Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

2004

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Brainerd acknowledges the work of its citizens on this document:

MAYOR
James E. Wallin

COUNCIL PRESIDENT
James J. Dehen, Jr.

CITY COUNCIL
Kelly Bevans
Anne Nelson Fisher
Mary Koep
Lucy R. Nesheim
Robert E. "Bob" Olson
Gary R. Scheeler

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Planning Commissioners E. L. Menk, Rod Carlson, Caron Long, Nina Moss Bob Sherman, Todd Thompson, Jim Uhlman, Jan Lambert and John Pecarich
Council President James J. Dehen, Jr.
Council Members, Lucy R. Nesheim,
Mark O'Day,
Debbie Olander,
Robert E. "Bob" Olson,
Frank Asplund, Mary Koep, Kelly Bevans , Anne Nelson Fisher and Gary R. Scheeler

PLANNING COMMISSION
E. L. Menk
Rod Carlson
Caron Long
Nina Moss
Bob Sherman
Todd Thompson
Jim Uhlman
Jan Lambert
John Pecarich
Council Member Mary Koep

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
E. L. Menk, Chairman
Erik Bonde
Tim Johnson
Rick Kummet
Thomas Pearson
Councils Member Lucy R. Nesheim and Robert E. "Bob" Olson

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD
Mark Innes, Chairman
Connie Christenson
Marty Johnson
Brian Phelps
Bob Sullivan
Howard Blanck
Council Member Anne Nelson Fisher, Council Liaison

CITY STAFF
Daniel J. Vogt, City Administrator
John Bolduc, Police Chief
Mike Brethorst, Planner/Economic Development Coordinator
Theresa Goble, Finance Director
Douglas Grout, Executive Director, Brainerd HRA
Jeff Hulsether, City Engineer
Kevin Mahle, Fire Chief
Thomas Phelps, Superintendent, Brainerd Public Utilities Commission
Airport Manager Steve Sievek

PLANNING CONSULTANTS
Dahlgren, Shardlow, Uban, Inc.
Jay Blake, Senior Planner
Phil Carlson, Senior Planner
Chad A. Carlson, Planner
Craig Roob, Planner

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City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Introduction

COMMUNITY SETTING

Brainerd is a city of about 13,750 people located in the heart of the Brainerd Lakes Area in Crow Wing County in Central Minnesota. Brainerd is roughly 60 miles north of St. Cloud on Highways 10 and 371, and 120 miles north of the Twin Cities. (Figure 1-1, *Community Location Map*). The city currently covers approximately 14 square miles. The city contains a wealth of natural resources including the Mississippi River, streams, lakes, fertile agricultural land, wetlands and wooded areas.

Brainerd is the largest city in Crow Wing County. Native Americans were the first residents of the Brainerd area. In 1805, Lt. Zebulon Montgomery Pike of the US Army camped in Brainerd to rest, on his way to finding the source of the Mississippi River.

Sixty-five years later, Thomas H. Canfield, president of Lake Superior and Puget Sound Company, signed a paper showing the first map of the city. The first streets were marked as "Gregory Square". Shortly thereafter, Brainerd was founded in 1870, when the Northern Pacific Railroad's survey determined that its Mississippi River crossing should be located there. Organized as a city three years later, the fledgling community was given the maiden name of Ann Eliza (Brainerd) Smith, wife of the Northern Pacific's first president, John Gregory Smith. As the city grew, it attained prominence as the railroad and wood products center in north central Minnesota. Extensive railroad shops and yards dominated the city's industrial makeup for many years. Still today, the railroad plays a significant role in the city with its active main line and important employment opportunities. It is worth mentioning here that much of the community's history and very existence can be traced to the railroad as it chose this location to cross the Mississippi River.

The population of Brainerd and the surrounding area is steadily increasing, and the population doubles during the summer tourist season. There are more than 400 spectacular lakes that dot the Brainerd Lakes Area landscape. Fishing, boating and other types of water-sports are popular recreational activities on most of the area lakes. Several championship golf courses were built in the area in the 1990's. Canoeing, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling and downhill skiing are just some of the terrific recreational sports enjoyed in the Brainerd Lakes Area.

Over the course of its history, Brainerd has experienced steady population growth – much of it tied to the expansion of the local business economy and the evolving role of Brainerd as a regional trade and tourist center. During the 1990's, the city began to grow at a more rapid pace due to the increasing desire to live in close proximity to area lakes. The city has recognized its unique position and has capitalized on its location and economy.

Brainerd lies on the Mississippi River. The downtown lies just east of the river and near the main railroad line – now an important part of the redevelopment effort within the community since the Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad is selling its excess right-of-way. The downtown remains vibrant despite increasing economic development opportunities in the neighboring community of Baxter. The community lies at the intersection of the major east-west and north-south highways in Central Minnesota. Trunk Highways 371, 210 18 and 25 all converge within the community, connecting the entire state to this regional hub.

Brainerd's beautiful setting, progressive nature and prime location make it a community with great potential for growth and change over the next 20 years.

PLAN SETTING

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Brainerd. This Plan sets forth the basic guiding principles that have been embraced by Brainerd to shape its future. It evolved through the interchange of information, analysis and response between the citizens, community leaders, staff and public officials within the city and surrounding areas through a planning process which began in 2002.

While the Table of Contents presents a clear listing of what is contained in this document, the reader will benefit from a brief overview of the organization of the Plan. This ***Introduction*** presents an abridged summary of the planning process and the framework within which the Plan was developed.

The ***Demographic Characteristics*** chapter provides an overview and assessment of demographic trends within the city and surrounding areas. An area's overall population characteristics such as age, household size, etc. are critical influences on its existing conditions within the community. This information also provides a basis for future expectations with regard to growth, housing needs, economic development, land use needs and other important components of the Comprehensive Plan.

The subsequent several chapters focus on specific planning topics including:

- Economic Development and Housing
- Natural Resources, Parks and Other Community Facilities
- Transportation
- Environment
- Land Use, Growth and Development

The ***Inventory and Analysis*** chapter contains existing conditions related to the respective topic within and affecting the city of Brainerd. Existing conditions and patterns of development in the city and surrounding area have a great influence on its

future. Thus, accurate, complete and up-to-date information on existing conditions is essential to a successful Comprehensive Plan.

The next chapter contains an overview of the ***Issues*** identified by project participants relating to a specific topic. The ***Goals and Strategies*** chapter includes a set of *goals and strategies* to guide the overall development and decisions made by the community.

A *goal* is a general statement of community aspirations indicating a broad social, economic or physical state of conditions that the community officially agrees to strive to achieve in various ways, such as through the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. A *Strategy* is an officially adopted course of action, position, policy or strategy intended to be followed to implement the community Goals. The Goals and Strategies express in detail the city's aspirations for the future. Experience has shown that no system of land use designation, public facilities, transportation, etc. can survive strong economic pressures to change. Therefore, it is appropriate that such systems be periodically reevaluated in light of changing social and economic conditions.

Consequently, it is from precisely this inevitability of changing conditions that a community's *Goals and Strategies* derive their true value, because it is in the *Goals and Strategies* that the city has the opportunity to communicate its aspirations regarding the type of living environment that its citizens strive to achieve. Therefore, while external factors influencing land use, public facilities, transportation, etc. will change, the *goals and strategies* will continue to provide the best perspective from which to view proposed changes.

The last chapter which is the ***Land Use and Development Plan*** contains an outline of more specific recommendations and geographic representations related to the future growth and development of the city. Implementation steps are included which describes how the city intends to execute this Plan and includes a description of the tools available to the city to implement the Plan. However, it must be recognized that the Comprehensive Plan does not endeavor to identify specific land uses on specific pieces of property. Rather, the Plan attempts identify appropriate land uses and development opportunities in general within the current and future areas of the city.

Figure 1-1, Community Location Map

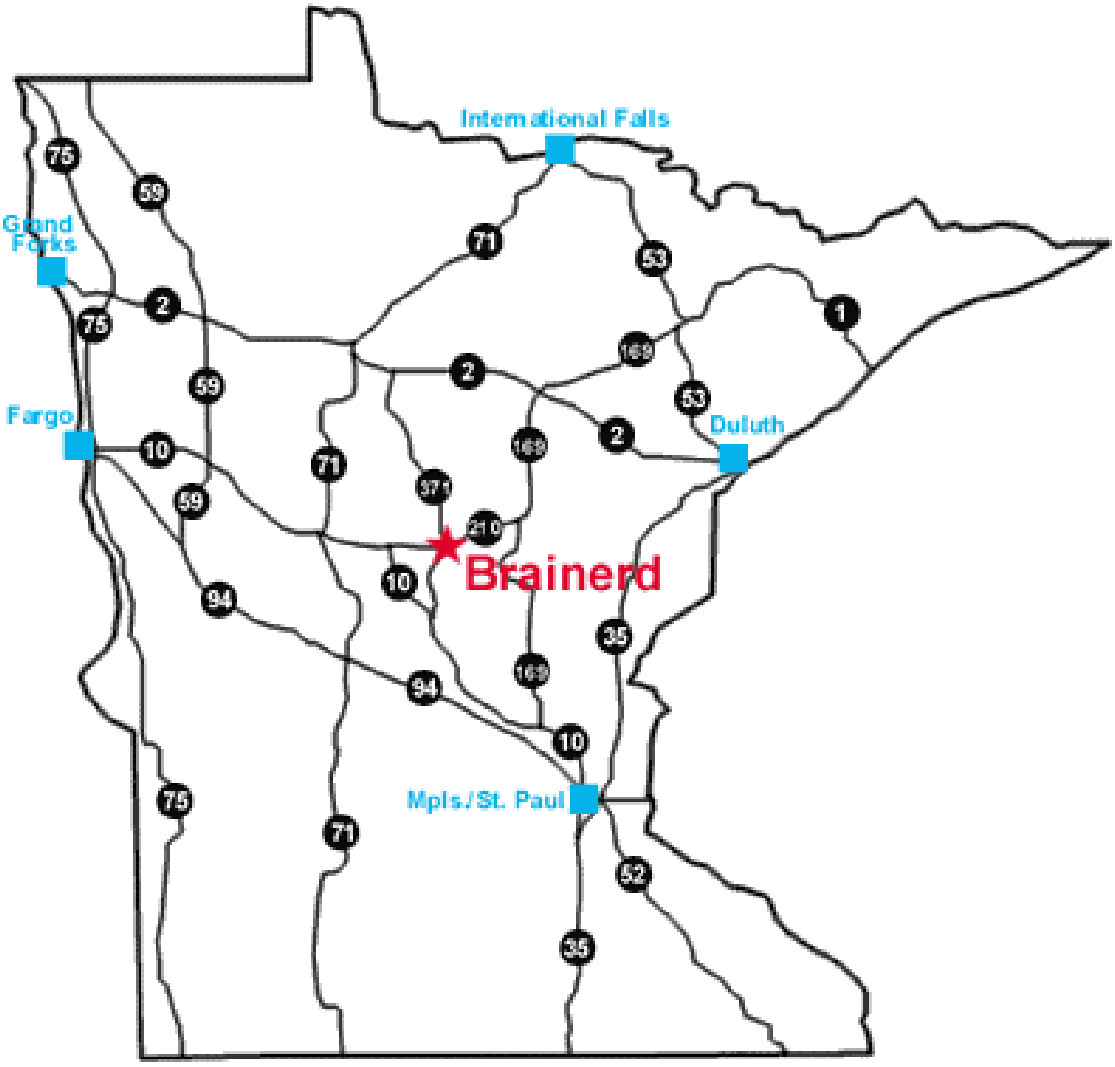
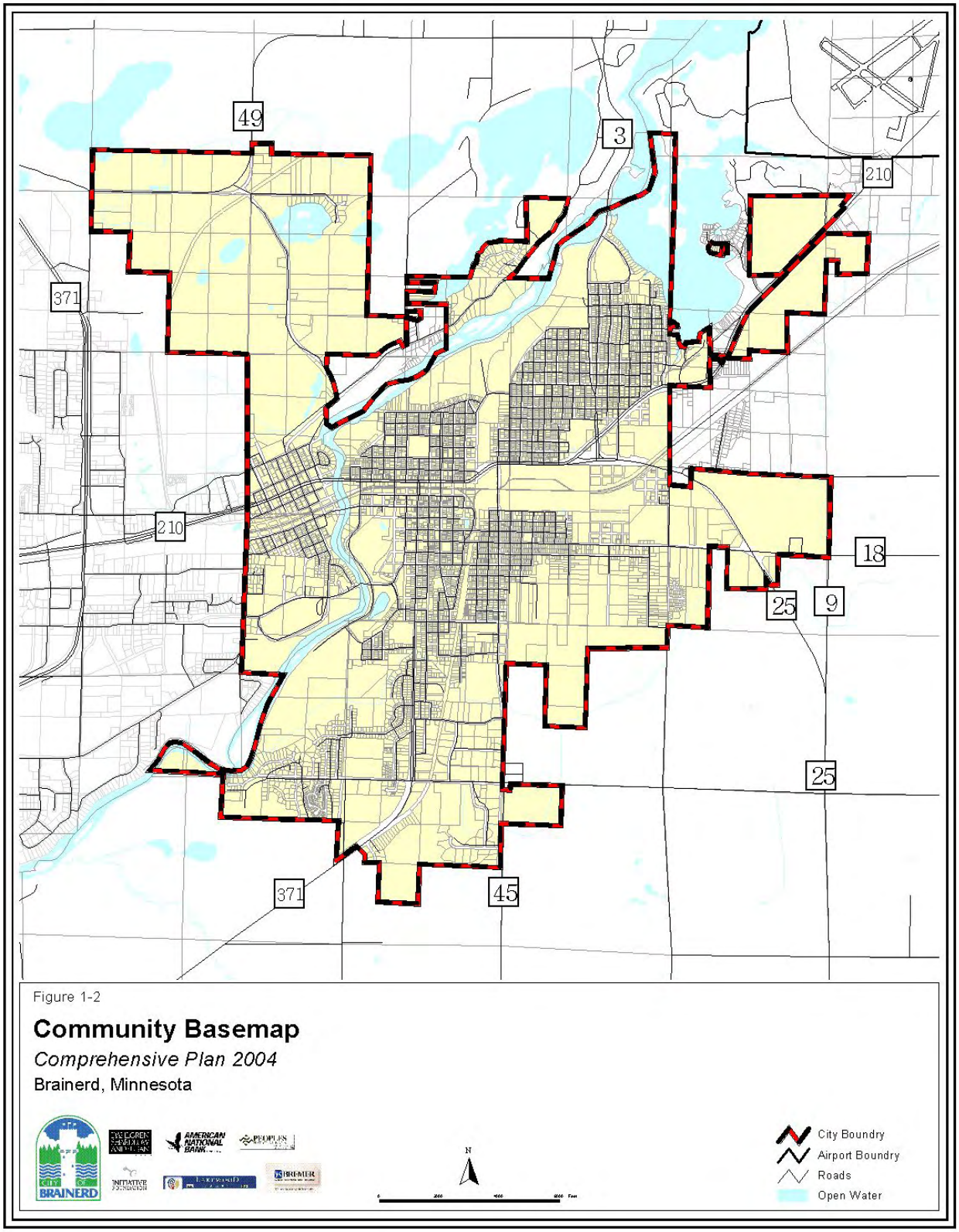


Figure 1-2, Community Base Map



PLANNING PROCESS AND PARTICIPANTS

The community planning process for this Plan was divided into three primary phases:

1. Inventory and Analysis,
2. Goals and Strategies Development, and Plan Preparation,
3. Plan Refinement and Adoption.

The city appointed a Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) that was charged with managing and commenting on the research and reviewing the draft Comprehensive Plan. A listing of the PAC membership is included in the Acknowledgements.

Public involvement was an important component of the Brainerd Comprehensive Plan process. As part of the community visioning process, the city hosted a Kick-off Session on September 5, 2002 at the Mississippi Horizons Middle School. At the Kick-off Session Brainerd citizens had the opportunity to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the community, define the issues the city should address in the Comprehensive Plan, and discuss community-wide goals. The ideas generated at this meeting combined with the findings of the background research served as the basis for the Comprehensive Plan's goals, strategies and other recommendations.

After an inspiring introduction by Brainerd Mayor James Wallin, the project consultants lead participants through an exercise to identify the city's strengths and weaknesses. Participants were asked several questions to generate discussion on the city's strengths and weaknesses. Participants then broke into small groups where they shared their thoughts. A spokesperson for each group then presented his/her group's ideas to the larger audience, which was recorded by DSU on large sheets of paper. Each participant was then allowed to vote for the top three issues/weaknesses and the top three assets/strengths he/she felt should be addressed as the city moves forward.

HALOS (STRENGTHS)

The strengths identified by participants can be broken into five (5) major categories as follows. The number after the responses represent the number of votes received:

ENVIRONMENT:

River and Natural Environment – 14
Parks, Trails & Programs – 7
Clean Environment (Air & Water) – 2

Many participants felt that the greatest strength of the community was the Mississippi River and the environment. It was felt that these features should be taken advantage of with trails and parks.

ECONOMY / LOCATION:

Small & Locally Owned Businesses – 10
Quality Public Service Employers – 5
Airport – 4
Central Location in the State – 3
Food COOP – 1
Affordable Housing – 1
Redevelopment (Mall) – 1
Government Center for Area – 1
Chamber of Economic Development Org. – 1

The community is blessed with many economic and geographic advantages that will help to ensure a positive future. It was felt that expansion of the small, locally owned business community is key to a successful economic development effort by Brainerd. Quality public service employers and the airport are great assets of Brainerd. In addition, the location of Brainerd at the crossroads of Hwy 371 and Hwy 210 in central Minnesota provide economic and tourism gateways to the community.

Participants felt that Brainerd is prime for change. The "unbelievable potential" of the city received the third most votes overall. The involved neighborhoods and the quality of life in Brainerd are important parts in unlocking that potential. The quality of life in Brainerd is enhanced by the public school system, secondary education opportunities, being located within the central Minnesota lakes region, small town atmosphere and strong and safe neighborhoods.

SOCIAL:

Unbelievable Potential – 10
Involved Neighborhoods – 10
Quality of Life – 5
North Side of Brainerd – 3
Small Town Atmosphere – 3
Safe Neighborhoods – 2
Strong Work Ethic

CITY SERVICES:

School System (K – College) – 9
CLC (College) Rosenmeier – 7
Emergency Services – 5
Churches of Interfaith Groups – 4
Youth Activities – 2
Hospital & Medical Services – 2
Library – 2
New YMCA Facility – 2
4th of July Events – 2
Good Transit Systems – 1
Service Organizations – 1
Media Outlets – 1
Soup Kitchen – 1

The city of Brainerd is proud of the educational systems within the community. It is possible to enter the school system in preschool and obtain a college degree without ever leaving the area. Emergency and medical services were also identified as a great asset to the community. The community felt that many other community services benefited area residents and created community identity. Brainerd boasts the only medical facility, which provides health care for the region. With all the recreational options within the region, the city of Brainerd provides growth opportunities for area youth with a strong faith community and a new YMCA community center facility.

Brainerd is rich in history. Participants indicated that the historic downtown is an intricate part of the city. Brainerd also has strong name recognition, which draws people to the area.

HISTORY:

Historic Downtown – 13
Positive Name Recognition – 8
Strong History – 2
Water Tower – 1

Although the listed strengths and opportunities cover a broad spectrum of issues, the issues that elicited the most agreement can be grouped into four main themes:

Small Town Community Spirit. Many residents felt that the sense of community in the Brainerd area is important to its health and vibrancy. Its residents, active

neighborhood associations, community groups and work ethic define the community in many ways.

Economy/Location. The community is blessed with many economic and geographic advantages that will help ensure a positive future, not the least of which is the location of the community in relationship to the Twin Cities metropolitan area and the presence of solid local employers.

Parks/Open Spaces. Brainerd can be viewed as an oasis within the prairie and farm fields. Much of the beauty of the area is represented by the amount of open space, parks and natural beauty.

The city will need to address maximizing the utilization of the existing open space and designing appropriate additional parks and recreational facilities for the future.

City Services. The city of Brainerd is a progressive community with significant investments in public infrastructure. The city is responsible for the maintenance of city streets, sanitary sewer, water, electric, flood control, parks and recreation, and police and fire. The community appears to be satisfied and pleased with the services and facilities that are available. The Comprehensive Plan will help to set forth goals and policies that continue to allow for the provision of adequate services for the residents.

PITCHFORKS (NEGATIVES)

While the residents seem to be proud of the accomplishments and strengths of the community, there are several concerns that need to be addressed by the comprehensive plan.

APPEARANCE / LOOK OF THE CITY:

General Appearance of City – 14
Too Much Concrete, Not enough Trees – 5
Railroad Splits Town
"Cookie Cutter" Housing Development

The community is concerned about the "look" of the city. The historic industrial uses give a drab and distressed appearance. It was felt that more trees and less concrete is needed to change this cold appearance.

A number of social concerns stem from the role and effectiveness of the local leadership base. The city has historically struggled with reaching consensus on issues that impact the health of the community. Some view a lack of vision, others a lack of leadership, as the primary causes. Effective leadership will need to rise from the residents and neighborhoods within the city. City residents also felt the loss of the young residents to larger metropolitan areas is a concern for the long term vitality of the community. Many felt that young residents lack employment opportunities that would allow them to stay in the community.

SOCIAL CONCERNS:

Contentious Decision Making Process (Elected and Non-Elected) – 23
Lack of Energetic Leadership – Not recognizing Citizen as Assets – 14
Lack of Vision for the Future – 10
Loss of Young People from Area – Nothing to Hold Them Here – 4
Lack of Cultural Diversity – 3
Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) – 3
Underutilized Senior Population – 1
Drugs and Alcohol Abuse – 1
Lack of Consensus within Community
Lack of Reasons for Seasonal People to Stop in Brainerd
Lack of Understanding Our Own History

URBAN DEVELOPMENT:

Low Ownership Percentage of Housing – 9
Undeveloped Youth Activity (Variety/Diversity) – 9
Lack of Affordable Quality Housing – 7
Highways that Cut-up and Congest – 3
Lack of Parking Downtown – 1
Lack of Community Center
Railroad Yards & Shops Unused

The city's housing stock includes a high percentage of rental housing. While the rental housing meets an important community need, the city would like to increase home ownership. Housing affordability is an issue for the community as land costs continue to rise, making housing expensive. Other issues included more community involvement by residents and more opportunities for the city's youth.

It was felt that planning for development should be proactive, and not reactive, to the community needs. Development on the fringes of the city compounded by the limited amount of land that is developable needs to be addressed.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT:

Uncontrolled Fringe Development – 13
Limited Land for Growth & Development – 8
Need to Balance Preservation with Growth –3
Baxter Envy –1
High Banks of Mississippi River
Gate Syndrome, "I got my piece, close the gate"

ECONOMIC:

Loss of Historic Buildings – 8
Business Rents are High – Close Early, Discourage New Business – 1
Poor Technology Infrastructure
Low Paying Jobs (Non-Union)
Aging Infrastructure
Loss of Large Employer – Impact Job Market
High Cost of Infrastructure

While economic activity has grown within the area, Brainerd needs to continue to strive to improve its economic engine, by protecting its heritage, improving its technology and infrastructure, and providing growth areas for business.

SUMMARY

Although the listed weaknesses and threats also cover a broad spectrum, the issues that elicited the most consensus can be grouped into four main themes. A more detailed report of the Weaknesses/Threats is located in Appendix A.

Transportation. By far the greatest concern expressed by the group was the inadequate traffic flow and transportation to and within Brainerd. Inadequate transportation infrastructure hinders economic development efforts and causes "small-town road rage". The impacts of congestion on downtown were also noted as a major concern for the future health of the community.

Growth Management. The community is concerned that growth is not managed in an appropriate manner. Participants recognize that the costs of growth are significant both to the developer and to the community. The city must also address environmental issues as it sees additional growth. The Comprehensive Plan will address these issues as it examines future growth boundaries, capital improvements and an Urban Assessment Review of Future City Improvement Projects.

Social Concerns. Nothing is so constant as change. As the community celebrates its successes, it must also address new social concerns. The community recognizes the changing demographics for most Minnesota communities and desires to address it. The community also recognizes the interrelationship between community development and an effective educational system.

Downtown and Commercial Development. The residents recognize the need to provide a variety of economic opportunities, including pedestrian and automobile-oriented commercial development for small and large businesses. There is interdependence between a healthy downtown and a vibrant retail community. The residents also desire more opportunity and choices when it comes to specific retail services that are available in Brainerd. The Comprehensive Plan will work to further define these local needs and establish action steps for the city.

COMMUNITY-WIDE VISION STATEMENT

The vision for the city of Brainerd is a compilation of ideas expressed by its citizens during the public Kick-off Session. The vision statement is a broad position statement used as a guide for the development of more specific goals and policies.

The City of Brainerd shall be…

A Place With Economic Opportunity

Brainerd has historically been the commercial center for the north-central lakes region. It continues to be the medical, educational, tourism, government and professional office center for the region. The economic engine of the area is evolving and Brainerd will continue to be the regional service center with excellent economic opportunity for a wide variety of businesses and employment. The city will actively promote and seek out new economic development opportunities to meet the needs of the growing and changing community.

A Place Where Development is Compatible with the Environment

The rapid growth within the lakes region is due in part to the natural beauty of the area. Brainerd is located along the Mississippi River and adjacent to Rice and Gilbert Lakes. Many wetlands are dotted among Brainerd's growth areas. These present challenges and opportunities for creative development patterns that respect the natural environment.

A Place with a Strong, Diverse and Growing Downtown

The downtown has historically been the place where the community congregated to worship and to conduct business, which created the sense of community for the city. The downtown and surrounding area must continue to be the focal point of community activities, government, commerce and recreation. New design styles will help to diversify the economic base of the area. Implementing the standards in the ***Downtown Master Plan*** will help to ensure that it remains a vibrant and unique area within the region.

A Place of Quality Neighborhoods

The city must remain a safe, clean and friendly community with open communication between the government and its residents. Strengthening neighborhoods, neighborhood associations and their schools will maintain a strong sense of place and help to preserve the quality of life for all residents of the city. The city will strive to provide a range of housing options throughout the community that will add to the quality of life for all residents. The city will ensure that development patterns within neighborhoods are reasonably compatible with existing land uses and will be respectful of the opinions of neighboring property owners.

A Place of Cultural and Recreational Opportunities

The city will strive to create a community with abundant cultural and recreational activities for people of all ages. A diversifying population means the need to continue to pursue a wide variety of recreation and cultural locations and activities.

A Place that Recognizes the Importance of the Mississippi River

Most cities, including Brainerd, have historically turned their backs on the rivers and streams within their communities. The Mississippi River is a critical scenic corridor through the community. The city will improve the views and recreational opportunities of the Mississippi River whenever possible.

A Place Where an Effective Transportation System is Available

The city will strive for the most effective, safe and coordinated transportation system possible. The community expects continuing efforts to provide effective roads, railroads, airport facilities, potential regional commuter rail, public transit, sidewalks and expanded trail systems that offer alternative modes of moving people and goods

around and through the city. The city recognizes its place as a regional economic center and that the transportation network must support the economic activity of the region.

A Place Where Informed Residents Make Government Work Effectively

The city strives to provide the most effective and efficient government that responds to the needs of the community. Residents and neighborhood groups will become more informed, active and respectful of the opinions of others within the community. Together, an effective government and an informed and active citizenry will strive to mutually respect each other and make local government work for the best interest of everyone. Citizen involvement will be encouraged. Our citizens are our greatest assets.

A Place that Pursues Technology Advancements

Brainerd will actively pursue and support improvements to its technology infrastructure. Brainerd will provide state-of-the-art business technology services that make the community an attractive place to live and conduct business.

A Place Rooted in a Deep, Rich History

Brainerd is unique for many reasons – its development associated with the railroad industry, its position as the stepping-off point for the Brainerd Lakes tourism industry and its unique cultural heritage. Brainerd will remember its historic place within the region as it looks to a bright future. Brainerd will learn from mistakes and capitalize on past achievements.

FOCUS TOPIC MEETINGS

In addition to the Kick-off Session, the Planning Advisory Committee conducted five Focus Topic meetings, each focusing on a particular community issue, such as transportation. At the meetings residents from the city and the surrounding townships, City Council members, Planning Commission members, and EDA members learned about community issues, gave input into resolving those issues, and discussed goals and strategies to address the issues in the Comprehensive Plan. The Focus Topic Meetings were well attended and a list of participants is located in the Acknowledgements. A concerted effort was made to make the public meetings accessible to the broadest spectrum of citizens – meetings were scheduled during the day and during the early evening.

Once the Focus Topic meetings were complete, a draft Comprehensive Plan was prepared and reviewed by the Planning Advisory Committee and Planning Commission.

City of Brainerd
Comprehensive Plan

Background and Inventory

The existing pattern of development and other conditions in the city of Brainerd and the surrounding area have a great influence on the community's future. Accurate, complete and up-to-date information on existing conditions is essential to a successful comprehensive plan. Background information for this report was gathered and analyzed for eight key planning components including:

- Demographic Characteristics
- Housing
- Economics
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Parks and Recreation
- Environment
- Land Use

The information gathered during this phase of the planning process, combined with the issues articulated during the Kick-Off Session and Focus Topic Meetings, was instrumental in the development of goals and implementation strategies for the Comprehensive Plan. A summary of background information on each key component is included in this Background and Inventory Report.

An inventory and analysis of existing conditions provides merely a snapshot of a community at a point in time, but when analyzed against past trends, future trends may be estimated. Thus, the insight on past and future trends is often more important than the existing conditions themselves. A community's story is a compilation of snapshots.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The identification of trends in population growth and other demographic data is a very important part of the comprehensive planning process. It can provide clues to future growth patterns and indicate what types of housing and public facilities may be needed in the future. For example, an increase in young couples with children would require starter housing, new parks and schools, and new or upgraded community facilities; whereas, an increase in the elderly population would lessen the need for schools and increase the need for specialized housing. This section of the Comprehensive Plan contains information on Brainerd's population and households.

POPULATION

Table 2-1 shows the changes in population that have taken place over the past two decades in the city of Brainerd, surrounding communities, Crow Wing County and the State of Minnesota. During the 1980's the city of Brainerd and most of the surrounding townships saw sizable growth. Brainerd grew 7.5 percent, while Baxter grew 40.8 percent, Crow Wing Township grew 33.0 percent and Unorganized Territory grew 9.1 percent. Long Lake Township and Oak Lawn Township experienced a small decline in population with –2.5 percent and –6.8 percent, respectively. The county as a whole grew 6.1 percent, while the State grew 7.3 percent.

The 1990's brought further growth in the city of Brainerd, surrounding townships and the County. Although the growth did slow, it still remained significant. Brainerd grew 6.7 percent, while Baxter grew 50.3 percent, Crow Wing Township grew 32.6 percent, Long Lake Township grew 19.9 percent and Unorganized Territory grew 29.0 percent. Crow Wing County grew by 24.5 percent. The state grew 12.4 percent in population. The State as a whole grew at a faster rate than it did in the previous decade, but still at a slower rate than the Brainerd area communities.

Table 2-1
Population Trends
Brainerd Area
1980-2000

	1980	1990	Percent Change	2000	Percent Change
Brainerd	11,489	12,353	7.5	13,178	6.7
Baxter	2,625	3,695	40.8	5,555	50.3
Crow Wing Twp.	687	914	33.0	1,212	32.6
Long Lake Twp.	877	855	-2.5	1,025	19.9
Oak Lawn Twp.	2,093	1,950	-6.8	1,793	-8.1
Unorg. Territory	3,655	3,987	9.1	5,144	29.0
Crow Wing County	41,722	44,249	6.1	55,099	24.5
Minnesota	4,075,970	4,750,099	7.3	4,919,479	12.4

Source: US Census

Population Share

The Brainerd/Baxter area is truly the regional center of Crow Wing County as illustrated in Table 2-2, *Population Share*. This area serves as the county hub for commercial, health and governmental services. Brainerd, Baxter, surrounding townships and the unorganized territory of the county comprised 51.3 percent of the county's total population in 1980 as shown on Table 2-2. Their share fluctuated through 2000.

In 1980, the six-community area of Brainerd, Baxter, Crow Wing Township, Long Lake Township, Oak Lawn Township and Unorganized Territory held over half the population of the county. That percentage grew slightly in 1990 to 53.7 percent. A slight decline occurred in 2000 to 50.7 percent.

Table 2-2
Population Share
City of Brainerd and Surrounding Communities
1980 - 2000

	1980	% of Six-Community Area	% of County	1990	% of Six-Community Area	% of County	2000	% of Six-Community Area	% of County
Brainerd	11,489	53.6	27.5	12,353	52.0	27.9	13,178	47.2	23.9
Baxter	2,625	12.3	6.3	3,695	15.5	8.4	5,555	19.9	10.1
Crow Wing Twp.	687	3.2	1.6	914	3.8	2.1	1,212	4.3	2.2
Long Lake Twp.	877	4.1	2.1	855	3.6	1.9	1,025	3.7	1.9
Oak Lawn Twp.	2,093	9.8	5.0	1,950	8.2	4.4	1,793	6.4	3.3
Unorg. Territory	3,655	17.0	8.8	3,987	16.8	9.0	5,144	18.4	9.3
Six Community Total	21,426	100	51.3	23,754	100	53.7	27,907	100	50.7
	1980	Six-Community % of County	% of County	1990	Six-Community % of County	% of County	2000	Six-Community % of County	% of County
Crow Wing County	41,722	51.3	100	44,249	53.7	100	55,099	50.7	100

Source: US Census

The city of Brainerd is also compared to the six-community area. In 1980 Brainerd comprised 53.6 percent of the six-community area. At the same time Baxter had less than a quarter of the six-community population. Unorganized Territory had the second highest number of people.

The population share began to change slightly over the next two decades. Brainerd's share of the population began to drop in 1990 to 52.0 percent and continued decreasing in 2000 to 47.2 percent. The population share in Baxter increased to 15.5 percent in 1990 and continued to increase in 2000 to 19.9 percent. The population of the region may be distributed differently, but Brainerd is still the hub of Crow Wing County.

Population By Age

Trends in age significantly impact a community's planning needs. It gives clues as to what type of housing, parks, community facilities and services may be needed in the future. It also indicates what demands may be placed on the school system in the future. The population in Minnesota and the nation is steadily aging as the baby boomer generation reaches maturity. There has also been a recent increase in the younger age groups in many communities – known as the baby boomer echo. This trend is replicated in Brainerd.

Table 2-3 shows the median age in Brainerd and surrounding communities for 1990 and 2000. Brainerd's population is going against the national trend, getting younger. Baxter and the surrounding townships are consistent with national trends and getting older. In 2000, Brainerd's median age was significantly lower than surrounding townships, the county and the state as a whole.

