

# ST. LOUIS PARK WOODDALE LRT STATION SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

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## OVERVIEW

St. Louis Park's convenient location as a neighbor to Minneapolis means you're only minutes away from some of the Twin Cities' most attractive amenities: the Chain of Lakes, the downtown theater district, shopping, universities and major league sports. St. Louis Park has a sound economic base, a healthy mix of new and traditional housing, and a nationally renowned school district - where every school has been named a National School of Excellence.

Residents of the Park enjoy a multitude of different social and recreational activities to participate in, along with diverse religious, economic, and education systems. The City of St. Louis Park is a place to live for a lifetime, where the options are endless.

Three of the Southwest Light Rail Transit stations will be located in St. Louis Park, one of which is the Wooddale Station. Already a mixed-use, higher density district, the transit stop will offer greater regional access to jobs and amenities.

With the advent of the light-rail transit investment, the City St. Louis Park partnered the Twin Cities LISC / Corridor Development Initiative to lead a series of community workshops to explore development options and scenarios to enhance the Wooddale Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station Area, and to elevate the potential for a more transit-oriented and walkable area. These development objectives are the result of the community workshops, and serve to inform the future development of the Wooddale LRT Station site

## ASSETS

*The City of St. Louis Park is guided by livable community principles, and offers:*

- Diverse residential areas (which are the dominant part of the city), accommodating a range of age levels, social, religious, and ethnic heritage - giving every neighborhood a distinct appearance and feel.
- A multitude of retail stores, restaurants, medical facilities, family-owned businesses, corporations, and churches and synagogues.
- Numerous trails and parks that connect to downtown Minneapolis, the Uptown area, Hopkins and Chaska. There are 51 parks throughout the city to enjoy (11.5 percent of St. Louis Park's land is set aside for parks). These parks provide recreation, community space and beauty to all St. Louis Park residents in any season.
- A strong school district and a community that values diversity. St. Louis Park was recently named one of the nation's "100 Best Communities for Young People" for the sixth consecutive time by America's Promise Alliance. The Park was honored because of its involvement and opportunities it offers to young people.



Above: Examples of the housing, trails, and green space in St. Louis Park.



## DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES: WOODDALE LRT STATION SITE

As a future station area along the Southwest Light Rail Transit corridor, the Wooddale station area has already seen recent investment in new mixed-use projects and higher density residential. Central to the city as an established hub, the Wooddale Station connects the areas north and south bridging Highway 7, east and west across Highway 100, and includes trail amenities for walking and biking. The opportunity is great to explore how transit-oriented development could further enhance the area by addressing accessibility, livability, and strengthening the pedestrian environment.

It is important that the Wooddale Station maintain its neighborhood character and sense of place. This can be accomplished by enhancing the pedestrian flow of the area, attracting smaller scale retail and services, and utilizing public art or green space to make it memorable. There is a desire to manage traffic and minimize surface and street parking in this area, as it is congested already. The Wooddale station would serve as an excellent location for a hub or convenient stop for bikers using the bike trail.

The site immediately adjacent to the proposed Wooddale LRT Station is publically owned by the City and County, which offers an amazing opportunity to enhance the potential of the site through a public / private partnership. Ideally the Wooddale station would be seamlessly integrated into the neighborhood and development on the site. To do this the City and County are encouraged to clearly define the aspirations for the site, and create an early partnership with a developer through an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) to consider the options.

The Wooddale LRT Station site is a prime location for a mixed use, mixed income development project with unique amenities for the public to draw people off the train or bike trail – something that creates a “wow” experience. The Wooddale station site offers an important opportunity to capitalize on the transit amenity, strengthen the multi-modal access, and provide for a mix of housing options to serve the needs of the community.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE INCLUDE:

### Goal 1: Enhance Neighborhood Assets and Character

- A. Continue to reinforce a connected, walkable, mixed-use, sustainable neighborhood, with a pedestrian-oriented and human-scale streetscape.
- B. Promote high-quality design, with a diversity of construction materials
- C. Encourage a diversity of architectural designs that preserve the aesthetic appearance and appeal of the neighborhood with appropriate scale and mass to the surrounding buildings.
- D. Add green space or pocket parks to soften the built environment that would allow for outdoor use year-round.
- E. Enhance a sustainable neighborhood by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- F. Create opportunities to live, work, learn, play – the spectrum of elements for a healthy community.
- G. Provide for a range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of all people throughout their life and changing lifestyle needs.
- H. Enhance the intergenerational opportunities in the community.
- I. Strengthen the vitality of the area through increased density and mixed commercial and residential uses.
- J. Encourage businesses that fit into and serve the needs of the community.
- K. Utilize universal design principles that can respond to changing demographic needs and anticipate innovative ways to address the dynamic and changing needs of residents.
- L. Consider use of these guidelines to support more cohesive future development along the corridor.





## Goal 2: Enhance Connections to Reinforce Pedestrian, Bus, and Bike Access

- M. Consider “complete street” design to better accommodate multi-modal users on 36th Street and Wooddale.
- N. Pursue transit-oriented design that enhances multi-modal access.
- O. Connect site / LRT station area to bike trail.
- P. Utilize landscaping and streetscape amenities to create stronger pedestrian district.
- Q. Limit surface parking with new development by incorporating underground or structured parking.

## Goal 3: Encourage Development of Mixed Use / Mixed Income Projects

Support was expressed for:

- Seamlessly integrating the station into the site
- Something that creates a “Wow” experience.
- A mixed-income and mixed-use development
- Compact development with public art and green space
- Flexible space that can adapt as needs change.
- The option of a trail attraction, offering a convenient stop-off spot for bikers and pedestrians.
- Locally owned businesses and strengthening opportunities for residents to live and work in the area.
- Encourage public private partnership for infrastructure
- Welcome developers and businesses that operate with equity principles of hiring and wages.

### For further information, contact:

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