

**Chapter 2: Land Use, Redevelopment, and Community Image**

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## **Section 1: Introduction**

This Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan describes how the City of Robbinsdale will attempt to guide land use and its future development. Because the City is a fully developed community, the strategy focuses on neighborhood protection and preservation, selective infill, redevelopment and continued image enhancement.

Over the next two plus decades, the City of Robbinsdale is forecasted to have 1,302 more people, 684 more households, and 1,000 more jobs. Robbinsdale's policy can accommodate the forecasts through land use regulation. The City must protect the charm of its traditional neighborhoods and its compact mixed use Downtown commercial area. The only way for the City to accommodate additional growth is to increase residential densities as a component of mixed land uses that help to preserve that small town, hometown feel. There are also Metropolitan Regional issues such as increasing housing density to prevent urban sprawl, the need for a variety of affordable housing types, and commercial and industrial development that are accessible to regional transportation infrastructure. Robbinsdale will need to continue to protect its neighborhoods, parks, and natural areas by using land use control wisely as the City accommodates the forecasted growth affiliated with the Metropolitan area.

Redevelopment will be the key to meeting the needs of the City through the year 2030. Specific redevelopment areas in the City have been identified in this chapter. When sites become available the City should work to guide those sites and facilitate redevelopment. Redevelopment is a chance for the City to handle its forecasted growth, correct poor land use decisions of the past, and take advantage of underutilized lands.

The interaction of major land uses form the land use pattern in Robbinsdale. A vital first step in the land use planning process is to understand the relationships between current land uses. The existing land use pattern in Robbinsdale is the result of a multitude of public and private decisions made over a period of time. These decisions were generally based on how the land should be used and where a development would be located. Factors affecting these decisions include population changes and shifts, economic bases and growth, technological advances, and political pressures and decisions.

## **Section 2: Land Use Inventory**

### **Existing Land Use**

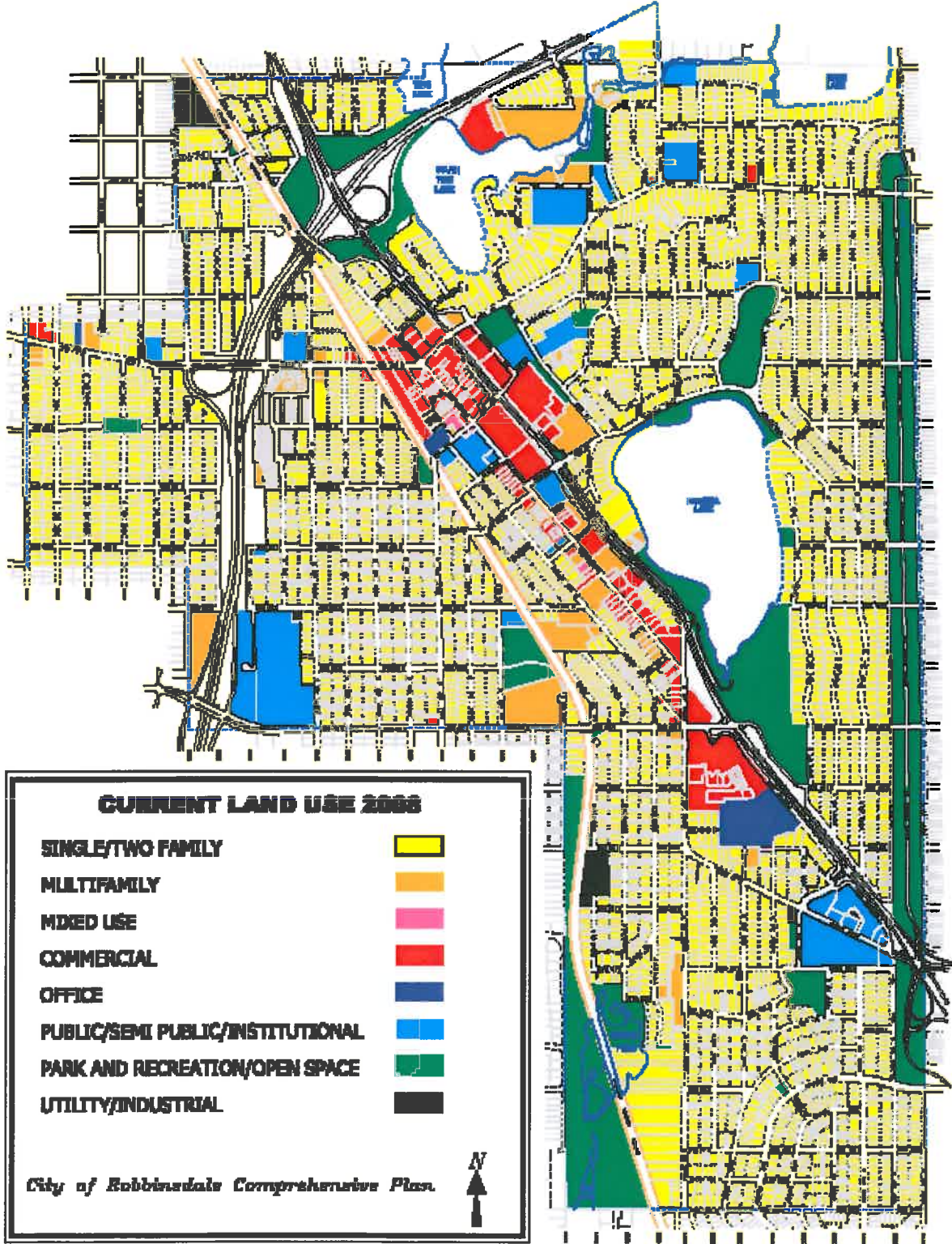
The following is an inventory of the existing land uses in Robbinsdale. **Table 2-1** shows existing land use in 2007 compared with 1999. **Figure 2A** shows existing land use patterns for the City of Robbinsdale. Some changes have occurred as a result of changing land use classification criteria.

