

**TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

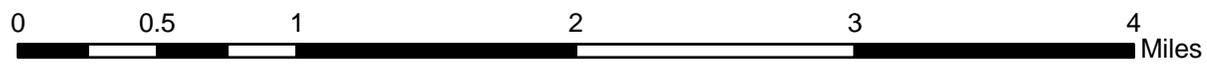
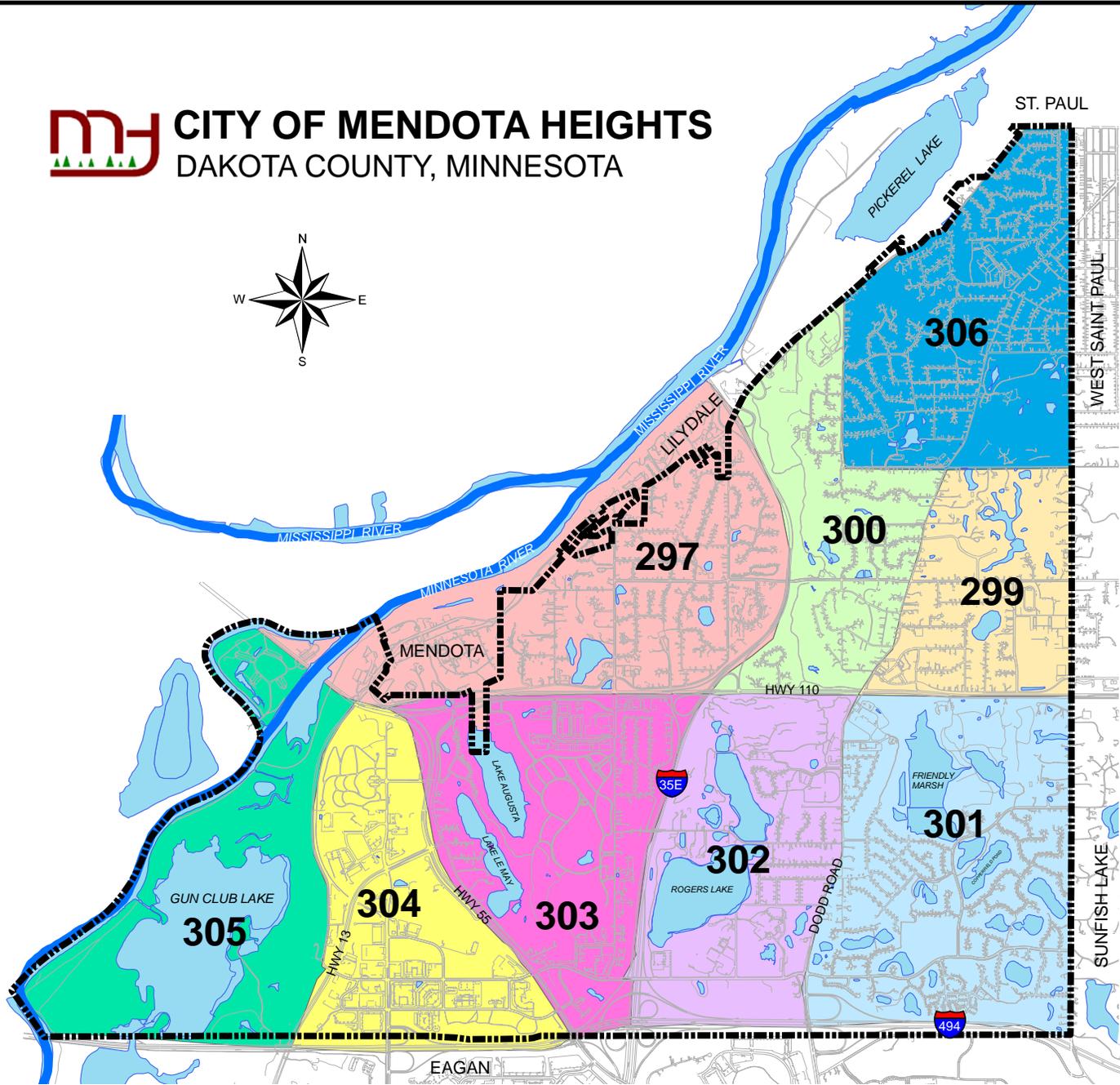
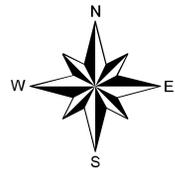
The completion of Interstates 494 and 35E in the late 1980s radically altered the physical environment of Mendota Heights. The highway systems have connected the community to the Metropolitan Region, and the improved access has contributed to growth of the residential, commercial, and industrial base of the community. Unfortunately, these major transportation systems have also impacted the quality of the environment and contributed to increased air, noise, and water pollution within the community. The City of Mendota Heights supplied a significant level of arterial highway capacity for the south and east metro, at a high cost to the City in terms of negative impacts associated with traffic, pollution, noise, etc., from the regional highway system and airport. By virtue of its location, the City has a disproportionate share of regional infrastructure impacts that are not shared by other communities. The City gained substantially in transportation access, but at the price of a diminished quality of residential living.

Expected growth within Mendota Heights will not exceed current roadway capacities.

**TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONES (TAZ)**

In order to develop forecasts and plan for regional roads and highways, the Metropolitan Council needs to know the demographic forecasts for smaller geographic areas known as *Traffic Analysis Zones*.

