



PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting will be held virtually through Zoom

December 16, 2020 at 7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Adopt Agenda
4. Approve Minutes November 18, 2020
5. Public Comment
6. Regular Business Items
 - a. Concept Plan – Senior Housing, Anderson Companies
7. Discussion by Planning Commissioners
8. Adjournment

Website Link to Agenda and Packets: <https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

There may be a quorum of St. Francis Council Members present at this meeting.

Zoom meeting Instructions:

Topic: Planning Commission - December 16, 2020

Time: Dec 16, 2020 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83034715303?pwd=QmlLaFISQVdYY1lyYS9nR1M2dGZCQT09>

Meeting ID: 830 3471 5303

Passcode: MYQd52

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,83034715303#,,,,,0#,,608718# US (New York)

+13017158592,,83034715303#,,,,,0#,,608718# US (Washington D.C)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

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Meeting ID: 830 3471 5303

Passcode: 608718

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JOINT MEETING WITH CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 18, 2020**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairman Zutz, virtually through Zoom
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Todd Gardner, Greg Zutz, Colleen Sievert, Liz Fairbanks and William Murray, and Joe Kollodge. Absent: Tara Kelly

Others in attendance: Kate Thunstrom- Community Development Director, Kevin Robinson, Sara Udvig, Steve Feldman, Joe Muehlbauer, Rob Bauer - City Council, Beth Richmond – City Planner

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Fairbanks, second by Gardner to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Sievert, second by Fairbanks to approve the October 28, 2020 Special Meeting minutes. Motion carried 6-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Regular Business Items:**
 - a. Development Code Rewrite Update.
 - Richmond provided an overview of the meeting and what is needed.
 - Chapter 10 is moving from 93 sections to 9 divisions. Consolidation of R1 and R2 to a new R1 and conversion of A3 to Urban Reserve. Updates will be recognized on an updated zoning map which is roughly a month behind this process.
 - Created a use table, used to consolidate and organize the districts and their uses, removing outdated and adding new permitted uses and the permitted with standards which is new to the city. This will create a higher level of efficiency in the city code. The chart being created will be available as a tool but not incorporated within the actual code so it is not a conflict if code changes.
 - Addressed and adjusted dimensions, listed by use, removed “buildable acres” requirements and larger setbacks adjacent to residential districts
 - Code procedural changes, development standards
 - Stormwater, in Sept the URRWD updated setbacks which are less than current code. Does PC wish to meet or exceed these standards? PC chose to leave with higher expectation to protect our wetlands as they are important. Group discussed the priority based on soil, the impact to overall water quality leading to the Rum River. PC wishes to keep a buffer setback that protects and is more restrictive.
 - The Group reviewed the roles between the PC and Council as PC is our details group which Council guides the city to where it needs to go.

- Timeline: Full draft proposed by December 1st to group. Deadline of December 9th for comments from both the PC and CC. Public Hearing will take place at the December 16th PC meeting and Council will complete the first reading in January. That is the tentative goal.
- Zoning Map update is running one month behind Code. Will get codes in place, inform property owners of changes. Map currently used is from 2010, is outdated and missing parcels, very difficult to use. Working towards an updated map with a digital component.
- Public and Parks do not and will not have their own zoning districts and their uses will be incorporated into the zoning district.
- Residential changes include R1 and R2 combination. RR will not longer be expanded but kept to identify existing properties. There is nothing that is a significant impact to the properties affected as both districts held close similarities.

General discussion was had in regards to which document superseded the other between the Comp Plan and the redevelopment plan. That the St. Francis Forward plan is our details but the Comp Plan guides the use.

General discussion was had around the city park system and if the system is expanded does it have to be spelled out in the Comp Plan or is there room in Code. If a park was created in an area not guided the City can amend the Comp Plan for parks and open space. Otherwise does qualify in code. Met Council would review.

General comments included:

- City is growing, it will be nice to take the confusion out of some of the codes that exist.
- Senior housing property will need an amendment for the comp plan. Met Council has been part of the discussion and overall should not impact the project negatively. Since the City is on its own system has some flexibility.
- County trail under bridge on Bridge Street, in County park plan, working on funding.

Please get any final comment to either Kate or Beth by December 9th.

7. Planning Commission Discussion –

- 8. Adjournment:** Motion by Fairbanks, second by Murray to adjourn. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

<https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

Signed by: Kate Thunstrom

DATE APPROVED:

PLANNING REPORT

TO: City of St. Francis Planning Commission
FROM: Beth Richmond, Consulting Planner
DATE: December 9, 2020
SUBJECT: Concept Plan
APPLICANT: Anderson Companies, LLC (Greg Anderson)
LOCATION: Block 1 Lot 1 East Village Addition (property east of the Rum River and south of Bridge St.)
MEETING DATE: December 16, 2020
COMP PLAN: Commercial
ZONING: B-2, General Commercial; C, Conservancy; R-2, Single Family Residential

OVERVIEW

Anderson Companies, LLC has submitted a plan to solicit input on a proposed concept for the development of a 125-unit senior residential development located on vacant land south of Bridge Street and east of the Rum River. This land is currently owned by the City. The concept provides a range of housing types, from independent living to assisted living and memory care. The proposed 4-story building would have access onto Bridge Street and would overlook the Rum River.

Anticipated land use actions for this project include a Comprehensive Plan amendment, rezoning, variance(s), and preliminary and final plats. Input is being sought from the Planning Commission and the City Council on the proposed concept prior to the preparation of application materials.

SITE INFORMATION

The City recently platted this site from several existing lots into a single, larger lot more suitable for development. It was platted as the East Village Addition, and at that time, a 40-foot wide strip of land along Bridge Street was dedicated as right-of-way (ROW) to Anoka County. The applicant is proposing to utilize that land, along with a small piece of land from the site's eastern neighbor (Casey's), to create a development site just under 4 acres in size. The property is currently vacant and wooded. An existing curb cut onto Bridge Street and gravel driveway are located on the site. Casey's General Store is located to the east of the property and a residential development exists to the south.

A county trail runs along the western side of the property. This trail currently lies within a 66-foot wide drainage and utility easement along the property's western lot line. A trail easement for the portion of the trail within the project site's boundaries has been created and filed with the County.

As part of this development, the applicant is requesting an administrative subdivision to add the land from Casey's to the property. An easement vacation for the 66-foot drainage and utility easement is also requested. Staff is examining this easement to determine whether it could be vacated.

Staff's understanding is that this property is located outside of the Rum River Management district. At this time, Staff is working to confirm this. Maximum building height and impervious surface limits would likely be impacted if the property is within the Rum River district.



ANALYSIS

The following documents were used to evaluate the senior housing concept:

- 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- St. Francis Forward plan
- Design Guidelines
- East Shop Site renderings
- Zoning Code

Comprehensive Plan

This land is currently guided for commercial use by the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed development would require a Comprehensive Plan amendment to reguide the area to High Density Residential use. High Density Residential use allows residential development with densities between 12 and 60 units per acre, which the proposed development meets. Land to the east and west of the parcel along Bridge Street is guided for commercial use.

