,297	$580,521
Fruits and Vegetables	$6,780,053	$7,892,728	$1,112,675
Snacks and Other Food at Home (10)	$12,989,916	$15,117,367	$2,127,451
Food Away from Home	$24,694,083	$28,744,115	$4,050,032
Alcoholic Beverages	$4,066,400	$4,739,144	$672,744

Data Note: The Consumer Spending data is household-based and represents the amount spent for a product or service by all households in an area. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. This report is not a comprehensive list of all consumer spending variables therefore the variables in each section may not sum to totals.
Source: Esri forecasts for 2022 and 2027; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2018 and 2019 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

January 11, 2023

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	2022 Consumer Spending	2027 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Financial			
Value of Stocks/Bonds/Mutual Funds	$191,347,290	$223,080,630	$31,733,340
Value of Retirement Plans	$691,295,674	$807,339,161	$116,043,487
Value of Other Financial Assets	$56,954,517	$66,413,299	$9,458,782
Vehicle Loan Amount excluding Interest	$20,416,338	$23,741,425	$3,325,087
Value of Credit Card Debt	$18,435,262	$21,479,724	$3,044,462
Health			
Nonprescription Drugs	$1,062,987	$1,237,065	$174,078
Prescription Drugs	$2,316,873	$2,697,784	$380,911
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	$652,441	$760,249	$107,808
Home			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (11)	$71,212,644	$83,113,697	$11,901,053
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	$19,356,566	$22,574,985	$3,218,419
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (12)	$4,231,725	$4,932,190	$700,465
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	$33,060,080	$38,482,385	$5,422,305
Household Furnishings and Equipment			
Household Textiles (13)	$661,128	$769,580	$108,452
Furniture	$4,297,357	$5,003,590	$706,233
Rugs	$211,274	$246,268	$34,994
Major Appliances (14)	$2,608,574	$3,039,245	$430,671
Housewares (15)	$590,786	$687,713	$96,927
Small Appliances	$347,149	$403,921	$56,772
Luggage	$110,641	$128,734	$18,093
Telephones and Accessories	$630,737	$736,471	$105,734
Household Operations			
Child Care	$3,570,980	$4,158,437	$587,457
Lawn and Garden (16)	$3,446,301	$4,017,886	$571,585
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	$467,467	$542,805	$75,338
Housekeeping Supplies (17)	$5,194,329	$6,046,374	$852,045
Insurance			
Owners and Renters Insurance	$4,418,396	$5,149,451	$731,055
Vehicle Insurance	$12,452,638	$14,484,594	$2,031,956
Life/Other Insurance	$4,109,234	$4,792,653	$683,419
Health Insurance	$28,028,499	$32,644,228	$4,615,729
Personal Care Products (18)	$3,270,407	$3,806,343	$535,936
School Books and Supplies (19)	$855,526	$995,183	$139,657
Smoking Products	$2,526,063	$2,937,369	$411,306
Transportation			
Payments on Vehicles excluding Leases	$18,293,649	$21,287,802	$2,994,153
Gasoline and Motor Oil	$15,936,855	$18,541,633	$2,604,778
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	$7,517,294	$8,748,982	$1,231,688
Travel			
Airline Fares	$4,042,630	$4,709,712	$667,082
Lodging on Trips	$4,740,394	$5,527,028	$786,634
Auto/Truck Rental on Trips	$360,937	$420,247	$59,310
Food and Drink on Trips	$3,959,360	$4,612,896	$653,536

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(1) Apparel Products and Services includes shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.

(2) Membership Fees for Clubs includes membership fees for social, recreational, and health clubs.

(3) Audio includes satellite radio service, radios, stereos, sound components, equipment and accessories, digital audio players, records, CDs, audio tapes, streaming/ downloaded audio, musical instruments and accessories, and rental and repair of musical instruments.

(4) Toys and Games includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, online entertainment and games, and stamp and coin collecting.

(5) Recreational Vehicles & Fees includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, payments on boats, trailers, campers and RVs, rental of boats, trailers, campers and RVs, and camp fees.

(6) Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.

(7) Photo Equipment and Supplies includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.

(8) Reading includes digital book readers, books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and single copies of magazines and newspapers.

(9) Catered Affairs includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.

(10) Snacks and Other Food at Home includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fats and oils, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips and other snacks, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.

(11) Mortgage Payment and Basics includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowners insurance, and ground rent on owned dwellings.

(12) Maintenance and Remodeling Materials includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.

(13) Household Textiles includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens, other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers and decorative pillows.

(14) Major Appliances includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.

(15) Housewares includes flatware, dishes, cups glasses, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.

(16) Lawn and Garden includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.

(17) Housekeeping Supplies includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.

(18) Personal Care Products includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, adult diapers, other miscellaneous care products and personal care appliances.

(19) School Books and Supplies includes school books and supplies for college, elementary school, high school, vocational/technical school, preschool and other schools.

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