

LAND USE PLAN

TABLE 4.5: UNDEVELOPED RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY, 2008-2030

Residential Land Use Category	Acres	Average Density	Households
2030 planned low density residential land	219	3	657
2030 planned medium density residential land	146	9	1,314
2030 planned high density residential land	43	20	860
2030 planned neighborhood mixed use land (50% residential)	960	3	1,440
2030 planned downtown mixed use land (50% residential)	8	20	80
2030 planned conservation residential land	59	.5	30
Total 2030 planned residential land	1,435	N/A	4,381

C. DOWNTOWN AREA LAND USES

Historic downtown Chaska contains a mix of land uses typical of a small town downtown, including civic, commercial, office, park, and residential. The core commercial area continues to be centered on Chestnut Street (Highway 41), Second Street, and Chaska Boulevard (old Highway 212), but has recently expanded to the area north of Chaska Boulevard as land has redeveloped. Downtown remains the civic center of the community with the City Square, City Hall, Police, City Plaza, Chaska History Center, and County Library all located in the center of downtown. In addition, Chaska is the County Seat with Carver County's government facilities located on the eastern edge of downtown. Downtown is also home to other institutions, including three churches and their affiliated elementary schools, the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative School, and the community's only elderly care and housing institution.

As part of updating its Comprehensive Plan, Carver County completed a *2030 Retail and Services Space and Land Demand Study* in January 2008. The objective of this study was to estimate the quantity of land necessary to support future retail and services development in Carver County, which includes retail, service, food service, financial, and medical establishments. This study also provides basic data relating types of retail and service establishments, quantity of establishment, existing square footages and acreages, and growth trends from 1986-2006. In 2006, downtown Chaska had 104 retail and service establishment, including 43 retail and 61 service, and occupied approximately 589,000 square feet of space. In terms of square footage, retail represented 63 percent of the space, followed by service (26.5%), financial (4.4%), food service

LAND USE PLAN

(4.3%), and medical (2%). In terms of number of establishments, restaurants represent 18% of the total retail/service establishments in the downtown area. From 1986-2006, square footage of retail and services in downtown grew by approximately 33 percent with the largest growth occurring during the 1997-2001 time period. Based on trade area households, future population growth, and potential competitive developments, the study estimates future downtown development potential between 2008 and 2030. The study estimates demand for retail and services square footage space will increase in the range of 63 to 79 percent over the next twenty years. An additional 37 to 47 acres of land may be needed to accommodate this development demand.

The location of downtown Chaska at the base of a 17.8 square mile City, with a road pattern shaped as a funnel, presents serious accessibility issues as the City continues to grow northerly away from downtown. Trade area traffic is funneled into downtown primarily via Highway 41, which has increasingly become a congested arterial highway, particularly with the completion of new Highway 212. The present downtown feeder system with Highway 41 as its backbone cannot be upgraded sufficiently to support traffic volumes generated by a City of 35,000 persons. Community and neighborhood shopping facilities are necessary in upper Chaska as the City grows to 35,000 persons and significant commercial development has occurred over the past 10-20 years to meet these needs. This continuing shift to a growing population and employment base above the bluff, which is physically and spatially separate from the historic downtown Chaska area, presents challenges for downtown. Downtown's accessibility challenges are countered by its relatively strong role as the historic image of the City and the center of many community functions and activities as mentioned above. The shopping role of downtown is actually only one of several functions, which collectively serve to create downtown's unique identity.

The 1980s and 1990s saw a transition and expansion of the downtown area. In essence, the downtown was geographically expanded to include the Klein brickyard area north of Chaska Boulevard (old Highway 212) and secondarily along Chaska Boulevard to the northeast. The historic downtown area south of Chaska Boulevard took on more of a service specialty character while the convenience goods retail sector consolidated north of Chaska Boulevard. This change has strengthened Chaska's role as a trade center in Eastern Carver County, but has had some obvious effects on the character of the historic downtown area.