Zoning/Lot Dimensions/Setbacks

The property is currently located within several zoning districts, including the B-2 General Commercial, C Conservancy, and R-2 Single-Family Residential zoning districts. There are multiple zoning designations on one parcel as a result of the plat earlier this year which combined several parcels into one.

The developer is considering rezoning the property to the R-4 High Density Residential district or to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) which would be based off of the requirements of the R-4 district.

The PUD tool is used to allow for flexibility in developments in exchange for high-quality, creative design, the preservation of unique or high quality natural features, the creation of a variety of life-cycle housing options, or other, similar public benefits such as the preferred design guidelines created for the Bridge Street corridor. In this case, the City may be willing to consider the development of a PUD in this area, including some flexibility from zoning code requirements, in exchange for the creation of a vibrant, active space along Bridge Street and additional housing options for St. Francis residents who wish to age in place.

The zoning code rewrite will affect this property. If the proposed development wished to move forward with the development following the zoning code rewrite's completion, the best fit for this property would be the new R-3 zoning district, which allows for high density residential uses. The table below shows the proposed and required dimensional standards for the property. The highlighted sections are areas where the proposed concept does not meet the zoning requirements. These would need to be addressed through a variance or PUD rezoning process.

Based on the timeframe communicated to Staff for this project, as well as the zoning code update, Staff recommends that the applicant pursue a rezoning to PUD. This would allow the project to move forward in a timely manner, while providing the needed flexibility without requiring variances. Staff anticipates that this PUD would resemble the future R-3 zoning district closely.

	Concept	Existing R-4	Proposed R-3
Minimum Lot Area	173,800 sq. ft. (1,390 sq. ft. per unit)	2,000 sq. ft. per unit	2,000 sq. ft. per unit
Lot Width	330 ft.	100 ft.	100 ft.
Front Setback	Roughly 30 ft.	60 ft. buildings 30 ft. parking	30 ft.
Side Setback	25 ft.	25 ft.	10 ft. living space 5 ft. garage
Setback from R-1 and R-2 Districts	50 ft.	50 ft.	50 ft.
Maximum Height	4 stories/45 ft.	3 stories or 40 ft.	4 stories or 50 ft.
Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage	31.3%	50%	50 %

The proposed lot area for 125 units in the high density residential district is less than what is required by Code. Instead of an area of 2,000 sq. ft. per dwelling unit required by Code, the applicant is proposing 1,390 sq. ft. per dwelling unit. This is a reasonable reduction, considering that the density proposed is within the Comprehensive Plan's density range for high density residential housing, and that this

development is intended for seniors with varying levels of independence. It is likely that there will be residents, particularly in the memory care units, who will not require as much space.

The proposed unit sizes for the senior residential units meet the requirements listed in Code:

Unit Type	Proposed	Required
Efficiency	442 sq. ft.	440 sq. ft.
1-Bedroom	663 sq. ft. and 721 sq. ft.	520 sq. ft.
2-Bedroom	1,215 sq. ft.	600 sq. ft.
Number of Efficiency Apartments	24 units or 19%	No more than 30% of total development

The building is proposed to be 4 stories in height. The current code allows a height of three stories, while the proposed code will allow 4-story buildings in high density residential districts. Staff discussed the proposed concept with the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief was comfortable with the proposed height of the building.

High density residential developments are required to be setback 50 feet from all R-1 and R-2 zoning districts. The concept adheres to this setback for the residential properties to the south. However, the park parcel to the west is currently zoned R-2, and so a 50 foot setback is required on the western side of the property as well. There are no homes on the property to the west, and the proposed structure would still be located more than 100 feet from the Rum River, so Staff is supportive of the conceptual layout. The zoning code update is planned to rezone the park parcel to the west to B-1, therefore a 50 – foot setback would not be needed if this concept were to be submitted following the zoning code update.

In the existing R-4 district, a 60-foot front yard setback is required for buildings and a 30-foot front yard setback is required for parking areas. The proposed concept shows the building roughly 30 feet from the right-of-way, meaning that the applicant would be requesting some flexibility from the existing front setback requirement. The 30-foot setback matches the front yard setback that will be required in the future R-3 district. However, in the design guidelines for Bridge Street, an important feature of development was to bring the buildings closer to the street. The preferred guideline for multi-family developments was to allow building extensions such as porches or balconies to reach up to the ROW line with the main building located no further from the ROW than 10 feet. Staff would be supportive of discussing how the applicant might reduce the front setback further, in line with the design guidelines, as a way to activate the streetfront along Bridge Street.

Streets

The concept proposes an access onto Bridge Street. Bridge Street is designated as a minor arterial roadway in the Comprehensive Plan, meaning that this is a street where access points are intended to be minimized in order to allow traffic to flow smoothly. A center turn lane exists in this area of Bridge Street that could serve the development. As Bridge Street is a County road, review and approval of the project by the Anoka County Highway Department will be needed.

Pedestrian and trail access along the south side of Bridge Street and connecting to the existing County trail along the Rum River should also be considered as part of this project.

The driveway shown in the concept provides a turnaround for emergency vehicles and drop-off opportunities, which is supported by Staff. During the Fire Chief's review, he noted that a fire access lane would likely be required in order to reach the back side of the proposed building because of the distance of the building from Bridge Street. Reconfiguring the building to bring it closer to Bridge Street may change the need for or extent of this requirement.

Parking

The concept plan proposed 127 total parking spaces, with 89 underground stalls and 38 above-ground stalls. As shown in the table below, this meets the amount of parking required by Code. The applicant will be required to show proof of parking for the remaining half of the independent living units as part of future applications.

Unit Type	Parking Requirement	Spaces Required
Independent Living	1 space per unit (can reduce to 0.5 space with proof of parking)	38
Assisted Living	0.5 spaces per unit	13
Memory Care	1 space per 6 beds, plus 1 space per employee on maximum work shift.	7
Guest parking	0.5 space per apartment unit	63
Total Spaces	Total spaces proposed: 127	121

Site Design

Bridge St Design Guidelines

This development is proposed to front along Bridge Street. Therefore, the Bridge Street Design Guidelines were used to evaluate the project. The intent of these guidelines is to allow for development that is "able to meet the desired form and character of the Comprehensive Plan and downtown plan, even if the use varies."

In conversation with staff and the City Council, the senior housing use has been determined to be generally acceptable on site along Bridge Street. However, the careful design of that use is important to ensure that the development will further the active, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere that the City is working to cultivate along Bridge Street. Without images of what the building will look like from Bridge Street, staff is somewhat limited in their review, but overall, Staff suggests that the applicant review the City's design guidelines for Bridge Street and work to incorporate them into their building and site design. Staff had the following preliminary comments after reviewing the concept against the Bridge Street Design Guidelines:

- **Entry:** The guidelines dictate that a primary entrance to a site along Bridge Street should be oriented to the street. The concept pulls the building back off of Bridge Street, with the official

entrance to the building close to the south end of the site. The layout of the building and entryway does not encourage activity along Bridge Street.