Table 2-3
Median Age
Brainerd and Surrounding Townships
1990 - 2000

Community	1990	2000
Brainerd	33.1	32.8
Baxter	31.9	35.6
Crow Wing Twp	29.3	34.8
Long Lake Twp	37.9	38.9
Oak Lawn Twp	31.8	37.6
Unorg. Territory	33.6	37.7
Minnesota	32.4	35.4

Source: US Census

The following information is a summary of Table 2-4 found on page 22.

The largest age cohort in Brainerd is the 25 to 34 year-old group, followed by the 35 to 44 year-olds. These groups, combined, comprise 26 percent of the city's population. From 1990 to 2000, Brainerd saw its largest population gain in the 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 year-old ranges. These age groups, combined, grew from 1,855 persons in 1990 to 2,361 in 2000, which is a 27 percent increase. This explains the decrease in median age for the city. During the same time period, there was a decline in Under 5, 5 to 9, 25 to 24, 55 to 64, 65 to 74 and 75 to 84 year-olds.

The 20 to 24 year-old age group is typically the group that is starting out on its own and putting stakes into the community. Members of this age group, particularly in the upper end, are beginning to enter the family formation years, thus continued drops/increases in this age group may indicate declining/increasing school enrollments in the near future. The 25 to 34 year-old group, comprises the typical first time homebuyer group while 20 to 24 year-olds are typically renters.

In Brainerd, the 25 to 34 year-olds comprise the largest age cohort in the city, but there was a decline in the group from 1990 to 2000. There are two factors that may have contributed to this slight decline of 2.8 percent. First, it could be related to seeking broader employment opportunities. Secondly, this age group may be moving out of the city onto lakeshore property.

The 35 to 54 year-old age groups tend to be looked at as the new generation of community leaders and business owners, and their children are found throughout the school system from kindergarten to 12th grade. These age groups also tend to be active in the community and demand high quality services for their children and families. However, these age groups also tend to be highly mobile and may move away from a community to find better opportunities. Within this population range, the 35 to 44 year-olds are typically move-up homebuyers while the 45 to 54 year-olds are typically included in the second stage of move-up homebuyer market. The 45 to 54 year-olds comprise the third highest share of the city's population and experienced a modest rate of growth, 4.6 percent, during the 1990's.

In Brainerd, there are mixed indicators within these groups. The 35 to 44 year-olds comprise the second largest age group in the city, and increased in population from 1990 to 2000 by 11.9 percent. The city's 45 to 54 year-olds comprise only 10 percent of its population.

Persons in the 55 to 64 year age group tend to be empty nesters and may move to smaller homes, while young seniors aged 65 to 74 often seek a variety of housing options. Empty nesters in these age groups begin to abandon homes with several bedrooms and two or more stories for lower maintenance, two bedroom units, often on one story. The 55 to 64 year-old group saw a decline in population in the 1990's. This could be contributed to moving out of the city to lake front property or early retirement. The 65 to 74 year-old group both comprises a small percentage of the city's population, and experienced a decline from 1990 to 2000.

The 75 to 84 and 85+ age cohort are well into their retirement years. There was a slight decline in the 75 to 84 age group from 1990 to 2000. There was a significant 16.6 percent increase in the 85+ population in Brainerd between 1990 and 2000. Although in 2000 this segment of the population only encompassed 4.2 percent of the total population in Brainerd, future growth of this segment will have several planning implications for the city. A sustained 75+ population has several planning implications for the city. Park and recreational demands of this group tend to be for passive activities rather than ball fields and playgrounds. Social services, elderly housing and medical services will be in demand and will most likely need to be located near one another.

Table 2-4
Population by Age
City of Brainerd
1990-2000

Age Cohort	1990		2000		1990-2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Change	Percent Change
Under 5	1,028	8.3	1,017	7.7	-11	-1.1
5 – 9	937	7.6	832	6.3	-105	-11.2
10 – 14	854	6.9	909	6.9	55	6.4
15 – 19	888	7.2	1,167	8.9	279	31.4
20 – 24	967	7.8	1,194	9.1	227	23.4
25 – 34	1,846	14.9	1,794	13.6	-52	-2.8
35 – 44	1,490	12.1	1,668	12.7	178	11.9
45 – 54	924	7.5	1,367	10.4	443	4.6
55 – 64	924	7.5	843	6.4	-81	-8.7
65 – 74	1,076	8.7	897	6.8	-179	-16.6
75 – 84	950	7.7	943	7.2	-7	-0.7
85+	469	3.8	547	4.2	78	16.6
Total	12,353	100.0	13,178	100.0	825	6.7

Source: US Census

The character of households can change over time in two ways as it relates to a city's population growth: by number and by size. If over time population growth is coupled with an increase in both the number and size of households, then it generally tends to indicate a community growing from within (i.e. a high birth rate). However, if population growth is reflected by an increase in the number of households and a decrease in the size of the household, then it may indicate that the community is growing due to an influx of new residents.

Tables 2-5 shows the city of Brainerd growing in population along with an increase in the number of households, however with a decrease in persons per household. This trend stays consistent between 1990 through 2000 for the city, surrounding communities and the state as a whole. This seems to indicate Brainerd and surrounding communities are growing due to an influx of new residents.

Table 2-5
Household Characteristics
Brainerd Area
1990-2000

Community	1990			2000		
	Households	Population	Persons per Household	Households	Population	Persons per Household
Brainerd	5,197	12,353	2.38	5,623	13,178	2.34
Baxter	1,200	3,695	3.08	1,921	5,555	2.89
Crow Wing Twp	296	914	3.09	417	1,212	2.91
Long Lake Twp	327	855	2.61	395	1,025	2.59
Oak Lawn Twp	590	1,950	3.31	586	1,793	3.06
Unorg. Territory	1,395	3,987	2.86	1,870	5,144	2.75
Crow Wing County	17,204	44,249	2.57	22,250	55,099	2.48
Minnesota	1,647,853	4,375,099	2.66	1,895,127	4,789,596	2.60

Source: US Census

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Table 2-6 shows the enrollment trends of the Brainerd School District 181 for years 1996 through 2003. These figures show steady growth from 1996 through 1998. There was a decline from 1998 to 2000, but enrollment increased again for the remaining years. The average enrollment for this time period is 7,298.

The boundaries of the school district reach beyond the Brainerd and Baxter city limits. Because of this, it is difficult to conclude how much the enrollment trends fluctuate related to the city of Brainerd's population changes versus the other communities within the district.

Table 2-6
K-12 School Enrollment Trends (1996-2003)
Brainerd School District 181

Grade	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Pre-K	82	93	93	128	98	102	112	105
K	549	518	482	469	454	444	500	470
1	510	554	542	485	474	462	451	508
2	524	513	544	536	500	486	481	468
3	538	531	520	550	550	506	505	495
4	526	535	532	534	566	554	521	517
5	499	539	533	540	543	576	565	535
6	531	512	560	572	559	560	583	572
7	587	546	529	544	576	575	574	606
8	559	603	581	550	572	592	595	591
9	585	568	608	574	550	580	612	612
10	617	626	602	630	600	586	599	620
11	606	586	605	580	627	584	596	582
12	550	587	611	623	604	651	628	622
Total	7,263	7,311	7,342	7,315	7,273	7,258	7,322	7,303

Source: MN Department of Children, Families and Learning

HOUSING

Available, affordable and safe housing is necessary for a community to accommodate the growth of all segments of the population. It provides a vital link between the community's population growth, economic development goals and its land use priorities. In order to encourage growth in the population and economy, housing will be needed in Brainerd for residents of differing income levels, for multi-family and single-family units, and for purchase and rent.

Housing types in Brainerd are generally mixed, reflecting the period in which they were built. Most of the housing is in good condition in the community. However, as consistent in many communities across the State, some of Brainerd's existing housing stock is in need of rehabilitation or maintenance. Often times both types of housing are located near each other or on the same block further emphasizing this mixture of housing.

A detailed Housing Study update was completed in November 2002 for Crow Wing County. Much of the analysis for this Comprehensive Plan used the data in that report.

Table 2-7 describes the total number of housing units (units in structure) in the city for years 1990 and 2000. During this time period the total number of housing units within the city of Brainerd increased by 376 units. Single-family housing units (1 unit attached and detached) occupy a majority of the housing landscape in Brainerd comprising of 57.7 percent of the total housing available. However, during the previous decade, the city did lose 48 units of single-family units.

According to the Crow Wing Housing Study and city building permits, between 2000 and 2002, the city has averaged over 50 new units per year, for additional 206 units in the community. Again, a majority of the new housing units consisted of one unit–detached structures and a large apartment complex consisting of 30 units.

Table 2-7
Housing Type (Total Units)
City of Brainerd
1990-2000

Structure Type	Number		Unit Change	Unit Construction 2000-2002	Total (Census and New Units)
	1990	2000			
1 Unit - Detached	3,227	3,179	-48	170	3,349
1 Unit - Attached	65	173	108	N/A	173
2 Units	405	429	24	6	435
3 to 4 Units	285	327	42	0	327
5+ Units	1,177	1,341	164	30	1,371
Mobile Homes	271	349	78	N/A	349
Other	N/A	8	8	N/A	8
Total	5,430	5,806	376	206	6,012

Source: US Census, Crow Wing County Housing Study 2002

Table 2-8
Housing Type (Total Units)
Brainerd Area
2000

Units in Structure	Brainerd		Baxter		Crow Wing County	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1, Detached	3,179	55	1,753	87	26,744	80
1, Attached	173	3	53	3	659	2
2	429	7	8	0.4	557	2
3 to 4	327	6	91	5	560	2
5 to 9	324	6	16	1	523	2
10 to 19	267	5	16	1	468	1
20 to 49	358	6	31	2	732	2
50+	392	7	0	0	488	1
Mobile Home	349	6	39	2	2,521	8
Other	8	0.1	0	0	231	1
Total	5,806	100	2,007	100	33,483	100

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-8 compares the housing types of Brainerd, Baxter and the county as a whole. Brainerd has a significantly lower percentage of single family housing than Baxter and the county as whole.

Table 2-9
Occupancy Status
Brainerd Area
2000

Status	Brainerd		Baxter		Crow Wing County		Minnesota	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	5,806	100	2,007	100	33,483	100	2,065,946	100
Occupied	5,586	96	1,962	98	22,250	66	1,895,127	92
Vacant	220	4	45	2	11,233	34	170,819	8
Status	Crow Wing Twp.		Long Lake Twp.		Oak Lawn Twp.			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Total	434	7	562	28	649	2		
Occupied	413	7	407	20	580	2		
Vacant	21	0.4	155	8	69	0.2		

Source: US Census

Table 2-9 shows the relatively low vacancy rate within the city of Brainerd of four percent. This is higher than Baxter, Crow Wing Township and Oak Lawn Township. It is lower than the state as a whole and Long Lake Township. However, Crow Wing County has a very high vacancy status. It is important to note though, that vacant units include seasonal homes.

Table 2-10 shows Brainerd's housing age. The city does not contain a large quantity of housing from any one era. The median year built was 1958.

Table 2-11 shows that in 2000, 59 percent of the households in Brainerd had only been occupied for 5 years or less. This may indicate an influx of new residents from outside the city limits of Brainerd. Only 9 percent of the population has occupied their residence longer then 30 years.

Table 2-10
Age of Housing
City of Brainerd

Year Built	Number	Percent
1999 to 2000	60	1%
1995 to 1998	279	5%
1990 to 1994	318	5%
1980 to 1989	580	10%
1970 to 1979	890	15%
1960 to 1969	624	11%
1950 to 1959	827	14%
1940 to 1949	733	13%
1939 or earlier	1,491	26%
Total	5,802	100%

Source: US Census

Table 2-11
Year Householder Moved Into Unit
City of Brainerd

Year Householder Moved into Unit	Number	Percent
1999 to 2000	1,649	30%
1995 to 1998	1,601	29%
1990 to 1994	846	15%
1980 to 1989	695	12%
1970 to 1979	282	5%
1969 or earlier	513	9%

Source: US Census

Table 2-12 illustrates the housing values for the years 1990 and 2000 in the city of Brainerd. The largest group of home values within the city falls in the $50,000 to $99,000 range.

Table 2-12
Owner Occupied Housing Values
City of Brainerd
1990-2000

	1990		2000		Change	
Value	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than $50,000	1,624	66	531	21	-1,093	-67
$50,000-$99,000	747	30	1,533	61	786	105
$100,000-$149,000	76	3	301	12	225	296
$150,000-$199,000	2	0.1	113	4.5	111	555
$200,000 or More	11	0.4	42	2	31	282
Total	2,460	100	2,520	100	60	2

	1990	2000
Median Value - City of Brainerd	$ 41,000	$ 70,800
Median Value - City of Baxter	$ 65,700	$ 121,600
Median Value - Crow Wing Township	$ 52,000	$ 97,000
Median Value - Long Lake Township	$ 50,000	$ 108,800
Median Value - Oak Lawn Township	$ 56,500	$ 100,500
Median Value - Crow Wing County	$ 54,000	$ 107,500
Median Value – Minnesota	$ 74,000	$ 122,400

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-13 shows the gross monthly rent in Brainerd. The table shows the greatest number of rents fall within the $300 to $499 range.

Table 2-13
Gross Monthly Rent
City of Brainerd
2000

Gross Rent	Units	Percent
Less than $300	632	25%
$300-$499	1,164	45%
$500-$749	602	23%
$750-$999	74	3%
$1,000+	30	1%
No cash rent	74	3%
Total	2,576	100%

Source: US Census

Table 2-12 previously also showed the median owner-occupied home values for Brainerd, surrounding communities, the county and the state. Brainerd's median value of $70,800 was lower than the other jurisdictions listed. The median value of homes in Brainerd for 1990 was $41,000 and in 2000 rose to $70,800. This represents a 72.3 percent increase in housing values. The consumer price index (rate of inflation) for the same period rose 41 percent in the Midwest (US Department of Labor), indicating the cost of housing increased beyond just the average inflationary increase. Although the cost of housing in Brainerd has increased more than other goods, this is not unique to the city. The housing price index in Minnesota rose 76 percent from 1990 to 2000.

Affordable housing is an important issue to keep in mind when considering quality of life for a community's residents. Housing is often considered affordable if a household doesn't have to spend more than 30% of its income on housing.

Table 2-14 points out that 16 percent of homeowners in Brainerd pay over 30 percent of their monthly income toward housing. Table 2-15 shows that nearly 50 percent of renters pay over 30 percent of their monthly income toward housing.

Table 2-14
Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in 1999
City of Brainerd

	Number	Percent
Less than 15 percent	512	31
15 to 19 percent	335	20
20 to 24 percent	323	20
25 to 29 percent	191	12
30 to 34 percent	70	4
35 percent or more	200	12
Not computed	6	0
Total	1,637	100

Source: US Census

Table 2-15
Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in 1999
City of Brainerd

	Number	Percent
Less than 15 percent	356	14
15 to 19 percent	381	15
20 to 24 percent	340	13
25 to 29 percent	250	10
30 to 34 percent	268	10
35 percent or more	865	34
Not computed	116	5
Total	2,576	100

Source: US Census

ECONOMICS

Economic health is an important component of a healthy and thriving community. A strong commercial and industrial base provides jobs to community residents, contributes to a city's tax base, and can be a source of psychological strength to a community. This can best be explained when one compares a downtown area consisting of boarded up buildings with one that has a thriving business sector. The community with the vacant or boarded up buildings appears listless and drab, while the one with the strong downtown community is lively, busy and thriving.

EMPLOYMENT

Table 2-16 shows the major employers in Brainerd and the products or services they provide. The city's largest employer, the Brainerd Public Schools, employs 950 persons. Of the top 15 employers, 4 are related to government and education; 5 are in the medical and human services industries, and 4 are manufacturing in nature.

Table 2-16
Major Employers
City of Brainerd

Employer	Product/Service	Number of Employees
Brainerd Public Schools	Elementary & Secondary Schools	950
St. Joseph's Medical Center	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals	908
Brainerd Regional Human Services Center	Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Hospitals	677
Crow Wing County	Executive, Legislative & Other General Gov't Support	450
Bisys	Business Support Services	404
Bethany Good Samaritan Village	Community Care Facilities for the Elderly	325
Central Lakes Community College	Colleges, Universities & Professional Schools	313
Brainerd Medical Center	Offices of Physicians	285
Anderson Brothers Construction Company	Highway, Street & Bridge Construction	160
Keystone Automotive Industries	Coating, Engraving, Heat Treating & Allied Activities	157
Woodland Good Samaritan Village	Community Care Facilities for the Elderly	150
City of Brainerd	Executive, Legislative & Other General Gov't Support	148
Bang Printing	Printing & Related Support Activities	145
A-Tek Inc.	Other Electrical Equipment & Component Manufacturing	125
Burlington Sante Fe Railroad	Rail Transportation	125
Total	N/A	5,352

Source: MN Department of Trade & Economic Development, Community Profile

Table 2-17 shows in what industries Brainerd residents work. The educational, health and social services industry employs more of Brainerd's citizens, 1,337, than any other industry. This industry provides 23 percent of the jobs for the city's employed residents. Retail trade; Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services; and manufacturing provide a large number of jobs for Brainerd residents as well.

Table 2-17
Employment by Industry
City of Brainerd
2000

Industry	Number of Workers	Percent Of Total Listed
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2	0.03
Construction	321	6
Manufacturing	724	12
Wholesale trade	201	3
Retail trade	883	15
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	180	3
Information	67	1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	296	5
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	358	6
Educational, health and social services	1,337	23
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	936	16
Other services (except public administration)	311	5
Public administration	198	3
Total	5,814	100

Source: US Census

Table 2-18 shows in what occupations Brainerd residents are employed. The greatest number, 27 percent, of Brainerd's working residents are employed in managerial, professional and related occupations, followed closely by sales and office occupations, and service occupations. Very few people work in farming, forestry or fishing.

Table 2-18
Occupation by Type
City of Brainerd
2000

Occupation	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,553	27%
Service occupations	1,263	22%
Sales and office occupations	1,495	26%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	2	0.03%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	461	8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,040	18%
Total	5,814	100%

Source: US Census

INCOME

As shown in Table 2-19, the greatest number of households have an income between $15,000 and $24,999. The median household income for the city is $26,901, which is lower than the statewide median household income of $47,111.

Table 2-19
Household Income
City of Brainerd
2000

Income	Number of Households	Percent of Households
Less than $10,000	851	15%
$10,000 to $14,999	743	13%
$15,000 to $24,999	1,046	19%
$25,000 to $34,999	912	16%
$35,000 to $49,999	913	16%
$50,000 to $74,999	739	13%
$75,000 to $99,999	231	4%
$100,000 to $149,999	100	2%
$150,000 to $199,999	19	0.3%
$200,000 or more	53	1%
Total	5,607	100%

Median Household Income: $ 26,901

Source: US Census

TRANSPORTATION

FRAMEWORK

A city's transportation system has a great influence on its future growth and development, as the network of streets in a community determines land use configurations. It is a challenging task for cities to provide access for shoppers and employees to local businesses and industries, provide efficient through transportation for regional travelers, and provide for recreational transportation opportunities. These challenges are further complicated by the need to balance the conflicting needs of pedestrians and the automobile.

Brainerd has approximately 77 miles of surfaced roads, most of which are local streets. Its thoroughfare system consists of all the various streets and highways designed to accommodate vehicular movement within its corporate limits. A typical city thoroughfare system serves the needs of two general types of traffic:

> Through-Traffic. Traffic that has its origin and destination outside the community and merely travels through it, typically on arterial roadways.
>
> Local Traffic. This is traffic that has its origin and destinations inside the community and utilizes the local street system.

Transportation Planning Objectives and Cycle

Transportation planning is a study of the cyclical relationships between land development and the needs for transportation facilities. The steps that frequently occur during the "development-improvement-development" cycle are:

- Land development generates vehicle trips
- Additional trips increase roadway needs
- Needs dictate roadway improvements
- Improvements modify access
- Modified access changes land values
- Changed land value attracts intensified development
- Intensified development generates more trips
- More trips lead back to the second step of the cycle

Within the development-transportation cycle, the objective of transportation planning is to provide the information necessary for making decisions on when, where and what type of improvements should be made in the transportation system to satisfy current and anticipated travel demands; and to promote land development patterns that are in keeping with community goals and objectives.

Transportation Planning Jurisdiction

Many jurisdictions, including federal, state and regional and local agencies are involved in planning the transportation system of Brainerd and the surrounding areas. Many of the agencies described within this section have and will continue to play a critical role in developing transportation strategies, approvals and funding at the local and regional level.

- FEDERAL - The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are all involved in providing funding and review of transportation projects. Generally, the corresponding state agencies are given the primary responsibilities for overseeing the federal programs.

- STATE - Both the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) are involved with assessing state concerns with planned transportation projects. MN/DOT oversees the Interstate Highway and Truck Highway system and provides secondary support assistance to cities, metropolitan planning efforts and transit planning activities. MN/DOT maintains a five-year Capital Improvement Program that prioritizes project needs with a statewide perspective. The MPCA's responsibilities include monitoring developments and projects having potential environmental impacts. The MPCA also becomes involved in large development or roadway projects that require Environmental Assessment Worksheets (EWA), Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) or Indirect Source Permits (ISP).

- COUNTY - The city of Brainerd lies within Crow Wing County. Collaboration between the county and the city will be crucial as the city expands within these jurisdictions.

Functional Classification

To aid in the understanding of Brainerd's thoroughfare system, all of the city's roadways have been classified by function and are summarized below in Table 2-20 and illustrated on Figure 2-1, *Existing Roadway Functional Classification*. The function and basic characteristics of each of these types of roadways are as follows.

Principal or Major Arterial. These roadways serve moderate to long trip lengths and provide a system to distribute traffic making external trips. Turning movements are often handled with channelized turn lanes or signal systems. Their very nature causes them to divide neighborhoods and to have negative effects on adjacent residential land use. Principal arterials are characterized by an emphasis on traffic mobility rather than land access, typically with traffic counts in excess of 8,000 cars per day. Typical speeds are between 30 and 50 miles per hour.

Principal arterials typically have access to minor arterials and collectors, which are described below. Typically there is no direct land access to these arterials with the exception of major traffic generators.

Minor Arterial. These thoroughfares either augment the arterial system in more densely or intensively developed areas or provide service in lieu of principal arterials in less densely or intensively developed areas where trip lengths are relatively short. Minor arterials provide a somewhat lower level of mobility than that proved by principal arterials, but should not penetrate identifiable neighborhoods.

They may, however, provide slightly greater direct access to abutting properties than a principal arterial. Traffic volumes on minor arterials are generally in excess of 3,000 cars per day. Access to these arterials should be limited to principal and other minor arterials and collectors.

Direct land access to minor arterials is typically restricted. However, in an urban setting like Brainerd, where speeds are posted at 35 MPH or less, local streets typically access a minor arterial.

Collectors. These streets serve as connections between local streets and minor arterials. Their principal function is to carry short trip lengths and to serve adjacent land. At the same time, they must be capable of moving relatively large traffic volumes for limited distances. They may also carry traffic to and from dispersed major traffic generators. Access to collectors includes other collectors, minor arterials, local streets, and direct access from/to abutting lands.

Local Streets. Residential streets that carry less than 100 vehicles per day and have average speeds of less than 30 MPH are the best example of local streets. They serve almost exclusively to collect and distribute traffic by connecting blocks within neighborhoods and specific activities within similar land uses. Access to local streets is provided by collectors, other local streets, and direct access to abutting properties.

With each step upward in the street hierarchy comes an increase in the size and carrying capacity of the roadway. For example, large trucks tend to deteriorate or even destroy local streets if they were allowed to use them. Thus, it would be counter-productive to build major thoroughfares in front of every house. Therefore, properly determining the size, location and timing of roadway construction are important aspects of transportation planning.

One basic principle of land use planning, tied directly to traffic, is that land uses that generate heavy traffic loads and require efficient access to function properly, such as industrial facilities, should be located near major thoroughfares. Conversely, land uses that generate very little traffic and that would not be benefited by through-traffic, such as residential neighborhoods, should be located away from the noise, pollution and bustle of busy arterials.

In summary, Brainerd's existing street hierarchy is as follows:

Table 2-20
Existing Functional Classification of Roadways
City of Brainerd
2003

Principal Arterials		
Route	**Termini**	**Jurisdiction**
Trunk Highway 371	S City Limits to Washington St./TH 210	State
Trunk Highway 210	W City Limits to E City Limits	State
Minor Arterials		
Route	**Termini**	**Jurisdiction**
Mill Avenue/County Road 3	TH 210 to N City Limits	County
H Street	Mill Avenue/Co Rd 3 to 1st Ave	Local
1st Avenue	H St. to Evergreen Ave	Local

Evergreen Avenue	1st Ave to Fir St	Local
Fir Street	Evergreen Ave to N 8th Street	Local
North 8th Street	Fir St. to Washington St/TH 210	Local
South 8th Street	Washington St./TH 210 to Quince St.	Local
Broadway Street	Quince St. to Vine St.	Local
South 9th Street	Vine St. to Willow St.	Local
Willow Street	SE 13th St. to S 6th St./TH 371	Local
South East 13th Street/CSAH 45	Co Rd 117 to E. Washington Street/TH210	County
Trunk Highway 25	E. Washington St./TH 210 to City Limits	State
Oak Street	S. 6th St./TH 371 to City Limits	Local
West Laurel Street	River to Highland Scenic Dr./CASH 48	Local
Highland Scenic Drive / CSAH 48	W. Laurel St. to City Limits	County
South West 4th Street	W. Laurel St. to W. Washington St./TH 210	Local
Laurel Street	S. 8th St. to River	Local
Major Collectors		
Route	**Termini**	**Jurisdiction**
Maple Street	SE 13th St. to SE 16th St.	Local
Industrial Park Road / County Road 117	S 6th St. to E. City Limits	County
Bluff Avenue	N. 4th St. to N 7th Ave.	Local
Fir Street	N. 7th St. to N. 8th St	Local
Wright Street	S. 6th St. to CSAH 45	Local
Vine Street	So. 4th St. to S. 6th St.	Local
East College Drive	River to Quince St.	Local
4th Avenue	E. Washington St./TH 210 to M St.	Local
M Street	4th Avenue to Mill Ave/CASH 3	Local
N Street	Mill Ave/CSAH 3 to 13th Ave	Local
13th Avenue	E. Washington St./TH 210 to N St.	Local
West College Drive	CSAH 48 to River	Local
Riverside Drive (CSAH 20)	Jackson St. to City Limits	County

Cedar Street	S. 6th St. to Emma Ave.	Local
Park Street	Cedar St. to Vine St.	Local
East River Road	Washington St./TH 210 to E. College Dr.	Local
North 4th Street	Washington St./TH 210 to Bluff Ave	Local
CSAH	W. Washington St./TH 210 to Jackson St.	County
South West 4th Street	E. College Dr. to W. Laurel St.	Local
Beaver Dam Road	Riverside Dr.	County
CSAH 45	S City Limits to Co Rd 117	County
Front Street	East River Rd. to S. 10th St.	Local
South 10th Street	Front St. to Laurel St.	Local
South 11th Street	S. 10th St. to Laurel St.	Local
South 5th Street	Quince St. to Laurel St.	Local
South East 16th Street	Oak St. to Maple St.	Local
South East 10th Street	Willow St. to Dead End	Local

Access Management

A key element to providing a safe, efficient roadway system is access management. Access management attempts to balance the need to maintain the mobility of the roadway system while allowing reasonable access to adjacent land uses. Generally speaking, with each step upward in the roadway functional classification system, the greater is the need for mobility and thus more limited access. Traffic conflicts may involve merging, diverging, stopping, weaving or crossing movements between uses of the roadway system.

As the number of potential conflicts increases, driving conditions become more complex and drivers are more likely to make mistakes. Access management aims to reduce conflicts between vehicles, vehicles and pedestrians, and vehicles and bicycles. The benefits of access control on roadways have been demonstrated through many studies. These studies have consistently indicated that a reduction in access reduces conflicts, which in turn reduces crashes, as well as increases capacity and smoothes the flow of traffic.

The best example of access control is the interstate freeway system, which has no access except through limited and controlled interchanges. These roadways have consistently had significantly lower accident rates than any type of roadway.

Other roadways also have restricted or limited access. On some, access is limited primarily to intersections with other roadways, while on others there are also limited private access points between intersections. This often occurs on state or county roadway systems, and the agencies owning the roadway have often purchased the right of access from adjacent landowners. This restricted access is important in lowering crash rates. Where numerous driveways exist and turning movements can occur virtually anywhere along the roadway, the number of conflicts, and thus the number of crashes, is generally higher.

Many conflicts also exist between turning traffic at intersections that are close together. Traffic from one intersection may backup through the adjacent intersection creating problems for traffic turning at the second intersection.

Driveways located very close to an intersection create additional conflicts. A left turn to a driveway just beyond an intersection is often unexpected by drivers behind the vehicle making the turn and often results in abrupt braking or lane changes. Left turns to driveways immediately in front of an intersection are also unexpected and lead to erratic maneuvers on the part of many drivers.

Offsetting the desirability of limited access is the need for access to properties and commercial areas. Over-controlling of access can lead to problems. In many communities, a major barrier to transportation flow is a freeway with no access. A lack of access to an expressway can often result in increased traffic on other roadways parallel to the expressway or leading to the access points. Residential traffic from a neighborhood that is forced to use a single access point often creates problems for the residents along the street that serves as the access. Also, as motorists seek to find alternate routes, many will choose local streets creating other types of problems.

A major concern of businesses is reasonable access to the roadway system. While some businesses desire unlimited immediate access, the access only needs to be convenient for both the motorist and the customer, and consistent with the onsite circulation patterns.

Traffic Counts

Average daily traffic counts are used in planning for expansions and improvements within a transportation system. Traffic counts are also important in creating and maintaining well-functioning roadways. Trunk Highway 371 and Trunk Highway 210 serves as the major arterial corridors through Brainerd. During the analysis of the SRF Consulting Group regarding the transportation system in Brainerd, SRF identified current traffic counts within the community. Those traffic volume numbers are used in determining the functionality of existing and new roadways and can be found in Chapter IV, Land Use and Development Plan, Figure 4-9 *Existing Volumes (AADT) and Historic Growth Trends.*

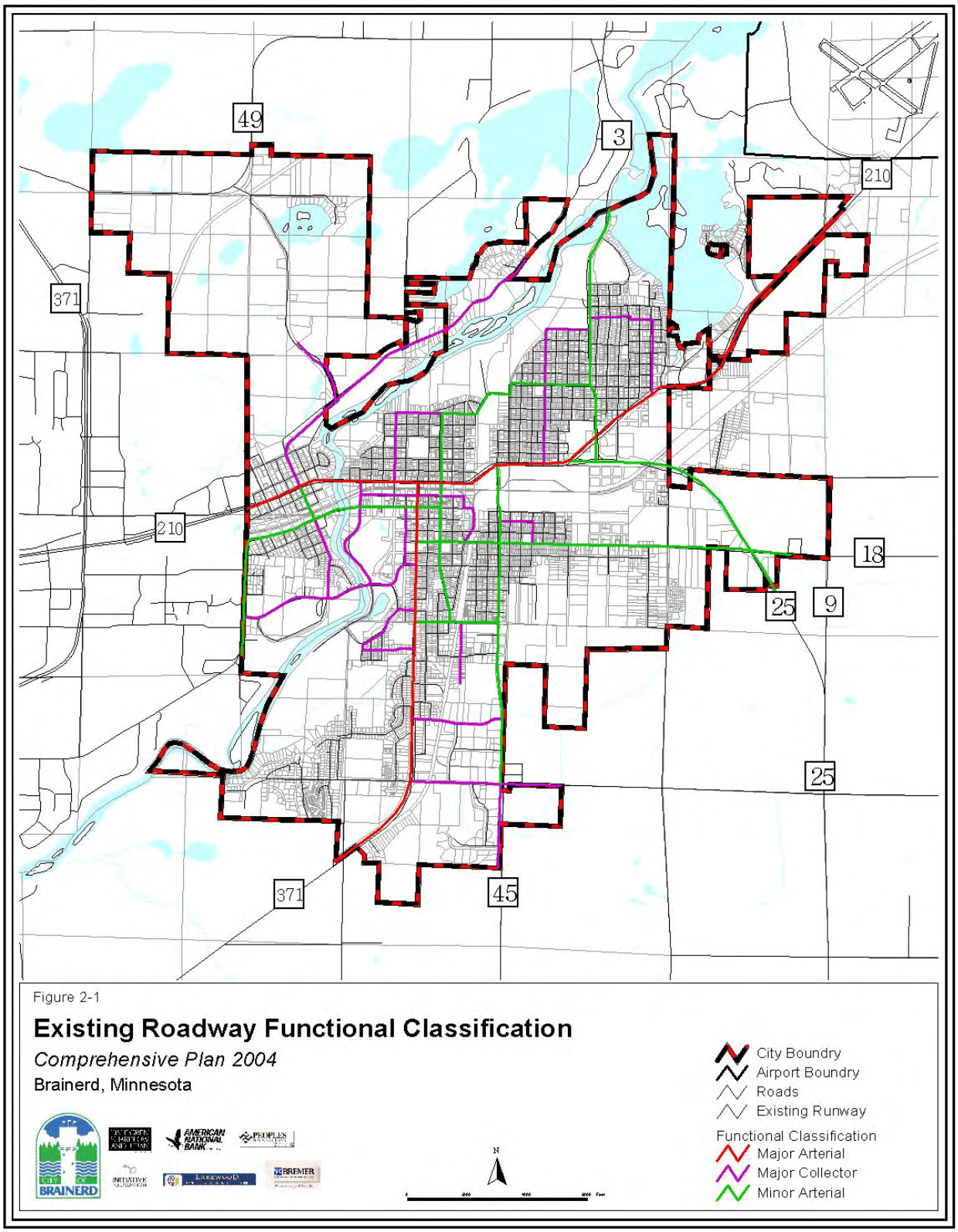
Pedestrian and Bicycle Ways
A discussion of the city's trail system is included in the Parks, Recreation and Environment section of this chapter.

Railroads
The Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail runs through Brainerd, providing daily service.

Air Service
The Brainerd Lakes Regional airport serves the city of Brainerd and the region. It provides charter, commercial, freight and jet service to the area and accommodates most light air craft. The nearest major airport is the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

Major funding has been made available for improvements to the facility and is discussed in the Community Facilities section of this chapter.

Figure 2-1, Existing Roadway Functional Classification



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The facilities owned and maintained by the city of Brainerd vary in size, age and condition. Due to the extent and nature of the services that these public facilities must provide to Brainerd's residents, functional structures are a necessity. The purpose of this section is to inventory the various public facilities within the city, focusing on their condition and function. Deficiencies and planned upgrades are also noted. This analysis will be a useful tool in the city's capital improvements planning.