**Table 2-1 Existing Land Use**

<b>Category</b>	<b>1999 Acres</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2007 Acres</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Existing Land uses within the urban service area</b>	1,780.0	100 %	1,909.5	100 %
Single/Two family Residential	801.7	45 %	828.41	43.4 %
Multiple Family Residential	42.75	2.4 %	61.4	3.2 %
Commercial (includes mixed use and office)	93.12	5.2 %	77.4	4.1 %
Industrial	5.6	0.3 %	10.1	0.5 %
Mining/extractions	0	0	0	0
Public and semipublic	59.96	3.4 %	65.1	3.4 %
Airports	0	0	0	0
Parks and recreation	109.93	6.2 %	173.1	9.1 %
Roadways	529.34	29.7 %	521.5	27.3 %
Open water	130.00	7.3 %	140.2	7.3 %
Utilities	N/A	N/A	10.1	0.3 %
<b>Land within the urban service area that is restricted for development</b>				
Environmental protection: e.g., wetlands, hydric soils, shoreland setbacks, bluffs/slopes, forests, floodplains, mitigation commitments, etc.	130.00	7.3 %	182.2	9.5 %
Public/semipublic use: e.g., parks and trails, highway/street rights-of-way, airports, utility easements	827.23	46.5 %	890.13	46.6 %
Historic preservation: e.g., historic sites, cemeteries/burial grounds, etc.	0	0	0	0
<b>Vacant developable land in the current urban service area (not restricted)</b>				
Single-family residential	0		3.85	0.2 %
Multifamily residential	0		2.00	0.1 %
Commercial	0			
Industrial	0			
Public and semipublic	0			
<b>Total Land Area of Community</b>	1,780.00		1,909.5	100 %

Source: Metropolitan Council, City of Robbinsdale

Figure 2A Existing Land Patterns



## **Residential**

Residentially zoned land accounts for 895 acres of the City's total land (see Table 2-1). Presently, 99.2% of this residential land is developed. Since the residential acreage is for all practical purposes fully developed, the available vacant residential land will not be sufficient to accommodate the projected increase of households in Robbinsdale. However, it should be pointed out that a small number of residential areas exist in the City that are under utilized. Under-utilized in this case means a single-family detached residential use occupying a double lot, or "turned-back" MnDOT right-of-way with potential for infill development. The City has an administrative procedure to separate double lots that are consistent with City standards. However, there is also interest in preserving larger lots to encourage new-construction of larger homes, a housing niche that is also underserved in Robbinsdale. There is approximately 3.4 acres of MnDOT right-of-way suitable for single-family (attached) development that may become available in the future. However, acquisition will be difficult because of title issues.

Since Robbinsdale has a predominantly single-family residential land use, select areas should be identified for higher density housing, especially along transportation corridors, and peripheral to commercial areas. The greatest opportunity to provide higher density residential use is through-mixed-use redevelopment, generally between West Broadway and County Road 81.

### **Residential Land Use Densities**

As a first tier suburb, Robbinsdale's single family housing density is fairly high, given the grid street pattern, alleys and lot widths of 40 and 50 feet. The City was considered fully developed when townhouses became a significant housing alternative. Townhouse development tends to be more successful with multiple acreage sites. Townhouse developments with as few as four units have been developed, but the homeowner's association resources and resident involvement often benefits from the depth offered by larger developments with greater numbers of units. Multiple acreage sites are challenging to assemble for a redevelopment scenario. By far, the largest townhouse development in Robbinsdale occurred with the redevelopment of a school site.

A large percentage of Robbinsdale's housing is high density. Rental apartment buildings were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's sometimes on remnant parcels of land less than ideal for high density land use.