- **Parking:** Staff is supportive of the proposed underground parking. Any surface parking should not dominate frontage on Bridge Street.
- **Rooftop:** Active rooftops are encouraged along Bridge Street. Staff suggests that the applicant consider creating a usable space or deck on the rooftop for residents.
- **Public Art/Public Plaza:** The building layout in the concept leaves a large amount of land near Bridge Street as open space. There may be an opportunity for a public plaza or public art to be included on the site near Bridge Street. The patio near the Rum River is a great amenity for residents, but again, what kinds of public amenities could be incorporated into this design to encourage an active, pedestrian-friendly Bridge Street frontage?
- **Stormwater:** A proposed stormwater pond is shown in the northeast area of the site. Stormwater management in the Bridge Street area should incorporate best management practices (BMPs) and is welcome to address stormwater in an innovative manner. Educational, landscape, and/or artistic elements are encouraged as part of stormwater treatments within this area of the City.

The guidelines themselves contain numerous other topics, but the above elements were most applicable to the senior housing concept. Staff will be sending the design guidelines and the East Shop Site renderings to the applicant for their reference. There is a worksheet included within the design guidelines document that the applicant should use to guide the design of the site and building. That worksheet should be submitted as part of further applications.

Open Space

31 percent of the site is planned to be impervious surface. A majority of the remaining land is proposed to be open green space. Staff suggests that the applicant consider strategies to activate the space, perhaps for public spaces, pedestrian connections, or outdoor amenities for residents. Additional details regarding the open space areas of the site should be shown on the landscape plan submitted in future phases of the project.

Pedestrian Connections

An existing County trail runs along the west side of this development. An easement is proposed to be created for the trail. No connections are shown from the trail to the development. Staff encourages the developer to work with the County on the possibility of providing access to that trail from the site. As part of the preliminary plan review process, Staff will reach out to the County Parks department for comments on the plan.

One of the City's goals for the Bridge Street corridor is to transform the corridor into a more pedestrian-friendly place. An existing sidewalk runs along the north side of Bridge Street. However, residents of the proposed development would not be able to access it without crossing Bridge Street in an area without a crosswalk, stoplights, or other improvements. Staff suggests the applicant consider the pedestrian connections that can be made within the site as well as connections to the network of sidewalks and trails, both future and existing, outside of the property boundaries.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission is requested to provide feedback to the applicant on the proposed concept. Comments shared are not binding to the City nor do they constitute official assurances or representations of the City on future recommendations or approvals. The City Council will also review the concept and provide feedback.

ATTACHMENTS

- Concept Plan
- Bridge Street Design Guidelines (pgs. 20-41)

PROJECT TEAM

DEVELOPMENT

Anderson Companies
3340 Republic Avenue, Suite 50
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

ARCHITECT

Kaas Wilson Architects
1301 American Blvd E, Suite 100
Bloomington, MN 55425
(612) 879-6000

CIVIL ENGINEER

Carlson McCain

SITE METRICS

PARCEL ID ____

ADDRESS XXXX Bridge St. NW

PARCEL AREA 173,800 SQ.FT. (3.99 ACRES)

ZONING R4 (possibly PUD)

APPLICATIONS rezone
replat
easement vacation

PLANNING METRICS

Zoning

Current: B1, R2
Proposed: R4 (possibly PUD)

Height

Allowed: 3 Stories / 40 Feet (whichever is less)
Proposed: 4 Stories / 45 +/- Feet

Lot Area

Min. lot size per DU: 2,000 s.f. per unit (86.9 units allowed)
Proposed: 125 units

Min. lot area: 15,000 s.f.
Lot size: 173,800 s.f.

Min. lot width: 100'

Lot Coverage

Allowed: 50 % Impervious Coverage
Proposed: 31.3 % Impervious Coverage
(173,800 - (31,783 + 22,481)) = 119,536
Proposed Green Space: 68.7 % Impervious Coverage

Setbacks

Allowed: 60' Front (30' parking) / 50' Rear / 25' Side
Proposed: 60' * Front / 50' + Rear / 25' + Side
*30' to delineated edge of wetlands

Vehicle Parking

Required: AL = .5 stalls/unit
IL = 1 stall/unit (can go down to .5 stall/unit
with proof of parking shown to get to 1:1)
MC = 1 stall/6 units + 1 stall per employee on
max shift

IL/AL = 46 stalls (at .5 per unit)
MC parking requirement: 4 + 3 = 7 stalls
TOTAL REQUIRED STALLS = 52 stalls

Proposed: 127 stalls (parking requirement exceeded even if
1:1 parking were to be provided for all IL/AL units)



1 SITE AERIAL - 1" = 500'
1 : 6000



REZONING: R4 or PUD

CURRENT VARIANCES TO BE CONSIDERED:

- 1) Front yard setback relief.
- 2) Height.
- 3) Lot size per dwelling unit.

PLATTING:

- 1) Replat to include a portion of Casey's property.
- 2) Easement vacation (66' at western side of site, possibly others).
- 3) Establishment of trail easement at SW portion of site.

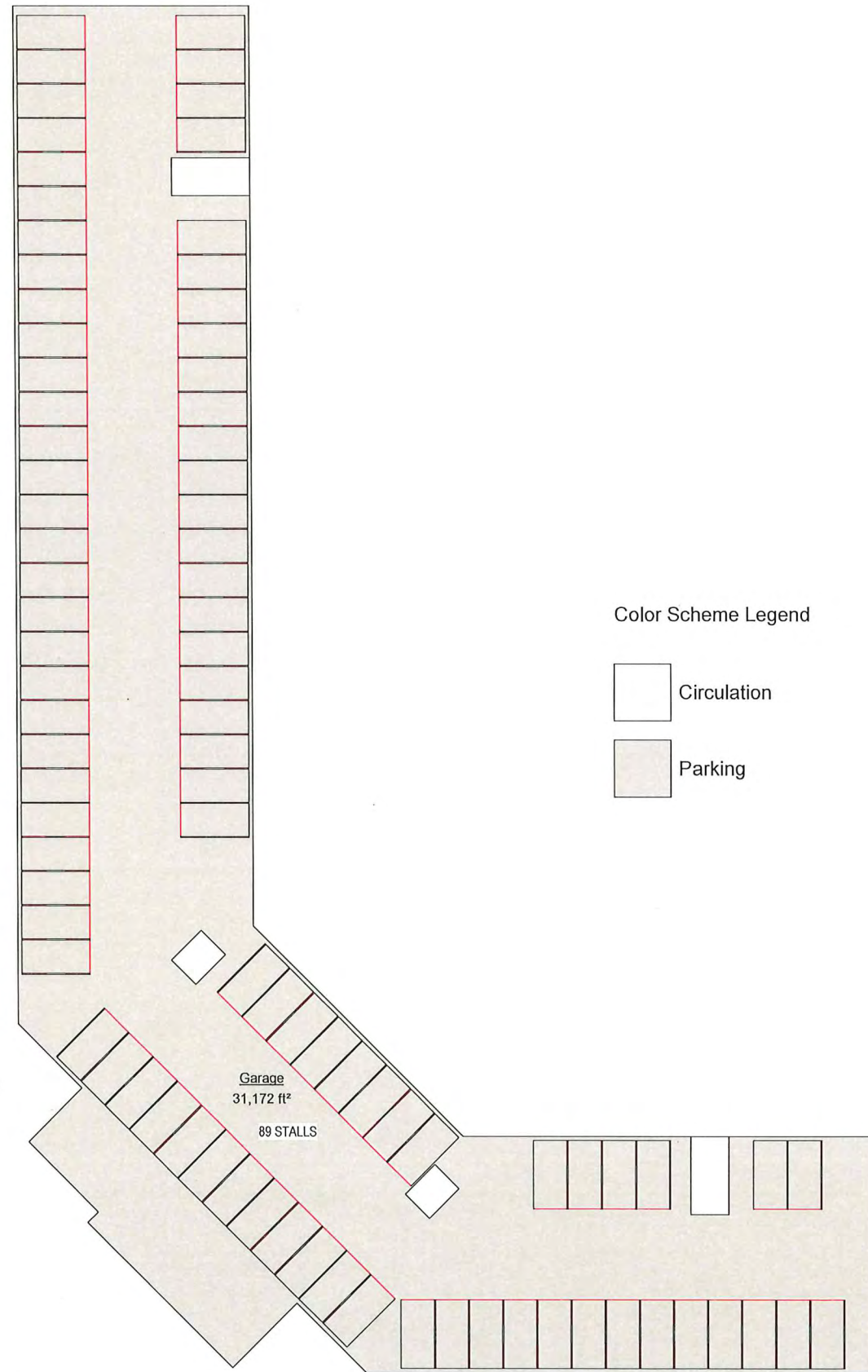
① SD Site Plan
1" = 60'-0"