Since other important public facilities operated by other units of government, non-profit and private organizations are also important assets for Brainerd's residents, businesses and visitors, some of these facilities are reviewed as well.

The following is a listing of the community facilities broken down into two categories: City/Government and Schools. This inventory identifies each building or facility, gives its location, describes its condition, and notes the facility's function and planned or needed improvements. The following community facility information was gathered by the appropriate city staff and others during the spring of 2003.

CITY GOVERNMENT

City Hall
501 Laurel Street

This structure built in 1917 and is currently in good condition. City Hall houses the city administration offices including the engineering, planning, building/inspections and transit departments. Remodeling was done in 1993. The largest meeting space is the council chambers, which has a capacity of 87 people. Other meeting spaces include a conference room and an employee lounge that have a capacity of 16 and 8 respectively. Some minor remodeling of the basement may be required in the future for department expansion. This may include the inspections department or portions of the engineering department.

Police Station
225 East River Road

Brainerd's Police Department moved to a new facility in July 2003 on East River Road. The new facility is approximately 8,000 square feet if office and 4,000 square feet of garage space. Twenty-five sworn officers and 8 full-time civilian staff are housed at the station. Services provide by the department includes: Patrol, K-9 Unit, Narcotics Unit, DARE, School Resources Officers, General Investigation Unit, Bike Patrol, Bomb Squad, and Airport Security.

Fire Station #1
23 Laurel Street

The structure was built in 1982 and is currently in good condition. Fire Station #1 houses many services including fire suppression, fire prevention and rescue. In 2003, the City added a training room to assisting in the education of the volunteer fire department. The facility is home to 33 on-call fire fighters and 1 support staff, which is adequate to protect the coverage area of this station. The facility holds fire-fighting equipment including three engines, one ladder truck and one tanker. There are no plans for remodeling or construction at this facility, but the Fire Department is concerned with the location of this facility for a "paid-on-call" department.

Fire Station #2
1301 Mill Avenue

Fire Station #2 was constructed new in 2003 in northeast Brainerd. The station staff consists of 7 on-call fire fighters and no support staff. The function of Fire Station #2 is fire suppression and rescue. The station will need additional 5 to 8 firefighters to adequately staff this facility. Equipment stored at this facility includes one engine and one tanker. Future improvements include additional staff and equipment for this facility.

The Brainerd Fire department recognizes that as the city expands, fire service must expand as well. A new fire station should be considered within the southeast quadrant of the community. The potential southeast station would serve the southern portion of Brainerd including the industrial park, and commercial and residential growth areas. Staffing and equipping the new station is a major concern of the fire department.

Street and Sewer Department Maintenance Building
724 Thiesse Drive

The city's public works maintenance building was constructed in 2003. The building was constructed for equipment and material storage. Ten people are employed at this facility. There are no planned expansions or remodeling in the foreseeable future.

Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport
16384 Airport Road

Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport was moved to its current location in 1946. Funding for the facility comes from the City of Brainerd, Crow Wing County, Federal Airport Improvement Project (AIP) entitlements, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) Office of Aeronautics grants, passenger facility charges (PFC) and in-house

generated revenue that includes: leases, rents, landing fee, fuel flowage, etc. There are 24 buildings located on the property.

- 6 – 10 unit T-hangers
- 1 – 11 unit T-hanger
- 4 – Private Hangers
- 1 – Civil Air Patrol Hangers
- 1 – Civil Air Patrol Classroom Building
- 5 – Tenant Occupied Individual Hangers
- 1 – Tenant Office Building
- 1 – General Aviation / Main Terminal
- 1 – Electrical Vault Building
- 3 – Maintenance Buildings

The main terminal was expanded and remodeled in 1997. New private hangers were built in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The general aviation portion of the facility was expanded and remodeled in 2001 which included new offices for the fixed base operator (FBO), a classroom, pilots lounge and pilots sleeping area. The restaurant (open 7 days a week) was remodeled and expanded as well.

There are currently three runways and one heliport at the Airport. The dimensions and surface materials are as follows:

- RWY 5/23 – 6,500 ft. x 150 ft. bituminous surface
- RWY 12/30 – 4,080 ft. x 75 ft. bituminous surface
- RWY 1/19 – 2,800 ft. x 75 ft. bituminous surface
- Heliport – 75 ft. x 75 ft. concrete surface

A new runway, RWY 16/34 began construction in the Fall of 2003. This three-year project will add a 6,500 ft. x 150 ft. concrete runway with a parallel 75 ft wide bituminous taxiway. A second instrument landing system (ILS) approach will be added on RWY 34.

The facility is rated category IV commercial service airport, certified FAA Part 139, which is excellent. The average daily take-offs and landings are:

3,360 air carrier
1,200 air taxi
20,000 general aviation local
9,000 general aviation transient
400 military
1,400 helicopter
35, 360 / 365 = **97 ops / day average**

Brainerd Public Library
416 South 5th Street

The building was constructed in 1986. The Brainerd Library is part of the Kitchigami Regional Library System that has over 340,000 books and resources. The Brainerd facility houses about 75,000 of that inventory. There are ten computers available for public use, 6 for Internet access and word processing and four for access to the library catalog.

There are two meeting rooms, the small meeting room seats up to 15 and a large room that seats 100 people. Both rooms are used on a regular basis for other group meetings within the community. The small meeting room is wired for Internet access and has a television and VCR available. The large meeting room also has a television and VCR available as well as an out-dated movie projector. The small meeting room is used annually from February through April for tax help. The large meeting room is used for the following scheduled events:

- Brainerd Public Library Book Club (Monthly)
- Teen Extreme Book Club (Monthly)
- First Thursdays Speakers Series (Monthly)
- Friends of the Library Meeting (Monthly)
- Brainerd Public Library Board Meeting (Monthly)
- Friends of the Library Book Sale (Biannually – March and August)
- Summer Library Program – Children's Party (Annually)
- Summer Library Program – Teen Party (Annually)
- Brown Bag Speakers Series (Weekly in June and July)

Computer hardware and software upgrades are a continuous need in order for the library to keep pace with technology and to be able to continue to provide the services that the citizens have come to expect.

The large meeting room does not have Internet access at this time, and is needed in the future. The outdated projection system in the large meeting room needs to be updated.

The uneven and inadequate lighting in the library has been a concern for years. The light bulbs have been replaced using different types and that has not corrected the problem.

Trees need to be removed or thinned out on the West side of the building. The view of the park from the large picture windows is being obstructed by overgrowth of the vegetation.

Patron self-checkout is a technological innovation that would be a great asset to the library and should be purchased in the near future. That would allow patrons to check out their own materials and free up some staff time to provide additional needed services, such as story time and reference assistance.

The materials security system also needs to be replaced. The current system is broken so the library is currently without a security system for books and other materials.

CROW WING COUNTY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Crow Wing County Court House
326 Laurel Street

The Crow Wing County Court House was built in 1920 and is structurally in good condition. Remodeling was done in 2002 to replace the roof of the structure. The County has identified some needed renovation and remodeling to the Third Floor Egress and tuck point work to the chimneystack. Other improvements are cosmetic in nature and would be included in a major remodeling project including landscaping and a new lawn sprinkling system.

The Crow Wing County Court House provides offices for the following departments:
District Court
District Court Law Library
Crow Wing County Board of Commissioners
Crow Wing County Auditor
Crow Wing County Assessor
Crow Wing County Treasurer
Crow Wing County Recorder
Crow Wing County Administrator
Crow Wing County Information Systems
Community Corrections- Juvenile Division
Agricultural Extension Office
Social Services – Satellite office
Crow Wing County Purchasing
Crow Wing County Maintenance
Crow Wing County Veterans Service
Crow Wing County Emergency Management

In 2003, the Crow Wing County Court House employs 139 full-time, 5 part-time and 7 seasonal workers. The largest meeting space is the Court House Meeting room, which has a capacity of 30 people. Computer Training room- Information Systems satellite – has a capacity of 10 for training purposes.

A master planning process looking at County buildings located on Laurel Street is being completed to try to meet the needs of the County for the next 20 years. The total project anticipates a cost of $56.8 million and would consist of a new judicial center with six courtrooms, jail and law enforcement center on Laurel Street across from the existing offices. The County Highway Department would be moved to another location. Under the plan, the public health, veterans services and social service offices could co-locate. Offices related to building services such as planning and zoning would be located with other land use offices. A central heating plant with one set of boilers could replace aging systems in several buildings. Substantial parking and landscaping improvements would also accompany construction.

Social Services Building
322 Laurel Street

This facility was constructed in 1976 and is in good condition. As with the Court House, the roof of this facility was replaced in 2002. Anticipated renovations include expanding the building size and painting. Other issues include addressing the drainage problem on the north side of the facility, landscaping and a new sprinkler system.

The facility employs 193 people within the following departments:

- Social Services:
  - Welfare Administration
  - I.M.U.
  - Welfare Fraud Prevention
  - Human Services
- Community Corrections:
  - Adult Divisions
  - Administration
  - Aitkin Office
  - Brainerd Office
  - Morrison Office
  - Special Services
- County Attorney's Offices
- District Court – Courtrooms and Judge Offices

Investigators Building
310 South 3rd Street

The Investigators Building was constructed in 1968 and is in good condition. The facility recently had the heating system replaced and there are no further improvements scheduled for this facility. The facility houses the County's Investigators.

Land Department Building
301 Laurel Street

The Land Department Building was constructed in 1926 and is in very poor condition. The building was recently remodeled to house the land department staff. Additional improvements are needed to the roof, heating system and tuck-pointing. The County is also concerned with the health issue of reoccurring mold.

The facility employs 14 people in the departments of Land Development, Parks, and Solid Waste.

Antolak Building
200 South 4th Street

This facility houses the Planning and Zoning, County Surveyor, and GIS departments, with a total of 18 employees at this site. No further information was made available for this facility.

Highway Department Building
202 Laurel Street

This facility houses the Highway department, with a total of 40 employees at this site. No further information was made available for this facility.

County Health Building
219 Laurel Street

The County Health Building is in fair condition and was recently remodeled to house the County's health services. The facility is in need of the following renovations: new roof, new heating system, the heating and cooling system infrastructure needs to be replaced and there are flooding issues on the north side of the building.

The facility houses the County Health Department and a basement meeting room with a capacity of 30 people. There are a total of 39 people employed at this facility.

Law Enforcement Center
304 Laurel Street

The Law Enforcement Center was built in 1979 and is good condition. The facility was remodeled recently to support the County's Dispatch Center. Other anticipated improved include expanding the garage, interior remodeling, new sprinkler system and landscaping.

The facility houses the Sheriff's Department, including the Boat and Water Division, and County Jail and Jail Annex. Until June of 2003, the building was also home to the Brainerd Police Department. There are a total of 89 employees at this facility.

Retired Seniors Volunteer Program - RSVP
213 South 5th Street – Complex West

The RSVP building is in fair condition, but is in need of a new roof. The building houses two employees, Federal and County personnel. No further information was made available for this facility.

SCHOOLS

In 2001, the consulting firm of Widseth, Smith and Nolting conduct a facilities evaluation on the schools in Independent School District (ISD) 181. Each facility was evaluated in four areas: Educator's findings, Architect's findings, Engineer's findings and Electrical Engineer's summary. Portions of that evaluation are included in this section.

~Elementary Schools~

Garfield Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1955 at 18,424 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 3 major additions; the most recent was 1992. Total building size is 48, 135 s.f. (119 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	403 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5 and handles the hearing impaired special program.

Garfield is the ideal size for an elementary building and is in good condition. Each grade level is divided into three sections which provided very good learning opportunities. The building offers all day, every day kindergarten and houses both the

hearing impaired and serves mild to severe mentally and physically handicapped children. The new large gym is an asset to the building and the district as a whole.

Harrison Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1938 at 34,352 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	1 minor addition in 1991. Total building size is 35,045 s.f. (121 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	283 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5

Harrison is a neighborhood school that serves a high population of special needs students. The building is over 60 years old but is well maintained. Many volunteers are utilized at this school.

Lincoln Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1938 at 33,508 s.f. (125 s.f./student)
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	There have been no major additions
Number of students (2002-2003)	267 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5

Lincoln School is over 60 years old and in good condition. It is one of the most heavily used buildings in the district. The facility has a strong program for Emotional Behavioral Disorder at-risk students. The building is also used for the year round for the summer Fun 'N Friends program.

Lowell Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1938 at 41,595 s.f. (109 s.f./student)
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	There have been no major additions
Number of students (2002-2003)	383 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5 and handles the Elementary Enriched special program.

Lowell Elementary School is over 60 years old and is well maintained. This facility houses the district wide enrichment program for grades 1-5. Each grade has two sections of classrooms. A project to refurbish the Lowell playground in conjunction with the city of Brainerd has recently been completed.

Riverside Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1955 at 20,202 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 6 major additions; the most recent was 1994. Total building size is 76,700s.f. (130 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	589 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5.

Riverside Elementary is a wonderfully designed building in very good condition. The building is handicapped accessible and includes facilities for special education programs. The newer additions are state-of-the art, and the entire building is air-conditioned.

Whittier Elementary School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1939 at 27,160 s.f. (151s.f./student)
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	There have been no major additions
Number of students (2002-2003)	179 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades K-5.

Whittier is a neighborhood school with less than 20 percent of the students being transported. The building is in very good condition. Special education and early childhood special education services are also offered in the school.

~Middle Schools~

Franklin Junior High School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1932 at 92,268 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 3 major additions; the most recent was 1991. Total building size is 152,768 s.f. (173 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	882 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades 8 & 9.

This 70-year-old building is in good condition considering the age. This building will close and relocate the students to a new school located in the city of Baxter called Forestview. The future use of the building has not been determined.

Mississippi Horizons School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1966 at 26,234 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 5 major additions; the most recent was 1997. Total building size is 117,000 s.f. (205 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	570 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades 6-9.

This building is the former state vocational-technical institute, which was renovated in 1996. This is currently the newest occupied school building in the District. The building is fully air-conditioned allowing for year round use. The Community Education Department and the district's staff development schedules keep the building in use all the time. This building will become the 9th grade campus upon completion of the new school located in Baxter.

Washington Middle School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1929 at 110,972 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 3 major additions; the most recent was 1989. Total building size is 137,852 s.f. (159 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	865 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades 6 & 7.

Washington Middle School is the oldest secondary building in the district and has been kept in good condition over the past 70 years. This building was the high school prior the construction of the current high school. The greater Brainerd Lakes community enjoys the use of the Tornstrom Auditorium as it is the only such facility around. This building will close and relocate the students to a new school located in the city of Baxter. The future use of the building includes District Administrative offices.

~High School~

Brainerd High School

Age of Original Building & Square Footage:	Built in 1968 at 262,902 s.f.
Age of Building Additions and Square Footages:	Includes 4 additions; the most recent was 1995. Total building size is 286,9181 s.f. (178 s.f./student)
Number of students (2002-2003)	1,610 students
Function:	This facility teaches grades 10-12.

This is the newest building in the school district and is in very good condition.
~Higher Education~

Central Lakes College (CLC)
501 West College Drive

Central Lakes College, Brainerd and Staples, is a comprehensive community and technical college offering more than 70 career education and liberal arts and sciences transfer degree programs.

Its two high-tech campuses serve about 4,000 students per year as part of the State's largest higher education provider – the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system – with its 32 institutions and 53 campuses in 46 communities.

Largest programs offered at the Brainerd campus of CLC include liberal arts and sciences, criminal justice, nursing, and computer information technology. Other unique programs are horticulture, Microsoft certified systems engineer, criminalistics, technical theatre and Natural Resources law enforcement.

Athletics, drama, music, and visual art provide students personal growth and cultural enrichment opportunity. Campus clubs such as Student Senate and Phi Theta Kappa complement academic energy by engendering advocacy and community service.

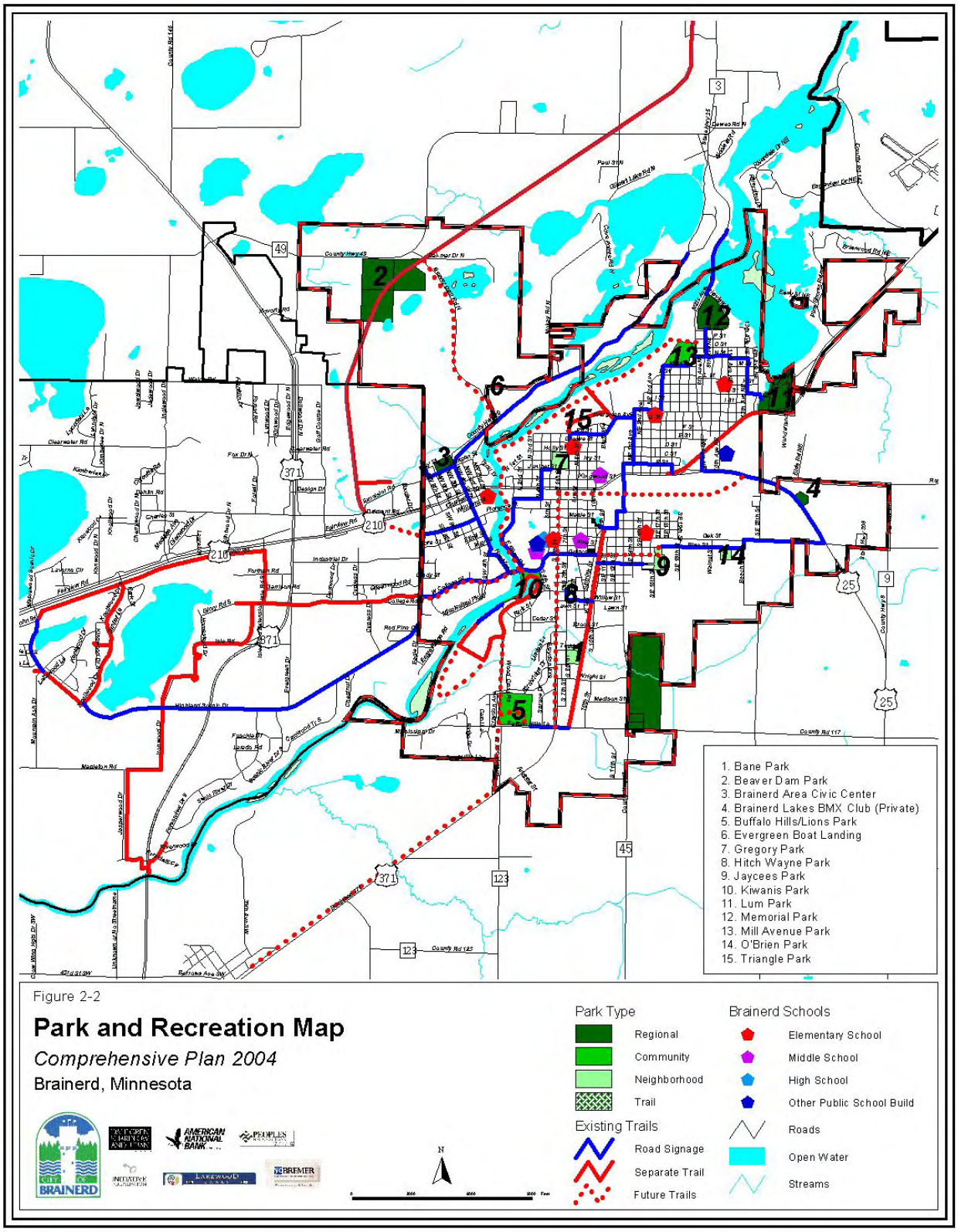
Onsite daycare and neighborhood housing serve residents who enroll at CLC. Convenient class times, Internet courses and fast-track options accommodate working student schedules.

Partnerships that benefit learners from all walks of life make CLC a center for constructive change. Four-year degree programs, such as those offered by Southwest Minnesota State University and the College of St. Scholastica, can be obtained at CLC.

The Business and Industry Center provides continuing education and customized training to employers and workers. The Small Business Development Center serves both entrepreneurs and expanding enterprises across the region.

College facilities enable non-profit agencies to host community events.

FIGURE 2-2, PARK AND RECREATION MAP



PARKS AND RECREATION

All public parks, open spaces and recreational areas are included in this category. It also includes campgrounds, resorts and golf courses, whether public or private. It does not include recreational facilities that are included as part of a school grounds, or recreation/amusement businesses, such as a bowling alley, miniature golf, or go-cart track. The largest tracts of parklands are used for baseball/softball fields and camping located in the northeastern portion of the city.

A common method of determining whether a community has enough parkland to meet the needs of its residents is to calculate the acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Although the recreational needs of a community vary depending on the city's role in the region, the demographic mix of its residents and other factors, a standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is typically considered adequate. Currently, 6% or roughly 303 acres of land are used for park and recreational uses, including trails. This means that there are approximately 23 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This is two times the recommended amount of land. However, this ratio does not take into consideration the amount of passive versus active recreation sites. The city should continue to identify key park and green space areas for future facilities.

The city of Brainerd has an abundance of park and trail facilities within the community. The city's park department has promoted the growth and maintenance of the community's parks with a variety of activities that are available on site. In addition, the entire region provides numerous recreational activities that benefit the city and the region as a whole. Trail and park linkages should be considered whenever development and/or projects are discussed.

The following Table 2-21 details each facility and the amenities that exist at the facility. The Ahlm Park property along Beaver Dam Road is the newest park within the community's park system and the table indicates future improvements for this facility. All Brainerd parks and recreational facilities are mapped on Figure 2-2 *Park and Recreation Map.*

Table 2-21
General Park Information
City of Brainerd

	Name	Type	Acre	Band Concert	Baseball	Basketball	Bike BMX	Boat Access	Camp Ground	Canoe Access	Concession Stand	X-Ctry Skiing	Disc Golf	Hiking/Biking Trails	Fishing Pier	Grills	Hockey	Ice Skating	Picnic Facilities	Park Shelter	Play Equip	Restrooms	River Access/Vista	Skateboard Park	Soccer	Softball	Swimming Beach	Tennis	Volleyball	Warming Shelter	Winter Sliding
1	Bane Park	Neighborhood	9		X						X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X								X	
2	Beaver Dam/Ahlm Park Property	Regional	110								F	F	F	F		F			F	F	F	F			F	F		F	F		
3	Brainerd Area Civic Center	Regional	7.6								X						X	X				X									
4	Brainerd Lakes BMX Club (Private)	Regional					X																								
5	Buffalo Hills/Lions Park	Community	20								X					X	X	X	X		X					X		F		X	
6	Evergreen Boat Landing	Regional						X		X													X								
7	Gregory Park	Community	8.5	X		X										X		X	X	X	X	X						X		X	
8	Wayne Hitch Park	Neighborhood																													X
9	Jaycees Park	Community	35		X						X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X						X	
10	Kiwanis Park	Community	14.4							X				X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X								

Table 2-21
General Park Information
City of Brainerd

	Name	Type	Acre		Band Concert	Baseball	Basketball	Bike BMX	Boat Access	Camp Ground	Canoe Access	Concession Stand	X-Ctry Skiing	Disc Golf	Hiking/Biking Trails	Fishing Pier	Grills	Hockey	Ice Skating	Picnic Facilities	Park Shelter	Play Equip	Restrooms	River Access/Vista	Skateboard Park	Soccer	Softball	Swimming Beach	Tennis	Volleyball	Warming Shelter	Winter Sliding
11	Lum Park	Regional	55						X	X	X			X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X				X		X		
12	Memorial Park	Regional	28			X						X					X			X	X	X	X			X	X					
13	Mill Ave Park	Community	12															X	X				X				X				X	
14	O'Brien Park	Neighborhood	4																	X		X										
15	Triangle Park	Neighborhood	0.5																			X										

Note: X = Existing Amenities/F = Future Amenities

ENVIRONMENT

GEOGRAPHIC / ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Brainerd is situated in the heart of one of the prime resort and recreational areas in the State of Minnesota approximately 120 miles north of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. It is estimated that there are more than 400 lakes within 20 miles of the City. While the greatest economic impact from the tourism generated by the environmental setting is in the summer months with fishing and golfing with numerous championship golf courses located within 15 to 30 minutes of the City, winter activities such as ice fishing, skiing, and snowmobiling also draw vacationers during the winter season. The Mississippi River runs north to south through the City creating a picturesque setting. Also, either partially or entirely within the City are Boom Lake, Gilbert Lake and Rice Lake/Reservoir.

The Crow Wing County Water Management Plan provides the following geographic and environmental information. According to the County's Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), the county's current Soil Survey is outdated to due its creation in the late 1950. The SWCD is researching funds to develop a new soil survey for the county. Thus, the primary source of the following information was provided by the Water Management Plan. In addition, GIS base data was available to create Figure 2-3, *Environmental Features Map,* which shows a snap shot of the city's natural features.

Water is Central Minnesota's life-blood and of its 731,000 acres, 101,764 are covered by this liquid heritage - scenic lakes, wetlands (marshes), not counting the flowing miles of rivers and streams.

Crow Wing County is about 100 miles northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Its length, north to south, is 45 miles and its width, east to west, stretches 27 miles. Crow Wing borders Cass County to the north and west, Morrison to the south and Aitkin to the east. The climate is continental meaning the summers are short and relatively warm, the winters long and cold. The first killing frost is around September 20 and the last frost of spring around May 28, for a growing season of about 125 days.

What is now a booming tourism industry started with the fur traders and trappers who used native Indians in birch bark canoes to lead them through the maze of lakes and waterways, followed by early explorers and loggers who sought to tame the vast watery wilderness. The lakes are of many ecological types and no two are exactly alike. Some are best suited to fish, some to waterfowl and other aquatic life. All provide scenic, recreational value.

Where early Indian tribes, fur traders and loggers once walked, Crow Wing today is divided into 31 townships and 19 cities with Brainerd (the county seat) being the largest. About 60% of the land remains in forest cover and major lakes are lined with permanent and seasonal homes and housing developments.

The level to gently rolling landscape, the abundance of scenic lakes, wetlands, meandering rivers and streams are gifts of three separate glacial periods that advanced, melted and retreated during the Wisconsin Ice Age about 10,000 years ago. There was movement by other glaciers in earlier times and much of the evidence of their presence was obliterated by the activity of the Wisconsin Ice Age. What is called the St. Croix Moraine located north, south and west of the Mississippi, the drumlin fields just south of Brainerd and the Mille Lacs Moraine that crosses the southeast corner were formed by glacial lobes.

The glaciers left surprisingly few rock outcroppings and boulders. Even the iron bearing rock of the Cuyuna Range does not have a natural exposure above the ground. The Precambrian strait of southern Crow Wing is overlain by dolomite limestone formations resulting from periods when the land was under a prehistoric glacial lake. The north and south central sections are characterized by forested hills, ice block basin lakes and soils, which are mostly brown, sandy glacial till. The southern one-third is characterized by pitted outwash plain lakes in a more sorted sandy soil that is well to excessively drained. The till material overlying the bedrock ranges from 40 to 500 feet thick.

Groundwater moves rapidly through the porous soils deposited by the glacial melt water. Limestone formations allow the groundwater to penetrate the relatively impervious bedrock below where it flows through cracks and fractures and supplies the drinking water for county residents, tourists, seasonal property owners, business and industries. Not only are people dependent on good water quality, so are fish and wildlife. Crow Wing is blessed with an exceptionally fine variety of wildlife both game and non-game. It is home to mammals ranging from the white tailed deer to the tiny shrew, birds including grouse, songbirds and waterfowl--all dependent of the natural ecosystem for food, water, shelter and a place to rear their young.

The lakes are recognized as some of the best sport fishing waters in the nation. Although the rivers offer their fishing assets, they are little used by anglers compared to the vast array of lakes. Conservatively speaking there are over 30 prime walleye lakes within a 40 mile circle around Brainerd. Larger lakes noted for walleye fishing are Mille Lacs, Gull, Pelican and the Whitefish Chain.

Many smaller lakes are also well-known walleye lakes. Large or small, deep or shallow, most Crow Wing County lakes have healthy varieties of all species of game fish native to this area. Most prime walleye lakes supply as many northern pike as well. Many lakes have exceptionally fine populations of largemouth bass, crappie and other sunfish (blue gill and pumpkinseed).

Notable among the smallmouth bass waters is the Mississippi, a river also known for walleye, northern and panfish. There are also muskies in the Mississippi and a few blue catfish have been taken south of Brainerd. Management of a few small lakes exclusively for trout has been undertaken for several years. According to the Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Inventory of Protected Water Inventory there were 492 lakes and 90 natural or altered watercourses. Wetlands are keys to clean water and no one knows for sure just how many there are. The MDNR includes only 183 wetland systems, of ten acres or more, in its list of protected waters. The National Wetland Inventory maps, however, show many thousand. Of the 13 lakes over 1,000 acres, Pelican Lake (8,400 acres) is the largest totally contained in Crow Wing County. Add together the connecting lakes of the Whitefish Chain, and this vital waterway becomes the largest.

Waters know no political bounds and were formed long before anyone thought of counties, townships and cities--borderlines and boundaries. The Gull Lake Chain on the western border, for instance, is shared with Cass County; Lake Mille Lacs on Crow Wing's southeast boundary is shared with Aitkin and Mille Lacs Counties.

There are two large reservoir systems--the Gull Lake and the Pine River reservoirs, both regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Rice Reservoir, also known as Rice Lake, on the Mississippi is maintained by the Missota Paper Company, Brainerd.

The total number and miles of rivers and streams is not known, nor is the total surface acreage. It is known, however, that the Mississippi meanders through the county northeast to southwest for 61 miles. The Pine River pours from the Corps of Engineers dam on Cross Lake for 32 miles to meet the Mississippi about 20 miles northeast of Brainerd. The Gull River flows through the Gull Chain from Upper Cullen Lake to the outlet at Gull Lake Dam and Recreation Area, then 4.5 river miles to meet the Crow Wing River. The Crow Wing River joins the Mississippi at Crow Wing State Park.

WATERSHEDS

A watershed is defined as an area of land from which all water drains to a given point. It's a ridge or stretch of high land dividing an area drained by different rivers or river systems. Unlike boundaries of political subdivisions such as counties, cities and

townships, which are mainly straight and uniform, watershed borders zigzag across the natural lay of the land. Crow Wing County lies within the Mississippi River Headwaters Drainage Basin and contains parts of five major watersheds and within each are minor or sub-watersheds all of which flow into the Mississippi.

The Elk Nokasippi Watershed covers the largest acreage of Crow Wing County and drains the central and southeastern portions. Waters flow into the Elk and the Nokasippi rivers, then into the Mississippi. This diverse watershed encompasses forested lakeshores to the north, the heart of the agricultural lands south of Brainerd and all of the Mississippi River in Crow Wing County.

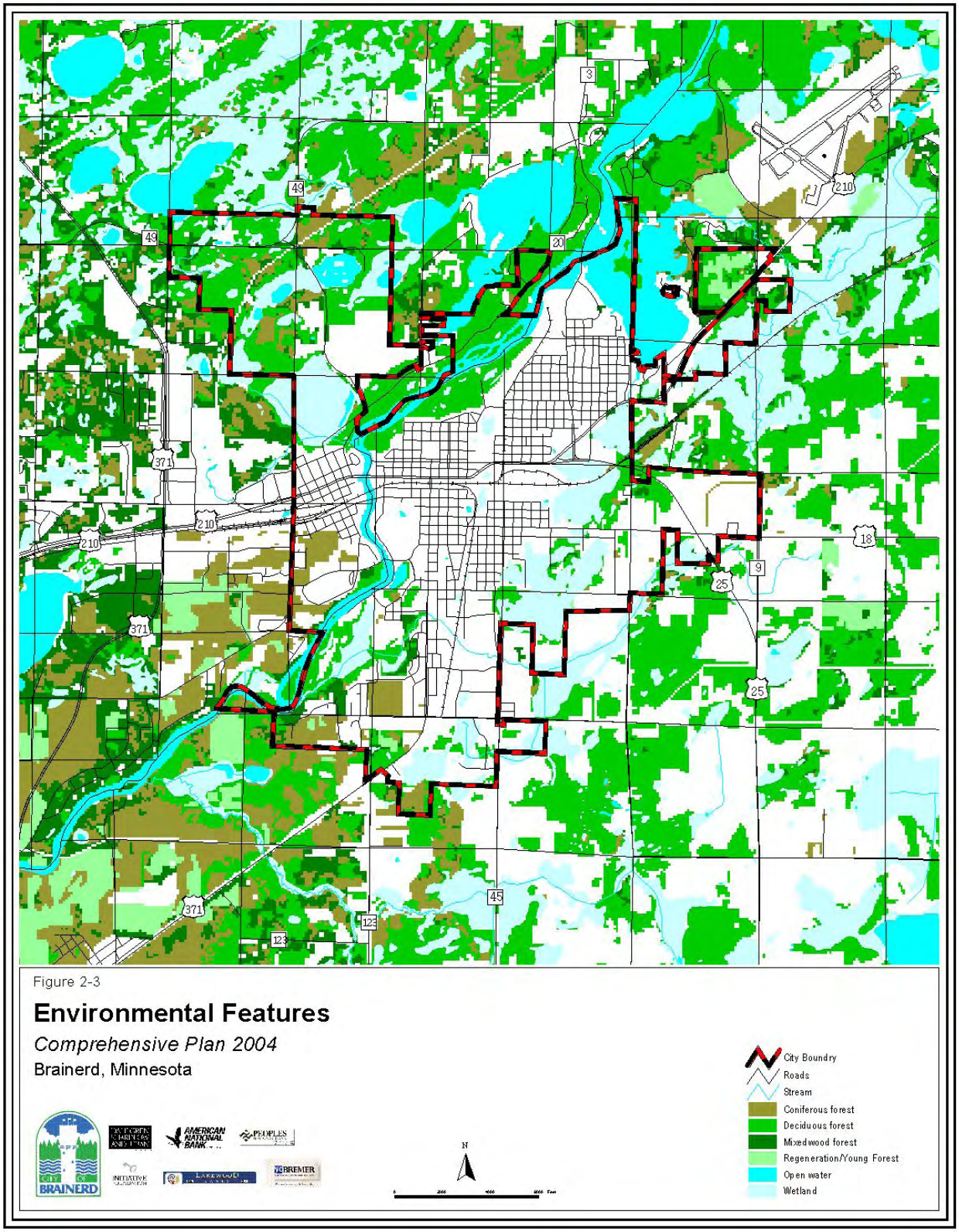
The watershed borders Aitkin County to the east, Morrison to the south and Lower Cass west along the Mississippi. Inter-county lakes shared by Aitkin and Crow Wing include Coon, Kruny, Cedar, Townline, Sunset, Tame Fish, and Birch. With Lower Cass, Crow Wing shares the Mississippi River and Hardy Lake along its southern border.