The Klein Brickyard Redevelopment project north of Chaska Boulevard was initiated during the latter 1990s. This project is the largest redevelopment effort

LAND USE PLAN

undertaken by the City to date and most likely won't be matched in the future. The focus of this project has been to create a mixed-use area (retail, office and residential) that reflects and complements the historic character of the historic downtown, and presents a positive image from both Highway 41 and Chaska Boulevard (old Highway 212). Provision of convenient parking and a pedestrian-friendly environment are also important objectives. This area includes a mix of retail businesses, both in vertical mixed-use buildings and freestanding buildings, offices, and high density residential uses. The buildings are oriented toward an extension of Walnut Street that directly connects this expansion area to the historic downtown. Some of the housing units are also oriented toward Clayhole Lake which includes a public trail and lake overlook feature.

Downtown is facing significant impacts from recent and future transportation changes in Chaska. With the completion of new Highway 212 in 2008 as a freeway through central Chaska, old Highway 212 has been turned back from the State to Carver County as CSAH 61. Since old Highway 212 travels through downtown, the City took the opportunity to officially name the roadway Chaska Boulevard in conjunction with the conversion from a state highway to a county highway. As a result of the completion of new Highway 212, traffic on Highway 41 is projected to increase significantly as it provides one of the limited crossings of the Minnesota River for traffic from the south traveling to new Highway 212. The volumes, speeds, and types of traffic carried on Highway 212 have major impacts on the downtown environment and its possibilities for revitalization. In addition, in December 2008 Mn DOT announced its recommendation for a new route for a Highway 41 river crossing that would connect TH 169 south of the Minnesota River and new Highway 212 in Chaska. The recommended route would travel along the south side of downtown near the river levee and Chaska Ballpark and have significant impacts on downtown, including potentially noise, visual and pollution. Finally, the Union Pacific Railroad spur that cuts through downtown Chaska was officially abandoned in 2008 which opens up a variety of opportunities for reuse of this land.

One of the City's basic goals is to continue to assist in revitalizing and expanding the historic downtown area as one of the community's major commercial districts. A broader downtown goal is to preserve and strengthen downtown as the primary focus of community activity and identity. The "new" City Hall/County Library, City Square enhancement, streetscape improvements, elderly care and housing facilities, Block 12 (theater) redevelopment, Block 54 (Riverbend hotel and townhomes) redevelopment, Block 38 (Werner Arcade) redevelopment, River Gables mixed-use building (commercial with apartments above), and numerous historic building renovations are all examples of broadening and

LAND USE PLAN

strengthening the historic downtown area. Although the City has a history of successful redevelopment projects in downtown, the desire for dramatic, long-term and cost-effective revitalization efforts in downtown have been hampered by the lack of a holistic vision and master plan for downtown. Recent downtown planning efforts that provide a foundation for a downtown master plan include the Historic Downtown Chaska Design Guidelines (2004), Chaska Historic Context Study (2006), Downtown Streets Master Plan concepts (2003), and Brick City Paseo concepts (2007).