GROSS AREA - TOTAL	
Level	Area
Level 4	29,967 ft²
Level 3	29,967 ft²
Level 2	30,687 ft²
Level 1	31,783 ft²
Level -1	31,783 ft²
Not Placed	0 ft²
Grand total	154,185 ft²

PARKING		
Level	Type	Count
Level -1		89
Level 1		38
		127

UNIT MIX - GROSS AREA

Name	Count	Unit Gross Area	Total Area	%
		Main Floor		
1 BR				
Unit 1-0	68	663 ft²	45,067 ft²	54%
Unit 1-1	6	721 ft²	4,327 ft²	5%
	74		49,394 ft²	59%
1 BR + Den				
Unit 2-0	13	828 ft²	10,770 ft²	10%
	13		10,770 ft²	10%
2 BR (Large)				
Unit 3-0	14	1,215 ft²	17,008 ft²	11%
	14		17,008 ft²	11%
MC Studio				
Unit MC 0-0	24	442 ft²	10,604 ft²	19%
	24		10,604 ft²	19%
Grand total	125		87,775 ft²	100%



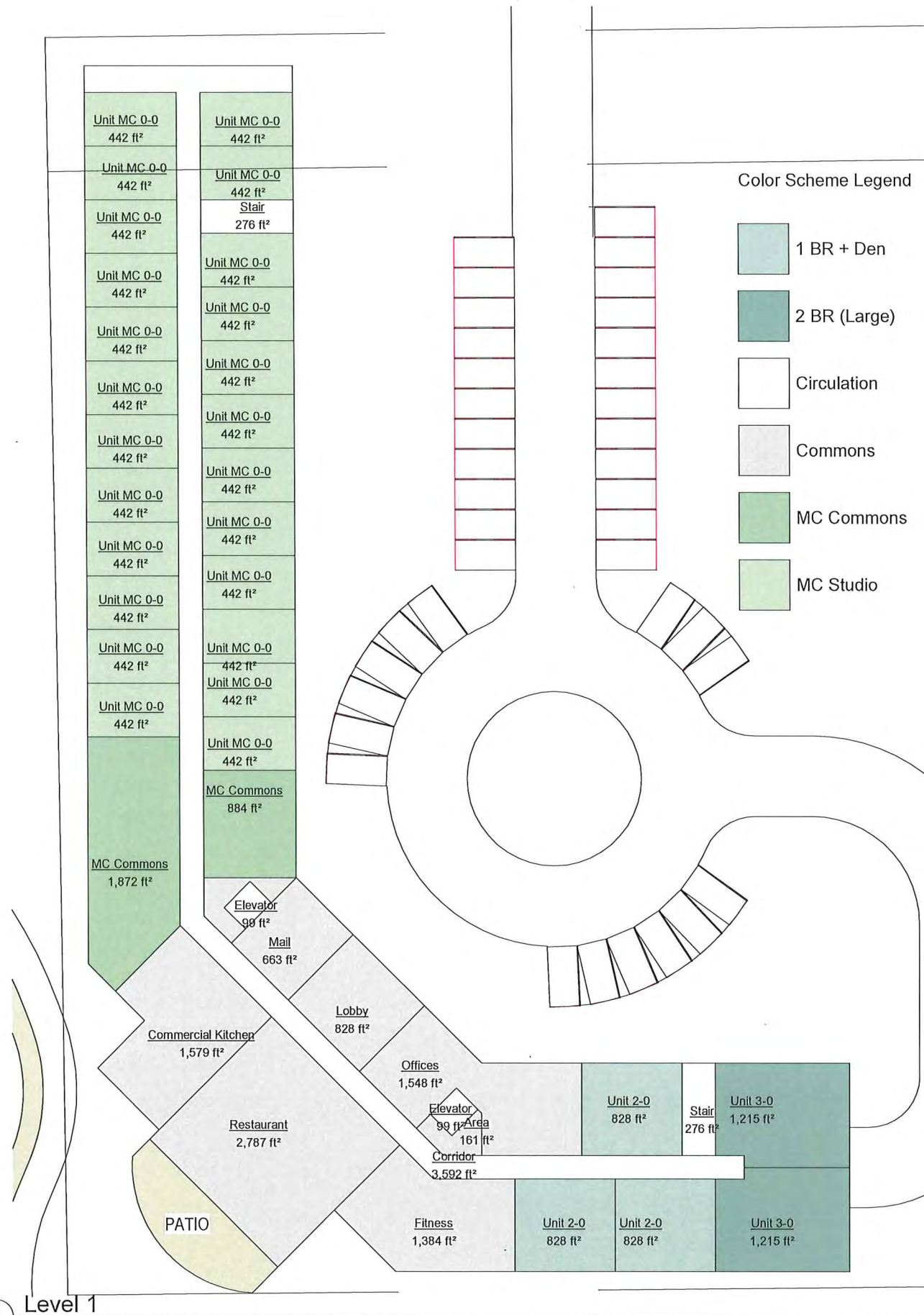
① Level -1
1" = 40'-0"