Cities include Brainerd, Baxter, Trommald, Crosby, Ironton, Riverton, Deerwood, Cuyuna, Fort Ripley, Wolford, and Riverton. It takes in the following townships: Dean Lake, Rabbit, part of Mission, Wolford, Deerwood, Irondale, most of Perry, Center, Nokay Lake, Oak Lawn, Crow Wing, Maple Grove, Mathias, Daggett Brook, and part of Platte Lake.

Some of the finest lakes lie within this major watershed. A partial list includes Upper Mission, Lower Mission, Stark, Pickerel, Upper Dean, Dean, Little Bass, Rabbit, Cuyuna Range Mine Pit lakes near Crosby, Long, Rice, Sullivan, Deer, Nelson, Carlson, Half Moon, Spider, Serpent, Cedar, Sunset, Birch, Townline, Perch, Crocker and Clearwater lakes. Across the center of the watershed are Bay, Rice, Gilbert, Wolf, Loon, Nokay, Clearwater, Shirt, Horseshoe, Pine, Agate, and Portage lakes. There are fewer lakes south of Brainerd in the southern one third of the watershed. These include Upper South Long, Lower South Long, Grove, Crow Wing, Mud, Russell, Sebin, Jinks, Mud and Round.

The Mississippi enters the county from the east along Hwy. 11 in Dean Lake Township and flows west near Rabbit, Indian Jack, and Island lakes, then turns south to meander along Upper and Lower Mission, Miller and Black Bear. It turns southwest through Brainerd and forms the county's western border near Baxter. The Nokasippi River joins the Mississippi just north of Fort Ripley.

Figure 2-3, Environmental Features Map



LAND USE

LAND USE INVENTORY

The purpose of a land use inventory is to quantify and analyze existing development in the city. An examination of current land uses should reveal development patterns, densities and other land use scenarios that can provide direction for future development and redevelopment. This inventory, combined with other background information, is used to suggest where, at what intensity, and in some cases, when growth should occur. The inventory can also help to classify areas that should remain undeveloped or preserved. The kind of development and how that development is allowed to progress should be a reflection of the community's needs and desires. Brainerd's existing land use is shown in Figure 2-4, *Existing Land Use*.

Methodology

The object of the land use inventory is to record, on a map of the city, the exact use of every piece of property and every building in the city and close surrounding area, using the legend described below. The inventory was conducted September 17 and 18, 2002 by a member of the consulting group.

The following procedure was used:

- An existing base map of the city was used for notes.

- Walking or driving through each area of the city, the person doing the inventory made notes directly on the map of the general land use category for each piece of property or building.

- The inventory reflected how the land is actually being used and not how it is zoned, because these may be different. That is one of the purposes of the exercise. For example, a single-family home in a business district was noted as a single family home, not commercial. A single-family home in an R-1 district, which has been converted to three units, was noted as an apartment building, not a single family home. A gas station in an I-1 district was noted as Commercial not Industrial. A business in a Residential district (usually these are older and grandfathered, such as a body shop or a grocery store) was noted as a Commercial use and not Residential.

- In some cases, it may be difficult to differentiate between commercial and industrial uses. As a rule of thumb, if the general public is able to purchase goods or service over the counter it was considered commercial.

- Once the draft map was completed it was reviewed and by several people, who are very familiar with the city, as well as city staff. It is easy to get a house in the wrong location, skip over a vacant piece of property, or describe a business differently than another person might describe it.

- The working maps were entered onto the City's digital base map in an Arc View format. In this format changes can be made easily and analysis can be done.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The land use inventory recorded 14 general land use categories. A description of each is given below.

Residential (3 categories):

Residential – Single Family
Includes: houses, private cabins, and other dwellings that house only one family, or one group of people, in one building that is located on off lake parcels.

Does not include duplexes, apartments, rooming houses, hotels, motels, resort cabins, or school dormitories.

Residential – Multi Family
Includes: duplexes - either side-by-side or up-and-down - townhouses, apartments, condominiums, rooming houses, and other dwellings that house more than one family in one building. Note the type of use: duplex, apartment, etc.

Does not include hotels, motels, resort cabins, and bed-and-breakfasts (these are Commercial uses), or school dormitories (these are Public/Semi Public uses).

Residential – Manufactured Home
Includes: manufactured homes, manufactured home parks, and trailer homes, if permanently located on the site.

Does not include manufactured housing if it is built on a standard single-family lot and is part of a typical single-family neighborhood in all other respects. Also does not include trailer homes or recreational vehicles, which are parked or stored temporarily on a site.

Commercial (2 categories):

General Commercial
Includes: retail stores, restaurants, banks, hotels, motels, lumber yards, business and professional offices; medical and dental clinics, or veterinary clinics, gas stations, and other businesses serving the public in the city.

Downtown Commercial
Includes: all business, retail stores, services, and professional offices such as attorneys, real estate, insurance, etc., located in the downtown area. Doesn't include government offices, schools, and churches that are located in downtown. These should be classified as public.

Industrial:

Includes: manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, truck terminals, mining, quarries, and other businesses that provide goods and services, but not directly to the public. Note on the maps the specific kind of business on each parcel, e.g., Lexington Manufacturing, factory, bakery (wholesale), printing plant, etc. Most of these Industrial uses will have an administrative or sales office within the same building, which should be counted as part of the Industrial use, and not as a separate Office use.

Does not include self-storage units which are open to the public (this is a Commercial use), small-scale manufacturing or service businesses which make something to sell directly to the public on the premises, e.g., printing and copy shops, bakery, candy stores, dry cleaners, etc. (these are Commercial uses).

Public/Semi-Public:

Includes: all publicly-owned uses, such as schools, city buildings, county buildings, water towers, pumping stations, sewage treatment plants, sanitary sewer etc., as well as public utilities, such as power plants, electrical substations, telephone companies, etc. Includes private institutional uses, such as hospitals, colleges, private schools, churches, monasteries, cemeteries, etc.

Does not include parks and other recreational uses, whether public or private, such as golf courses, camps, etc. (this is a Park use). Does not include private clinics or dental offices (these are Office uses), large-scale day care centers or pre-schools, (these are Commercial uses, unless they are part of a church or other non-profit institution), or railroads (this a separate category).

Park/Open Space:

Includes: all public parks, open spaces, walking trails and recreational areas. Also includes campgrounds, golf courses, whether public or private. Does not include recreational facilities that are included as part of the school grounds (this is Public/Semi-Public), recreation / amusement businesses, such as a bowling alley, miniature golf, or go-cart track (these are Commercial uses).

Water:

Includes: rivers and lakes, at their normal water lines.

Does not include small man-made storm drainage ponds, wetlands, or marsh areas (these will be mapped separately in the natural resources inventory).

Vacant:

Includes: all platted vacant land with no actively-used buildings, but which could be available for development. This can include former farmland that has not been cultivated for many years and is now sitting idle. It can also include land that had been actively used for some purpose, but which use has been abandoned. If there were buildings on the site associated with the former land use, these could be still standing but vacant, or they could be already torn down.

Does not include temporarily vacant buildings, storefronts, or office facilities which are likely to be filled within a year (these would be Commercial or Industrial uses). Does not include pasture or farmland being actively cultivated (this is Agriculture). Does not include land owned or controlled by a government agency, such as city, county, or state parks, or a private organization such as the Nature Conservancy (these are Public uses). Does not include large yards or spacious grounds around and owned by another use, such as a school playground or vacant cemetery plots; these should be included with the primary use.

Table 2-22 shows Brainerd's generalized existing land uses by acreage as of September 2002. Acreages are given as "gross" and "net". Gross refers to the total acreage. Net refers to the total acreage, less and wetlands. This table shows that residential is the largest developed land use category in the city with public / semi-public / institutional uses being the next highest. Agricultural and vacant land is a large percentage of the city's undeveloped land. Figure 2-4, *Existing Land Use*, maps the current land uses in Brainerd, and shows that the core of the city is comprised primarily of residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses with vacant / agricultural being located on the periphery.

Table 2-22
Existing Land Use City of Brainerd
September 2002

Land Use Category	Acres			Percent (of Total Developed Area)	
	Gross	Wetland	Net*	Gross	Net
Residential					
Low Density	1,338	70	1,268	35	37
Medium to High Density	171	15	156	4	4
Manufactured Housing	84	5	79	2	2
Public /Semi-Public / Institutional	1,010	170	840	27	25
Industrial	546	119	427	14	13
Park / Trails	340	33	307	9	9
Commercial					
General	255	17	238	7	7
Downtown	35	0	35	1	1
Total Developed	**3,779**	**429**	**3,350**	**100**	**100**
Vacant	2,089	701	1,388	35	29
Total Land	**5,868**	**1,130**	**4,738**	**100**	**100**
Water	420		420	6	7
Right of Way	993		993	14	16
Total City	**7,281**		**6,151**	**100%**	**100%**

Residential

Comprising 43 percent of the city's total developed area, residential development (single-family homes, duplexes and townhomes, multi-family homes and pre-manufactured housing) is the largest land use type in the city. Low-density homes consume the vast majority, over 84 percent, of the city's residential land.

Public / Semi-Public / Institutional

Comprising 25 percent of the city's developed area, public and semi-public land uses make up an important portion of the city's land. This category includes educational, religious, health care, government, utility and other public uses. A large area devoted to public land uses is located in the area to the south of the city's downtown. Central Lakes College, located south of the city's downtown, numerous public schools, the Brainerd Regional Human Services Center, and County facilities comprise a considerable portion of the city's public land.

Industrial

Industrial uses make up a moderate portion of the city's land area. Approximately 13 percent of the developed area of the city is used for industrial purposes. Industry is located in a number of areas throughout the city but the largest concentrations exist along the rail line running east west through the city, and in the southeastern portion of the city, east of Business Highway 371.

Parks / Trails

Brainerd has 307 acres of parks and open space areas, accounting for nine percent of the developed land use in the city. There are a total of 13, neighborhood, community and regional parks scattered throughout the city. In addition, regional facilities such as the Brainerd Area Civic Center/Gold Medal Arena, the Lum Park Campground and the Evergreen Boat Landing provide additional recreational activities. There are numerous community pedestrian trails (on-road and separated) within the corporate limits and within the region.

Commercial

Commercial areas make up a relatively small portion of Brainerd's total land area. There are approximately 273 acres of commercial development, which account for seven percent of the city's total developed area. Commercial uses are concentrated primarily in the downtown; along major transportation corridors, particularly Business Highway 371 and TH 210.

The downtown area consists largely of older one to three-story buildings with commercial establishments facing the street. There are few new commercial structures in the downtown area and there are relatively few vacant spaces in the downtown. The downtown consists predominantly of smaller retail and service-oriented establishments while the newer, larger retailers tend to be located adjacent to Trunk Highway 210. This corridor includes small regional shopping centers, the East Brainerd Mall, and

highway-oriented businesses such as fast food restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations and other auto-oriented businesses.

Vacant/Undeveloped

This category includes vacant and undeveloped land with no actively used buildings, but which could be available for development, including existing undeveloped, platted lots and land that had been actively used for some purpose, but which has been abandoned. In this case, buildings on the site associated with the former land use could be still standing but vacant, or they could be already torn down.

This category also includes the minimal agricultural land in the city. Although Brainerd is a growing and thriving urban center, agricultural uses currently comprise a small portion of the city's total land area. These are located primarily in the northern and southern areas of the city. Although some of this land is actively farmed, it is in the path of urban development and may be suitable for residential, commercial and industrial uses in the near future.

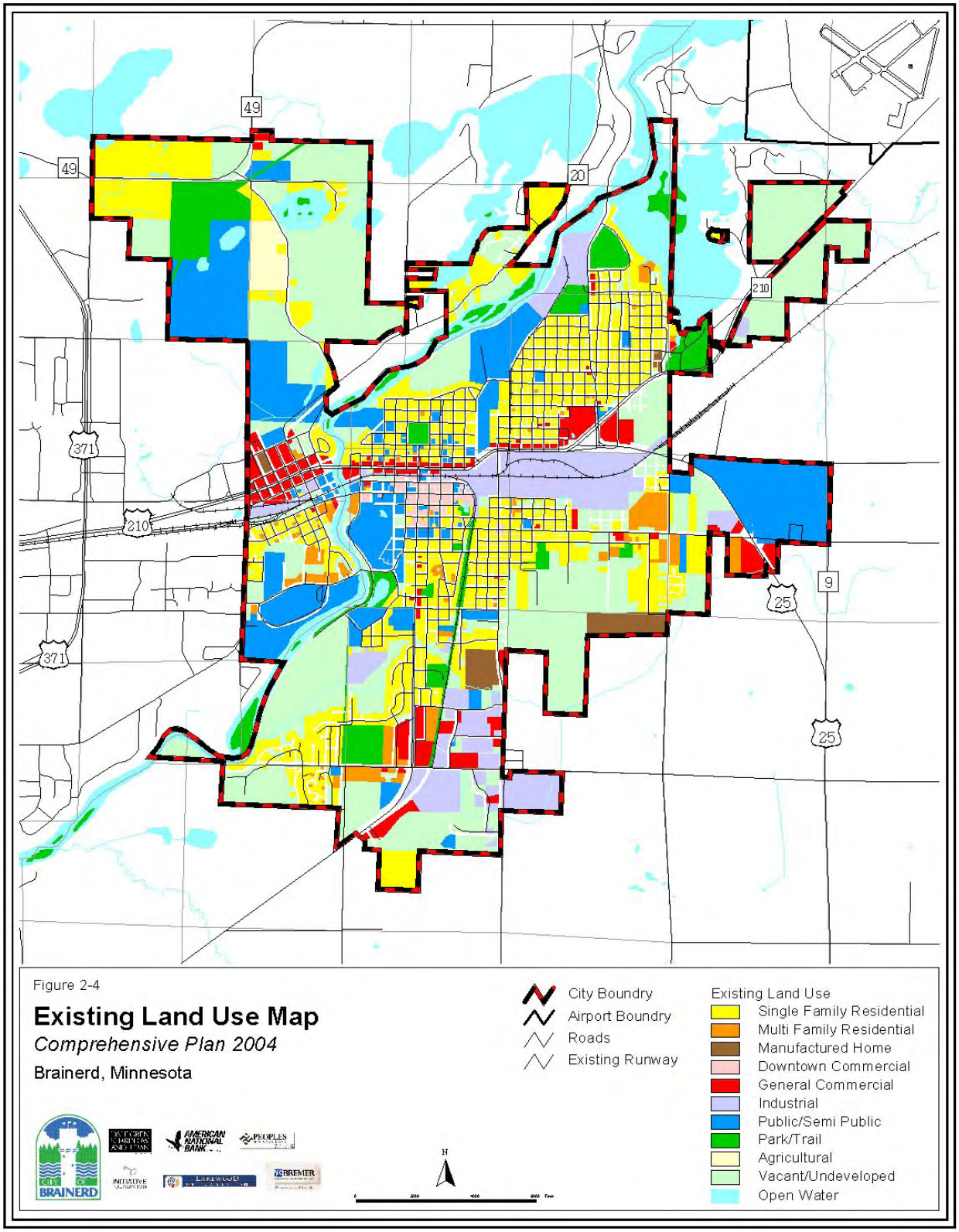
Vacant/undeveloped land does not include park or open space land owned or controlled by a government agency, such as the city, a township, the county, or the state, or a private organization, which are all classified as parks/open space. Large yards or spacious grounds around and owned by another use, such as a school playground are also not included; these are classified with the related primary use.

Vacant/undeveloped land comprises 1,388 acres, or 29 percent of the city's total land area. However, it is worth noting that a fairly large portion of this area, 34 percent, is wetland.

Water

Open water comprises 430 acres, or approximately six percent of the total city. The primary water feature in Brainerd is the Mississippi River. Rice Lake, located just northeast of the community, a portion which is within the community, Boom Lake located southwest of downtown and Gilbert Lake, located just north of Brainerd a portion of which is within the City, are also important water features in Brainerd. These water bodies, along with the numerous wetland areas are some of the prime scenic and recreational features of the city and efforts to preserve them should be continued and enhanced where appropriate.

Figure 2-4, Existing Land Use



City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Goals and Strategies

Goals and Strategies are a detailed expression of a community's aspirations for the future and can be considered the heart of the Comprehensive Plan. The Goals and Strategies appear toward the beginning of the Comprehensive Plan to provide the framework for the various roles and responsibilities of the city in implementing and achieving these aspirations. The issues identified at the Community Kick-off Session and Focus Topic Meetings precede the specific goals and strategies that will aid the city in addressing the issues.

Goal: A general statement of community aspirations and desired objectives that indicates a broad social, economic, or physical state of conditions that the community officially agrees to strive to achieve in a variety of ways, such as through the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Strategies: An officially adopted course or method of action intended to be followed to implement the community Goals.

The Goals and Strategies spell out various roles and responsibilities for the city relative to the future development patterns. To better understand the role for each Goal and Policy, a number of key terms are defined below with the corresponding responsibilities:

Create: Bring about the desired goal, usually with city staff involved at all levels from planning to implementation. May involve city financial assistance.

Continue: Follow past and present procedures to maintain desired goal, usually with city staff involved at all levels from planning to implementation.

Encourage: Foster the desired goal through city strategies. Could involve city financial assistance.

Endorse: Subscribe to the desired goal by supportive city strategies.

Enhance: Improve current goal to a desired state through the use of Strategies and city staff at all levels of planning. This could include financial support.

Identify: Catalog and confirm resource or desired item(s) through the use of city staff and actions.

Maintain: Keep in good condition the desired state of affairs through the use of city strategies and staff. Financial assistance should be provided if needed.

Recognize: Acknowledge the identified state of affairs and take actions or implement strategies to preserve or change them.

Prevent: Stop described event through the use of appropriate city strategies, staff actions, and finances, if needed.

Promote: Advance the desired state through the use of city strategies and staff activity at all levels of planning. This may include financial support.

Protect: Guard against a deterioration of the desired state through the use of city strategies, staff, and, if needed, financial assistance.

Provide: Take the lead role in supplying the needed financial and staff support to achieve the desired goal. The city is typically involved in all aspects from planning to implementation to maintenance.

Strengthen: Improve and reinforce the desired goal through the use of city strategies, staff, and, if necessary, financial assistance.

Support: Supply the needed staff support, strategies, and financial assistance at all levels to achieve the desired goal.

Sustain: Uphold the desired state through city strategies, financial resources, and staff action to achieve the desired goal.

Work: Cooperate and act in a manner through the use of city staff, actions, and strategies to create the desired goal.

FORMULATION OF GOALS AND STRATEGIES

To help guide the background studies and to formulate community goals and strategies, participants listed and then ranked the issues in order of importance. Ultimately, these issues and the subsequent goals and strategies will be used to draft a land use plan and related strategies for the community. It should be noted that the listed strengths, weaknesses and other ideas are only the opinions and perceptions of the residents who chose to participate in the workshop.

GENERAL GOALS AND STRATEGIES

GENERAL GOAL #1: *Maximize Brainerd's potential as a thriving center for business, health care, industry, education and recreation, while maintaining and enhancing its livability.*

Strategies

1. Promote the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Plan that effectively and efficiently plans for land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, economic development and environmental protection for Brainerd and the immediate surrounding area.

2. Review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. Adhere to this Plan, which shall guide all zoning changes, as closely as possible to ensure consistent development policy.

3. Formulate and enforce city ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, including downtown development guidelines, and general commercial development requirements.

4. Continue to plan for land uses to support and enhance Brainerd's ability to attract quality development, by providing adequate quality areas for new business development.

5. Participate in the state legislative, Crow Wing County, and surrounding townships' governmental processes regarding issues important to the city.

6. Protect both the general welfare and the individual choices of Brainerd residents. Insure that decisions that are made by the community reflect the needs of current residents and business owners.

GENERAL GOAL #2: *Support a strong, ongoing working relationship between Brainerd, Crow Wing County, and the adjacent governmental jurisdictions in all matters related to planning and the provision of public services.*

Strategies

1. Recognize the legitimate issues and concerns regarding jurisdictional issues by working and cooperating with surrounding communities through this planning process and outside this process.

2. Encourage joint planning projects and shared community facilities where appropriate and fiscally responsible.

General Goal #3: *Promote community spirit and unity and enhance Brainerd's character and identity.*

Strategies

1. Encourage volunteerism, participation in community activities and acceptance of community leadership positions.

2. Seek partnerships with coalitions and interest groups to share resources and energies in order to address community problems and opportunities.

3. Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision-making process and encourage active neighborhood associations.

4. Encourage increased interaction and communication between citizens of all ages, cultural heritages and incomes.

5. Continue to improve and enhance communication among the city, residents, businesses, civic groups and public agencies utilizing various media such as a city newsletter, cable access and a community web page.

6. Continue to improve connections between the city, and its business community through active participation in the local Chamber and civic groups.

7. Encourage a variety of experiences and opportunities in terms of living, working and social activities within the community.

8. Protect and enhance important historical, cultural and natural resources as a means to maintain the integrity, heritage and local character of Brainerd's natural and built environment.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

GOAL: *Plan for the orderly, efficient and fiscally responsible growth of commercial and industrial development in Brainerd.*

Strategies

1. Locate and design industrial and commercial developments to provide good access and road service, while avoiding the routing of traffic through residential neighborhoods.

2. Require new commercial and industrial developments to have access to adequately sized and designed public roads.

3. Encourage the development of additional commercial and industrial areas within the city in accordance with the land use plan.

4. When available, require all commercial and industrial developments to be on public sewer and water.

5. Buffer commercial and industrial developments from environmentally sensitive areas and residential areas within the community.

6. Require compliance with all City Codes including the building, storm water and landscaping codes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: *Support the development of a strong, diversified, and growing economic base and create a favorable climate for economic development and ongoing business activities.*

Strategies

1. Promote and encourage quality commercial and industrial development in the city through the support and cooperation of the City Council, EDA, the Brainerd Lakes Development Corporation (BLADC), business organizations and community leaders.

2. Actively promote development and redevelopment within the community, including financial incentives, with particular emphasis on attracting and supporting businesses that provide livable-wage jobs.

3. Strengthen and maintain a diverse retail base through the cooperation of the the Brainerd Economic Development Authority, (EDA), Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), BLADC, business organizations and community leaders.

4. Promote and encourage environmentally sound commercial and industrial development through design standards and good site planning.

5. Promote aesthetically pleasing development and redevelopment in the city.

6. Create and maintain an economic development database to track trends and determine future needs.

7. Emphasize tax base expansion and job creation in economic development efforts by the city.

8. Plan for adequate land for future Industrial and Commercial Developments in three principal areas within the city:

    - East of Business Highway 371 near the Industrial Park Road
    - Within the Redevelopment of the Northern Pacific Center
    - On the former Potlatch Paper Mill site
    - Other areas deemed appropriate

DOWNTOWN

GOAL: *Support the economic viability and diversification of the Downtown Commercial District.*

Strategies

1. Complete the work underway with business owners, property owners and other stakeholders to implement the Downtown Master Plan for the Downtown Redevelopment District.

2. Retain and attract the appropriate mix of retail/service business activity and housing opportunities in Downtown.

3. Re-focus development efforts to take advantage of the River and the regional Trails to improve the character and access to the Downtown area.

4. Evaluate and recommend improvements to Downtown pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow.

5. Encourage and support innovative housing opportunities in the Downtown area.

6. Promote and improve parking for the Downtown.

7. In addition to private investment, encourage the use of federal, state, local, and other financial resources to promote reinvestment and the rehabilitation of Downtown.

LAND USE

LAND USE GOAL #1: *Support the efficient and orderly growth of all urban development, including residential, commercial and industrial areas. Strengthen the distinction between the urban city and the rural countryside with well planned and carefully coordinated services appropriate to the distinct needs of each.*

Strategies

1. Work with Baxter, Crow Wing Township, Long Lake Township, Oak Lawn Township, Unorganized Territory and the County to identify growth areas.

2. Work with the County and adjacent townships to maintain low residential densities in planned growth areas to promote the efficient extension of public utilities.

3. Work with adjacent units of government to develop orderly annexation plans for areas that are urban or are about to become urban in character located within the city's planned growth areas, as services can be provided to those properties. Work cooperatively with the adjacent townships, the county, and property owners to encourage orderly growth and development.

4. Conduct an environmental review of lands within the planned growth area to assess potential impacts that may occur from the growth and development of the community. Amend the Comprehensive Plan to address identified impacts, if necessary.

5. Review all applicable ordinances and policies to ensure that they do not deter desirable, self-supporting development.

6. Identify areas of significant natural resource benefit and protect these areas from premature or incompatible development.

LAND USE GOAL #2: *Plan for the orderly, efficient and fiscally responsible growth of commercial and industrial development in Brainerd.*

Strategies

1. Require new commercial and industrial developments to have access to adequately sized and designed public roads.

2. Locate and design industrial and commercial developments to avoid the routing of traffic through residential neighborhoods.

3. Encourage the development of additional commercial and industrial areas within the city in accordance with the land use plan.

4. When available, require all commercial and industrial developments to be on public sewer and water.

5. Buffer commercial and industrial developments from environmentally sensitive areas, residential neighborhoods and other incompatible land uses within the community.

LAND USE GOAL #3: *Plan for the orderly, efficient and fiscally responsible growth of residential development in Brainerd.*

Strategies

1. Continue to guide residential growth in an orderly and compact manner so that new developments can be effectively served by public improvements and that the character and quality of the city's existing neighborhoods can be maintained and enhanced.

2. Encourage well-designed residential subdivisions at urban densities in the designated growth areas of the city. Locate higher density residential developments in areas adjacent to higher density development and major transportation systems to efficiently address traffic volumes.

3. Only place high-density developments in areas with adequate transportation infrastructure.

4. Encourage development of low density and high-density family housing units in those areas designated on the adopted Land Use Plan.

5. Encourage compatible infill residential development throughout the developed portions of the city, to encourage the efficient use of land, the establishment of a strong tax base and the cost effective provision of city services.

6. Require all residential developments to be connected to public sewer and water where feasible.

7. Encourage the development of trail systems and open spaces in new residential developments with "points of interest" destinations.

8. Encourage housing rehabilitation and redevelopment in appropriate areas.

LAND USE GOAL #4: *Plan land uses and implement standards to minimize land use conflicts.*

Strategies

1. Prepare and adopt a land use plan that designates land use areas and guides development to appropriate areas in order to ensure desirable land use patterns and minimize conflicts.

2. Require adequate transitions between different land uses through appropriate land use planning and zoning standards.

3. Promote architectural/site aesthetics that are compatible with community standards.

4. Encourage the location of commercial and industrial development in areas that avoid adverse impacts, such as truck traffic, through residential areas.

5. Prepare design standards for commercial, industrial and multi-family housing development.

LAND USE GOAL #5: *Support development that enhances community character and identity.*

Strategies

1. Work to strengthen and maintain the appearance of the Business Highway 371, Highway 210/Washington Street, Oak Street (former Highway 18), Highway 25 and County Road 3 corridors through design standards, trails, lighting, sidewalks, signage and other tools.

2. Develop and enforce architectural/site-planning standards in both the downtown and general commercial areas that support and promote community aesthetic standards.

3. Support and enhance Brainerd's ability to attract new development by identifying quality building sites that provide efficient infrastructure, specifically in growth areas.

4. Support the redevelopment of vacant and abandoned sites within the urban core.

5. Ensure that high quality developments are well planned and connected to existing development through the efficient use of streets, utilities and infrastructure.

6. Develop a "Community Resources Master Plan" that identifies unique environmental, cultural and architectural sites within the community. Establish preservation guidelines that allow for adaptive re-use, or redevelopment.

7. Work with property owners to encourage the development of attractive entrances and gateways to the community.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

GOAL: *Provide and maintain adequate community parks and open space to meet the future needs of the community.*

Strategies

1. Create and maintain a parks master plan that includes park location, function, park equipment, trail system, and future park and trail expansion.

2. Strongly support the expansion of parks, trails, and open space along the Mississippi River and Gilbert Lake.

3. Improve greenway and trail connections between existing and future community parks and provide trail connections to the Spur Line and Paul Bunyan Trail.

4. Prioritize valuable water resources -- streams, lakes, and wetlands – native prairie remnants and woodlands for preservation in public and private parks and open space.

5. Require park dedication in cash for all new development and utilize the funding to develop parks based on reasonable standards of the proportional use and enjoyment of such park facilities by the residents or employees of the new development.

6. Accept parkland dedication only when it is consistent with the parks master plan and the city's development and environmental mitigation plans. Focus development efforts on area-wide community parks serving larger populations and not localized neighborhood tot-lots.

7. Carefully incorporate city infrastructure needs into park and open space acquisition.

8. Encourage and support non-traditional parks.

9. Continue to work with the County to better utilize the Crow Wing County Fair Grounds.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION GOAL #1: *Provide a safe, efficient and adequate transportation system that serves and balances both access and mobility needs.*

Strategies

1. Use the functional classification system to define and plan roadways.

2. Develop and utilize access management guidelines.

3. Require the provision of safe and adequate access to all properties through the implementation of subdivision regulations.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL #2: *Maintain a transportation system that is coordinated and cost-effective.*

Strategies

1. Continue to work with surrounding jurisdictions, state and federal agencies to ensure an integrated regional transportation system.

2. Schedule transportation projects in a capital improvement program.

3. Streets in developing areas shall connect to the existing network of streets and reflect its character and design.

4. Create conceptual master plans of the city's growth areas that identify future transportation corridors.

5. Proactively work to preserve future transportation corridors both by acquiring needed right-of-way in advance when possible and through the use of official mapping.

6. Actively pursue another river crossing upstream of the Mississippi River dam.

Transportation Goal #3: *Coordinate transportation with land use planning and environmental protection.*

Strategies

1. Analyze the traffic generation characteristics of proposed land uses to avoid exceeding the capacity of local, county and regional roadways.

2. Consider the impacts to neighborhoods when planning new or upgrading existing roadways.

3. Support transportation projects that support the compact, orderly development of the city and region and are supportive of the preferred development pattern emerging from this Plan.

4. Design transportation systems to avoid, where possible, wetlands or other environmentally sensitive areas.

5. Identify and consider the costs of lost environmental benefits for proposed transportation projects.

Transportation Goal #4: *Promote alternative transportation such as bicycling, walking, transit and rail.*

Strategies

1. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure when planning changes, additions, or maintenance to roads, sidewalks, bridges, paths or other public facilities.

2. Integrate bike safety standards into planned transportation improvements.

3. Continue to maintain and seek ways to expand the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the city.

4. Encourage sidewalks and separated pathways along all arterial and collector streets in developing residential and commercial areas through the city's subdivision regulations.

5. Promote the connectivity of alternative transportation systems and have such transportation systems connect efficiently to community and recreational facilities.

6. Design local streets to discourage driving at unsafe speeds and promote pedestrian and bicycle use.

7. Continue to work with the Brainerd and Crow Wing County transit system to provide safe, efficient public transit.

8. Continue to work with the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport to provide air travel services.

9. Work with the appropriate agencies if and when commuter rail is discussed.

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Land Use and Development Plan

LAND USE PLAN

This Land Use Plan focuses on providing additional areas for residential, commercial and industrial growth in Brainerd and its planned growth areas while supporting and maintaining the existing developed core of the community. The Land Use Plan and associated map (Figure 4-1, *Future Land Use Plan*) describe the different future land use designations for the city and its planned growth areas. The designations govern zoning and the city's future land use form. They provide a general framework for growth and development within Brainerd and its growth areas at full development. The Plan text provides the policies, standards and principles to guide the city's future physical form and function, and serves as the basis for updating the zoning ordinance and other development controls that are enforceable under the city's police powers. The Land Use Plan map illustrates the land use categories for which the policies will apply.

OBJECTIVES

The Land Use Plan accomplishes several objectives: (a) it reflects existing development and generalized land use patterns, (b) it addresses the need to plan for the orderly expansion of urban development into the neighboring rural areas, (c) it supports the continuation of rural land uses in those areas until urban development occurs, and (d) it recognizes the natural environment. The land use and growth recommendations contained in this Plan provide for a balance between these components and were derived from careful consideration by the Planning Advisory Committee on a range of alternative approaches.

It is the intent of this Plan to facilitate or create a community within which these elements exist:

- A variety of housing types,
- Adequate parks and community facilities,
- An efficient transportation system, and
- Ample business and commercial opportunities for residents and visitors alike

BASIC PLANNING PROVISIONS

In addition to the goals and strategies, there are a number of basic principles that are important to implementing the Land Use Plan as a whole. These are described below:

- Zone property in accordance with this Plan.
- Ensure adequate collector street access to all existing and new development in the city and its identified growth areas.
- Work to interconnect existing and new residential neighborhoods, parks, community facilities, schools and other points of interests with the transportation and trail systems.

- Work cooperatively with surrounding jurisdictions to plan development of the city's designated growth areas.
- Work cooperatively with surrounding jurisdictions to prevent urban development near City boundaries and limit densities in the City's designated growth areas until such time as development is imminent and those lands are annexed into the city.
- When development is proposed and lands are annexed, the designated growth areas should be zoned in accordance with the Land Use Plan map.

PHYSICAL CHARACTER

There are five major elements that define the physical character of the city: (a) development pattern (density, urban vs. rural), (b) major road pattern, (c) neighborhood form, (d) future growth pattern of major community facilities/open space and (e) location and nature of major business centers. Several guiding principles have been established for each element as follows:

Pattern of Development and Neighborhood Form

- Promote infill development and redevelopment of existing homes in the built-up areas of the city.
- Promote a compact urban development pattern in new residential areas.
- Maintain agricultural densities in areas outside of the city in its planned growth areas until such time as urban development is imminent and the lands are annexed.
- Encourage open or green space in new residential neighborhoods.
- Integrate new multi-family residential development throughout the city.

Road Pattern

- Preserve the existing street pattern throughout residential infill areas.
- Establish collector streets through the city's planned growth areas.

Open Space/Community Facilities

- Strategically locate community and neighborhood sized parks/open space.
- Plan for bikeways and walkways connecting commercial areas, parks and other points of interest including the Mississippi River.
- Continue upgrading and maintaining streets, parks, water/sanitary sewer, storm sewer and other infrastructure.

Business Districts

- Guide commercial and industrial expansion primarily to areas with adequate transportation access and adequate infrastructure availability.
- Strengthen existing main commercial areas and the downtown commercial core.

- Implement the recommendations of the DSU Market Research report summarized below. The entire *DSU Market Research Report, Commercial and Industrial Position of Brainerd and Development Recommendations* can be found in an Appendix to the Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Twelve unique land use categories have been identified to guide growth and development within Brainerd and its planned growth areas. Below, each land use designation category is described. The city is preparing a plan to guide the future use of land throughout the existing city and the planned growth areas. The following are the future land use categories.

Low to Medium Density Residential

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain one and two family dwellings such as duplexes and town homes. Low to Medium Density Residential could include both the older, smaller lot, single-family subdivisions found within the city as well as the newer, larger lot subdivisions within the city and its planned growth areas.

The overall density of these areas should be maintained at or between three and five units per acre.