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Current Acreage</b>	<b>Dwelling Units</b>	<b>Average Net Density*</b>
<b>Low Density Residential</b>	838 acres	4,921	5.87 du. / acre
<b>Medium Density Residential</b>	11.74 acres	181	15.4 du. / acre
<b>High Density Residential</b>	44.9 acres	1,285	28.6 du. / acre
<b>All Residential</b>	894.64 acres	6,387	7.14 du. / acre

\* Average Net Density excludes major public streets and parks

### **Low Density Residential**

Includes R-1, single family and R-2, single and two-family residential districts. The typical lot width is 50 feet with lot areas of 6,000 square feet. However, Robbinsdale has many 40 ft. wide legal non-conforming lots which are considered lots of record. The Average Net Density is 5.87 dwelling units per acre, which includes local streets and alleys. The area of half of a typical

street and alley width brings the typical average net lot area to 7,850 sq. ft. An unknown number rental units exist in single family homes that have become investment properties and remodeled without building permits or zoning approval.

### **Medium Density Residential**

The average townhouse development in Robbinsdale consisted of eight units prior to the redevelopment of the old junior high school site into Parker Village. All townhouses in Robbinsdale are in the form of row-houses. In retrospect, the quality of maintenance of the townhouse development depends on the strength of the homeowner's association. Small developments of less than eight units have few people to assume the demands of association board participation and have fewer financial resources in the event of default by one or more of the owners.

### **High Density Residential**

Robbinsdale has close to 1,300 apartment units, which is more than 20% of its housing, a significant percentage. Most of the apartments are affordable, partly because of their age and design. Some buildings have minimal unit floor space, green space and less than half of the required parking. Robbinsdale also has over 422 apartments that cater to the needs of seniors and disabled residents. The new Robbins Way building completed in July of 2009 provides an additional 36 affordable units for seniors.

### **Roadways**

Highways and streets actually make up the second largest land use in Robbinsdale. This might be attributed to a grid street pattern with alleys, but the City is also served by arterial highways 100 and County Road 81. Three grade separated interchanges providing access to highway 100 consumes land. However, MnDOT has provided the City with redevelopment opportunities through the "turn back" of excess right-of-way. These turn back areas are generally found on the edges of single-family neighborhoods backing up to the major highway and single-family detached housing has been found to be the most appropriate land re-use.

### **Commercial**

Commercially zoned land accounts for about 93.5 acres in Robbinsdale (see Table 2-1). There are three intersections in Robbinsdale around which commercial development is concentrated: 1) County Road 81 and 36th Avenue (Terrace Mall); 2) County Road 81 and 41st Avenue; 3) West Broadway and 41st Avenue (Old Town). Robbinsdale is served by a regional shopping center outside its boundaries, Brookdale. This existing center makes similar commercial development unlikely in Robbinsdale. In fact, there is a perception that Brookdale has lost commercial tenants to newer commercial development in developing out-lying suburbs along principal arterial highways.

The commercial development along West Broadway shows past trends of the streetcar era upon which the City was originally built. Later, with the construction of County Road 81, commercial growth acquired a "strip development" pattern. However, development does not provide optimum service to Robbinsdale's residents because it is oriented towards people traveling through. Thus, there is a need for continued development efforts and strategies that encourage a

compact, "pedestrian scale" Downtown area.

**Industrial**

Currently, no land is zoned industrial in Robbinsdale. Public policy has encouraged residential development rather than industrial. Industrial uses tend to require larger sites, often have outdoor storage, generate truck traffic and are incompatible with residential uses. However, despite this, Robbinsdale has some industrial uses, mostly automobile repair related and custom fabrication and assembly uses mixed with commercial between West Broadway and County Road 81 south of 39<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. There is also an electrical substation at 3301 Indiana Ave. N. which has been reassigned as "utilities" in conformance with Metropolitan Council land use criteria. The total acreage that includes industrial uses is less than three acres.

**Public Land**

Public land accounts for nearly 820 acres of land in the City. This includes parks (both community and neighborhood); significant natural environmental features in the form of several lakes and one creek; major trunk routes like Highway 100 and County Road 81; schools, churches. Victory Memorial Parkway east of Xerxes Ave. N. is also within the Robbinsdale City limits although it is owned and under the jurisdiction of the Minneapolis Park Board.



### **Section 3: Future Land Use**

Robbinsdale's future land use plan(s) is illustrated in **Figure 2B**. Robbinsdale has identified land use categories as follows:

- **Low Density Residential (Less than 5.00 dwelling units per gross acre of land area):** Single family detached homes are the predominant low density residential use, with small clusters of two family attached homes (no more than four in a cluster) mixed in at scattered locations as appropriate. However, Robbinsdale's low density residential land use is generally higher than 5 units per acre. Robbinsdale also has over 250 rental duplexes or twin homes that were constructed in the late 1940's and 1950's that provide options for affordable housing in larger concentrations. These duplexes are ubiquitous, often found on typical single-family lots including those with 40-foot widths. They are generally treated as legal-nonconforming properties. Other types of residential structures in planned unit development's (PUD's) may also be appropriate as long as the overall density of development falls within the acceptable range. There is interest in "cluster" housing patterns, with detached homes oriented towards common space maintained by homeowner's associations. However, the lack of available land limits the size of such developments. Metropolitan Council equivalent is "single family". Robbinsdale's typical lot size of approximately 6,000 sq. ft. and lot width of 50 feet oriented with a grid street pattern often with alleys accommodates a higher density for single-family detached housing than is found in most suburban areas of the metropolitan area. As previously mentioned, Robbinsdale's low density residential land use has a comparatively high density as a result of the "grid" street pattern, and many 40 and 50 foot wide lots. Residential land use policies have encouraged the combination of these smaller lots, but real estate investors have striven to maintain the status quo. Robbinsdale's average net density is about 5.5 dwelling units per acre, factoring alleys and local streets.
- **Medium Density Residential (from 5.00 to 11.99 dwelling units per gross acre of land area):** Medium density residential uses include two family attached homes in clusters of five or more units, townhomes, or other types of housing in PUD's where the average density of development falls within the acceptable range. The Metropolitan Council equivalent is part of "multi-family". Robbinsdale was considered fully developed prior to the advent of large scale townhouse development. However, selective redevelopment and "in-fill" development have produced several options for townhouse living. Over 165 townhouse or row house units are being constructed with options ranging from single-level senior "cottages" up to three story row houses for maintenance-free living. Robbinsdale's medium density residential is also typically higher than most suburbs. This is a result of limited land availability, the cost of acquiring and clearing land, and the grid street pattern restricting new developments to the row house pattern often with minimal setbacks, and common open space.
- **High Density Residential (12.00 dwelling units or more per gross acre of land area):** Apartment buildings and condominiums are the predominant high-density residential uses. About 20% of Robbinsdale's housing units are in high-density buildings constructed in the 1950's through the 1980's. Most of the existing high-density housing is located near West Broadway Ave., County Road 81 and 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. (County Road 9). Two other



areas of high density are located in more remote areas, a nursing home located on France & Lowry Avenues, and the Beach South area on Twin Lake near Highway 100. These sites are not easily linked to transit, but they should be preserved as high density sites. Other types of housing may be offered as Planned Unit Developments if they are located in appropriate locations that can be served by transit and have convenient pedestrian links to commercial goods and services. The Metropolitan Council equivalent is part of “multi-family”.