KW
kaas wilson architects

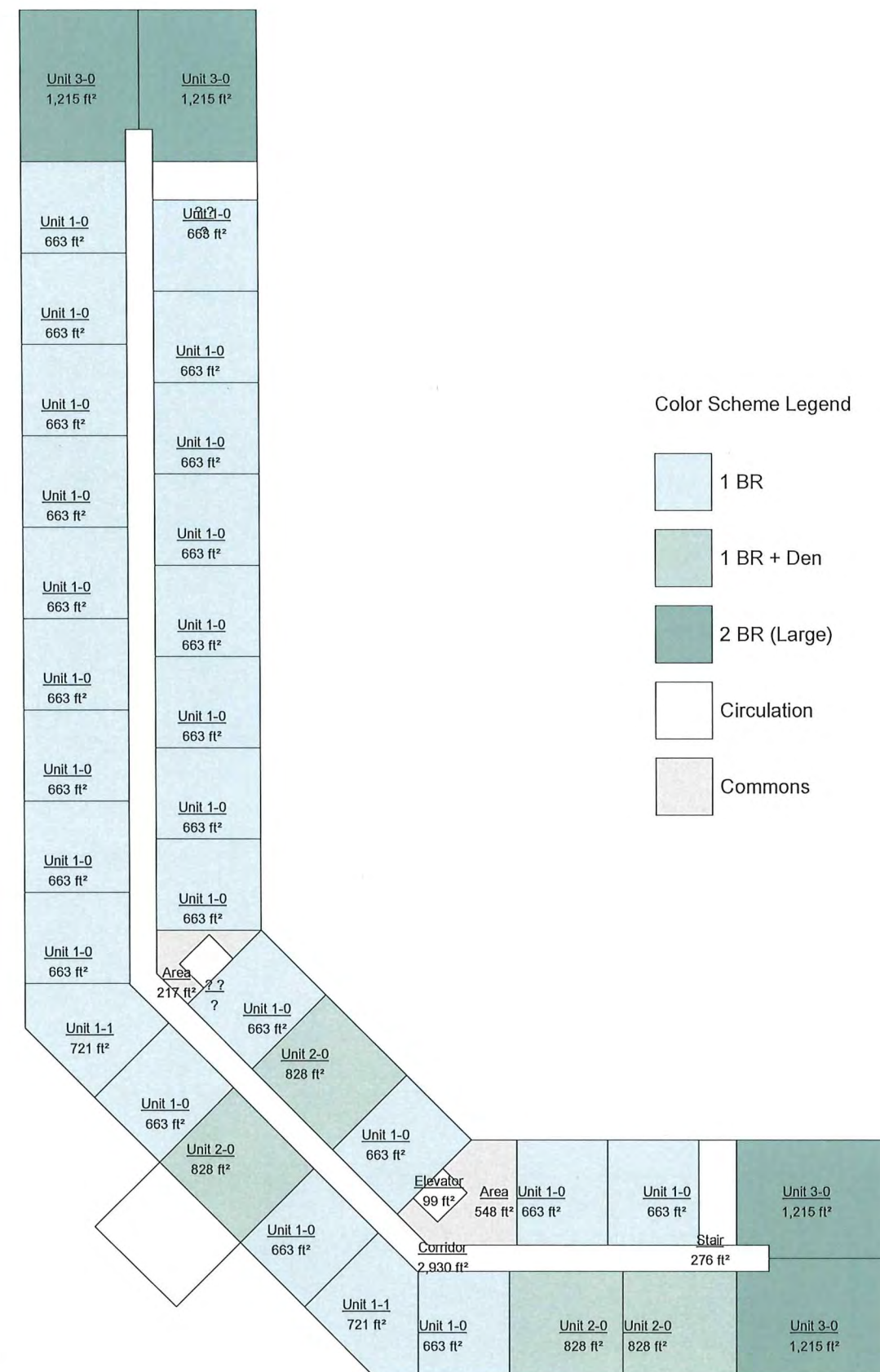
GARAGE LEVEL

3.0

ST. FRANCIS SENIOR LIVING



1 Level 1
1" = 40'-0"



Color Scheme Legend

- 1 BR
- 1 BR + Den
- 2 BR (Large)
- Circulation
- Commons

① Level 3
1" = 40'-0"



Private Development

The Private Development chapter of the Design Guidelines addresses how private development should occur on owned parcels. First and foremost, the City's zoning code dictates what is permitted.

Private Development

1 What Can Be Built?

- Land Uses

2 Where does the building go on the site?

- Setbacks

3 How does the building function on the site?

- Building Orientation/Entries
- Screening and Fencing
- Rooftops

4 How does the site function?

- Parking orientation
- Access
- Water

5 What does the building look like?

- Style vs. Character
- Articulation
- Massing and Stepping
- Facade Details
- Windows
- Awnings
- Building Materials

6 What does the rest of the site look like?

- Parking orientation
- Vegetation/Landscaping
- Sidewalk/Cafe Seating
- Sidewalk Sales/Displays
- Semi-Public Space
- Public Art

Terminology in this chapter

In each section, there are actions that are classified as "Preferred," "Acceptable," and "Not Appropriate." Preferred actions go above the baseline "as of right" requirements for development. When policy changes (variances, comprehensive plan amendments) or incentive packages (TIF, Tax Abatement, etc.) are requested, the City may require "Preferred" actions.

1 What Can Be Built?

Land Uses

Through the St. Francis Forward Redevelopment Plan and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the City has identified planned land uses for each of the parcels along the Bridge Street Corridor. The expectation is that development will follow the guidance of the Comprehensive Plan. This guidance relates to general categories such as commercial, civic/institutional, and residential at different densities.

In some cases, a project that is different than what has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan may be proposed. When this occurs it will be evaluated by City Staff and elected officials to see how it furthers the City's broader goals. If the project is given the go-ahead, it will require a zoning change and a land use amendment.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Land Uses	As identified in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan	Able to meet the desired form and character of the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan, even if use varies. Will require zoning changes and a Comprehensive Plan Amendment.	Varying from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and not approved for change/amendment



2 Where does the building go on the site?

Setbacks

Setbacks are the distance a building is set back from the edge of the parcel line. In a commercial setting, the elimination of setbacks or a "build to line" can contribute to a more contiguous, active feeling street. In the Rum River West downtown area, the character of Bridge Street especially benefits from a more consistent build to line. This is the case for commercial and residential uses.

In the Rum River East and Transition zones, single family neighborhood residential uses may benefit from larger setbacks as the space creates more of a buffer from the roadway, which in this area focuses more on movement of vehicles. Multi-family housing and commercial uses should still orient themselves to Bridge street with a smaller setback or no setback.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Commercial / Civic Building Setback	Built to the edge of the Right-of-Way	Built to within 5' of the Right-of-Way. Setback of main massing may vary with use of use foundation plantings, Semi-Public space (plaza, courtyard, etc.), other architectural elements that bring the building to the Right-of-Way edge.	Structure's front is set back more than 5' from the right of way or oriented to the rear of the lot Parking is located between the building and street
Multi-Family Residential Building Setback	Building extensions (Porches, stoops, etc) reach the right of way line. Main building may be set back within 10' of Right-of-Way with yard, porch or foundation plantings. Elevate first floor slightly above ground level.	Built to within 10' of the Right-of-Way. Use foundation plantings.	Structure's front is set back from the right of way further than 10' or oriented to the rear of the lot. Parking is located between the building and street



3 How does the building function on the site?



Entries into the Building

Primary entries shall be located with an orientation to Bridge Street. Entries that also orient to parking shall be located on a corner of the building that also fronts Bridge Street (see parking orientation on p. 25). Secondary entries that may reduce the efficacy of the primary entry are discouraged.