Medium to High Density Residential

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain higher density housing units. Medium to High Density Residential is intended to accommodate primarily manufactured home parks, apartments, rooming houses and other multi-family development. The overall density of these areas should generally be maintained at 5 to 20+ units per acre.

Industrial

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain industrial uses. Land uses in these areas could include manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, truck terminals, mining, quarries and other businesses that provide goods and services, but not directly to the public.

General Commercial

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain general retail commercial uses adjacent to the arterial highway system. The intent of

this designation is to provide areas for highway-oriented businesses. Consequently, having a strong general commercial base in the city helps the downtown as well. Having a strong highway commercial area helps draw consumers to the city and provides for a healthy downtown. Examples of these could include highway-oriented businesses such as fast food restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations and other auto-oriented businesses as well as a number of large retailers.

Downtown Commercial

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain businesses arranged in a pattern that is pedestrian-oriented. The downtown consists predominantly of high-density retail, service, office, governmental and public uses.

Business Park

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain professional business services. Business Parks are much like industrial parks in that similar business types are concentrated in the same area. These areas could include medical facilities such as dentists, chiropractors, optometrists etc.; other professional businesses like lawyers; and other administrative uses; as well as light manufacturing where the corporate offices are an integral part of the business operation.

Parks and Open Spaces

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain official parks and open spaces. Parks and open spaces are uses for recreation and relaxation. Examples could include local and state parks, golf courses, campgrounds, wildlife areas and other outdoor recreation facilities.

Public/Semi Public

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that should contain uses that benefit the public. This would include all publicly-owned uses, such as schools, city/township buildings, water towers, pumping stations, sewage treatment plants, as well as public utilities, such as power plants, electrical substations and telephone companies. This also includes private institutional uses such as hospitals, colleges, private schools, churches, cemeteries, etc.

Development Preserve

The purpose of this category is to protect currently undeveloped land from inappropriate urbanization patterns prior to the availability of urban services such as sewer and water. This area should include very low-density residential development

and agricultural uses until such time as services are available. Prior to urban development, the city could consider development of these areas with the use of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) concept, with community septic systems as an interim use until municipal sewer is available.

Gateway District

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that are located at major entrances to the community. The goal is to provide a higher quality design element for new commercial construction. The area may utilize new development patterns and require a higher quality of building construction. The Gateway Districts were defined and researched during the planning process.

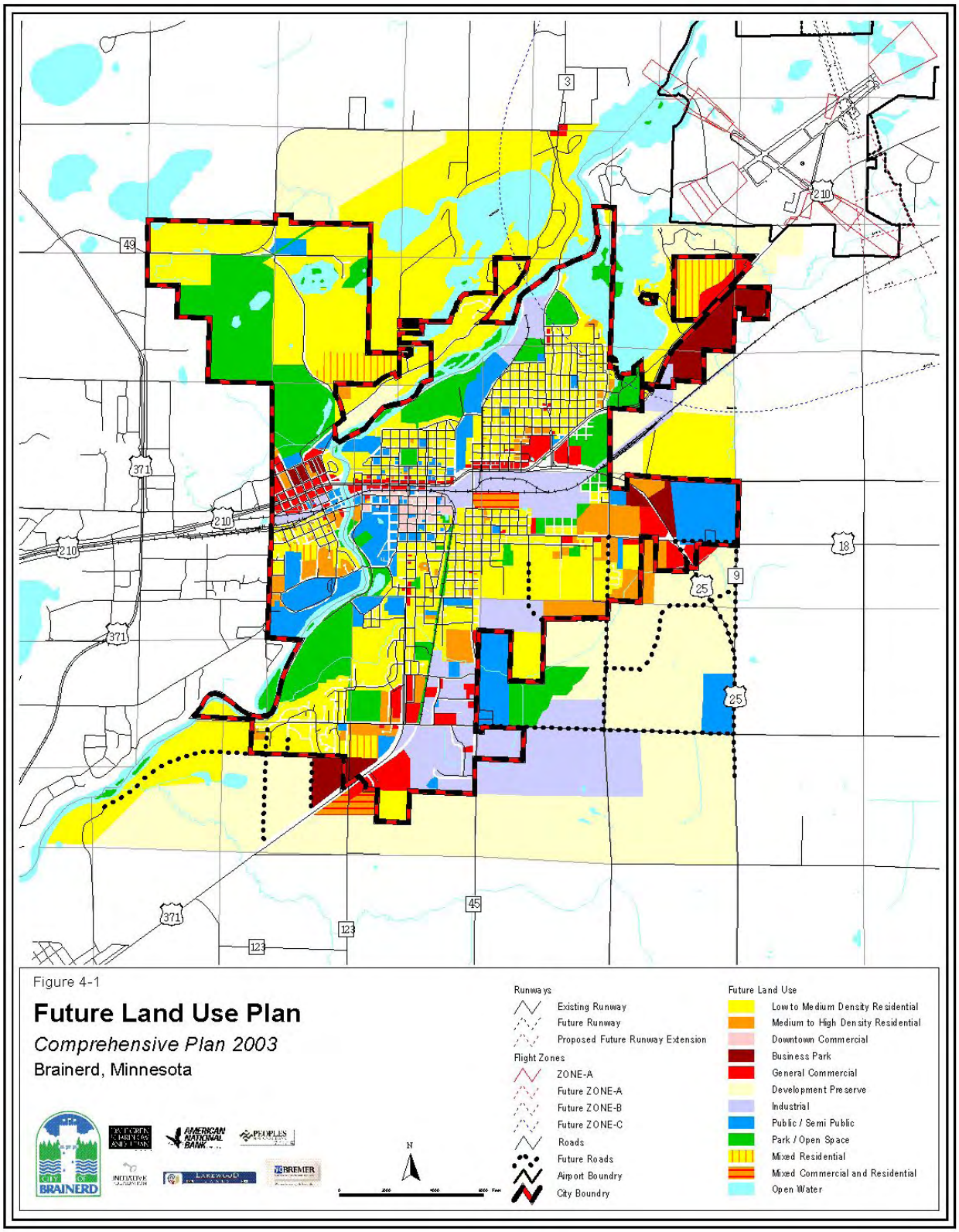
Mixed Residential

The Mixed Residential category is intended to promote neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and densities within a single development. Densities in the Mixed Residential category may range from 2 to 20+ units per acre within any given portion of a development, but development should provide a range of densities within any single development concept/neighborhood. Similarly, a wide variety of housing types are appropriate within the Mixed Residential category, including single-family homes, twin homes, town homes, condos and apartments. However, no single type should dominate any given area. Rather, a range of housing types and densities should be integrated within any given development concept/neighborhood. Through zoning ordinance amendments, the city would develop design and density standards for new developments to ensure mixed residential developments occur.

Mixed General Commercial and Residential

The purpose of this category is to identify portions of Brainerd that would benefit from a mix of General Commercial and Medium to High Density Residential. Areas that would benefit from this type of development would be along the Business Highway 371 corridor and the southern portion of the rail yards. New commercial development along the Business Highway 371 corridor and along the existing rail yard will encourage the inclusion of residential units. The city will need to amend its zoning ordinance to include a percentage of residential units for all new commercial development in these areas.

Figure 4-1, Future Land Use Plan.



MARKET RESEARCH

DSU Research was hired by the city of Brainerd to examine the City's commercial position and to recommend uses that will best situate the community to realize sustained growth. DSU Research accomplished this by completing a detailed inventory of commercial uses in the Brainerd/Baxter region, and by focusing on the characteristics of the key sites within Brainerd.

DSU Research completed commercial user inventories in Brainerd and Baxter. They focused on the significant commercial concentrations in both cities, ignoring scattered, minor uses. DSU believes that scattered commercial uses make up a small fraction (well under 5%) of the two-city supply of commercial space.

DSU identified seven significant commercial concentrations in the two-city region.

Brainerd:

- Downtown – the area between the Mississippi River on the west and roughly 11th Street South/the rail alignment on the east, and Washington Street (including the north side frontage) on the north and Oak Street on the south. This area covers the historic downtown area of Brainerd.

- West End – west of the river to the Baxter border (just west of 8th Street NW along Washington Street), from the Burlington Northern tracks on the south to roughly Jackson Street on the north. This area includes the eastern part of the Westgate Mall, which straddles the border between Brainerd and Baxter.

- Northeast – the north side of Washington Street/Highway 210 between roughly 13th Street/1st Avenue on the west and Mill Avenue/County 3 on the east. This also includes the area near the intersection of State Highways 210 and 25, covering the Bisys building and a handful of uses east along Highway 210.

- 25/18 "Gateway" – the four quadrants surrounding the intersection of State Highways 18 and 25, in the southeastern corner of the city. This area lies adjacent to the State Hospital site.

- Business 371 "Gateway" – both sides of Business Highway 371, to the north of County Road 117, on the south-central side of Brainerd. This area includes the Brainerd Medical Center and the Ramada Inn.

Baxter:

- Highway 371 Corridor – both sides of State Highway 371, starting at the intersection of State Highway 210 and extending north to the intersection with County Road 77/49. The hallmark of this sub-district is the array of big box retailers along both frontage roads, including Best Buy, Target and Wal Mart.

- Highway 210 Strip – the east side of Baxter, generally on the north side of Highway 210. This area starts on the east with Westgate Mall (which straddles the Brainerd/Baxter border) and continues westward to the intersection with TH 371.

In each commercial area, the research team collected information on the type of commercial user (including vacant spaces) for these categories:

- Retail
- Service
- Office
- Office-Service
- Health Care Office
- Hotels/Motels (Hospitality)

For retail, service, office and office/service uses, the research team also segmented users into user subclasses. Examples include: retail-fast food, service-entertainment (e.g. theaters), and office/service-banking. By understanding specific subclasses of user by area, DSU was able to characterize each of the seven commercial areas in Brainerd and Baxter and compare their specific market positioning.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This section discusses the commercial development and redevelopment opportunities for the five current commercial districts in Brainerd, as determined by DSU Market Research. Two emerging/future commercial districts are also identified. Much of the discussion focuses on downtown Brainerd, as it has the largest number of commercial users in the city; and also has arguably the greatest challenges regarding commercial sustainability and redevelopment. Additionally, other development opportunities should be explored including a Center for the Performing Arts, a history center or museum that builds on the rich railroad history in Brainerd and the possibility of a convention center.

Downtown Brainerd (Figure 4-2, *Downtown Brainerd*)

- Build off of Brainerd's leading position for professional office uses. Ensure that Brainerd maintains and solidifies its position as a leading location for lawyers, accountants, architects and publishers. A strong local office base provides daily workers to help keep retail and service uses vital.

- Ensure that downtown Brainerd remains the seat of government for the city and the region. Expansions of government offices should occur downtown, not elsewhere. Keeping government uses together creates a cohesive district, benefiting local retailers and service businesses and creating a reason to visit downtown Brainerd.

Many buildings in or near Downtown Brainerd have great cultural and historical significance to the community.

- Emphasize quality of retailers and services over quantity. Baxter has already won the market share war in terms of dollars (the 371 Corridor), but downtown Brainerd can win the battle in terms of experience, character and diversity.

- Weed out industrial uses in the downtown area, especially those that consume valuable parcels in or near the contiguous commercial core.

- For retail uses, focus on specialty shops and destination uses for visitors that are unique in the region, and those that will not likely be found in the "auto-oriented" districts elsewhere. These include antique stores, used bookstores and independent restaurants (not national or regional chains).

What Downtown Is Or Can Be:

- Small office/professional office center: banking, finance, publishing, architecture, etc.

- Small-scale, specialty retail with character

- The center of municipal and regional government

- The antique center of the region

- The emotional "heart" of the region

- A place to seek a retail "experience" in buildings with character and history

- A place that serves highway traffic (210) and neighborhood shoppers (historic Downtown)

- Encourage diversity of ownership while recognizing the value of locally owned stores, shops and properties.

- Work off of the unique character of downtown: historic architecture, pedestrian-friendly pattern, history, etc. Work to renovate buildings with historic character.

- Develop a "theme" for downtown. Other downtowns across Minnesota have successfully created and marketed themes including Czech culture in New Praque, theater and entertainment in Lanesboro and specialty shops in Perham.

- Promote downtown Brainerd as a place that has great potential and one that locals should care about. Encourage locals to patronize the independent shops in downtown.

- Encourage downtown business owners to develop succession plans. The closing of longtime, vital businesses when the founder/owner retires has plagued many small downtowns. Succession planning can help avoid vacant storefronts.

- Identify sites that could be reused for owner-occupied housing development. New housing brings vitality and energy to an area. Removing obsolete uses and replacing them with new owner housing would help stabilize downtown and the surrounding residential blocks, and help upgrade the appearance of the larger area.

West Brainerd (Figure 4-3, *West Brainerd*)

- Solidify the highway commercial pattern. Auto-oriented uses are appropriate for this district, which benefits from the second highest traffic volumes in the region, after the Highway 371 district in Baxter. Parcels that can be consolidated to create larger redevelopment sites could provide opportunities to medium- or large-scale commercial users in the future, especially retail and service businesses.

- Redevelopment types appropriate for this district with office, office-service and highway-oriented retail uses.

- Clean up old sites and remove non-conforming (e.g. industrial) uses.

Northeast (Figure 4-4, *Northeast Brainerd)*

- Encourage the ongoing evolution of the East Brainerd Mall site. This site is a "gateway" location, serving eastern and northeastern Crow Wing County for retail and services. The intersection of Highways 25 and 210 should remain a

strong commercial node in the future. New and upgraded retail stores, perhaps on a smaller overall scale than the former mall, will still have a significant draw area.

- Encourage aesthetic, parking and access improvements to the commercial area between 5th and 13th/Gillis. This area has many smaller businesses in older buildings, which over time, may turn into redevelopment opportunities. Auto-oriented retail uses, such as the fast food uses in this area, would continue to be appropriate. However, traffic speeds can be high in this stretch of Highway 210, creating potential traffic hazards for uses that generate higher levels of traffic. Also, a center median limits access to many of these sites from eastbound Highway 210.

- Encourage development of the excess property where the existing rail yards are located adjacent to Highway 210 and continue to work closely with the developers of the historic Northern Pacific Industrial Center.

Business 371 Gateway (Figure 4-5, *Business 371 Gateway in Brainerd*)

- Continue to foster this as a health-care district; and office and office-service uses.

- Infill/redevelop with smaller-scale retail that can serve industrial employment base (e.g. convenience/gas, fast-food, etc.).

- As the community grows in the future, this corridor will lend itself to a mix of development opportunities.

18/25 Gateway (Figure 4-6, *18/25 Gateway in Brainerd*)

- Establish and preserve this as a future highway commercial area for regional consumers. Retailers may be interested in this high-visibility location at the intersection of two regional highways.

- Good site for many retail and services uses in future: banks, restaurant, sports-oriented retail and recreation, etc.

CSAH 49

- As this corridor becomes more important as a transportation route, future commercial growth will likely occur especially in the area of County Road 3 and Beaver Dam Road. This will be even more likely if a new river crossing is established which will tie into this corridor. Property should be appropriately

identified in these areas for commercial uses as the community continues to grow.

Highway 210 East/Airport Corridor

- The annexation of property along this corridor that has already occurred along with anticipated annexation of additional property which may include the Airport will make this area prime for a mix of development.

Figure 4-2, Downtown Brainerd Plan

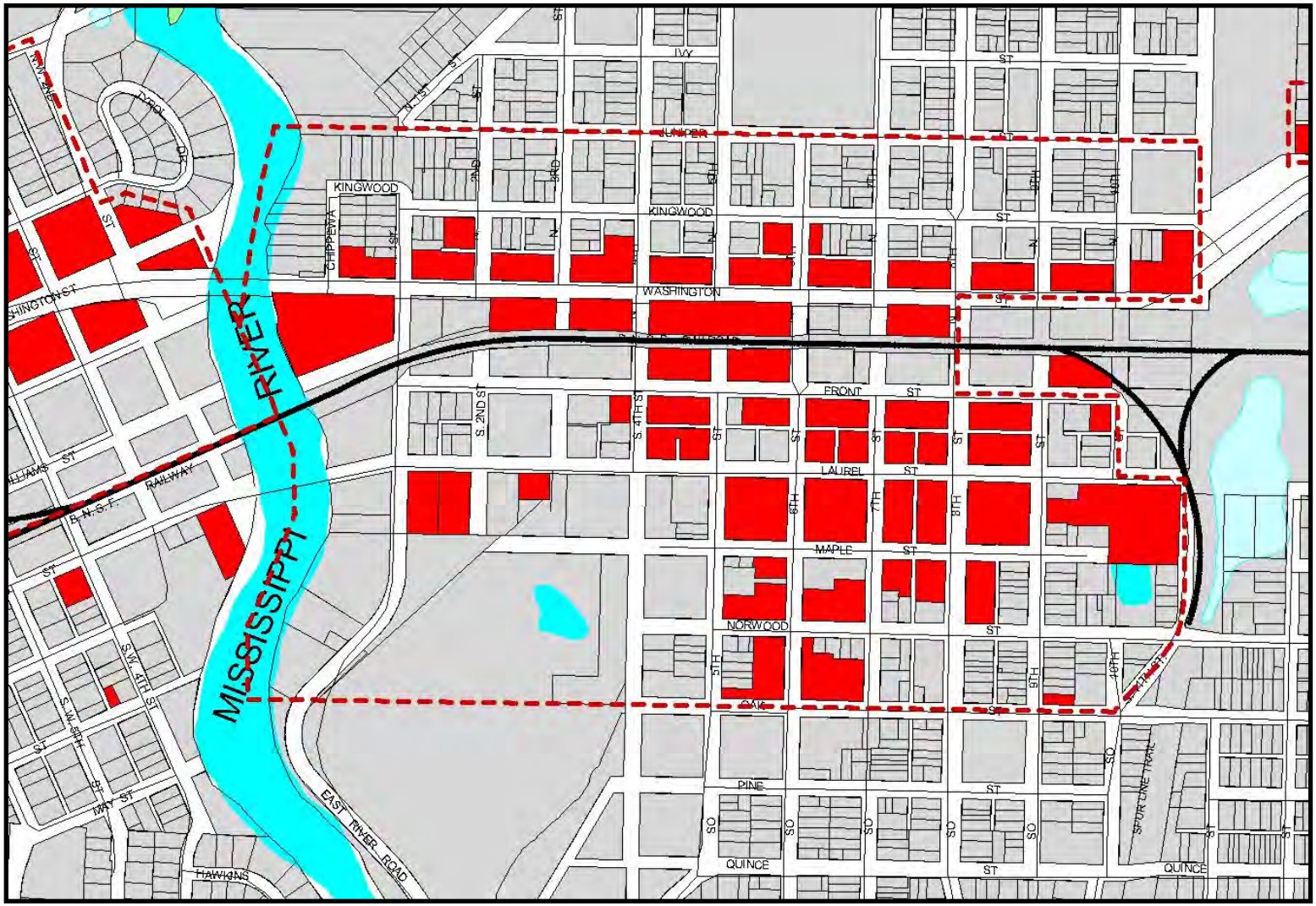


Figure 4-3, West End Brainerd Plan

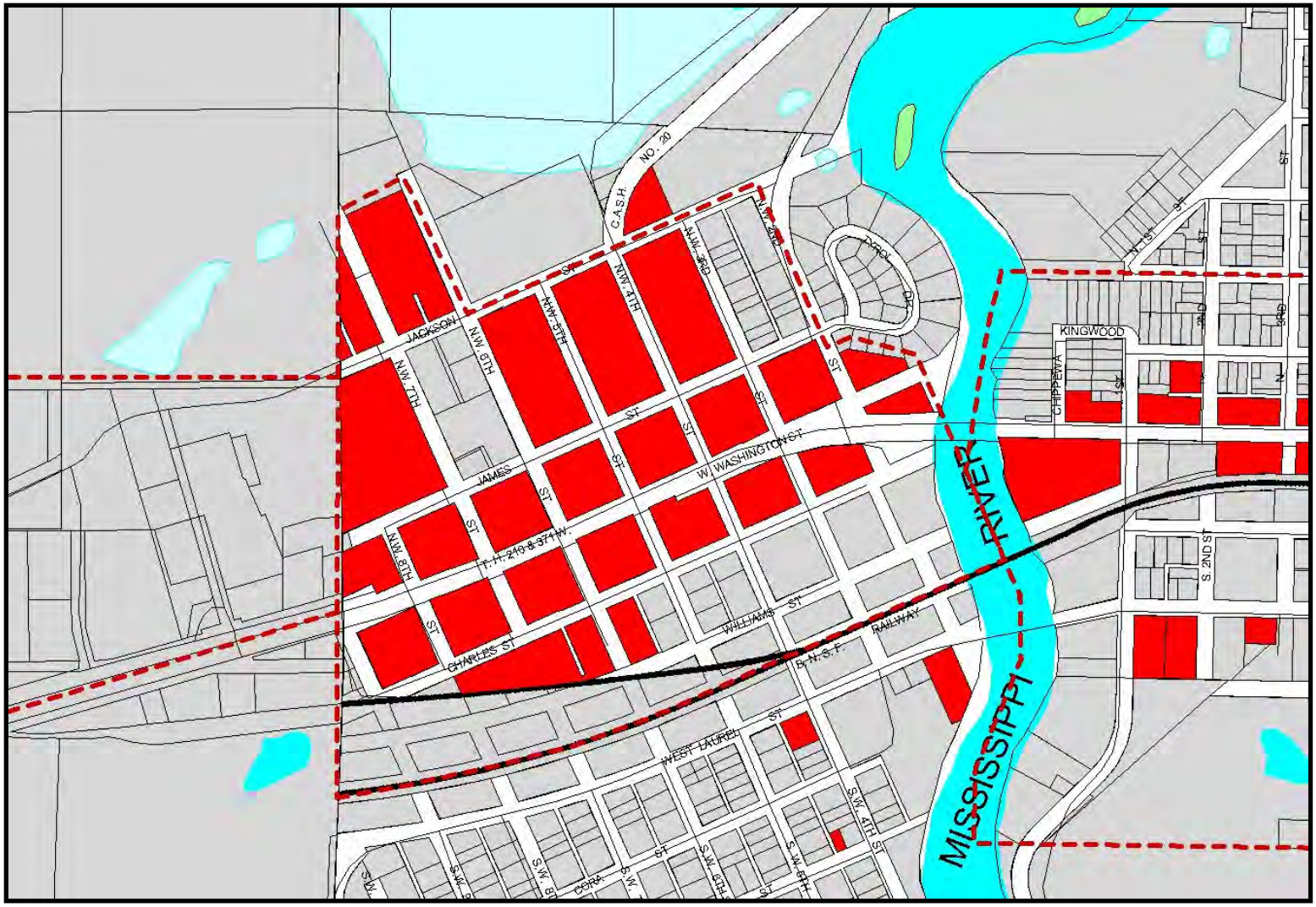


Figure 4-4, Northeast Brainerd Plan

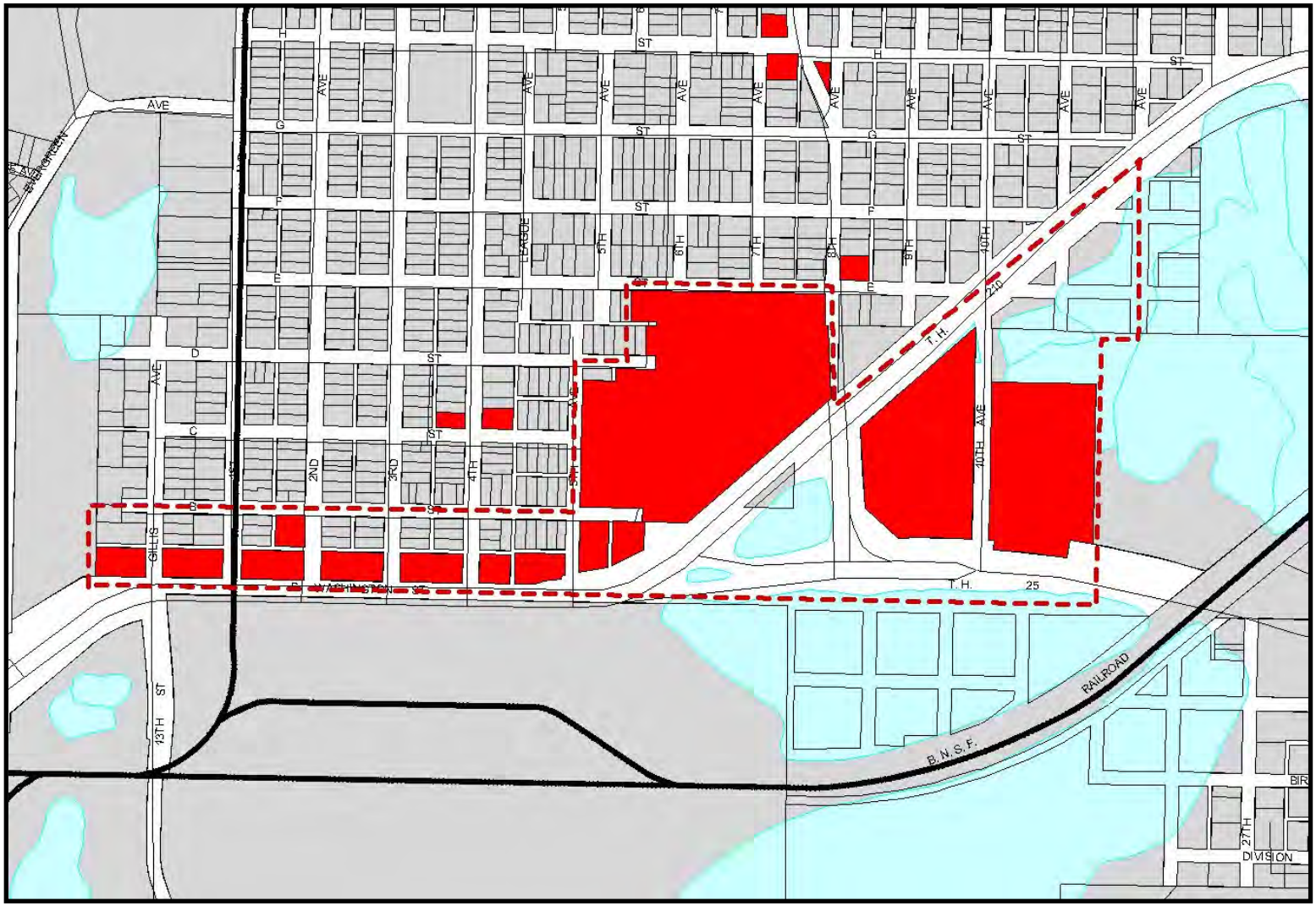


Figure 4-5, Business 317 Gateway in Brainerd Plan

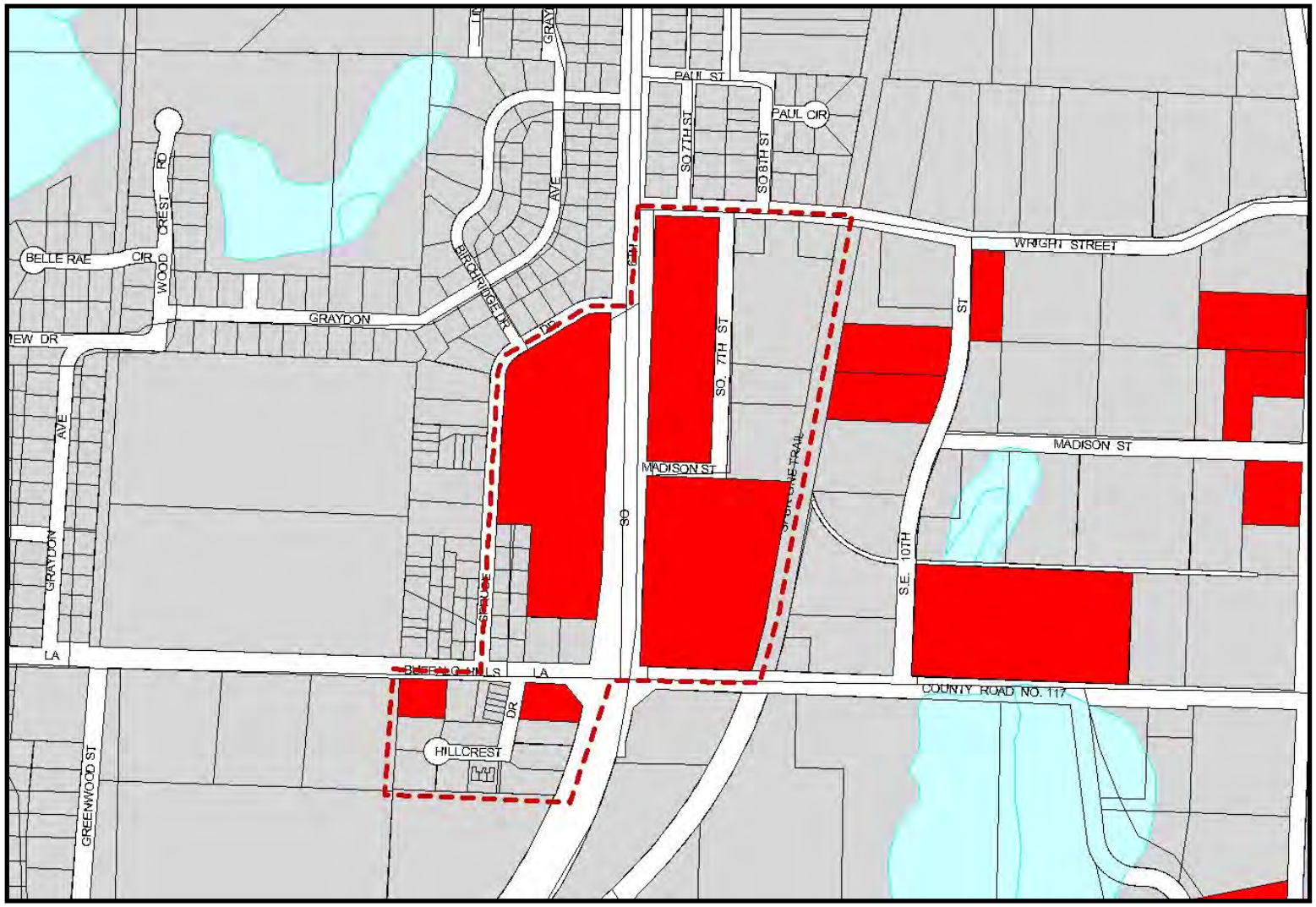


Figure 4-6, 18/25 Gateway in Brainerd Plan

COMMUNITY GROWTH

Growth will happen in population, housing, and employment in the Brainerd area no matter what land use decisions are made by the City of Brainerd within this planning process. What will be different is *where* that growth will occur – inside or outside the city limits of Brainerd. Because of the neighboring city of Baxter and natural features, the main direction of growth for Brainerd proper is to the north, south and east. To the west is the City of Baxter.

Structured/Planned Growth

- The *Structured/Planned Growth* concept which has been chosen by the City, assumes that the City will "encourage" growth to happen *within* the City and will annex the land needed for such growth, or at least have orderly annexation agreements in place to phase in such growth areas. Communication with adjacent governing jurisdictions when reviewing proposed annexations will be an important element in planning for such growth. Because the land will be connected to City services, much less land is required and the growth areas shown on the map are much smaller than what would be required with a limited growth alternative. These growth areas can be master planned to make efficient use of the land, work around wetlands and other sensitive area, and accommodate street connections. More agricultural land or pristine natural areas will be left undisturbed outside the City while accommodating the same amount of growth in households than the amount of land consumed using a more limited growth option.

The growth areas near the community include.

Growth Areas north and along Highway 210
Growth areas north of Highway 210 and along the Highway 210 corridor have been identified. The future land uses for these areas include Low to Medium Density Residential and Development Preserve. In addition, Industrial uses are proposed along the existing rail corridor, east of the existing city limits.

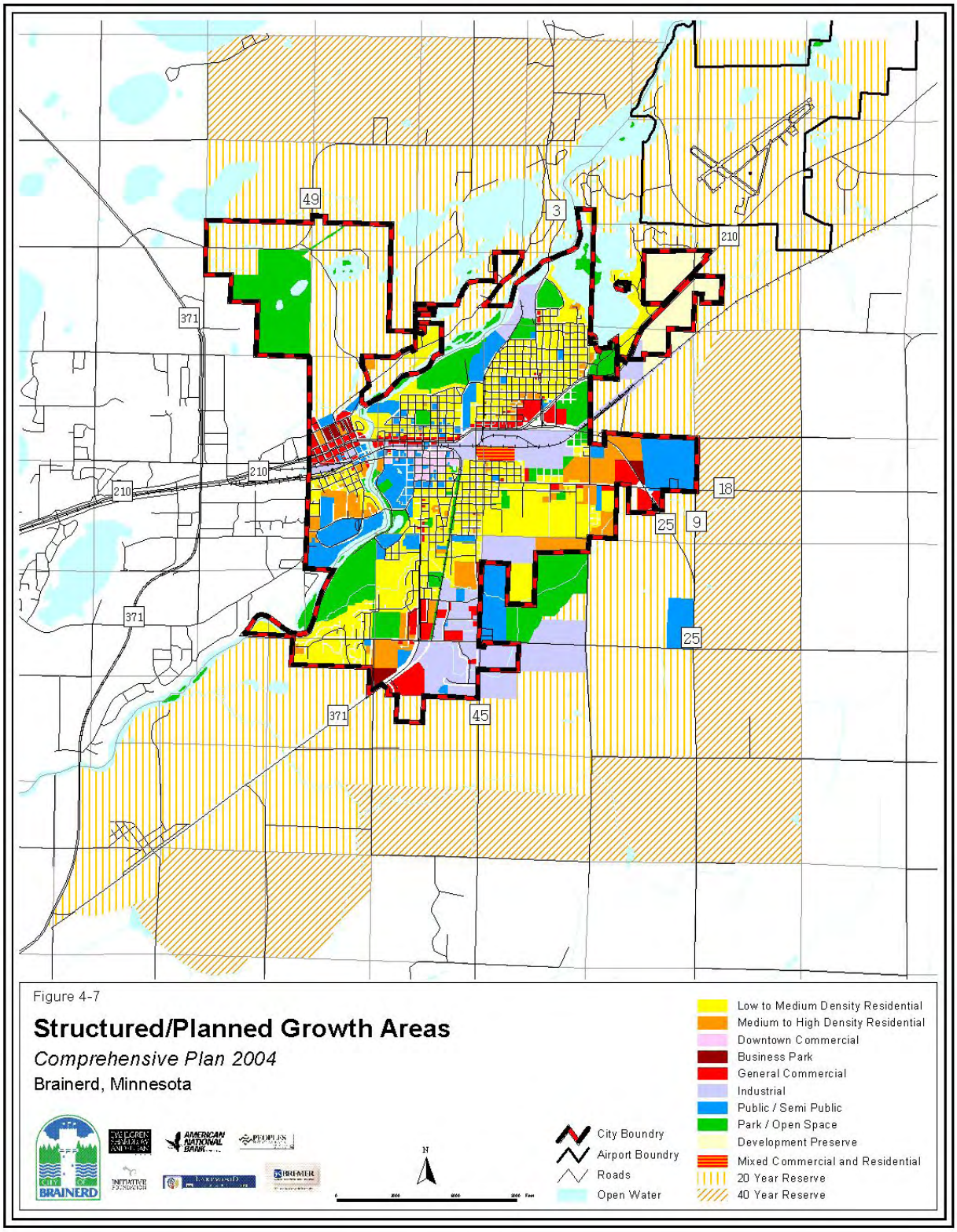
South West Growth Area
Growth areas southwest of the community will encourage low to medium density residential development. The growth area is bounded to the north by the Mississippi River, which should encourage residential development. The remaining property within this growth area is identified as Development Preserve where development will be orderly and in accordance to growth polices and management tools endorsed by this Comprehensive Plan and City Policies.