Policies: Downtown Area Land Uses

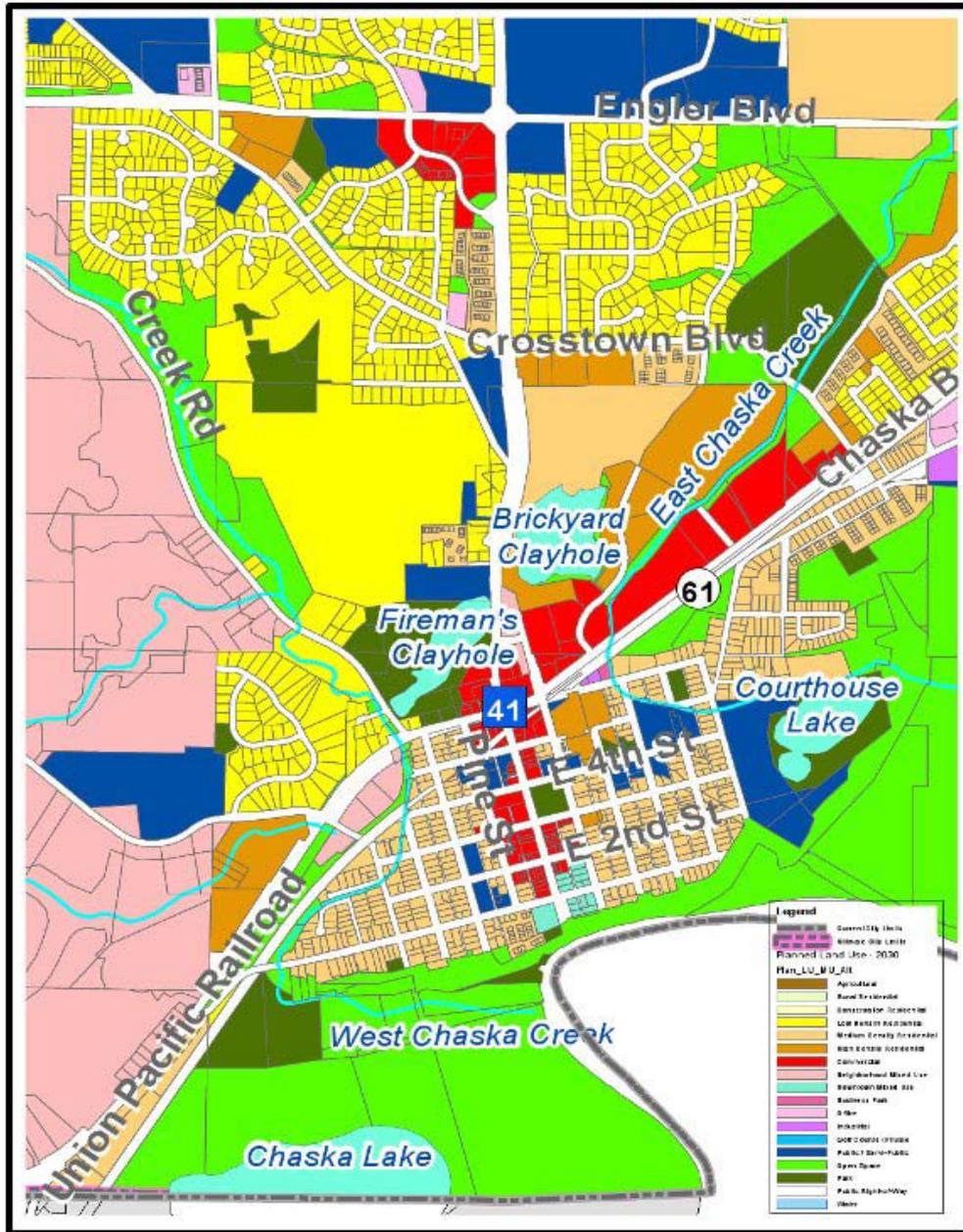
- 1) Continue to promote and support activities that will assist in revitalization/expansion of the historic downtown area by making it a more desirable place to shop, do business, to live in, and to visit.
- 2) Manage and improve the provision of downtown parking facilities, in partnership with private redevelopment, to ensure that downtown's parking facilities are located in a convenient and efficient manner, using high quality design appropriate to an urban and historic downtown environment.
- 3) Preserve and strengthen the role of downtown Chaska as the center of community identity and activity. Facilities that collectively add to downtown's vitality and identity include the City Hall, Carver County Library, City Square, Chaska History Center, Carver County Government Center, post office, churches, schools, farmer's market and medium/high density housing. The many civic functions that are held in downtown such as River City Days are very important ingredients of a City Center.
- 4) Encourage development of additional medium and high density housing in appropriate locations within convenient walking/driving distance of the downtown area as a means to strengthen its vitality and customer base.
- 5) Establish the geographical expansion limits of the historic downtown commercial core, generally recognizing Walnut Street as the east edge and Pine Street as the west edge. The exception is the west side of Pine Street north of 4th Street, which may be appropriate for non-residential re-use.
- 6) Encourage the continued restoration/rehabilitation of downtown Chaska's historic buildings, particularly those constructed of "Chaska brick" from the City's early brickyards. New buildings should be consistent with

LAND USE PLAN

neighboring buildings and the historic character of downtown relative to materials, size, scale, color and character. Promote use of the Historic Downtown Chaska Design Guidelines for relevant historic buildings.