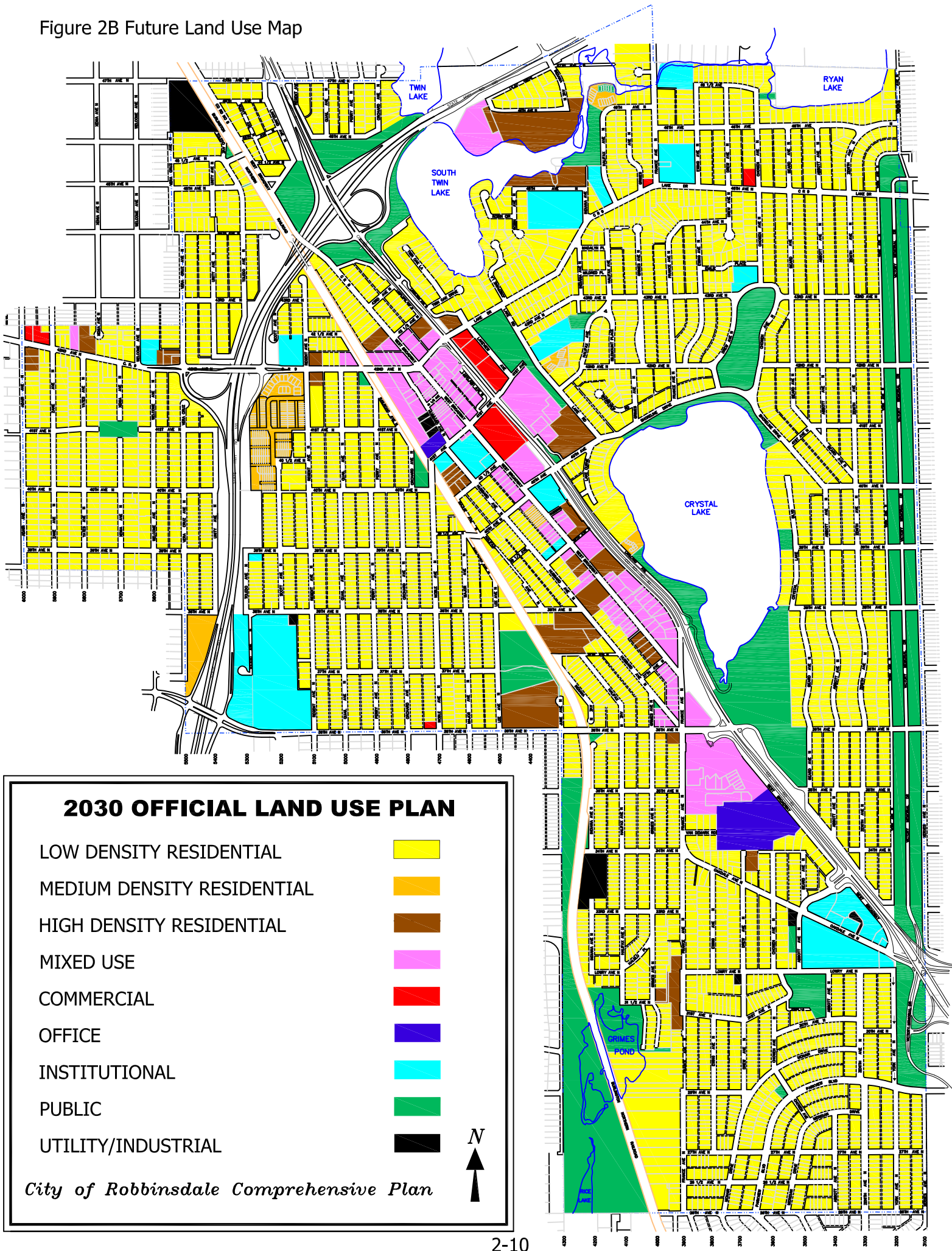
- **Commercial:** Commercial uses include retail sales/services, restaurants, entertainment, limited light manufacturing/assembly, and professional office space. Commercial mixed use PUD’s or conditional uses are also possible to facilitate the combining of commercial with residential uses. The Metropolitan Council land use equivalent is “commercial”.
- **Mixed Use:** Areas with more than one land use (e.g. multilevel with residential above and commercial below or different land uses that are separate but in the development, geographic area, or on the same parcel of land.) Generally, medium and high density residential is combined with commercial land use either vertically or laterally. This land use category is intended to promote redevelopment opportunities through flexibility and higher densities, particularly for residential uses. Mixed use can accommodate densities of has high as 60 units per acre (in the case of Broadway Court, 87.5% residential, 12.5% commercial/office), or eight units per acre in the case of a 40 foot wide lot with a duplex or commercial/office with accessory living space. To promote maximum flexibility there are no proposed standards to mandate ratios or percentages of the uses in the mixed use category. From a regulatory perspective, mixed uses are generally conditional uses with findings and standards required to mitigate conflicts.

Generally, mixed use areas featuring residential uses will have the following density ranges based upon location:

Redevelopment area	Minimum residential density	Maximum residential density
Downtown north of 41 <sup>st</sup> Ave. N. (and including Robin Center)	12 units per acre	60 + units per acre
South of 41 ½ Ave. N. to 36 <sup>th</sup> Ave. N.	8 units per acre	12 units per acre
Terrace Mall area (includes 3600 France)	12 units per acre	60 + units per acre

- **Institutional:** Lot or parcels containing private and not-for-profit businesses, hospitals, churches, and other institutional uses. Metropolitan Council equivalent is part of public-semi-public.
- **Public:** Building and lands (including parklands/open space) that are owned, operated, and maintained by a governmental agency (e.g. City, County, Regional, State, or Federal Government). Metropolitan Council equivalent is part of “public-semi-public”.

Figure 2B Future Land Use Map



### **Future Residential, Commercial Land Use and Density**

Future residential and commercial development density will be allowed to increase in areas of the City such as Terrace Mall and Downtown. The change in density and design is part of a larger plan to create mixed-use districts, which will allow compact development in a certain area. Mixed use is a concept of “New Urbanism” that promotes commercial and residential mixed development designed in a pre-suburban form. This form is one that is intense, compact, and friendly to alternative modes of transportation such as pedestrians, bicycles, and transit (light-rail or bus). Demographic trends such as the aging of the Baby Boomer generation will justify the need for compact development, as people become less dependent on the automobile and more dependent on other modes of transportation. The City has accommodated higher density “in-fill” redevelopment and has learned some lessons. Good design is imperative to mitigate the impact of higher density that will mandate screening for adjacent properties and allowing for green space.

Undeveloped residential property is planned to develop as low density residential to provide housing units for growing families and additional upscale units. In areas identified as mixed-use, redevelopment may include higher-density residential units. Residential property that is being redeveloped through the City’s Scattered Site development program will continue to be developed as low density single-family. The City will also facilitate the combining properties when possible to create lots so that home designs that meet contemporary expectations can be constructed.

Some commercial properties have been developed or redeveloped in a traditional suburban mode that focuses on automobile use and discourages pedestrian access. On-site parking lots of many sizes and drive-up windows encouraging automobile conveyance on site should be balanced with pedestrian facilities. The City will encourage new patterns of compact commercial development with shared parking and pedestrian facilities. Dependence on the automobile can be reduced if future land uses are compatible with alternative modes of transportation (if available) and appropriately located higher density residential development.