This growth area also consists of a southern Gateway District for the community. Mixed development of commercial and residential development is anticipated. In addition, the community has identified the potential for a Business Park along Business Highway 371.

South East Growth Area

Numerous wetlands and environmental features will limit development within this growth area. The community is anticipating additional industrial growth to the east from the existing industrial park. A majority of the growth area has been identified as Development Preserve and will be developed, as municipal services are available, in accordance to the policies of this Comprehensive Plan. The area also contains the Highway 25 Gateway District as discussed earlier in this Chapter.

Figure 4-7, Structure / Planned Growth



TRANSPORTATION PLAN

SRF Consulting Group was hired by the city of Brainerd to analyze the transportation system within the community and provide recommendations for system improvements. The following is a summary of SRF's analysis of the transportation system.

The purpose of this section is to provide a planning-level overview of the transportation, sewer and water infrastructure as they relate to the future growth of the city of Brainerd. The material contained in this section is based on information that was gathered from:

- Discussions with the County Engineer and County Planning Director
- Discussions with Mn/DOT Planning staff
- Discussions with Brainerd City Engineer
- Historic traffic information from 1985 to 2001

Transportation System

The Brainerd area contains a large amount of lakes, wetlands and wooded areas. These natural features have attracted vacationers, retirees, weekend visitors and new full-time residents. In fact, the Brainerd area has undergone significant growth over the past ten years, growing by 24 percent between 1990 and 2000. One of the interesting things about this growth is that the majority of it occurred in rural areas (outside of Brainerd/Baxter).

The fact that most of the growth has occurred outside of Brainerd itself and the fact that all of the natural features limit the transportation infrastructure, has caused significant increases in traffic on local area highways leading into the urban areas. Figure 4-9, *Existing Volumes (AADT) and Historic Growth Trends*, shows the existing volumes on key facilities as well as their annual growth rates. Generally, growth rates of 1.5 to 2.5 percent per year are typical. Growth rates near three percent will double the volume over 20 years and annual growth rates in the three to six percent per year are considered quite high.

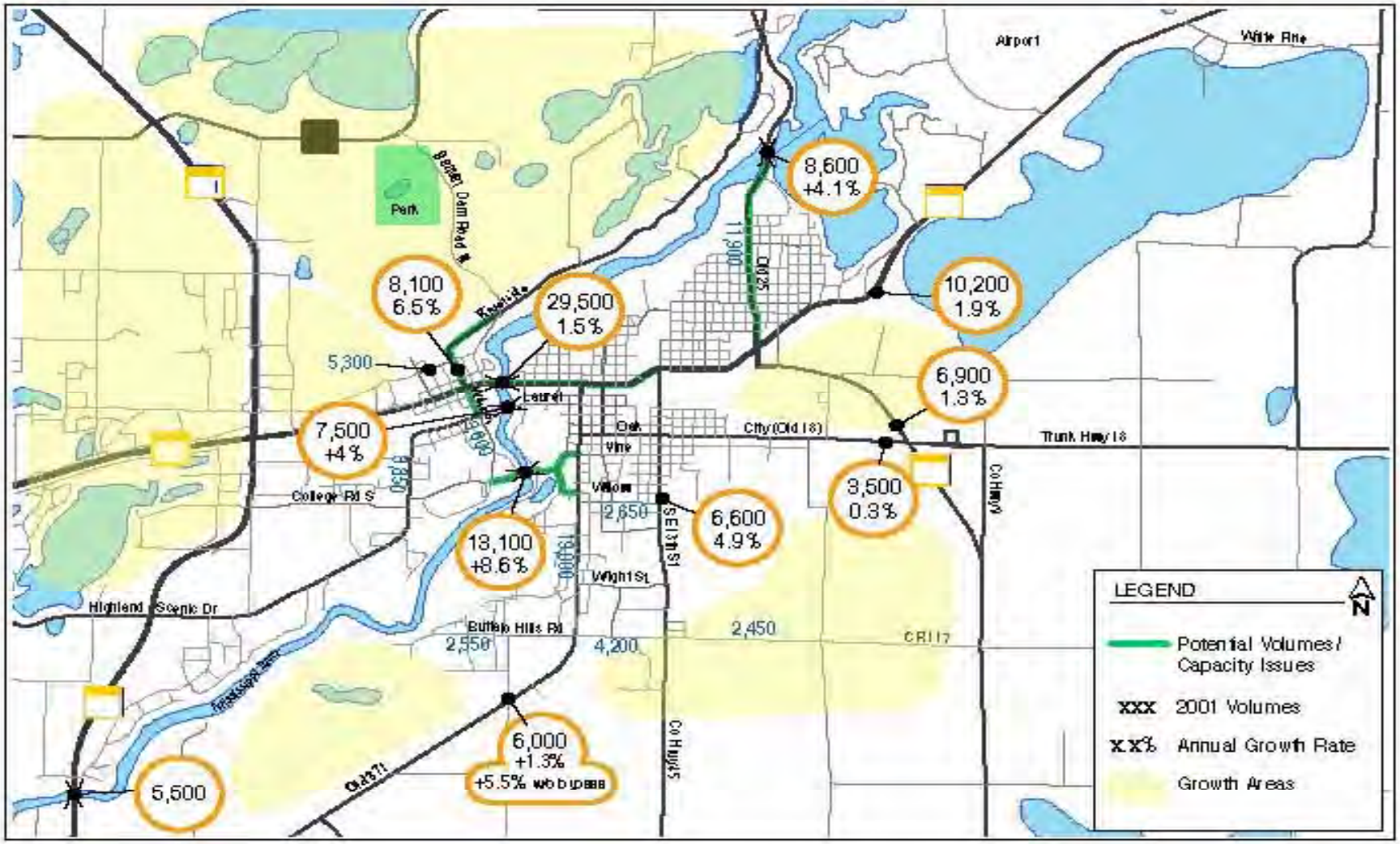


Figure 4-8: Existing Volumes (AADT) and Historic Growth Trends

Based on the review of historic volume trends, site visits and other discussions with local officials, the following observations have been made:

1. Most of the river crossing routes have significant growth and have volumes that are near the typical capacity of these facilities.
   - Two of the more important crossings include West College Drive (8.6 percent annual growth) and County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 3 (4.1 percent annual growth). These two crossings have volumes near capacity and high growth rates.
   - Significant growth north of Brainerd will increase use of CSAH 3 (primarily access to Cross Lake area). This facility was previously TH 25 and as a turnback to Crow Wing County is eligible for turnback funds. Crow Wing County is planning an improvement project using turnback funds south of the river bridge to TH 210 in 2006.
   - New expansion of a medical clinic, residential growth south and east of Brainerd, and continued commercial growth in the Baxter area will result in more traffic on East and West College Drive (Bridge is wide enough to accommodate more through lanes, but connecting roadways would need to be widened).
   - East of the Bridge on College Drive traffic splits (roughly 50/50) into two streets that connects to Business Highway 371 (Quince and South 4th Street). The South 4th Street connection with Willow Street will enhance the connection to Business Highway 371.
   - Trunk Highway 210, a four-lane undivided principal arterial, goes through the heart of Brainerd. The current volumes indicate that this facility is near capacity. Work has been recently completed to do some access modifications near the west city limits. More access consolidation and organization could help improve east-west traffic flows and capacity of the route.
   - Work with MN/DOT and Crow Wing County to identify a possible new river crossing to divert traffic from TH 210 to the north.

2. Other key routes leading into and out of Brainerd are expected to have significant traffic increases as rural areas continue to develop. This includes: County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 20 or Riverside Drive extends north of Brainerd along the Mississippi River connecting rural, residential developments to Brainerd. The County has widened CSAH 20 to four-lanes from TH 210 to Beaver Dam Road to address capacity issues.

- CR 117 is a key east-west route in the southern part of the city that serves the city's industrial area. The county is planning to upgrade CR 117 to a four-lane facility in 2004-05 from Business 371 to CSAH 45 (13th Street).

- Other key routes connecting rural areas to the city include TH 371, TH 18, TH 25, CR 117 and CSAH 45. CSAH 45 is a north-south route that parallels Business 371 to the east. This route serves primarily residential areas and has a high traffic level for a two-lane residential collector street. This route may need to be looked at for some improvements in the future if traffic volumes continue to increase.

3. The key arterial collector routes in the city that help connect businesses, neighborhoods, schools and activity centers include:

<u>East-West Facilities</u>

- Buffalo Hills Lane
- Industrial Park Road (CR 117)
- Wright Street
- Willow Street
- Vine Street
- Oak Street
- Laural Street
- H Street
- East West College Drive
- Jackson Street
- Riverside Drive (CSAH 20)
- Wise Road (CSAH 49)
- Washington (TH 210)

<u>North-South Facilities</u>

- South 6th Street (Business Highway 371)
- SE 13th Street (CSAH 45)
- North 4th Street
- North 8th Street
- CSAH 3 (Old TH 25)
- 28th Street
- Highland Scenic Drive (CSAH 48)

- 4th Street (S-N and N-E)
- Beaver Dam Road

Most of these facilities are shown on the functional classification plan for the area. As previously indicated, due to physical constraints there are limited choices for major routes. One of the recommendations is to further analyze the region's functional classification system to determine the appropriate designation of facilities. This will likely extend beyond city boundaries. For example, as rural development continues on CSAH 20, it may be appropriate to extend the arterial designation further north. This may also be considered for routes like Beaver Dam Road and Wise Road. Another possibility to ease traffic that is feeding onto Laurel Street is the diversion of CSAH 48 to TH 210 which is currently under consideration.

4. Population of the area significantly increases during the summer tourist season. This has implications for all of the transportation facilities; summer volumes can increase as much as 15 to 25 percent over the average annual daily traffic. Weekend peak volumes (Fridays and Sundays) can increase substantially above summer volumes.

5. Two of the critical linkages to the regional area are TH 371 and TH 210. These routes are designated as part of Minnesota's Interregional Corridor System and are responsible for providing access to the Brainerd area from other parts of the state. This is especially critical on TH 371 to the south as a significant amount of summer time residents and weekend visitors travel north out of the Twin Cities area to Brainerd Lakes area. Currently TH 371 is a super-two facility between Brainerd and Little Falls. Mn/DOT is in the process of upgrading this facility to a four-lane expressway. Because the function of these routes is to facilitate traffic movement to and from regional centers a significant emphasis is placed on mobility and safety. As a result, the city should work with Mn/DOT to manage access and facilitate the movement of traffic on these facilities so that good access to the region is maintained.

6. Access to arterial and collector facilities should be evaluated and managed so that it is consistent with the route's function. Generally, less access is provided on arterial facilities whose function is to move or facilitate traffic movement versus local facilities, which provide access to local residents and business. The lack of having a good street network with adequate spacing of arterials and collectors usually results in higher volumes of traffic in neighborhood settings (cut-through traffic). The city should actively manage access to its street system as well as assist other jurisdictions

(Crow Wing County and Mn/DOT) in managing access to their systems through the planning and zoning approvals process.

Access Management

The need exists to develop an access management plan for Brainerd that will provide the safety benefits of reduced access and still provide reasonable access for residents and business customers. Recognizing this, many road jurisdictions have developed access policy guidelines that limit access to specific locations along their roadways. These consist of full access intersections at a specific minimum distances, partial intersections that can either be ¾ (which prohibit left turns), or right-in/right-out only access.

The city of Brainerd has a system of roadways that vary in both purpose and need for access. Development of a single spacing guideline for roadways would be very difficult to develop and implement. In addition, the development of specific distance guidelines for different types of roadways is beyond the scope of the Comprehensive Plan and instead should be developed as part of the implementation process of the Plan. Guidelines need to be developed consistent both with good access management principles and the land use and transportation goals of this Plan. Following are some generalized guidelines that should be considered in developing access management standards.

Access to principal arterials, such as Business Highway 371 and Highway 210, should be limited to intersections with other roadways wherever possible. Some right-in/right-out movements to private driveways may be acceptable depending upon location. Traffic signals should be planned for predetermined locations, but not every intersection. The adjacent road system should be oriented to the full access locations to the highways.

Minor arterials in highly developed areas should seek to limit direct access to intersections with other roadways or specific, limited or shared driveways. Minor arterials in growth areas should have access limited to intersections with other roadways and driveways serving collective areas at intermediate locations. Direct access of residential properties to arterial streets should be discouraged. Collector streets should also have restricted access, although individual driveways from commercial developments are acceptable. Fronting houses with individual driveways for every lot can lead to safety and traffic flow concerns and should be avoided on collector streets. Residential streets should be protected by incorporating traffic plans that encourage the utilization of collector routes.

Some of the elements that should be part of the access management plan include the following:

- Access to individual parcels should be limited to a single driveway unless the lot footage is relatively long.

- In multi-family areas, there should be significant distance between the multiple driveways to provide for snow storage and maneuvering area. These types of driveways should be discouraged from occurring on city streets and restricted to internal streets and drive aisles.

- Access to an arterial or collector street should be located a significant distance from any intersection.

- In residential areas, minimum spacing distances for driveways from intersections should be developed.

- The location of any driveway or access should be consistent with sight distance along the roadway. Where sight distance is not adequate, an alternate access location should be required.

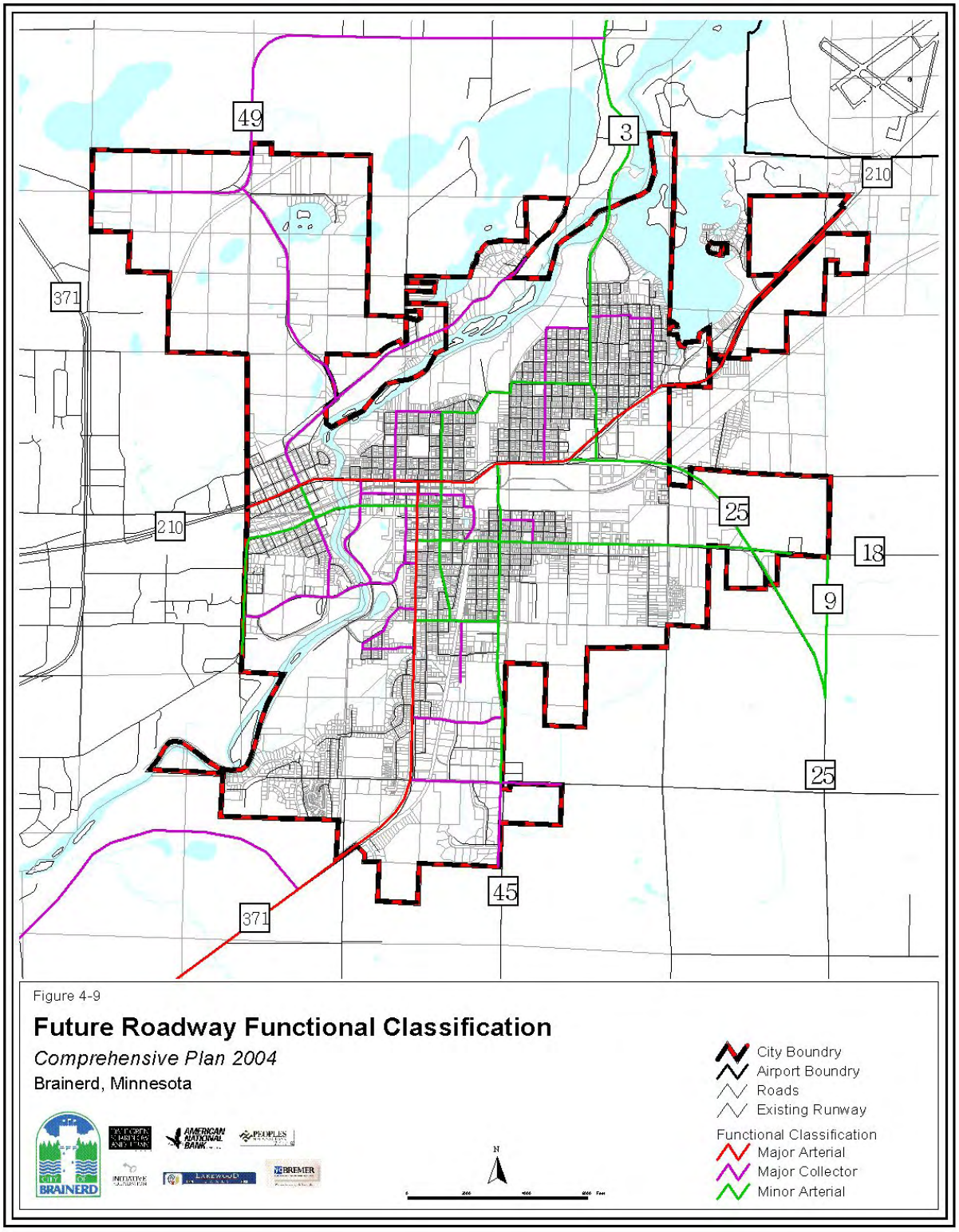
- Development of service roads or common driveways should be used wherever possible along arterial and even collector roadways, especially in commercial areas.

- The use of medians could be considered on arterial roadways to control multiple access locations and provide left turn lanes for heavier movements to private driveways or public streets.

- Be aware of land uses such a senior citizen facilities when planning roadway improvements and develop access controls as appropriate.

Figure 4-9, *Future Functional Classification*, provides a proposed functional classification system of roadways for Brainerd in the future. It includes the logical extension of some existing collector and arterial roads into new growth areas. In addition, new collector and minor arterials will be needed to accommodate future transportation needs.

Insert Figure 4-9, Future Functional Classification



UTILITIES PLAN

SRF Consulting Group was hired by the city of Brainerd to analyze the sewer and waters systems within the community and provide recommendations for system improvements. The following is a summary of SRF's analysis of the sewer and water utility systems.

The purpose of this section is to provide a **planning-level** overview of the sewer and water infrastructure as it relates to the future growth in the city of Brainerd. The material contained in this section is based on information that was gathered from:

- Discussions with the County Engineer and County Planning Director
- Discussions with Brainerd City Engineer
- Discussions with Brainerd Public Utilities sewer plant operators
- Sewer plant facility performance records from 1997 to 2001
- Water plant and well information

Utility Infrastructure

A planning-level review was done of the city's sewer and water infrastructure to assess its ability to accommodate future growth of the city of Brainerd as well as the city of Baxter. The sewer and water systems for these two cities are linked. The city of Baxter contracts with Brainerd to supply sanitary sewer services and limited water services. The city has a long standing policy that it does not extend its sewer and water services to unincorporated/unorganized areas unless the property is annexed into the city. The following is an overview the basic system capacity.

Water Supply and Treatment Facilities

The water supply for the Brainerd area is in good shape from a supply perspective. The wells and water treatment plant have capacity well beyond the city's needs. Additional analysis may need to be done to identify additional storage facilities needed to maintain adequate water pressures as the system is expanded. These analyses typically are done as the city considers specific annexations or utility extensions. In areas that have been looked at north of Brainerd off of Riverside Drive, utility costs have been high due to the lot sizes that currently exist (density of development is related to cost per household). It was evident that additional platting and rural developments are occurring in this area (private wells and septic), and this will make it more difficult to provide urban services in the future.

- Six wells can supply a total of 31.9 million gallons per day (mgd)
- Two water treatment plants can treat 7.3 mgd
- Four elevated and/or ground storage reservoirs have a capacity of 3.4 mgd
- Average daily water usage is 2.57 mgd with Brainerd using 2.25 mgd and Baxter using 0.32 mgd

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The city of Brainerd reconstructed its wastewater treatment plant in 1982. This plant has an operating discharge limit of 3.13 mgd. According to the plant operators, the discharge limit has been exceeded during periods of heavy rainfalls when the sewer system experiences infiltration into the system from other sources, with total flows as high as 3.6 mgd. Typically this has not resulted in legal problems or fines from MPCA as during these times, river flows are high and critical elements of the discharge are well below the required maximums. For example, the BOD levels average 7 to 15 mg/liter while the maximum limit is 35 mg/liter. The City is aware of the inflow and infiltration (I & I) problems and must take steps to reduce these flows.

The average flow processed by the plant during 2002 was 2.63 mgd. The peak month flow was in June at 2.88 mgd. The operators indicate that flows can fluctuate during wet periods. The following are some general comments with respect to the operation and status of the current system.

- The city has submitted an application for a new permit (existing one ran out in June 03). This new permit has requested a discharge level of 3.6 mgd.

- The average peak flows have increased over the past five years by 11 percent. However, the flows from Baxter have increased by 79 percent (0.24 mgd to 0.43 mgd) while the city of Brainerd has risen only 3 percent (2.12 mgd to 2.19 mgd).

- The plant was originally designed to serve 18,100 persons; the current population served is estimated at 14,100. The additional population that has been identified in the growth scenario is approximately 4,000 people in Brainerd alone. This indicates that the wastewater treatment facility needs to expand to serve the expected growth of the Brainerd/Baxter area. With that, the Brainerd Public Utilities Commission has authorized a conceptual study of various wastewater treatment alternatives that could be utilized as recommended by the MPCA. It is anticipated that the results of the study will guide future wastewater treatment improvements to meet the needs of the area in the future.

Other Utilities

Electric

The Brainerd Public Utilities (BPU) provides electrical distribution services to users in the city of Brainerd as well as portions of the city of Baxter and Unorganized Territory of Crow Wing County and Oak Lawn Township. The BPU purchases power from Minnesota Power through a long term agreement. This method of electrical distribution has served the community well over the years and should be continued.

Telecommunications/Electronic Media

The city currently has a franchise agreement with Charter Communications to provide cable television service to the community. Charter Communications also offers high speed internet services to its customers. Other forms of telecommunication services are provided privately. Companies who provide these services should be required to provide full services to all areas of the city in the future and to extend service to areas that are not currently receiving such service.

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Implementation Plan

In many ways, formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is the first step in the planning process, rather than the last, because it establishes the policy direction for the community, describing its objectives and methods to achieve them. Without continuing action to implement and update the Plan, city efforts will have little lasting impact. Goals, strategies, principles and other recommendations are contained throughout this Plan. This chapter outlines further steps to put this Plan into action.

To effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan, Brainerd should:

- Review and revise several of its regulatory measures that can enforce the Plan's policies and recommendations, such as the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations;

- Formulate a current Capital Improvements Program, implementing the most important public improvements on a priority system, while staying within budgetary constraints;

- Work with Crow Wing County and surrounding townships to plan for the orderly development of the planned growth areas;

- Actively involve local residents in ongoing planning discussions and decisions;

- Review and update the Plan itself, as needed, to reflect local aspirations and changing opportunities.

Each of these requirements is briefly discussed below.

ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is a governmental unit's primary regulatory tool for implementing planning policies. It consists of the official zoning map and supporting ordinance text. The official map divides the community into a series of zoning districts, and the text describes regulations for the use of land within these districts including permitted uses, lot sizes, setbacks, density standards, etc. It can also include design and property maintenance controls.

Implementation Steps

- During the Comprehensive Plan implementation, the current zoning map should be compared to the adopted Future Land Use Plan map in order to clearly document valid discrepancies between the two.

- The second step is to review, update and refine the Zoning Ordinance to implement and enforce the guidelines of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The Subdivision Ordinance regulates the development of land and the provision of public facilities within the community. Properly enforced subdivision regulations, coupled with zoning, can ensure proper physical development and adequate public facilities within growth areas. They normally prescribe standards for street improvements, lot layouts, water and sewer facilities, and other development standards. Subdivision regulations can also ensure that the costs of public improvements within growth areas are borne by the developers and the new residents as appropriate rather than by the established community. Brainerd's subdivision regulations should be reviewed against the recommendations of the new Comprehensive Plan, and revised and modified where necessary.

Implementation Steps

- Review and update the Subdivision Ordinance to implement and enforce the guidelines of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Another potential tool for implementation is the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which establishes schedules and priorities for major public improvements within a five-year period. The city first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years, including transportation and community facilities projects. Once all projects are reviewed, priorities are assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified, the city can determine which projects should be financed through annual tax receipts, which require public borrowing, and which may be eligible for outside sources of assistance.

The CIP allows the city to provide the most critical public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints. Many of the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan can be articulated in a CIP. The discussion of transportation, utilities, community facilities, and land use in this Plan will be helpful in determining capital priorities.

Implementation Steps

- Continue to maintain a CIP that includes elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Priorities may include an adequate transportation system in the growing areas of the community, adequate and up-to-date city buildings, downtown redevelopment funds and multi-use trail facilities.

PLANNED GROWTH AREAS & ANNEXATION

The city of Brainerd anticipates further residential, commercial and industrial development. In order to accommodate that growth, the city has designated areas outside of the current city limits for future growth and development. This plan identifies future land uses and policies within these areas to prevent premature development so that adequate streets, infrastructure and services can be provided in a cost effective manner. The city wishes to work with Crow Wing County and surrounding townships to ensure that the growth that occurs in these areas is compatible with the goals and strategies adopted through this comprehensive planning process and can eventually become part of the city and served by a full range of city services. Orderly annexation agreements are the preferred method to achieve this.

Implementation Steps

- Work with surrounding Townships to include all of the identified planned growth areas within an orderly annexation agreement, and establish common strategies for land use administration prior to annexation;

- Designate the city's planned growth areas for very low density residential and agricultural uses until such time as development is imminent. Also, work with Crow Wing County and surrounding townships to designate the city's planned growth areas outside the city limits for very low density residential and agricultural uses until such time as development is imminent and these areas are annexed into the city;

- Establish procedures for the annexation of land within the planned growth areas;

- When annexed, rezone land within the planned growth areas in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan map;

- Work with landowners to annex other areas of existing development adjacent to the city on a landowner petition basis when sewer and water can be made available.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

This comprehensive planning effort has begun to establish a dialogue among local residents and elected officials concerning the future of the community. Wide publicity has been given to this Comprehensive Plan with resident involvement in the planning discussions. Because this Plan will affect everyone in the community, everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to its implementation.

Implementation Steps

- Make copies of this Plan available for public review and discussion. This may include making copies available for review at City Hall, the County Courthouse, the public library, and on the city's Internet web site. Individual sections of the Plan may be suitable for dispersal to those interested in moving to or doing business in the city.

- Ensure open zoning, subdivision and CIP processes.

Comprehensive planning is a continuous process; therefore the Plan should be monitored and updated when necessary. The City Planning Office, Planning Commission and City Council should carefully review proposed changes and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If changes are found to be appropriate, they should be formally added to the Plan by legal amendment. In addition, every three to five years, the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it is an up-to-date expression of community goals and intentions.

Implementation Steps

- Each year, the City Planner will brief the Planning Commission and provide a report to the City Council on the "State of the Comprehensive Plan." This briefing should reacquaint the Planning Commission and City Council with the content of the Plan, discuss emerging facts that have a bearing on the accuracy of the Plan projections, discuss land use and development activities within the last year and those on the docket for the upcoming year, and suggest an annual agenda of planning activities to assist in the implementation of the Plan.

- Review the Plan in three to five years and again in ten years to determine whether the Plan recommendations are still current. Revise those sections that are determined to be in need of an update.

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Appendix A Strengths and Weaknesses Summary

APPENDIX A

Defining Brainerd's Strengths and Weaknesses

During the Comprehensive Plan Kick-Off Meeting, participants were asked to put on their thinking caps and discuss issues that face Brainerd. First, each person was asked to reflect and write down the things that made Brainerd a great place to live, or the "Halos." Once people were done writing they were asked to share and discuss what they had written down with the people at their table. A table facilitator was appointed by the consultant to record the ideas of each person at the table. The facilitator then reported the halos for everybody to hear while the consultants posted the comments on the wall.

This lead to the challenges, or "Pitchforks," that face Brainerd. The same process of self-reflection, reporting to the table, then reporting to the large group was repeated. These issues are the foundation for the focus topic meetings for the Comprehensive Plan process. It should be mentioned that every comment was considered. There was no editing or interpretation of the comments. It is up to the consulting team to consider these comments in the formulation of the goals and strategies when writing the Comprehensive Plan. The Halos and Pitchforks that were reported from each group are shown in the table below. The numbers next to each issue represent the voting results of the meeting participates and are ranked based on their importance to the community.

Halos

River and Natural Environment – 14
Historic Downtown – 13
Small and Locally Owned Businesses – 10
Unbelievable Potential – 10
Involved Neighborhoods – 10
School System (K-College) – 9
Positive Name Recognition – 8
Parks, Trails & Programs - 7
CLC (College) Rosenmeyer – 7
Emergency Services – 5
Quality Public Service Employees – 5
Quality of Life – 5
Churches of Interfaith Groups – 4
Airport – 4
North side of Brainerd – 3
Central Location in State – 3
Small Town Atmosphere – 3
Youth Activities – 2
Safe Neighborhoods – 2
Strong History – 2
Clean Environment (Air & Water) – 2
Hospital and Medical Services – 2
Library – 2
New YMCA Facility – 2
4th of July Events – 2
Food Coop – 1
Affordable Housing – 1
Good Transit System – 1
Redevelopment (Mall) – 1
Service Organizations – 1
Media Outlets – 1
Government Center for Area – 1
Chamber of Economic Development Organization – 1
Soup Kitchen
Water Tower
Strong Work Ethic

Pitchforks

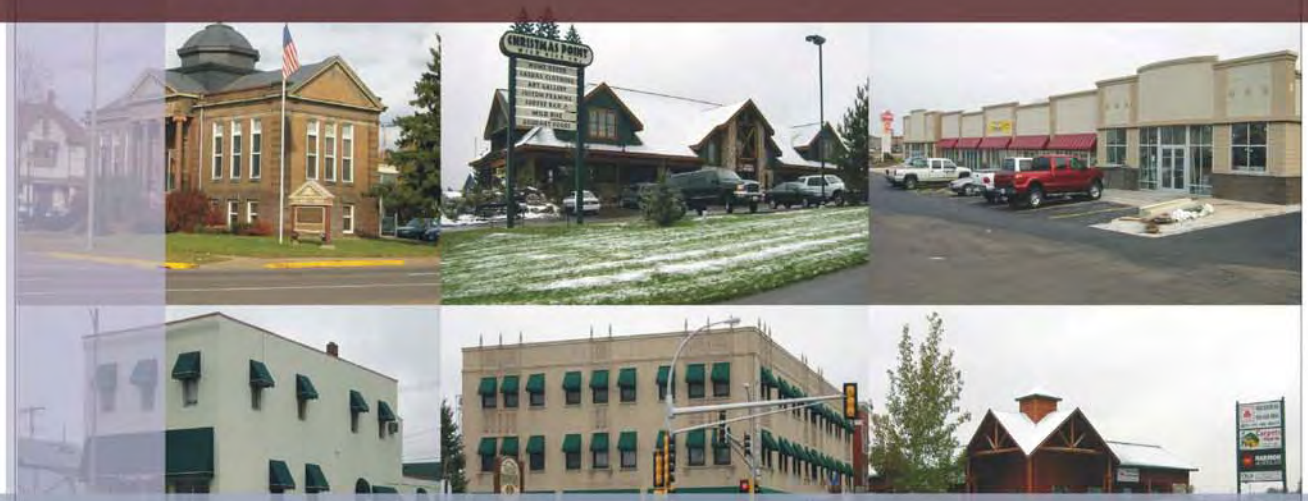
Contemptuous Decision Making Process (Elected and Non-Elected) – 23
Drab Distressed Appearance of City – 14
Lack of Energetic Leadership – Not recognizing Citizens as Assets – 14
Uncontrolled Fringe Development – 13
Lack of Vision for the Future – 10
Low Ownership Percentage of Housing – 9
Undeveloped Youth Activity (Varity/Diversity) – 9
Loss of Historical Buildings – 8
Limited Land for Growth & Development – 8
Lack of Affordable Quality Housing – 7
Too Much Concrete – Not Enough Trees – 5
Loss of Young People From Area – Nothing to Hold Them – 4
Highways that Cut-Up and Congest – 3
Lack of Cultural Diversity – 3
Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) – 3
Need to Balance Preservation With Growth – 3
Bar Expansion Program – 2
Business Rents are High – Close Early, Discourages New Business – 1
Under Utilized Senior Population – 1
Lack of Parking Downtown – 1
Baxter Envy – 1
Drugs and Alcohol Abuse – 1
Railroad Track Split Town
Poor Technology Infrastructure
Lack of Community Center
Lack of Consensus Within Community
Lack of Reasons for Seasonal People to Stop in Brainerd
Low Paying Jobs (Non-Union)
"Cookie Cutter" Housing Development
Aging Infrastructure
High Banks of Mississippi River
Loss of Large Employer – Impact on Job Market
Lack of Understanding of Our Own History
Railroad Yards & Shops Unused
Gate Syndrome – "I got my piece, close the gate"
High Cost of New Infrastructure

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Appendix B
DSU Market Research:
Commercial and Industrial Position in Brainerd and Development Recommendations

Commercial/ Industrial Position of Brainerd and Development Recommendations

Brainerd, Minnesota



Prepared For:

City of Brainerd, Minnesota

Submitted By:

DSU Research

a division of Dahlgren, Shardlow and Uban, Inc.

March 2003

INTRODUCTION

DSU Research was hired by the City of Brainerd to examine the commercial position of Brainerd and to recommend uses that will best situate the community to realize sustained growth. DSU Research accomplished this by completing a detailed inventory of commercial uses in the Brainerd/Baxter region and by focusing on the characteristics of the key sites within Brainerd.

DSU Research completed two full days of commercial user inventories in Brainerd and Baxter. We focused on the significant commercial concentrations in both cities, ignoring scattered, minor uses. We believe that scattered commercial uses make up a small fraction (well under 5%) of the two-city supply of commercial space.

We identified seven significant commercial concentrations in the two-city region. They are shown on maps at the end of this memorandum.