- 7) Create a Downtown Area Master Plan that will provide a long-term holistic vision for the historic downtown Chaska area and the necessary guidance for coordinated future public and private redevelopment and investment efforts. A Downtown Area Master Plan should establish the downtown area's long-term identity, desired market niche and strategy, future land uses, transportation and safety coordination, regional and community connections, housing revitalization and affordability, new housing opportunities, urban design and streetscape enhancements, views and landmarks, parking strategies, heritage preservation, infrastructure improvements, parks and green spaces, pathways/trails, bike routes, and implementation strategies. A Downtown Master Plan should incorporate recent downtown planning efforts focused on specific downtown elements, including the Chaska Historic Context Study, Historic Downtown Chaska Design Guidelines, Downtown Streets Master Plan concepts, and Brick City Paseo concepts.

2030 Downtown Land Use Plan




City of Chaska, Minnesota
2030 Comprehensive Plan
 Community Development Department

Data Source:
 City of Chaska
 Metropolitan Council


 May 2009
Figure 4.7
 Hoisington Koeigler Group Inc.
 Planning | Landscape Architecture | Urban Design



0 0.25 0.5 Miles

- Figure 4.7 -
[\(Click Image to View Full-Sized PDF\)](#)

LAND USE PLAN

colonial times until the 1940's and historically were based on the following design principles:

- Neighborhoods that have an identifiable center and edge.
- Neighborhoods where the most important and visible property is utilized by some public use (ie., public buildings, parks, plazas, etc.,).
- Neighborhoods whose size is limited by the distance from the edge to the center, generally a five to ten minute walk ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius).
- Neighborhoods that consist of an integrated network of walkable streets.
- Neighborhoods that contain diversity in land uses, building types, building sizes, building prices, and styles of ownership.
- Neighborhoods whose name links it directly to the activity that is occurring at its center.

Policies: Traditional Neighborhood Development

- 1) The inclusion of TND's into the community fabric requires modifications from existing policies and ordinances, since the intent of these areas are to create "urban-centers" rather than "suburban-enclaves". The City will continue to review its policies and ordinances to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms that will allow for these developments, while still requiring good design standards and protecting the health, welfare and safety of the general public. The creation of unique PRD and PMD Districts will be used to establish the desired standards and design guidelines for future traditional neighborhood developments.
- 2) The following development areas should be considered as being eligible for TND's: Downtown Chaska, Riverwoods, Brickyard/Clayhole Lake Area, Clover Ridge, and the SW Chaska growth area east of new Highway 212 (Heights of Chaska concept plan area).

XII. HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Like so many early river towns, Chaska has a rich heritage, which is manifested by a significant collection of historic buildings, some dating back to the mid-1800s. Of particular interest and unique value are the many "Chaska brick" buildings, which were a product of the City's early brickyards. The existing clayhole lakes serve as a reminder of Chaska's former brick-making industry.

"Chaska brick" homes are scattered throughout lower Chaska and the surrounding rural area. Some early industrial buildings were also constructed of

LAND USE PLAN

"Chaska brick" and are still standing, such as the mill and United Sugars. The most apparent concentration of "Chaska brick" buildings is found in the downtown commercial area, particularly along 2nd Street and Walnut Street.

The majority of the City's historically relevant buildings have been preserved to varying degrees. Conversely, a few "gems", such as the courthouse and school adjacent to the City Square, were razed before historic preservation became popular.

In recent years, many commercial buildings in the downtown area have been restored or rehabilitated to recall their original designs and materials. The City has financially assisted many of these downtown restoration/rehabilitation efforts since the latter 1980s.

In 1978, the State Historical Society designated several individual buildings and a district for historic preservation. In 1980, the Walnut Street Historic District was listed as a National Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as well as seven (7) individual buildings. The Walnut Street Historic District contains City Square and portions of six other contiguous blocks, which encompasses 29 contributing properties within the district.

In 1989, the City adopted a Heritage Preservation Ordinance, which established the Planning Commission as the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and set forth various criteria and standards for designating historic buildings, sites and districts. Subsequently, members of the Chaska Historical Society prepared an inventory of buildings and sites having historic value. A brochure describing 50 historic buildings/sites was prepared during the 1990s to guide walking and driving tours of historic downtown Chaska.