**Table 2-2 Future Land Use Table**

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>2020 Acreage</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2030 Acreage</b>	<b>%</b>
Low Density Residential	828.7	43.4 %	828.7	43.4 %
Medium Density Residential	19.5	1.0 %	19.5	1.0 %
High Density Residential	41.5	2.2%	41.5	2.2 %
Mixed Use	13.2	0.7 %	23.9	1.3 %
Commercial	53.8	2.8%	42.1	2.2 %
Institutional	65.1	3.4 %	65.1	3.4 %
Office	11.3	0.6 %	11.3	0.6 %
Parks/Open space	173.1	9.1 %	173.1	9.1 %
Roadways –right-of-way	521.5	28.6 %	521.5	27.3 %
Open Water – Lakes	140.2	7.0 %	140.2	6.9 %
Railroad	30.7	1.6 %	30.7	1.6 %
Utility/Industrial	10.1	0.5 %	10.1	0.5 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,909.6</b>	<b>99.9 %</b>	<b>1,909.5</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 2-2** is a projection of future development within the urban service area. Robbinsdale is a fully developed community and has very little vacant acreage available for development. Vacant land has only been made available from MnDOT conveying excess right-of-way to the City. Demolition of obsolescent or blighted structures is the only other method of creating vacant land, either privately or after acquisition by the City. Redevelopment and infill projects are the only way the City's future needs can be met.

It will be noticed that the projected 2030 mixed use acreage is less than the 2020 acre projection. This is a result of the North Memorial Medical Center (hospital and adjacent accessory uses) has been reclassified as institutional land use. In addition, the redevelopment of the southern half of the Terrace Mall (the Wards site) into the North Memorial out-patient clinic has resulted in an office land use designation.

**Table 2-3 Future Development Within the Current Urban Service Area**

Forecasted Households	Projected Average Household Density (acres/household)		Acres Vacant Developable Land	Acres Infill & Redevelopment
	Single-family	Multi-family		
<b>1990 – 6,008</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>1995 – 6,074</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>2000 – 6,097*</b>	5.5	33	Less than 5	22-30
<b>2010 – 6,200</b>	5	31	Less than 1	9-15
<b>2020 – 6,500</b>	5	30	Less than 1	9-15
<b>2030 – 6,700</b>	5	30	Less than 1	-----

\* 2000 U. S. Census

The comparatively high density for existing single family patterns is a reflection of small lot sizes. The City has many 40 foot-wide lots on which single family and even twin homes were constructed after World War II. The current minimum single family lot width standard is 50 feet and minimum area is 6,000 sq. ft. However, an existing vacant 40-foot wide lot would be treated as a buildable lot of record.

## **Section 4: Specific Area Redevelopment & Development Areas**

Robbinsdale has identified specific areas of redevelopment or development that are viewed as a vital part of the City's economic development and community image.

Discussions of those specific sites follows. The major areas having redevelopment issues are listed below:

- Downtown Robbinsdale/Project 4 Area – (Redevelopment and Infill Development)
- Robin Center area – (Redevelopment/Reuse)
- West Broadway area south of downtown – (Redevelopment)
- Terrace Mall/Theater – (Redevelopment/Reuse)
- North Memorial Medical Center – (Ongoing Development)
- TH 100 Service Road Area - (Redevelopment)

### **Site 1 – Downtown Robbinsdale**

The Downtown will be subject to redevelopment and infill projects. Robbinsdale has invested significantly in the downtown area to create a pedestrian oriented commercial center with a traditional character dating back to its street car origins. The City should work to continue to create a pedestrian environment and the enforcement of architectural guidelines with an emphasis on sustainability. Flexible zoning regulations and higher-density mixed land uses will be the key to maintaining the downtown as Robbinsdale's traditional "Main Street" and it's commercial and civic core. An example of "mixed-use" redevelopment is Broadway Court, constructed in 2000. It consists of a four story building with 57 market rate senior apartments above street-level commercial with surface and underground parking. The Broadway Court example provides a "template" for maximum redevelopment potential. However, it is not expected that four-story buildings would line both sides of entire blocks because of the "canyon effect" that would result.

### **Site 2 – Robin Center area**

The north side of Robin Center has been re-invigorated with the CVS Pharmacy redevelopment of a former grocery anchor, and the County Road 81 improvements. The remaining strip building between CVS and 41<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. may benefit from aesthetic or architectural enhancements. The Robin Center area south of 41<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. has suffered from the vacation of key tenants, and would benefit greatly from re-investment or redevelopment. A mixed-use concept has been discussed with a combination of street-level commercial/office over parking, and several floors of residential above. Enhanced visibility and presence along County Road 81 is one incentive. Poor soils will be a limiting factor, but increased density may provide enough value to accommodate the needed soil corrections or stabilization requirements. The other benefit of higher density would be enhanced visibility as a byproduct of higher profile multi-story buildings, preferably with underground parking.