Brainerd:

- Downtown – the area between the Mississippi River on the west and roughly 11th Street South/the rail alignment on the east, and Washington Street (including the north side frontage) on the north and Oak Street on the south. This area covers the historic downtown area of Brainerd.

- West End – west of the river to the Baxter border (just west of 8th Street NW along Washington Street), from the Burlington Northern tracks on the south to roughly Jackson Street on the north. This area includes the eastern part half of the Westgate Mall, which straddles the border between Brainerd and Baxter.

- Northeast – the north side of Washington Street/Highway 210 between roughly 13th Avenue North/1st Avenue on the west and Mill Avenue/County 3 on the west. This also includes the area near the intersection of State Highways 210 and 25, covering the Bisys building and a handful of uses east along Highway 210.

- 25/18 "Gateway" – the four quadrants surrounding the intersection of State Highways 18 and 25, in the southeastern corner of the city. This area lies adjacent to the State Hospital site.

- Business 371 "Gateway" – both sides of Business Highway 371, to the north of County Road 117, on the south-central side of Brainerd. This area includes the Brainerd Medical Center and the Ramada Inn.

Baxter:

- Highway 371 Corridor – both sides of State Highway 371, starting at the intersection of State Highway 210 and extending north to the intersection with County Road 77/49. The hallmark of this subdistrict is the array of big box retailers along both frontage roads, including Best Buy, Target and Wal Mart.

- Highway 210 Strip – the east side of Baxter, generally on the north side of Highway 210. This area starts on the east with Westgate Mall (which straddles the Brainerd/Baxter border) and continues westward to the Paul Bunyan amusement park area.

In each commercial area, the research team collected information on the type of commercial user (including vacant spaces) for these categories:

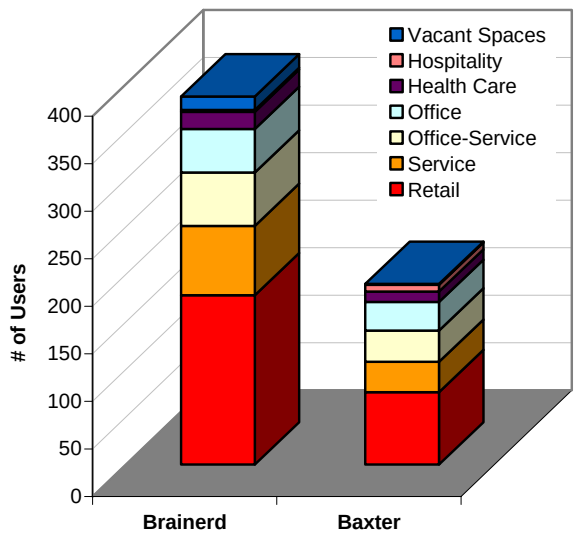
- Retail
- Service
- Office
- Office-Service
- Health Care Office
- Hotels/Motels (Hospitality)

For retail, service office and office/service uses, the research team also segmented users into user subclasses. Examples include: retail-fast food; service-entertainment (e.g. theaters); and office/service-banking. By understanding specific subclasses of user by area, we were able to characterize each of the seven commercial areas in Brainerd and Baxter and compare them along lines of specific market positioning.

COMMERCIAL USES BY BROAD CATEGORY

Table 1 shows a tally of commercial uses by broad category for Brainerd and Baxter; the chart at right depicts the same information. The table shows that Brainerd has two-thirds of the commercial tenants in the region (387 users) while Baxter has one-third (190 users). However, Brainerd has many small, independent commercial firms (e.g. many small-scale retailers), while Baxter has fewer, but larger, regional-scale retailers.

Brainerd has between 60% and 70% of the commercial users in the region in all categories except the hotel/motel category. Several hotels have been developed in the Highway 371 corridor in recent years, while attrition over the years has left Brainerd with just two hotels. Brained has 14 of the region's 15 commercial space vacancies.



Brainerd has more than twice the number of commercial users than Baxter. However, Baxter has the majority of hotels/motels (7 of 9) and greater shares of office, office-service and health care uses than its population would suggest. Brainerd has virtually all of the vacant commercial spaces (14 of 15).

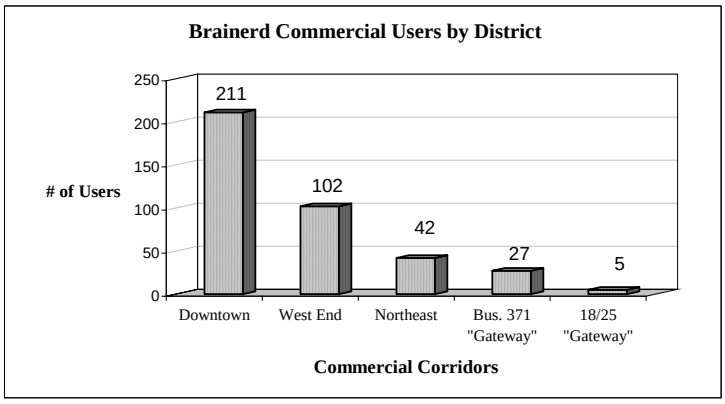
Table 1
Summary of Commercial Market Share by City and Broad Use Category
(Number of Users)
Brainerd and Baxter
October 2002

	2-City Total		Brainerd		Baxter	
Commercial Use Type	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Retail	254	100%	178	70%	76	30%
Service	105	100%	73	70%	32	30%
Office-Service	89	100%	56	63%	33	37%
Office	76	100%	46	61%	30	39%
Health Care	29	100%	18	62%	11	38%
Hotels/Motels	9	100%	2	22%	7	78%
Vacant Spaces*	15	100%	14	93%	1	7%
Total Commercial Users	**577**	**100%**	**387**	**67%**	**190**	**33%**

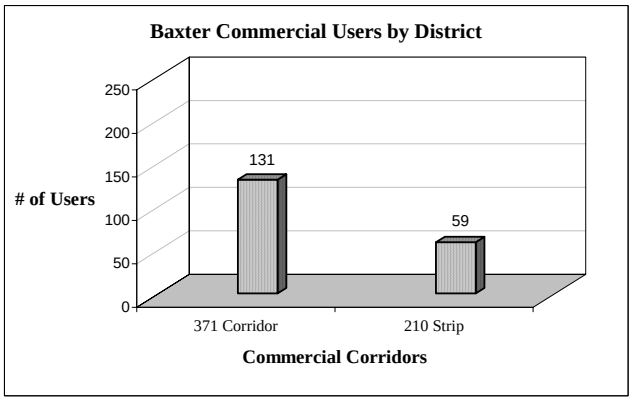
Source: DSU Research: Land Use Inventory

** Includes only spaces that formerly held a commercial use that are now vacant. Does not include spaces that are under construction nor vacant commercial land that has never been developed.*

COMMERCIAL USES BY SUBDISTRICT



As the charts at right show, the Downtown and West End subdistricts comprise the bulk of Brainerd's commercial base (numerically), holding 4 out of every 5 users in the city. These two districts lie adjacent to one another, both deriving substantial business from Highway 210 traffic.



Baxter's commercial base is also highly concentrated, with just under 70% of its commercial users located in the Highway 371 Corridor.

Brainerd has a significant commercial subdistrict in the Northeast area with 42 users, slightly smaller than the 59 commercial users along the Highway 210 strip in Baxter.

The "Gateway" areas in Brainerd – at the intersection of Highways 18 and 25 and where Business Highway 371 enters Brainerd on the south – are important nodes, not because of size, but because of their potential to "set the tone" for travelers into the city. Creating attractive, inviting, well-planned entries into the city at these points will go a long way to help reestablish or redefine Brainerd's position in the region.

COMMERCIAL MARKET SHARE BY ASSESSED VALUE AND TAX REVENUES

Table 2 presents the aggregate assessed market value and tax revenues for each of the seven commercial subdistricts in the region. The chart below summarizes the same data. The figures come from the Crow Wing County Assessor and represent a summation of values of all of the parcels containing commercial uses in each subdistrict.

The table shows how a tally of sheer numbers of users can be misleading in assessing market share: even though Brainerd has two-thirds of the commercial users among the region's seven major commercial subdistricts, it holds only one-third of the collective market value of the subdistricts ($77.5 million), and slightly less than one third of the tax revenues ($2.2 million).

Commercial Property: Values Summary

	Market Value		Tax Revenues	
Brainerd	$77.5 million	35%	$2.2 million	32%
Baxter	$144.8 million	65%	$4.6 million	68%
2-City Region	$222.3 million	100%	$6.7 million	100%

Table 2
Market Value of and Tax Payments by Commercial Properties
Brainerd and Baxter
October 2002

	Total Commercial Users		Total Assessed Market Value of Commercial Uses			Net Tax		
Brainerd: Major Commercial Districts	***No.***	***%***	***Market $***	***Share Among Districts***	***Average Market $ Per User***	***Tax $***	***Share Among Districts***	***Average Tax $ Per User***
Downtown	211	37%	$27,658,200	12%	$131,082	$717,550	11%	$3,401
West End	102	18%	$26,282,700	12%	$257,674	$751,618	11%	$7,369
Business 371 "Gateway"	27	5%	$12,817,600	6%	$474,726	$379,358	6%	$14,050
Northeast	42	7%	$9,253,200	4%	$220,314	$260,403	4%	$6,200
18/25 "Gateway"	5	1%	$1,525,000	1%	$305,000	$38,515	1%	$7,703
Brainerd Subtotal	***387***	***67%***	***$77,536,700***	***35%***	$200,353	***$2,147,444***	***32%***	$5,549
Baxter: Major Commercial Districts								
Highway 371 Corridor	131	23%	$118,917,600	53%	$907,768	$3,751,464	56%	$28,637
210 Strip	59	10%	$25,841,200	12%	$437,986	$812,430	12%	$13,770
Baxter Subtotal	***190***	***33%***	***$144,758,800***	***65%***	$761,888	***$4,563,894***	***68%***	$24,020
Brainerd/Baxter Totals	**577**	**100%**	**$222,295,500**	**100%**	**$385,261**	**$6,711,338**	**100%**	**$11,631**

Sources:
Crow Wing County Assessor
DSU Research

Color Legend:
Dominant Area
Area of Secondary Importance
Weakest Performing Area

Conversely, Baxter's two subdistricts hold $145 million in commercial market value and generate $4.6 million in taxes. Clearly, the newer, larger commercial uses in the Highway 371 Corridor have launched Baxter into the leading position in the region, in terms of market values and impact on local tax roles.

The Highway 371 Corridor alone accounts for nearly $120 million in commercial market value, about 53% of the seven-subdistrict total, and $41 million above the value for *all commercial uses in Brainerd's five major subdistricts.* The average market value per user in the 371 Corridor is over $907,000, nearly double the figure in the second highest area, the Business 371 Gateway area of Brainerd ($475,000). The figure for this latter area is significantly skewed by the Brainerd Medical Center and the Ramada Hotel, which each have estimated market values of between $2.5 and $3.5 million.

The small, independent nature of Brainerd's Downtown commercial base is evident in the table. Despite holding the largest numerical share of users of all subdistricts (211 of 577), Downtown Brainerd has about the same aggregate market value and tax stream as Brainerd's West End (102 users) and the 210 Strip in Baxter (59 users). The large number of users, but relatively small market and tax values, gives Downtown Brainerd the lowest averages per user in the five districts: $131,100 in market value and just $3,400 in annual taxes. Both are far below the seven-district averages of $385,300 and $11,600, respectively.

COMMERCIAL USES BY BROAD CATEGORY AND SUBDISTRICT

Table 3 shows commercial users broken down by broad category for the seven major subdistricts in Brainerd and Baxter. The table list six categories of commercial use (e.g. office, retail, etc.) as well as vacant commercial spaces in structures (but not vacant, undeveloped lots). Areas with the dominant position (regarding number of users) are highlighted in dark green; areas of secondary strength are highlighted in light green. The table begins to show the positioning of the different subdistricts along lines of detailed uses.

Retail Concentrations

Downtown Brainerd (99 retailers), the 371 Corridor in Baxter (55 retailers) and the West End of Brainerd (46 retailers) are the dominant retail subdistricts in the region. Downtown Brainerd has a wide variety of small, independent retailers that serve the local market. The West End offers mostly highway commercial uses to local and pass-through traffic, including gas/convenience stores and national fast-food restaurants.

The 371 Corridor in Baxter holds the overwhelming supply of national and regional chain "big box" retailers including Best Buy, Target, Mills Fleet Farm and Wal Mart. This corridor serves the much larger region, attracting consumers from throughout Crow Wing, Cass and Morrison Counties. While the scope of this research did not allow us to calculate market share based on sales, the 371 Corridor in Baxter undoubtedly captures the vast majority of retail dollars that are spent in the region.

Brainerd's Northeast subdistrict, along Highway 210 near the east edge of the city, holds 27 retailers, according to our tally. This area is anchored by the East Brainerd Mall, a traditional, long-time mall with a JC Penney department store anchor and a nearby Cub Foods supermarket. Competition over the years from other emerging retail areas to the west has likely eroded the market share for this area, but its good visibility and access at the intersection of Highways 25 and 210 will help this retail node stay viable in the future. A small strip retail center is nearing completion to the south of the mall, adding four new retailers and two service uses at this node.

Baxter's Highway 210 frontage is the fifth significant retail node in the region. Essentially an extension of the West End subdistrict in Brainerd, this area holds two malls (one of which, Westgate, straddles the border with Brainerd). Several national restaurant chains take advantage of the high traffic level on Highway 210.

Table 3
Breakdown of Commercial Uses by Category
Major Commercial Districts in Brainerd and Baxter
October 2002

	Total Commercial Users		Users by Broad Category													
			Retail		Service		Office		Office Service		Health Care		Hospitality		Vacant Spaces*	
Brainerd: Major Commercial Districts	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Downtown	211	100%	99	47%	36	17%	23	11%	36	17%	11	5%	1	0%	5	2%
West End	102	100%	46	45%	26	25%	9	9%	13	13%	2	2%	0	0%	6	6%
Northeast	42	100%	27	64%	10	24%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	3	7%
Business 371 "Gateway"	27	100%	2	7%	0	0%	13	48%	6	22%	5	19%	1	4%	0	0%
18/25 "Gateway"	5	100%	4	80%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Brainerd Subtotal	***387***	***100%***	***178***	***46%***	***73***	***19%***	***46***	***12%***	***56***	***14%***	***18***	***5%***	***2***	***0.5%***	***14***	***4%***
Baxter: Major Commercial Districts																
Highway 371 Corridor	131	100%	56	43%	25	19%	20	15%	18	14%	6	5%	6	5%	0	0%
210 Strip	59	100%	20	34%	7	12%	10	17%	15	25%	5	8%	1	2%	1	2%
Baxter Subtotal	***190***	***100%***	***76***	***40%***	***32***	***17%***	***30***	***16%***	***33***	***17%***	***11***	***6%***	***7***	***3.7%***	***1***	***1%***
Brainerd/Baxter Totals	**577**	**100%**	**254**	**44%**	**105**	**18%**	**76**	**13%**	**89**	**15%**	**29**	**5%**	**9**	**2%**	**15**	**3%**

* Does not include undeveloped land; only building spaces that are unoccupied.

Color Legend:
- Dominant Area
- Area of Secondary Importance

Sources:
Crow Wing County Assessor
DSU Research

Service Use Concentrations

Service uses, such as hair salons, dry cleaners, and auto service or repair shops, go hand in hand with retailers, as they also sell directly to the consuming public. Service uses often have the same high-visibility and easy-access requirements of retailers.

The distribution pattern of service users in the Brainerd/Baxter region is similar to that for retailers. The dominant area, in terms of raw numbers, is Downtown Brainerd (36 users), followed by the West End of Brainerd (26) and the 371 Corridor in Baxter (25). Brainerd's Northeast subdistrict (10) and the 210 Strip in Baxter (7) are smaller service nodes.

Office-Service Concentrations

As a category, office-service includes uses that sell services in office settings, with a strong public-commerce element. In this respect, location is of vital importance, and office-service uses are often located among retail and service uses, such as in shopping malls or along commercial strips. Examples of office-service users include insurance and real estate brokers, banks, lawyers and travel agents.

Downtown Brainerd holds the dominant position for office and office-service users. Downtown Brainerd has 59 such users, nearly double the amount in the Highway 371 Corridor (38), the area of secondary concentration in the region. Most office users in the region, regardless of subdistrict, are of the same small scale; no more than one or two dozen workers in any given building. The exceptions are two Bisys offices, one in the 371 Corridor and another in Northeast Brainerd. Because of the similar size of most office users throughout the region, Brainerd's dominant position with sheer numbers of office-based businesses likely means that it leads the market in total office employment and square footage, too.

A new office building in the Highway 371 Corridor, on a site south of Mills Ford, will elevate the Baxter in the office market. It will be the first, and only, "high-end" multi-tenant building in the region. (Other newer buildings in the region, virtually all located in the Highway 371 Corridor, are more modest in terms of architectural quality, building amenities and size.)

The Highway 210 Strip (25 office and office-service users), Brainerd's West End and the Business 371 Gateway area in Brainerd are tertiary office and office-service markets, with 25, 24 and 19 users, respectively.

Health Care Office Concentrations

Health care office includes medical clinic, dentists, optometrists and other similar uses. This category does not include hospitals. Downtown Brainerd holds the largest number of independent health care offices with 11, followed by the Highway 371 Corridor in Baxter (6), the Business 371 Gateway area (5) and the 210 Strip in Baxter (5).

Hotel/Motel (Hospitality) Use Concentrations

The 371 Corridor in Baxter has the lion's share of hospitality uses in the region: 6 out of 9 total. Several of the hotels in the 371 Corridor sit at the top of the market, including the Comfort Inn Suites on Woida Road North in the northern part of the Corridor, and the Country Inn and Suites, located nearby, on the east side of Highway 371.

MARKET POSITIONING OF THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS IN THE REGION

Introduction

This section discusses key characteristics and the specific market position of each of the seven commercial districts in Brainerd and Baxter. To determine commercial market positioning, we examined the extent and detailed type of retail, service, office and office-service uses in each commercial area. Our on-site inventory of uses enabled us to categorize each commercial user into a specific subcategory; examples include "fast food restaurants" for retailing, "dry cleaning/laundry" for services, or "banking" for office uses.

The results of our detailed inventory and the subclasses of uses in five of the seven major commercial subdistricts in the region are presented in Appendix Tables A-E. We did not assemble tables for either of the Gateway areas of Brainerd: the 18/25 Gateway area has just five commercial users and the Business 371 Gateway area is made up mainly of office/office-service and medical users, and just two retail businesses.

Brainerd Commercial Subdistricts

Downtown

- Historic commercial center of the region; many landmark buildings but also many land use challenges (building deterioration, intermingling of industrial, commercial and residential uses, etc.). Brainerd residents often have very personal connections to Downtown, although many are more attracted to the "big box" shopping experience (e.g. Target, Wal Mart, etc.) rather than the eclectic/independent retail experience of Downtown.

The renovated Elks building in Downtown Brainerd.

- The only traditional "downtown" district in the region: multistory buildings; smaller scale; high density; early 1900s original development timeframe.

- The strongest presence of government services and employment in the region, by far.

- The only commercial node in the region that could be considered "pedestrian-friendly." All other areas are decidedly auto-oriented.

- Borders on more households than any other district; strongest captive base of Brainerd households in close proximity.

- Highest density of commercial uses of the seven districts; the most eclectic and "unpolished" in terms of uses and appearance (both good and bad from a retail perspective).

- Small, specialty, independent retailers and service businesses dominate; nearly as many independent retailers and service businesses Downtown as in all six other commercial areas combined (130 Downtown versus 143 in all other areas).

- Dominant market share (based on number of users) for bars, fraternal groups and sit-down restaurants: mid-price, "working class," long-time bars and restaurants catering to locals.

- Dominant market share (based on number of users) for:
  - books/gifts/floral shops
  - games/hobbies/art supplies
  - coffee shops/delis/cafes
  - sports and recreation retailers

- One of the four hubs for fast-food restaurants, equivalent in numbers to the West End in Brainerd and the 210 Strip and 371 Corridor in Baxter.

- The leading center for independent stores selling clothes/apparel/shoes; far behind in dollar market share, however, compared to the Westgate Mall area and the "big box" discount retailers in the Highway 371 Corridor.

- About the only place to go in the two-city region for antiques; 3 of 4 shops in the region are located Downtown. Other smaller cities nearby but outside of the Brainerd/Baxter area, such as Crosby, are also centers for antiques.

- The dominant small office subdistrict in the region; has the leading market share for banking, real estate and mortgage offices, law offices, insurance and professional services (e.g. architects, appraisers, engineers)

Small, well-maintained professional offices add to the healthy mix of uses in Downtown Brainerd.

- The largest number of personal service establishments in the region (36), including such use categories as hair, tanning, massage, photo studio, etc.

West End

- Auto-oriented commercial district in a retail pattern established during an earlier part of the highway-commercial era (the 50s and 60s). The West End has roughly half a dozen strip retail malls of various sizes accessible off of Highway 210/Washington Street.

Auto-oriented uses on Highway 210 in Brainerd's West End.

- 40% the retail users (20 of 47) and 23% of the service users (6 of 26) are national or regional chains, taking advantage of high-visibility sites along busy Washington Street/Highway 210.

- Along with the Highway 371 Strip in Baxter, the West End has the highest number of auto sales and auto service uses, as well as home electronics retailers.

- Among the leading subdistricts for drug/pharmacy (two users including a recently-built Walgreen's), games/hobbies/art supplies and home appliances/furniture.

- Significant regional retail presence due to Westgate Mall, which straddles the border with Baxter. Roughly 20 retailers and service tenants are on the Brainerd side of the mall.

- Has seen some redevelopment in recent years with the Walgreen's store and has a small strip center under construction along Highway 210 frontage.

- Across the river for the vast majority of Brainerd households, although most establishments are highly visible and easily accessible from Highway 210.

- Strong personal-services base; second only to Downtown Brainerd and above the 371 Corridor in Baxter.

- Has the leading market share in home services uses (upholstery, vacuum repair, TV repair, etc.).

- The fourth largest office and office-service subdistrict in the region, about equal to the Baxter 210 Strip.

Northeast Brainerd

- Auto-oriented retail node at the intersection of Highways 210 and 25, centered on the East Brainerd Mall, an early, important retail center in Brainerd.

- A 6-block strip along the north side of Highway 210 holds an eclectic retail and service mix from a variety of eras: newer national fast-food restaurants, and bars, local restaurants, auto services and other uses in older (many Pre WWII) buildings.

Eclectic retail and service mix along 210 in NE Brainerd

- Minimal office market in terms of numbers (2), but likely large in square feet due to the Bisys office building at the 210/25 intersection.

- Smaller fast-food node with two national chains and one independent.

- Hub for liquor sales: 2 retail stores and one off-sale establishment.

25/18 "Gateway"

- Small commercial node with future potential due to its "gateway" status from the east (along Highway 18) and the south (along Highway 25).

- Four current retailers: 2 trailer home sales, a Conoco gas/convenience station and a sports/marine shop). One service business (repair and rentals).

- Adjacent to the State Hospital site.

Business 371 "Gateway"

- Smaller commercial node on both sides of Business Highway 371.

- Newer, uses; mostly office and office-service users.

- A supermarket and a sit-down restaurant comprise the retail base.

- Strong health care node: Brainerd Medical Center and several multi-tenant medical office buildings line both sides of the highway.

Baxter Commercial Subdistricts

Highway 371 Corridor

- Far and away, the dominant retail area in the region, primarily due to several large-scale retailers: Target, Fleet Farm, Wal Mart, Best Buy, Mills Ford, Mills GM, Home Depot, Menard's, Office Max, Cub Foods and Slumberland.

- A major retail destination for the lakes area and several counties across central Minnesota. The wide variety of retailers and services – many strong national brands – attracts a broad base of customers. The entire Corridor serves as a destination.

A variety of newer retail uses attract regional and destination consumers to the Highway 371 Corridor in Baxter.

- The Corridor has the market locked up with a) big-box discount merchandisers (Target, Mills Fleet Farm and Wal Mart) and b) home improvement (Home Depot and Menard's).

- Dominant for the hotel/motel industry: 6 of 9 such uses in the region and all of the newest hotels.

- Many national or regional chain restaurants, both fast-food and sit-down: Applebee's, Bonanza, Taco Bell, KFC and Arby's.

- Fast becoming the dominant office market with several newer, multi-tenant office buildings and the only "high-end" building in the region (under construction). Second only to Downtown Brainerd in terms of the number of office and office-service users, but likely far greater in terms of space.

- Directly accessible from the region's two largest roadways: Highways 371 and 210.

The region's first "high-end" office building is under construction in the Highway 371 Corridor in Baxter.

Highway 210 Strip –

- Auto-oriented highway strip with a variety of uses including strip malls, freestanding retail and office buildings and Paul Bunyan Land.

- Integrated with the West End of Brainerd; difficult to tell where Brainerd ends and Baxter begins.

- The third largest subdistrict in the region with 52 commercial users; behind Downtown Brainerd and the 371 Strip in Baxter.

- Smaller retail and service base: 20 retailers, 7 service businesses. However, 35% of retailer uses (7) are national chains taking advantage of the high level of traffic on Highway 210.

- Significant office subdistrict with 25 users. Several multi-tenant office buildings with financial services, insurance, real estate and professional services firms.

- Significant restaurant base with 6 establishments (4 fast food, 2 sit down).

Several multi-tenant office buildings in near Highway 210 in Baxter make the district a significant office submarket.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRAINERD'S COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Introduction

This section discusses the commercial development and redevelopment opportunities for the five commercial districts in Brainerd. We spend much of our discussion on Downtown Brainerd, as it has the largest number of commercial users in the City, and also has arguably the greatest challenges regarding commercial sustainability and redevelopment.

Downtown Brainerd

- Build off of Brainerd's leading position for professional office uses. Ensure that Brainerd maintains and solidifies its position as a leading location for lawyers, accountants, architects and publishers. A strong local office base provides daily workers to help keep retail and service uses vital.

- Ensure that Downtown Brainerd remains the seat of government for the city and the region. Expansions of government offices should occur Downtown, not elsewhere. Keeping government uses together creates a cohesive district, benefiting local retailers and service businesses and creating a reason to visit Downtown Brainerd.

- Emphasize quality of retailers and services over quantity. Baxter has already won the market share war in terms of dollars (the 371 Corridor), but Downtown Brainerd can win the battle in terms of experience, character and diversity.

- Weed out industrial uses in the Downtown area, especially those that consume valuable parcels in or near the contiguous commercial core.

- For retail uses, focus on specialty shops and destination uses for visitors that are unique in the region, and those that will not likely be found in the "auto-oriented" districts elsewhere. These include antique stores, used bookstores, independent restaurants (not national or regional chains).

- Work off of the unique character of Downtown: historic architecture; pedestrian-friendly pattern; history; etc. Work to renovate buildings with historic character.

Many buildings in or near Downtown Brainerd have great cultural and historical significance to the community.

- Develop a "theme" for Downtown. Other downtowns across Minnesota have successfully created and marketed themes including Czech culture in New Praque, theater and entertainment in Lanesboro and specialty shops in Perham.

- Promote Downtown Brainerd as a place that has great potential and one that locals should care about. Encourage locals to patronize the independent shops in Downtown.

- Encourage Downtown business owners to develop succession plans. The closing of longtime, vital businesses when the founder/owner retires has plagued many small downtowns. Succession planning can help avoid vacant storefronts.

What Downtown Is Or Can Be:

- Small office/professional office center: banking, finance, publishing, architecture, etc.

- Small-scale, specialty retail with character

- The center of municipal and regional government

- The antique center of the region

- The emotional "heart" of the region

- A place to seek a retail "experience" in buildings with character and history

- A place that serves highway traffic (210) and neighborhood shoppers (historic Downtown)

- Identify sites that could be reused for owner-occupied housing development. New housing brings vitality and energy to an area. Removing obsolete uses and replacing them with new owner housing would help stabilize

Downtown and the surrounding residential blocks, and help upgrade the appearance of the larger area.

The West End

- Solidify the highway commercial pattern. Auto-oriented uses are appropriate for this district, which benefits from the second highest traffic volumes in the region, behind the Highway 371 district in Baxter. Parcels that can be consolidated to create larger redevelopment sites could provide opportunities to medium- or large-scale commercial users in the future, especially retail and service businesses.

- Redevelopment types appropriate for this district with office, office-service and highway-oriented retail uses.

- Clean up old sites and remove non-conforming (e.g. industrial) uses.

Northeast

- Encourage the ongoing evolution of the East Brainerd Mall site. This site is a "gateway" location, serving the eastern and northeastern Crow Wing County for retail and services. The intersection of Highways 25 and 210 should remain a strong commercial node in the future. Upgraded retail stores, perhaps on a smaller overall scale than the former mall, will still have a significant draw area.

- Encourage aesthetic, parking and access improvements to commercial area between 5th and 13th/Gillis. This area has many smaller businesses in older buildings, which over time, may turn into redevelopment opportunities. Auto-oriented retail uses, such as the fast food uses in this area, would continue to be appropriate in this area. However, traffic speeds can be high in this stretch of Highway 210, creating potential traffic hazards for uses that generate higher levels of traffic. As well, a center median limits access to many of these sites from eastbound 210.

Business 371 Gateway

- Continue to foster this as a health-care district; office and office-service uses.

- Infill/redevelop with smaller-scale retail that can serve industrial employment base (e.g. convenience/gas, fast-food, etc.).

18/25 Gateway

- Establish and preserve as a future highway commercial area for regional consumers. Retailers may be interested in this high-visibility location at the intersection of two regional highways.

- Good site for many retail and services uses in future: banks, restaurant, sports-oriented retail and recreation, etc.