In mixed use buildings, separate entries should be provided for distinct uses (i.e. commercial and residential).

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Entries	Primary entrance focused on Bridge Street	Primary entrance with orientation to Bridge Street and parking lot	Secondary or no entrance on Bridge Street



Screening and Fencing

Screening can help reduce the visual impact of "back-of-house" elements such as loading docks and trash. Depending on the amount of space, this can be done with vegetation or opaque fencing. It may also be appropriate to incorporate some of these elements into the building design with internal rooms.

Fencing in "front yards" should be utilized to help continue a vertical edge between public and private space that has already been set by buildings. An example of this might be to separate the sidewalk from side loaded parking. Fencing should not be used to create a storage area along Bridge Street.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Screening	Trash/Loading internal to building	Trash/Loading screened with a full enclosure at rear of building	Trash/Loading unscreened and/or on public frontage edge
Front Fence Materials	Wood or decorative metal At least 33% transparent <4' tall	As per zoning code	Barbed wire, temporary fencing, snow fencing



Rooftops

Active use rooftop are encouraged when appropriate for commercial and multi-family uses. Rooftops without an active use should be designed to screen elements such as mechanicals and stair towers that do not contribute to the character of the district. Screening colors should be neutral and not draw attention to the screen structure

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Rooftops	Active Use	Screening of mechanicals, stair towers, elevators, etc.	No screening of mechanicals, stair towers, elevators, etc.

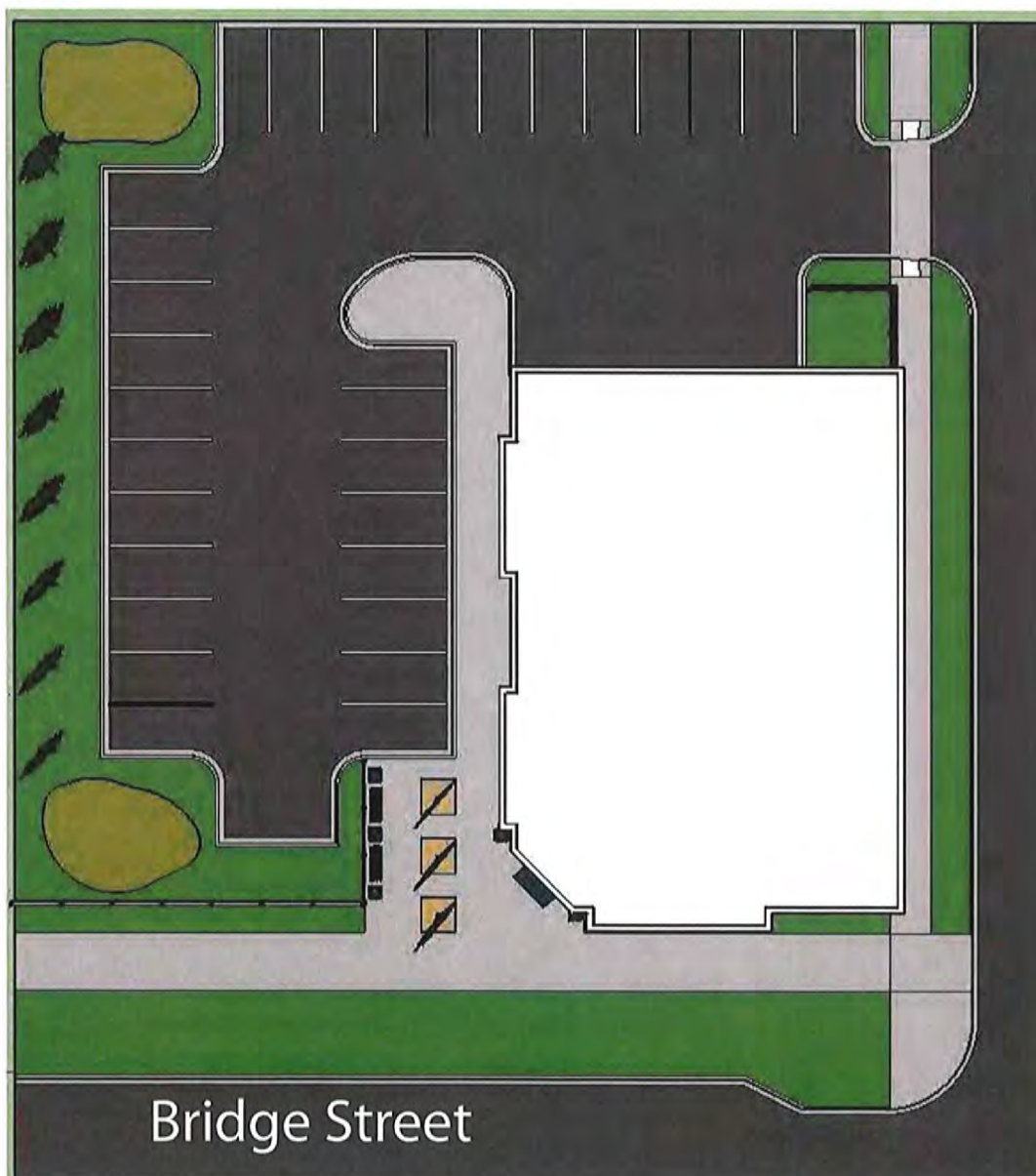


4 How does the site function?

Access

In order to provide a more unified face to Bridge Street, as well as allow traffic to flow more smoothly, access to private parking lots should, when possible, occur via public side streets. This will also help provide a more logical entrance to rear and side loaded parking. Where side streets and backage roads are not feasible, utilize existing curb cuts, or coordinate to share access points with adjacent property owners.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Access	Via side streets or backage roads	Via existing or relocated curb cut driveways from Bridge Street.	New curb cut driveways



Relationship to the Street

How a building is oriented can have a large impact on the way it interacts with the street and the public realm. A commercial building with active windows facing the street gives people the impression that there are “eyes on the street” and that members of the community are aware of what is going on. When front doors are oriented toward the street, it sends a welcoming message to people using the street, whether they are in a car, on foot, or on a bike. Alternatively, many buildings require less attractive, but necessary, elements such as loading docks, trash, and garage doors. It is preferable to keep these out of the public view at the rear of buildings or in enclosed areas.

There is often a balance between providing convenient access to a parking lot and the sidewalk. This is addressed in the parking orientation section.