### **Site 3 – West Broadway area south of 40<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.**

The West Broadway Area, south of the traditional downtown area presents the greatest opportunity for increasing residential density as a component of mixed-use redevelopment. In particular, the properties between West Broadway and County Road 81. All of the land is privately owned and redevelopment will depend on market forces. The City may explore grants

and other methods to assist in redevelopment, however, private investment will be the primary impetus for redevelopment. A row house development called “39 On West Broadway” is an example of the compact single-family attached housing ideally suited for this area.

#### **Site 4 – Terrace Mall/Theater Redevelopment/Re-use**

The redevelopment of the Terrace Mall area is moving into a second phase. The first phase has been accomplished with the redevelopment of the Montgomery Wards site into the North Memorial Health Center as a regional outpatient clinic. These efforts should stabilize the surrounding neighborhood by providing job renewal and job creation. At the same time, the projects should serve as a direct link to home ownership and preservation of affordable single-family homes in the area. Job and tax base increase is a by-product for the City. The second phase starts with adaptive re-use of the Terrace Theater site presumably for medical office use. Soil limitations will have a limiting effect on the intensity of redevelopment for commercial or mixed-use. The current economic conditions have not favored the office re-use. Mixed-use is considered the most flexible future land use category.

The intersection of 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. and France Ave. N. is peripheral to the Terrace Mall and Theater area. The southwest corner was cleared and a plan approved for remediation of potentially contaminated soils with the help of grant funds from the Livable Communities Act. Redevelopment was initiated with four row houses on the corner of Grimes and 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. However, the proposed high density residential building was not constructed due to declining market conditions.

#### **Site 5 – North Memorial Medical Center (NMMC)**

A Facility Master Plan has been developed in order to serve as a comprehensive guide for long range facility planning at the Robbinsdale Medical Campus. The plan identifies the location of potential future candidate building sites for both medical and parking facilities. As the facility expansion occurs, the City will continue to work with NMMC to see that the Master Plan is implemented, or amended as necessary. Previous land use plans have included the NMMC campus as a mixed-use area. However, no residential redevelopment opportunities are anticipated, other than peripheral residential uses. The NMMC campus is considered a job center and will be classified as an institutional use consistent with Metropolitan Council land use classification criteria.

#### **Site 6 - Highway 100 Turn-back Properties**

Highway 100 intersection improvements have been completed and the City has acquired various small parcels for redevelopment. The relative size and isolation of the parcels suggests that low-density (single-family) is the most logical use, however, small clusters of medium-density (townhomes) may be possible, primarily in the vicinity of Scott Ave. N. & 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave. N.

Approximately 3.4 acres of land is located on the southeast corner of Vera Cruz Ave. N. and 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. N, backing up to a highway 100 noise barrier wall. This site lacks depth, suggesting that appropriate residential uses extend for single-family detached to row-house type development. However, the land was acquired via easement and underlying property ownership is unknown, but assumed to be private making acquisition difficult.



## **Other Specific Areas with Redevelopment Potential:**

### **Crystal Lakeshore Property**

This under utilized property has received preliminary plat approval for six single-family lots.

### **Lee Ave. N. Maintenance Facility (Bus Garage)**

This 1.02 acre property was the former site of a bus maintenance and storage facility for ISD #281. The buildings have been demolished and the site cleared. The site is owned by the Robbinsdale Economic Development Authority as a result of the various agreements resulting from the Parker Village redevelopment. The primary opportunity for re-use is residential with single-family detached housing being the most likely scenario.

### **36<sup>th</sup> and France Avenue**

The redevelopment and infill of 36<sup>th</sup> and France should emphasize a higher-density development. Medium density uses in the form of townhouses are nearly finished at the 36<sup>th</sup> and Grimes site. However, the approved 18 unit condominium development failed to materialize at 36<sup>th</sup> & France. Higher density residential uses should continue to be encouraged, with an emphasis on life-cycle housing types not found in Robbinsdale, i.e., townhouses, condominium apartments, or row houses. Mixed use with Commercial would be a reasonable alternative. The eventual site development requires sensitivity of design because it is constrained with a small size and adjacent single-family uses mandated effective screening and traffic management.

### **Lakeside Offices and Peripheral Properties Adjacent to Highway 100**

Redevelopment site of 4.5 acres with potential for medium to higher-density housing. The area currently has a large amount of high-density housing in the Beach South apartments. Approximately 4.5 acres of land is occupied by office/commercial uses. Should this property redevelop, there is potential for medium and higher-density housing with high amenities on the edge of Twin Lake. However, the loss of commercial (office) land with amenities and visibility on Hwy 100 would be a trade-off. This area is also isolated from commercial goods and services and the community in general by Lower Twin Lake. Access is only available via France Ave. N., but is convenient to Highway 100. The relative isolation of the area would inhibit higher residential densities. Lower density residential uses with high amenities would be ideal, however, the expense would be significant.