Appendix Table A
Breakdown of Retail, Service and Office/Office Service Users
Downtown Brainerd
October 2002

Retail Categories	Total Retailers		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Bar (Includes Fraternal Orgs)	15	15%	0	0%	0	0%	15	100%
Restaurant-Sit Down	13	13%	0	0%	0	0%	13	100%
Games/Hobbies/Art Supplies/Pets	9	9%	0	0%	0	0%	9	100%
Books, Gifts and Floral	8	8%	0	0%	0	0%	8	100%
Clothing/Apparel/Shoes	6	6%	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%
Coffee Shop/Deli/Cafes	6	6%	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%
General/Discount Merchandise	5	5%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Home Appliances/Furniture	5	5%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Hardware/Home Imp/Lawn & Garden	5	5%	0	0%	2	40%	3	60%
Restaurant-Fast Food	5	5%	2	40%	0	0%	3	60%
Convenience Gas	4	4%	1	25%	0	0%	3	75%
Antiques	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Auto Sales and Parts	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Home Electronics	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Small Grocery/Markets/Food Stores	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Sports/Recreation	3	3%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Drug Store/Pharmacy	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Bakery	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Jewelry	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Home Office	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Liquor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Supermarkets	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	99	**100%**	**3**	**3%**	**2**	**2%**	**94**	**95%**

Service Categories	Total Service Users		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/ Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Personal Service	21	58%	0	0%	0	0%	21	100%
Auto Repair/Car Wash	6	17%	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%
Home Services	5	14%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Dry Cleaner/Laundry	3	8%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Health Related Services	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Entertainment	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	36	**100%**	**0**	**0%**	**0**	**0%**	**36**	**100%**

Office/Office Service Users	Total Users	
	Number	% of Total
Financial/Banking	13	22%
General Office Users/Other/Misc.	12	20%
Legal	11	19%
Professional Services	7	12%
Insurance	5	8%
Real Estate/Mortgage/Construction	4	7%
Non-Profit/Recruiters	2	3%
Publishing/TV/Radio	2	3%
Travel	2	3%
Accountants	1	2%
Business to Business Offices	0	0%
	59	**100%**

Legend

1 or more national or regional tenants; 2 or more independent tenants

1 independent tenant

Source: DSU Research

Appendix Table B
Breakdown of Retail, Service and Office/Office Service Users
Brainerd-West End
October 2002

Retail Categories	Total Retailers		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Auto Sales and Parts	8	17%	5	63%	0	0%	3	38%
Clothing/Apparel/Shoes	6	13%	1	17%	0	0%	5	83%
Restaurant-Fast Food	5	11%	5	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Electronics	4	9%	2	50%	0	0%	2	50%
Games/Hobbies/Art Supplies/Pets	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
Books, Gifts and Floral	4	9%	0	0%	1	25%	3	75%
Convenience Gas	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Hardware/Home Imp/Lawn & Garden	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Drug Store/Pharmacy	2	4%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
General/Discount Merchandise	2	4%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%
Small Grocery/Markets/Food Stores	2	4%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Home Appliances/Furniture	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Home Office	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Restaurant-Sit Down	1	2%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Jewelry	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Sports/Recreation	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Antiques	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bakery	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bar (Includes Fraternal Orgs)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Coffee Shop/Deli/Cafes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Liquor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Supermarkets	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	46	**100%**	**15**	**33%**	**4**	**9%**	**27**	**59%**

Service Categories	Total Service Users		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/ Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Personal Service	11	42%	3	27%	0	0%	8	73%
Home Services	7	27%	1	14%	0	0%	6	86%
Auto Repair/Car Wash	4	15%	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%
Entertainment	2	8%	0	0%	1	0%	1	0%
Health Related Services	1	4%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dry Cleaner/Laundry	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
	26	**100%**	**5**	**19%**	**1**	**4%**	**20**	**77%**

Office/Office Service Users	Total Users	
	Number	% of Total
Financial/Banking	6	27%
General Office Users/Other/Misc.	5	23%
Publishing/TV/Radio	3	14%
Insurance	2	9%
Non-Profit/Recruiters	2	9%
Real Estate/Mortgage/Construction	1	5%
Travel	1	5%
Accountants	1	5%
Business to Business Offices	1	5%
Legal	0	0%
Professional Services	0	0%
	22	**100%**

Legend	
	1 or more national or regional tenants; 2 or more independent tenants
	1 independent tenant

Source: DSU Research

Appendix Table C
Breakdown of Retail, Service and Office/Office Service Users
Brainerd-Northeast
October 2002

Retail Categories	Total Retailers		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
General/Discount Merchandise	3	11%	1	33%	0	0%	2	67%
Auto Sales and Parts	3	11%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Liquor	3	11%	0	0%	0	0%	3	0%
Restaurant-Fast Food	3	11%	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%
Hardware/Home Imp/Lawn & Garden	2	7%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Books, Gifts and Floral	2	7%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Home Electronics	1	4%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Convenience Gas	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Small Grocery/Markets/Food Stores	1	4%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%
Home Appliances/Furniture	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Restaurant-Sit Down	1	4%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Antiques	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Bakery	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Bar (Includes Fraternal Orgs)	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Coffee Shop/Deli/Cafes	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Supermarkets	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Jewelry	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Clothing/Apparel/Shoes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Games/Hobbies/Art Supplies/Pets	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Drug Store/Pharmacy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Office	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Sports/Recreation	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	27	**100%**	**5**	**19%**	**2**	**7%**	**20**	**74%**

Service Categories	Total Service Users		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/ Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Personal Service	5	50%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Auto Repair/Car Wash	3	30%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Entertainment	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%	2	0%
Home Services	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dry Cleaner/Laundry	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Health Related Services	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	10	**100%**	**0**	**0%**	**0**	**0%**	**10**	**100%**

Office/Office Service Users	Total Users	
	Number	% of Total
General Office Users/Other/Misc.	1	50%
Financial/Banking	1	50%
Publishing/TV/Radio	0	0%
Insurance	0	0%
Non-Profit/Recruiters	0	0%
Real Estate/Mortgage/Construction	0	0%
Travel	0	0%
Accountants	0	0%
Business to Business Offices	0	0%
Legal	0	0%
Professional Services	0	0%
	2	**100%**

Legend

1 or more national or regional tenants; 2 or more independent tenants

1 independent tenant

Source: DSU Research

Appendix Table D
Breakdown of Retail, Service and Office/Office Service Users
Baxter-Highway 371 Corridor
October 2002

Retail Categories	Total Retailers		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Hardware/Home Imp/Lawn & Garden	12	22%	2	17%	2	17%	8	67%
Auto Sales and Parts	7	13%	3	43%	1	14%	3	43%
Restaurant-Sit Down	5	9%	1	20%	1	20%	3	60%
General/Discount Merchandise	4	7%	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%
Home Electronics	4	7%	2	50%	1	25%	1	25%
Restaurant-Fast Food	4	7%	3	75%	0	0%	1	25%
Home Appliances/Furniture	3	5%	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%
Convenience Gas	3	5%	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%
Liquor	3	5%	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%
Small Grocery/Markets/Food Stores	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Bar (Includes Fraternal Orgs)	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Clothing/Apparel/Shoes	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Books, Gifts and Floral	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Games/Hobbies/Art Supplies/Pets	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Jewelry	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Home Office	1	2%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Supermarkets	1	2%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Sports/Recreation	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Antiques	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bakery	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Coffee Shop/Deli/Cafes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Drug Store/Pharmacy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	55	**100%**	**17**	**31%**	**8**	**15%**	**30**	**55%**

Service Categories	Total Service Users		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/ Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Personal Service	9	36%	0	0%	0	0%	9	100%
Auto Repair/Car Wash	7	28%	1	14%	0	0%	6	86%
Home Services	6	24%	0	0%	1	17%	5	83%
Entertainment	3	12%	0	0%	2	67%	1	33%
Health Related Services	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dry Cleaner/Laundry	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	25	**100%**	**1**	**4%**	**3**	**12%**	**21**	**84%**

Office/Office Service Users	Total Users	
	Number	% of Total
Financial/Banking	6	16%
General Office Users/Other/Misc.	6	16%
Real Estate/Mortgage/Construction	5	13%
Professional Services	5	13%
Publishing/TV/Radio	3	8%
Insurance	3	8%
Business to Business Offices	3	8%
Legal	3	8%
Non-Profit/Recruiters	2	5%
Accountants	2	5%
Travel	0	0%
	38	**100%**

Legend

1 or more national or regional tenants; 2 or more independent tenants

1 independent tenant

Source: DSU Research

Appendix Table E
Breakdown of Retail, Service and Office/Office Service Users
Baxter-210 Strip
October 2002

Retail Categories	Total Retailers		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Books, Gifts and Floral	4	20%	2	50%	0	0%	2	50%
Restaurant-Fast Food	4	20%	1	25%	1	25%	2	50%
Clothing/Apparel/Shoes	2	10%	0	0%	1	0%	1	0%
Restaurant-Sit Down	2	10%	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Hardware/Home Imp/Lawn & Garden	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Home Electronics	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Sports/Recreation	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
Auto Sales and Parts	1	5%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Bakery	1	5%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Convenience Gas	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%
General/Discount Merchandise	1	5%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Games/Hobbies/Art Supplies/Pets	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Supermarkets	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Small Grocery/Markets/Food Stores	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Jewelry	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Antiques	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Appliances/Furniture	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Bar (Includes Fraternal Orgs)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Coffee Shop/Deli/Cafes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Liquor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Office	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Drug Store/Pharmacy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	20	**100%**	**7**	**35%**	**3**	**15%**	**10**	**50%**

Service Categories	Total Service Users		National Chain		Regional Chain		Independent/ Local	
	Number	% of Total	Number	Category %	Number	Category %	Number	Category %
Personal Service	2	29%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Auto Repair/Car Wash	2	29%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Entertainment	2	29%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%
Health Related Services	1	14%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dry Cleaner/Laundry	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Home Services	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	7	**100%**	**2**	**29%**	**0**	**0%**	**5**	**71%**

Office/Office Service Users	Total Users	
	Number	% of Total
General Office Users/Other/Misc.	5	20%
Financial/Banking	4	16%
Insurance	3	12%
Non-Profit/Recruiters	3	12%
Professional Services	3	12%
Real Estate/Mortgage/Construction	3	12%
Legal	2	8%
Accountants	1	4%
Travel	1	4%
Business to Business Offices	0	0%
Publishing/TV/Radio	0	0%
	25	**100%**

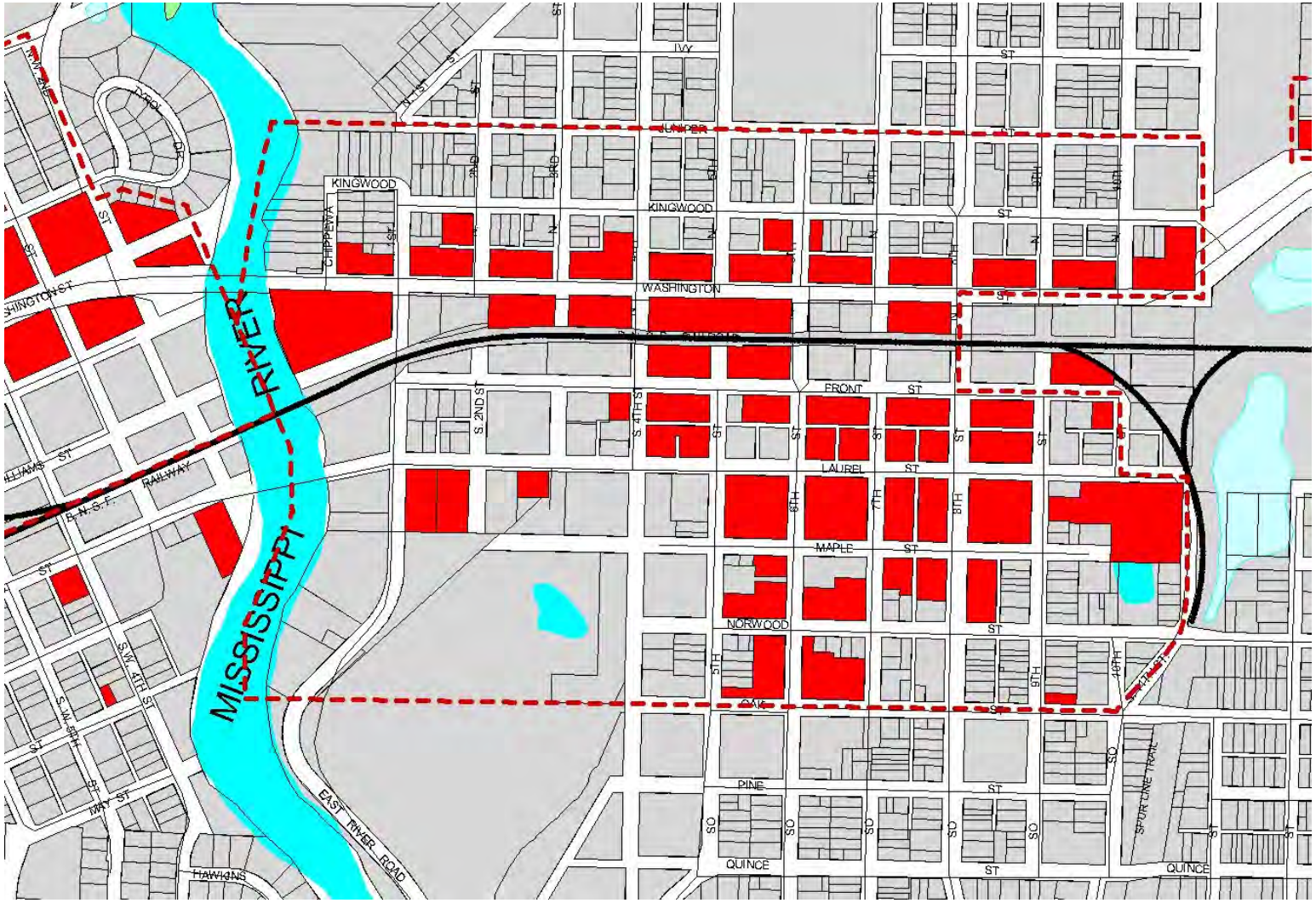
Legend

1 or more national or regional tenants; 2 or more independent tenants

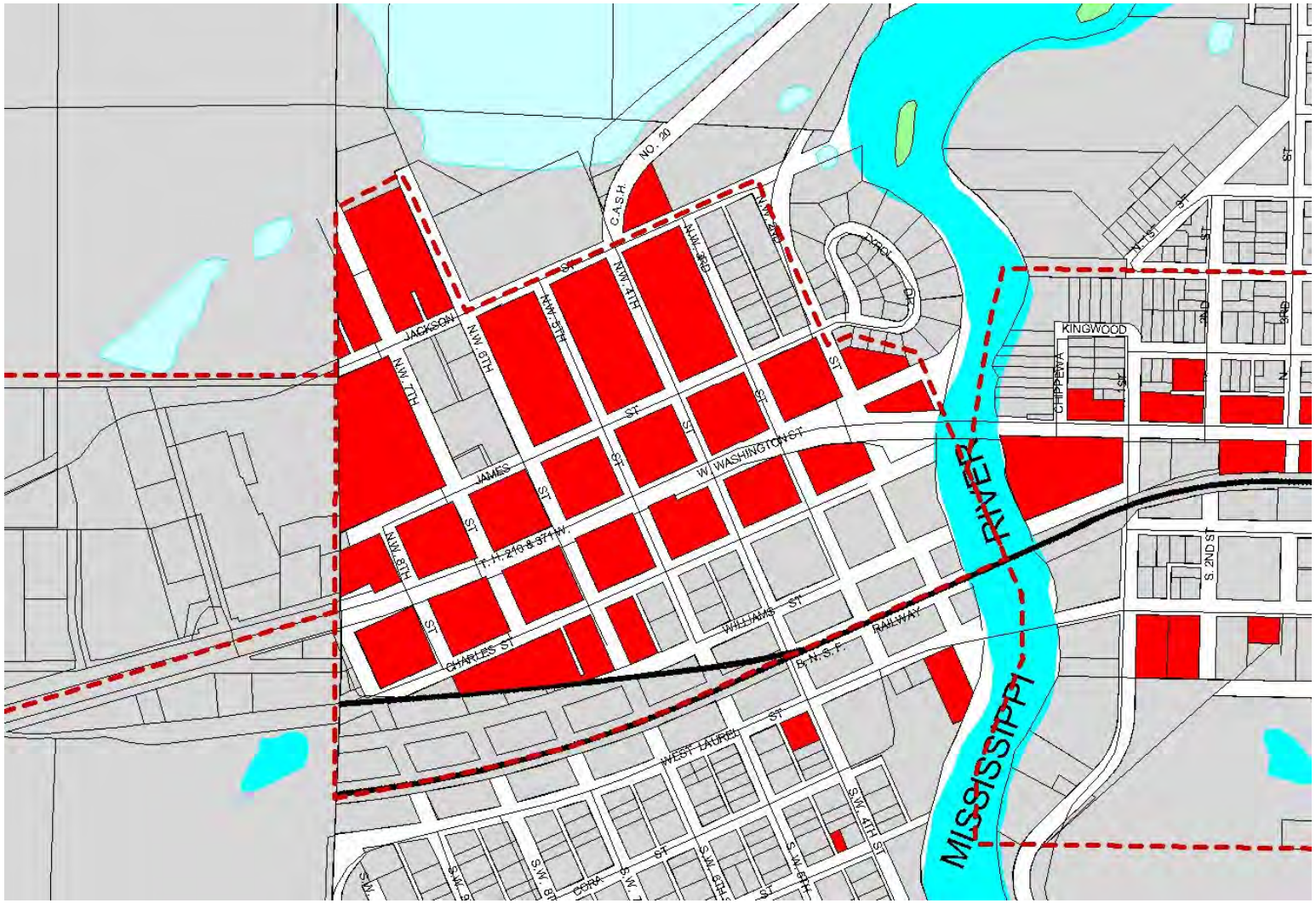
1 independent tenant

Source: DSU Research

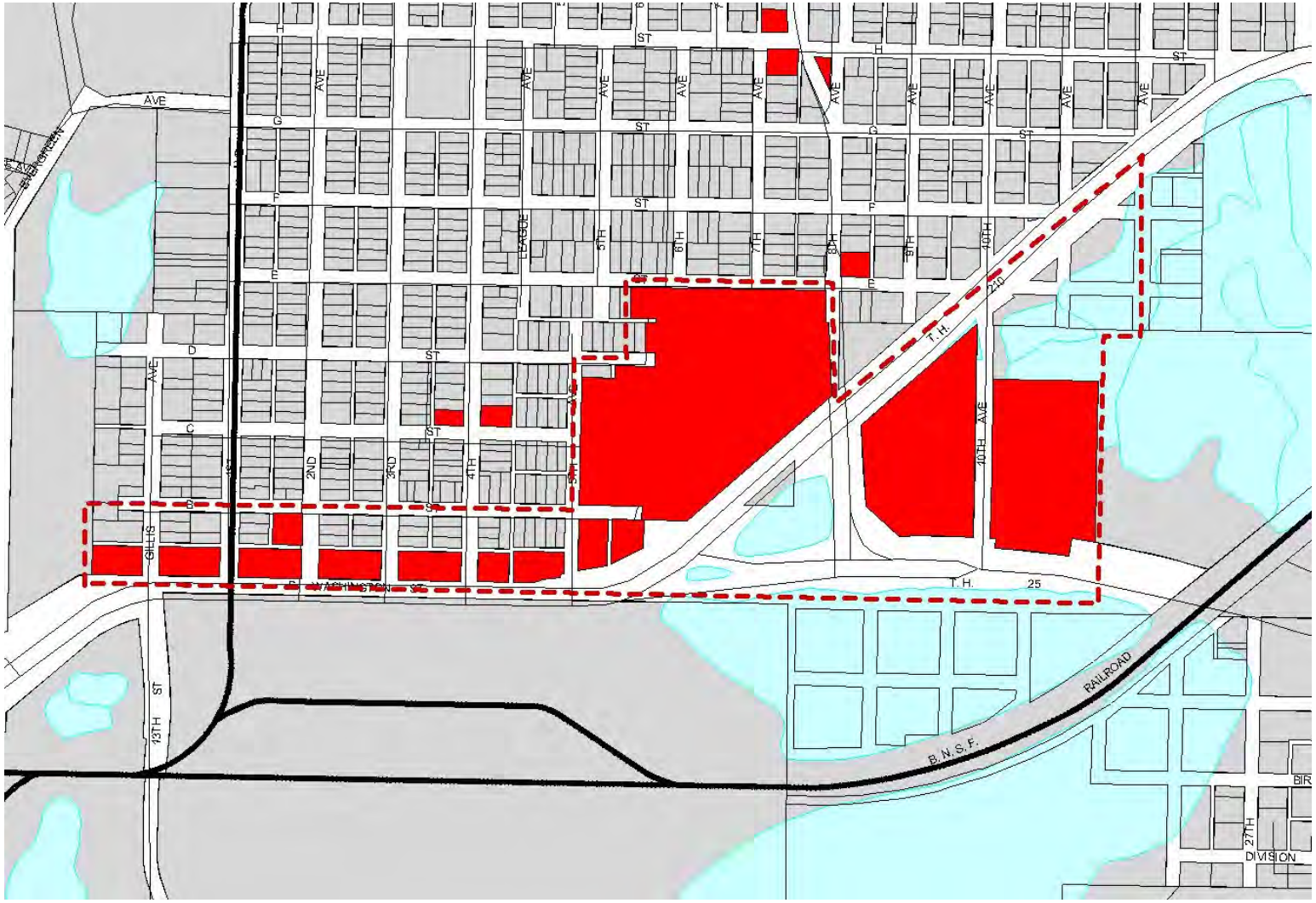
Downtown Brainerd



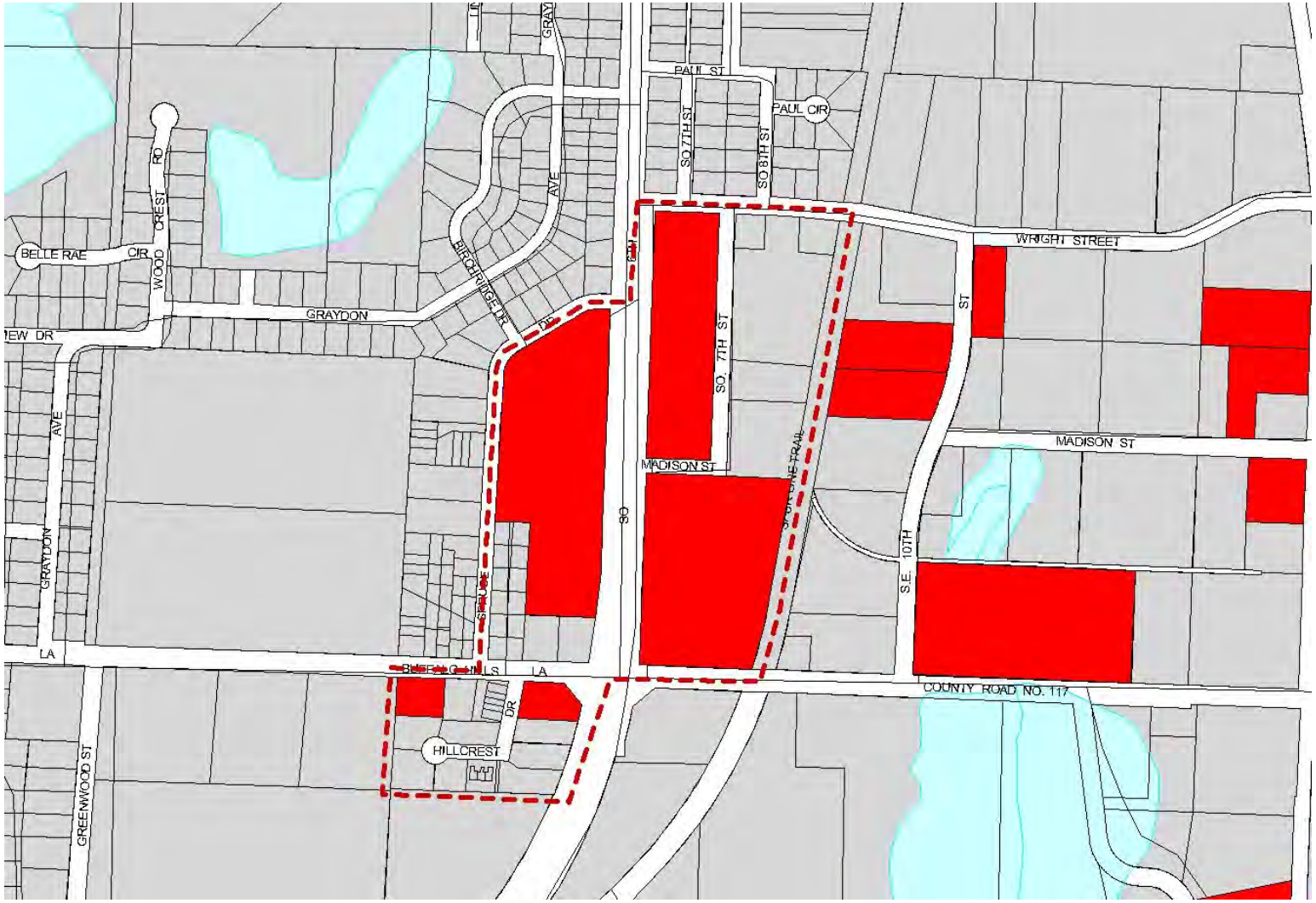
West End Brainerd



Northeast Brainerd

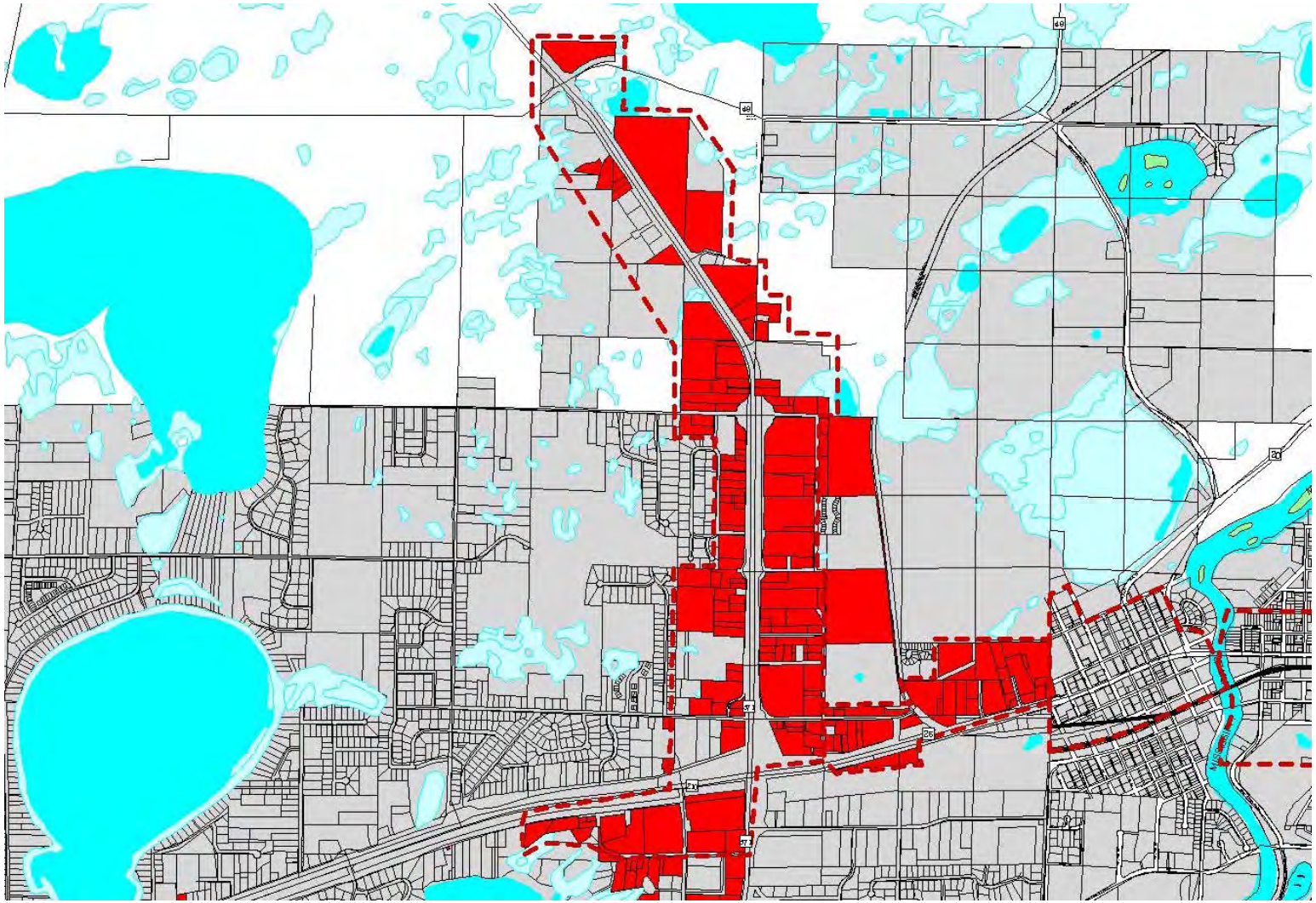


Business 371 Gateway in Brainerd



18/25 Gateway in Brainerd

Highway 371 Corridor in Baxter



Highway 210 Strip in Baxter

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Appendix C Utility Policy

APPENDIX C

CITY OF BRAINERD POLICY
CONSTRUCTION OF MUNICIPAL UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Properties Abutting Municipal Utilities and Within the City

The City of Brainerd will, from time to time, construct municipal utility improvements past properties within the City limits that currently have on-site utility systems. Pursuant to City Code, developed properties within the City that abut a public sewer must connect to the sewer system within one (1) year of availability unless the property owner can show proof that the existing private septic system satisfactorily passes a Certificate of Compliance Inspection as set forth in Minnesota Rule Chapter 7080. If the property owner can show proof that the system satisfactorily passes a Certificate of Compliance Inspection, connection will not be required. Said inspections are required every three (3) years. In the event the existing private system is, at the time of initial or subsequent inspection a failing system, or becomes an imminent threat to the public health or safety as defined by Minnesota Rule 7080, the Brainerd Public Utilities Commission, pursuant to City Code Section 700.05, Subd 5., shall serve upon such owner or occupant ten days' notice in writing specifying the time when such municipal sewer connection or connections must be made and completed. No repairs or improvements may be made to existing wells and/or individual septic systems on property having access to municipal utility systems.

Prior to the construction of such utility improvements, the City must conduct a public hearing so that the affected property owners have an opportunity to speak regarding the proposed project. The hearing, notices and procedures shall conform to the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429. Subsequent to the public hearing, the Council may authorize the construction of the project and levy an assessment against the property as provided by Statute. Assessments levied against a property that has a conforming on-site system may, at the request of the property owner, be deferred by the City Council. Such deferral shall only be available during the time period when the property is not connected to the utility systems. Interest on the assessment will accrue during the deferral. At such time as the assessment is activated, the term of the assessment will coincide with the remaining years of the original assessment. (ie. If the original term of assessment is 10 years and the property is connected in two years, the assessment term is 8 years.) Note that Sewer and Water Availability Charges (SAC &

WAC) will be due upon connection to the utilities. Also, the City has in place a process for deferral of assessments for persons who meet certain income and asset guidelines.

Properties that abut the improvements and are later subdivided will be levied a Water and Sewer Connection Charge (WSCC) for each lot created. This charge, as established by Council Resolution and adjusted annually, represents the average costs of constructing such utility improvements and is payable either immediately upon connection to the system or may be assessed against the property. At such time as the property is assessed the WSCC, the term of the assessment will coincide with the remaining years of the original assessment. (ie. If the original term of assessment is 10 years and the property is connected in two years, the assessment term is 8 years.) If a property owner connects after the term of the assessment has expired, the WSCC is due upon connection.

APPENDIX C

CITY OF BRAINERD POLICY
CONSTRUCTION OF MUNICIPAL UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Properties Abutting Municipal Utilities and
Not Currently Within and/or Abutting the City

The City Council may authorize the construction of utility improvements outside its corporate boundaries. In order to pay for such costs, the Council hereby establishes a Water and Sewer Connection Charge (WSCC). This charge, as established by Council Resolution and adjusted annually, represents the average costs of constructing such utility improvements and is payable either immediately upon every connection to the system or may be assessed against the property. For a property that abuts the City limits but is not currently in the City, the property owner must initiate annexation into the City prior to the connection being made and the assessment being levied pursuant to law. The property owner must also sign a waiver of objection to the assessment in order to be assessed in this manner. At such time as the property is assessed, the term of the assessment will coincide with the remaining years of the original assessment. (ie. If the original term of assessment is 10 years and the property is connected in two years, the assessment term is 8 years.) If a property owner connects after the term of the assessment has expired, the WSCC is due upon connection. Also, the City has in place a process for deferral of assessments for persons who meet certain income and asset guidelines.

Since the City cannot assess properties outside of the City, the Water and/or Sewer Connection Charge (WSCC) is payable immediately upon every connection to the system for properties that do not abut the City and cannot annex pursuant to law. A property owner that receives municipal utilities, even though the property does not at the time of connection abut the City, must sign and record against the property an agreement that a petition for annexation of the property into the City will be submitted as soon as practicable, pursuant to the appropriate statute.

APPENDIX C

Properties not in the City but having access to municipal utility systems may continue to utilize on-site water and sewer systems provided that the existing private septic system satisfactorily passes a Certificate of Compliance Inspection as set forth in Minnesota Rule Chapter 7080. In the event the existing private system is, at the time of initial or subsequent inspection a failing system, or becomes an imminent threat to the public health or safety as defined by Minnesota Rule 7080, the Brainerd Public Utilities Commission, pursuant to City Code Section 700.05, Subd.5, shall serve upon such owner or occupant ten days' notice in writing specifying the time when such sewer connection or connections must be made and completed. No repairs or improvements may be made to existing wells and/or individual septic systems on property having access to a municipal utility system.

Note that Sewer and Water Availability Charges (SAC & WAC) will be due upon connection to the utilities.

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Appendix D Equipment Certificate

APPENDIX D

	BOND YEAR 2004	BOND YEAR 2007	BOND YEAR 2010
REPLACE '94 DUMP TRUCK/WITH TANDEM	$96,000		
REPLACE '94 DUMP TRUCK	$75,000		
REPLACE '89 PICKUP	$25,000		
REPLACE SURVEY VAN	$27,700		
REPLACE DISC MOWER	$5,100		
REPLACE TANKER #2	$175,000		
REFURBISH LADDER #1	$250,000		
RUBBER TIRE BACKHOE	$51,000		
REPLACE S&S '85 MOTORGRADER		$140,000	
REPLACE ENGINE #3		$325,000	
REPLACE '90 ELGIN SWEEPER		$100,000	
REPLACE '85 JOHN DEERE TRACTOR		$44,000	
REPLACE '94 DUMP TRUCK		$78,000	
REPLACE '97 LUMINA SEDAN (INSPECTOR)		$23,000	
REPLACE ENGINE #1			$350,000
REPLACE '97 LUMINA SEDAN (CITY HALL)			$23,000
REPLACE ENGINE #5			$350,000
REPLACE '91 LOADER			
REPLACE ENGINE #2			
REPLACE '97 DUMPTRUCK			
REPLACE '96 CAT LOADER			
REPLACE '99 SUBURBAN			
TOTAL	**$704,800**	**$710,000**	**$723,000**

City of Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Appendix E
Capital Improvement Plan

APPENDIX E

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

The purpose of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is to plan, compile, prioritize, and finance capital improvements that are responsive to the needs and demands of the public and city government, and supportive of the long and short range goals of the City of Brainerd. More specifically the CIP is being developed to further the City's commitment to improving the "quality of life" for the Citizens of Brainerd.

The development of the capital improvement program is a continual process and, consequently, should be viewed as a working document. Therefore while this document covers a 5-year planning perspective, it will be revised as needed in order to accommodate new projects, reflect changes in ongoing projects and extend the program to include future years.

The CIP provides the foundation for the future economic development of Brainerd. It can lead to increases in community wealth and the attraction of high quality jobs by sending a message to the private sector that the community is professionally managed and will support private development. It makes intuitive sense that private individuals and private-sector businesses would want to invest in communities with quality services, adequate supporting facilities and sound infrastructure, in order to protect the value of their own interests.

TRANSPORTATION: ROADS

Brainerd municipal transportation system consists primarily of roads. As of 2004, the City of Brainerd maintains approximately 85 miles of roadway miles. Projections for population and employment growth in Brainerd is an important factor when determining the future needs of our roads, because of this, it is important that Brainerd continues to plan for this expected growth so that available funds can be maximized to offset expected increases in both traffic volume and congestion.

The Brainerd Engineering Department meets continuously with various quasi-governmental agencies, governmental agencies, various municipal departments, perspective developers, and local interest groups to maintain a constant pulse on the needs for transportation. Through this collaboration with various groups, they have

improved the general mobility within the city while maintaining connectivity with the major and minor arterials.

Brainerd is coordinating with various groups to update and maintain their GIS mapping system. This will create a clearer picture for future planning and road improvement management. An updated and maintained GIS system allows for a more efficient budgeting process as there is less duplication of efforts.

The Engineering Department has identified several projects which will need to be visited over the next several years which include but not limited to:

Riverside Drive Reconstruction, Willow Street Extension, Laurel Street reconstruction, Northtown Plat, Dumbeck Estates, Stonebridge Plat, Buffalo Hills reconstruction, Wright Street Extension, Various Road Overlays, Seal Coats as needed, expansion of the Brainerd Industrial Park, and improvement as driven by development and necessity as approved by the Brainerd City Council.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING: Transportation is one of the most costly efforts a municipality undertakes. There is no set funding mechanism to cover the cost for all transportation projects. A combination of assessments, federal or state grants, municipal dollars, state aid funds, and other sources of revenue will be needed to leverage the over all cost for the projects.

UTILITIES: ELECTRIC, SEWER AND WATER

The City of Brainerd has approximately 4,500 water and sewer connections. There are approximately 7,300 electric meters serving residential homes, commercial businesses, and industrial users in Brainerd. Brainerd is proactive and continues to maintain and upgrade public facilities as needed. The current facilities, as designed can support the existing needs for the city. The City has the capacity to support additional growth and expansion without major improvements to its treatment plants or pump stations. (note: for additional reference (Chapter 4: Land Use) pg. 117 of the Brainerd Comp Plan)

Over the next several years, Brainerd will be expanding its utility extension to Northtown Plat, Dumbeck Estates Plat, Stonebridge Plat, Russell Road, Edge Wood

Evergreen Lift Station Interceptor, future expansion of the Brainerd Industrial Park and other improvements as driven by development and necessity as approved by the Brainerd City Council.

UTILITY FUNDING: The City of Brainerd will use a variety of funding mechanisms to cover the cost for construction and improvements. The funding mechanisms include Sewer Availability Charges, Water Availability Charges, special assessments, publicly bonded dollars, state and federal grants, and other various sources as approved by the Brainerd City Council.

FACILITIES: In 2003, the City of Brainerd constructed a new police station, fire station, and public works building to improve the quality of service to its residents as well as upgrade their facilities to support future growth and development. The expansion of the Brainerd Fire Department has improved the response time capabilities of the city with the construction of the new substation as well as having trained fire fighters in the area. There is no planned facility construction for the next several years, as the 2003 improvements have meet the current and projected facilities needed to provide services to the citizens of the City of Brainerd. There will be routine and regular maintenance needed to sustain the facilities as well as upgrades and improvements as approved the Brainerd City Council.

FACILITIES FUNDING: Funding for these facilities was derived from a variety of sources including budgetary transfers, Lease Purchase Bonds, and General Obligation Bonds. The routine maintenance of the facilities will be covered by annual budgets as well as other sources as deemed appropriate by the Brainerd City Council.