Parking Orientation

St. Francis businesses and many residents rely on automobiles for many of their day to day trips. Being able to provide enough parking is key for the success of any redevelopment project along Bridge Street. Where this parking is sited has implications for the character of the community.

Locating parking lots between Bridge Street and a building pushes the building away from the road. This leads to a development pattern that feels isolated from the road, and detracts from the ability to walk to destinations. Siting parking on the side or rear of buildings allows the buildings to better address the street. Access to parking lots should be provided or duplicated on side streets.

Bicycle parking & racks should be provided in all projects where vehicular parking is provided.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Parking Lot Location	Parking in rear of building	Parking at side of building	Parking between building and Bridge Street
Parking Lot Access	From alley or side street	From Bridge Street east of the Rum River	From Bridge Street west of the Rum River



Stormwater

Historically, when it rained in St. Francis, water would fall on the ground, infiltrate, and slowly seep into the river or wetlands. When development started, the model changed, and the approach was to move water away as quickly as possible through gutters, pipes, and ditches. This had the effect of increasing the “bounce” or the volume of water in local waterways. When this occurs at a large scale, it can lead to flooding, erosion, and an increase in pollutants that make it into the water system.

The Rum River is a Outstanding Resource Value Water (ORVW) as designated by State Statute 7050.0335. This classification focuses on preserving the river and minimizing any degradation through preventative protection. The statute protects the river by controlling and limiting new or expanded discharges to the waterway. New or expanded discharges are not allowed unless there is no other prudent or feasible alternative for the discharges than the Rum River.

Recognizing these impacts, the City has incorporated best management practices (BMPs) into its zoning ordinance. For technical details, please refer to the City’s zoning ordinance.

St. Francis operates a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and as such, has developed a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program which focuses on public education, public participation, illicit discharges, construction and post-construction site runoff controls, and pollution prevention and municipal “good housekeeping”.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Stormwater	Addresses stormwater in an innovative manner. Stores more stormwater than is required Incorporates educational aspects, aesthetics, landscape, design, and/or public art	As required by zoning code	Does not meet zoning code



When new construction occurs, it is important to ensure that it is not impacting the community as a whole by degrading the natural water system, or putting undue pressure on the existing stormwater infrastructure. A number of BMPs may be used to improve water management and quality:



Rain Gardens/Infiltration Basins

Rain gardens are vegetated infiltration areas that allow stormwater to infiltrate back into the ground. These are planted with specific plants that can accommodate both wet and dry conditions.



Buffers

Vegetated buffers around wetlands, creeks, and rivers help remove sediment and reduce erosion when water flows through them towards the waterbody.



Vegetated Swales

Vegetated Swales can help move water from one part of a site to another, while also helping to slow down the movement of water and remove sediment and pollutants.



Permeable Pavers

Permeable paving is an attractive paving option that allows rainwater to pass through the gaps between pavers, while also providing a solid structure that can be driven on.

There may be exceptions for areas where infiltration and other BMPs are challenged by land use (fueling/maintenance), high bedrock, or the presence of contaminants in the existing soils.



Above Ground Rainwater Storage

Cisterns and rain barrels may be utilized to manage stormwater. If cisterns are utilized above ground, interpretive signage should explain what the cisterns are and how they help manage stormwater and reduce impacts on local waterways.



Underground Storage (cisterns and rain barrels)

Underground stormwater management devices such as underground cisterns may be utilized to control rate and sedimentation levels in stormwater runoff.

5 What does the building look like?

Style vs. Character

The intent of design guidelines are not to be prescriptive of a single style (Modern, Victorian, Tudor, etc.) but rather to emphasize design principles that strengthen the character of a downtown area. These include ideas like adding architectural interest, designing for the human scale, and encouraging interaction between the building and the public realm. This happens through thoughtful design that incorporates the elements discussed below and on following pages.



Articulation

Buildings should be designed to avoid a monolithic presentation, and rather should use articulation to emphasize visual breaks in the parts of the building. This helps break an individual buildings into a series of coherent experiences that are more to a human scale and create a tempo to the design. This is done with variations in materials, rooflines, windows, and other design elements. Articulation should take place at least every 30-60 feet.



Massing & Stepping

The massing of buildings should be set to the build to line. To strengthen the small town/downtown character of the existing corridor, buildings over 3 stories should be stepped back approximately 8-12 feet for all floors above the second story.

Facade / Details

The first two floors of a building should be designed to add visual interest to the buildings in the primary sightlines of pedestrians. This may be done through the incorporation of detailing such as cornices and door/window mouldings and ornamentation. It may also be accomplished through the change of materials and colors. Where buildings are located on a corner and face multiple streets, attention should be paid to all building sides with a public face.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Facade / Details	Architectural details consistent with the style of the building	Standard framing of windows and doors	No framing of windows and doors



Windows

Windows compliment an active street and pedestrian scale and give the impression of “eyes on the street.” In order to strengthen this character, over half of the building face of the ground level facing Bridge Street should be transparent windows. Mirroring is not permitted. Windows should be spaced out along the length of the building to minimize large areas of solid walls facing Bridge Street.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Windows	Over 60% of the length of the building with windows at regular intervals and visibility in and out of the building	Over 30% of the length of the building with windows at regular intervals and visibility in and out of the building	Lack of windows Long stretches of building face without windows Mirrored windows Windows that don't allow views in and out of the building (ie. closed off display windows, windows with large signs)



Awnings

Awnings provide protection from the elements for pedestrians and help bring the scale of a building down to a human scale. Awnings are encouraged on all commercial and multifamily buildings. Awnings should not interfere with street trees or lights.

Signage

Sign dimensions and regulations are covered extensively in the City's zoning code. For the downtown area, signs should be in proportion to the buildings they are representing and of complementary materials and character.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Signage	Coherent, clear signage that complements the character of the building and Bridge Street	As per zoning code	Temporary signs that are not cared for,



Building Materials

Materials should be high quality and suggest permanence such as brick, wood, stone, and precast concrete.

Sheet metal as a primary wall material is not appropriate on Bridge Street.

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Building Materials	Brick, wood, stone, precast concrete	Stucco, manufactured siding	Materials that do not suggest permanence (such as sheet metal) Materials in poor repair



6 What does the rest of the site look like?



Vegetation/Landscaping

Vegetation can help a site and a district in many ways. Trees and attractive landscaping can add value to a property. Trees and other plantings also help to catch stormwater, buffer and reduce road noise, screen areas that are visually unattractive, provide shade, and reduce ambient heat in an area.

Use of native species is desired for landscaping in St. Francis. Many native species have developed here, and can thrive here without need for extensive inputs of watering or fertilization. Use of native species is a common theme throughout the state and many attractive options are now grown commercially for landscaping purposes.