### **30<sup>th</sup> & Grimes**

This isolated sub-neighborhood site has been previously considered for housing redevelopment, because of the proliferation of rental housing with high demands on services, soil problems and Flood Plain encroachments. The neighborhood is comparatively isolated, and the City has previously attempted to acquire properties through grants. Any redevelopment efforts would seem to have an increased likelihood of success if the density can be lowered. However, lowering density is generally impractical, unless the cost can be off-set by grants. Also, successful redevelopment would most likely depend on clearing the area of blighted housing.



### **43<sup>rd</sup> & Scott Ave. N.**

The Robbinsdale Economic Development Authority has acquired property in this area and demolished several houses as part of the MnDOT Highway 100 right-of-way turn-back process. The houses were obsolescent and were not served by city sewer and water. Redevelopment as single-family, cluster or low density town houses is the most likely scenario. The cost of providing sanitary sewer to the site will be one of the development costs.

The area bounded by Highway 100, 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N. and the Burlington Railroad right-of-way has appeal for a variety of redevelopment scenarios. High density housing is one, regional commercial and even industrial uses would be well served by the Principal Arterial highway access (Highway 100) as well as proximity to the downtown commercial area and the Robbinsdale Transit Center.

### **Hubbard Ave. South of 40 ½ Ave. N.**

This single-family neighborhood has a mix of attractive, well-maintained homes, and others that have become rental properties and are well past their prime condition. Row houses would be one example of higher density redevelopment that would “fit” into the established street pattern and transitions between residential and other land uses.

### **42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N.(County Road 9) West of Highway 100**

The houses lining the north side of 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N. have become primarily rental housing, and the area does not seem ideal for single-family housing. However, access to Highway 100 and conveniently available commercial areas in both Robbinsdale and Crystal suggest the high density residential would be a logical scenario for redevelopment. This is reinforced by existing high density residential and office land uses between Welcome and Zane Avenues North.

### **Future Land Use Implications**

In order to accommodate the growth projections of the Metropolitan Council as well as the estimated loss of population since the 2000 Census, approximately 3 acres of the downtown area (including Robin Center) would have to be redeveloped at densities similar to Broadway Court (63 dwelling units per acre). In addition, approximately 7.5 acres of land south of 39<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. would have to be redeveloped at densities similar to the Accent Homes’ 39 on West Broadway (about 13 dwelling units per acre). This scenario assumes continued in-fill development and redevelopment in other locations of the city at projected densities and completion / construction of previously approved developments.

## **Section 5: Solar Access**

State law requires Land Use Plans to address solar energy access. The City supports the conservation of fossil fuels and increased use of solar and wind energy, but does not find a need for municipal regulation of solar access, beyond existing zoning standards for building setbacks and height restrictions. It is clear that Robbinsdale has a long established pattern of compact development in an urban scale. The occasional juxtaposition of new 2.5 story homes alongside lower, rambler style houses illustrates the variety of housing styles available in the city and is in contrast to many suburbs that have been characterized as areas of “tract housing.” At the same time, Robbinsdale’s height restrictions are not typically more permissive than other suburban communities.

Official controls allow for solar energy devices that are an integral part of principal structures. Solar energy devices that are non-integral parts of a principal structure can be permitted through a conditional use permit.

## **Section 6: Historic Preservation**

Today, few vestiges of Robbinsdale's early growth and development remain visible to the eye. Few buildings predating 1900 are known to exist and many over time have been removed through redevelopment. However, not all traces of historic Robbinsdale have disappeared. The Downtown area as it stands today is still in its original, centralized, compact form as in past days when it was the commercial center of the northwest sector of the Metropolitan area. Robbinsdale's historical legacy is also reflected in its predominant pattern of residential development, first established by A.B. Robbins and others, being primarily 40 x 120 foot lots with rear alleys. This pattern serves to remind the community of times when the typical suburban estate was a lot of 4,800 square feet, in comparison to the contemporary standard of 10,000+ square feet exhibited in many newer suburbs.

### **Historic Buildings**

Robbinsdale's only building that can claim historical significance is its former library. The former library is the only building on the National Register of Historic Places in Robbinsdale. Designed by Architect H. H. Livingston, the Robbinsdale Library, built in 1925, is a one-story wood frame building of a rectangular shape with stucco and brick siding.

Listed are Historic Buildings and Natural Areas that are protected by the City of Robbinsdale:

- Historic Library
- Hubert H. Humphrey Park
- Spanjers Park
- Norma Kelly Park
- Mielke Park
- Sanborn Park
- Triangle Park
- Thomas Hollingsworth Park
- Sunset Park
- Lakeview Terrace Park
- Lee Park
- South Halifax Park
- Walter Sochacki Park
- Parkview Park
- Manor Park