In 1991, the City created a Historic Preservation Task Force to survey older buildings and sites, receive citizens' suggestions regarding historically significant buildings, research historic information, and recommend buildings and sites worthy of local historic designation. The Task Force used specific criteria contained in the Heritage Preservation Ordinance in its considerations of which buildings and sites to designate as historic places. Three groups of buildings and sites were recommended by the HPC and approved by the City Council as local historic buildings/sites in 1992, 1993, and 1996, with a total of 51 buildings/sites now designated within the City. In 2006, five additional properties were designated as local historic buildings/sites by the City Council. Thus, as of 2008, the City had 56 locally designated historic properties.

LAND USE PLAN

In 2002, the City significantly expanded and revised its Heritage Preservation Ordinance in order to meet the specific ordinance requirements for qualifying as a Certified Local Government (CLG), as established by State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The City also established the Heritage Preservation Commission as a separate commission from the Planning Commission, which was also a CLG requirement. City Staff also researched and developed a draft Heritage Preservation Plan, which has not been completed nor adopted up to now.

In 2003, the City of Chaska applied for and became a Certified Local Government (CLG), which is administered and by the SHPO. As a CLG, the City is empowered to assume a leadership role in the community by identifying, evaluating and protecting local historic resources; eligible to apply annually for grants administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) from a designated federal CLG pass-through allocation; receive technical advisory services from the SHPO; and have a formal role in the National Register process.

In 2003, the City of Chaska applied for and received a \$10,000 CLG matching grant from the SHPO and the Historic Preservation Fund (National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior) to help fund the costs of creating the Downtown Preservation Design Manual. The Downtown Preservation Design Manual was adopted by the City Council in March 2004 as the City's design guidelines for historic building storefronts in the downtown commercial district and as the primary design criteria for the Chaska Economic Development Authority when considering applications for the City's Storefront Rehabilitation Loan and Initial Architectural Feasibility Grant program.

The City of Chaska applied for and received a second CLG matching grant of \$5,000 to develop the Chaska Historic Context Study, which was approved by the City Council in August 2006. Historic Context Study provides a "framework" document that establishes the overarching themes or "contexts" of Chaska's historical development that provide the City with a tool for organizing and evaluating its historical resources and lend a broader perspective on the Chaska's historical development. The Historic Context Study is intended to be the primary guide for evaluating current historic resources, designating new resources, and planning for preservation in future generations. The historic contexts will allow for a more fair designation of properties, as each site can then be viewed in terms of what is best for the City as a whole, rather than as a single instance in isolation. The eight (8) historic contexts are as follows:

- a. Native American, Early Archeological, Early Settlement: 1700-1858
- b. Chaska Brick: 1857-1950
- c. Commerce and Industry and Civic Services: 1850s-1950s

LAND USE PLAN

- d. Farmsteads and Agricultural Life: 1852-1950s
- e. Transportation: 1700-1950s
- f. Religion: 1842-1950s
- g. Residential: 1857-1950s
- h. Preservation of the Recent Past: 1956-present

Policy: Heritage Preservation

- 1) Promote the preservation and continued use of Chaska's designated historical and architectural resources for the education and general welfare of the people of the City of Chaska.
- 2) Promote the benefits of heritage preservation as a tool for increasing the economic, cultural, and functional vitality of historic downtown Chaska.
- 3) Investigate increasing the City's inventory of locally and nationally designated historic resources, using the eight (8) historic contexts from the City's adopted Historic Context Study and accompanied by expanded interpretation of these resources.
- 4) Identify and evaluate more recent potential historic resources for future studies and designation, such as the original Jonathan development, Hazeltine Golf Course, Chaska Cubs athletic park, and the river levee.
- 5) Provide educational, financial, technical, and regulatory assistance to ensure the preservation of the City's historic resources.
- 6) Explore the potential for creating a downtown heritage preservation plan in conjunction with a downtown master plan that links heritage preservation with economic development, public improvements, redevelopment, and placemaking.

XIII. RESOURCE PROTECTION

A. SOLAR ACCESS

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota Statutes 473.859, Subd. 2) requires that local comprehensive plans include an element for the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems. The City will protect such access by requiring minimum standards for lot sizes, amounts of open space, yard setbacks, and maximum building heights for urban