Conversely, many of the invasive species that cities and states are dealing with today were imported for landscaping purposes. These plants may have developed elsewhere, where local predators and competition kept them in check. When relocated, they lack the natural checks and often outcompete local plants and spread into natural areas, causing harm to the ecosystem. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the City of St. Francis discourage the use of the following invasive species:

Invasive Trees and Shrubs	Invasive Grasses and Wildflowers	
• Amur maple (<i>Acer ginnala</i>) • Black locust (<i>Robinia pseudocacia</i>) • Buckthorns (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i> & <i>Frangula alnus</i>) • Exotic honeysuckles (<i>Lonicera tartarica</i>, <i>L. morrowii</i>, <i>L. x bella</i>) • Japanese barberry (<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>) • Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>) • Russian olive (<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>) • Siberian elm (<i>Ulmus pumila</i>) • Siberian peashrub (<i>Caragana arborescens</i>)	• Amur silver grass (<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>) • Bird's-foot trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>) • Bull thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>) • Butter and eggs (<i>pnaria vulgaris</i>) • Canada thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>) • Cow vetch & hairy vetch (<i>Vicia cracca</i> & <i>V. villosa</i>) • Creeping Charlie (<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>) • Crown vetch or axseed (<i>Coronilla varia</i>) • Flowering rush (<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>) • Garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>) • Grecian foxglove (<i>Digitaps lanata</i>) • Hoary alyssum (<i>Berteroa incana</i>) • Japanese knotweed (<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>)	• Leafy spurge (<i>Euphorbia esula</i>) • Musk or nodding thistle (<i>Carduus nutans</i>) • Non-native waterlilies (<i>Nymphaea</i> spp.) • Ox-eye daisy (<i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i>) • Perennial sow thistle (<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>) • Purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum sapcaria</i>) • Queen Anne's lace (<i>Daucus carota</i>) • Reed canary grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>) • Smooth brome grass (<i>Bromus inermis</i>) • Spotted knapweed (<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>) • White and yellow sweetclover (<i>Meplotus alba</i> & <i>M. officinaps</i>) • Wild parsnip (<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>) • Yellow iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>)

	Preferred	Acceptable	Not Appropriate
Vegetation	Attractive, designed landscape using native plants	As per zoning code	That which does not meet the zoning code Use of invasive species



Sidewalk/Cafe Seating

Sidewalk cafe seating and tables create activity and vitality along the street and are encouraged. Seating and tables should be limited to the area adjacent to the building and must preserve a pedestrian accessible route of at least 6 feet. Chairs and tables should be secured out of the way when the business is closed. Service of food and beverages should be on private property and alcohol is not permitted to be sold or consumed in the public right-of-way. The City is open to food trucks and prefers they are parked off of the public right-of-way (such as in a parking lot) but will consider alternatives on a case by case basis.



Sidewalk Sales/Displays

Sidewalk sales and displays can add personality to a district when done well, but can also detract from the visual character and operational functioning when done poorly.

Displays should be limited to the area immediately adjacent to the building, take up no more than one third of the sidewalk, and must preserve a pedestrian accessible route of at least 6 feet.

Displays may not be left outside overnight, and must be secured indoors when the business is closed. Outdoor displays should not be used during the winter.



Semi-Public Space

Patios/Plazas

Patios and plazas should be encouraged in new developments as public gathering spaces. Patios and plazas should be large enough to accommodate site furnishings, shade elements, and gathering. These areas benefit from consideration and use of materials such as vegetation and paving.

Locate these public spaces so as not to interfere with the movement of pedestrians or vehicles.



Public Art

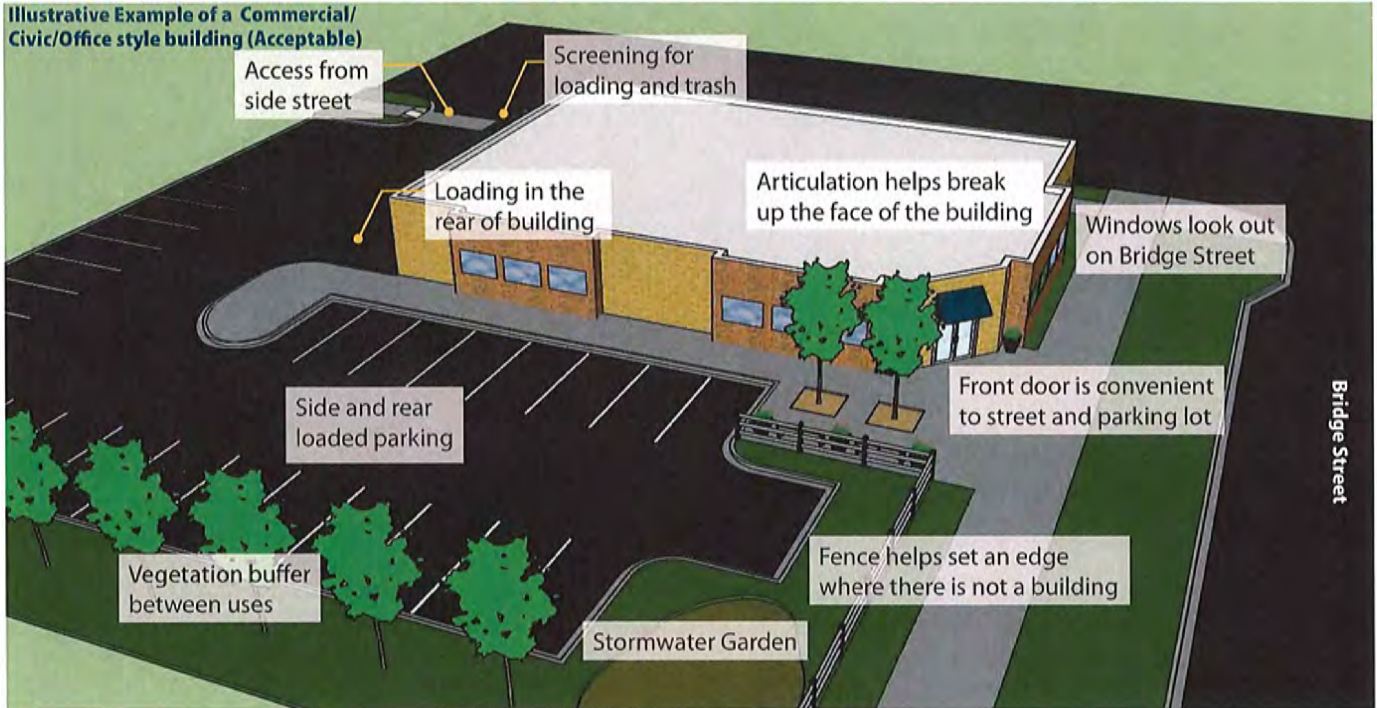
The City strongly encourages the inclusion of public art in development projects. Public art can strengthen the identity of the district and provide a showcase for local talented artists. Pieces should be constructed of durable materials and not obstruct pedestrian movement in the corridor. Public art should be located so as to be visible to pedestrians and will be reviewed by the City.



Illustrative Examples

These following examples show how a development may fit into the Bridge Street Corridor by adhering to the principles and guidelines discussed above.

Illustrative Example of a Commercial/Civic/Office style building (Acceptable)



Illustrative Example of a Commercial/Civic/Office style building (Preferred)



Bridge Street Development Example



Illustrative Example of a multi-family residential building