The Traffic Analysis Zones Map illustrates the Zones that are located within the City of Mendota Heights: 297, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, and 306. The next map illustrates the City's allocation of the Metropolitan Council's 2030 population, household, and employment forecasts according to each TAZ. Such forecasts are consistent with those projected in the Metropolitan Council System Statements.



# 2030 Comprehensive Plan

## Traffic Analysis Zones

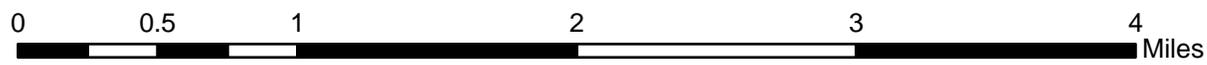
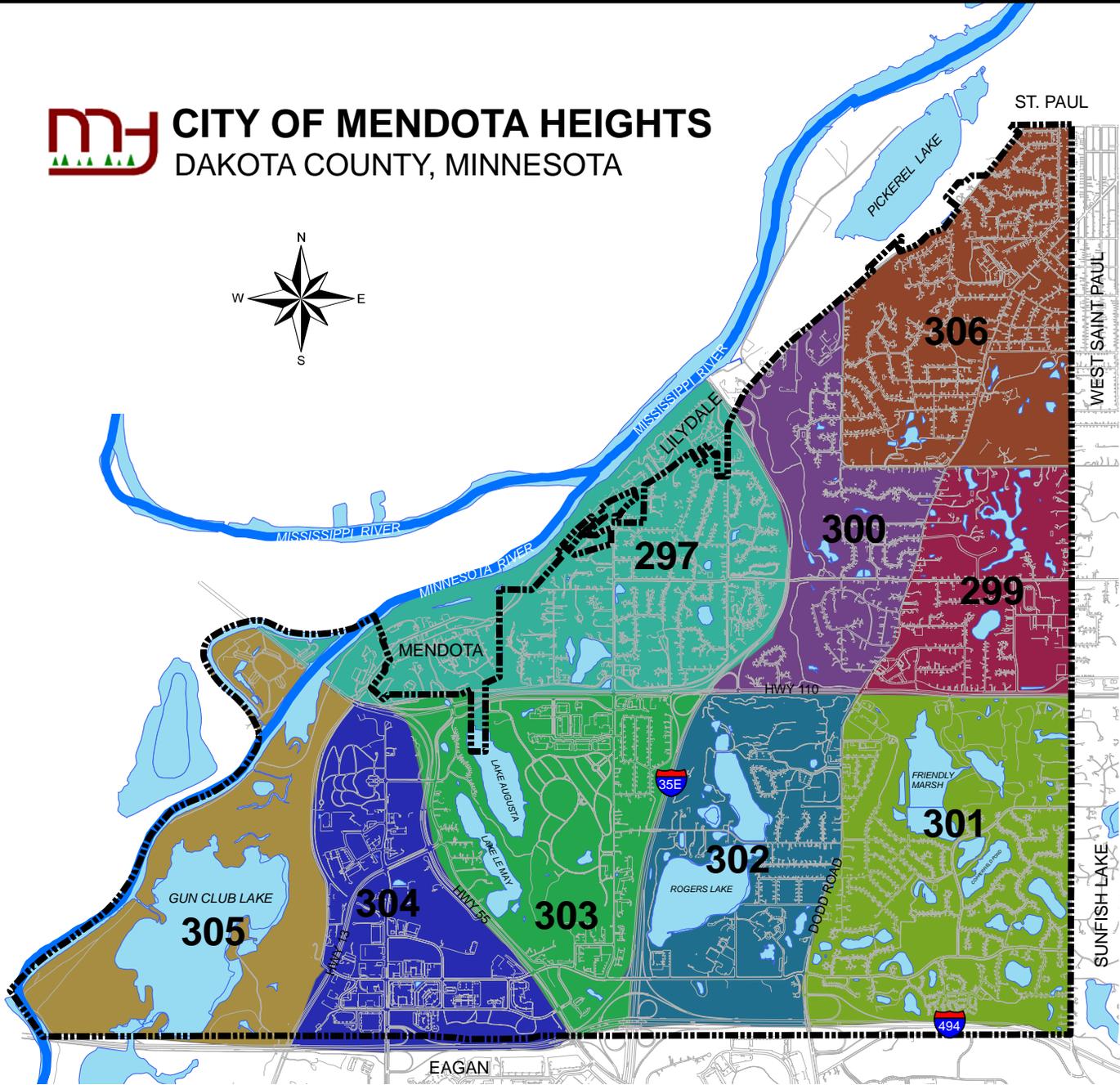
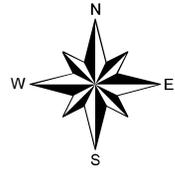
### Traffic Analysis Zones

- 297
- 299
- 300
- 301
- 302
- 303
- 304
- 305
- 306
- City Boundary
- Roads
- Major River
- Water

**NAC** NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.  
 4800 Olson Memorial Highway, Suite 202, Golden Valley, MN 55422  
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Source: City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County, Metropolitan Council, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

July 2008.



# 2030 Comprehensive Plan

## 2030 Population, Household, & Employment Forecasts According to Traffic Analysis Zones

2030 Popul, HH, & Employment

	0, 0, 0
	16, 8, 5500
	640, 212, 750
	795, 282, 450
	867, 418, 1900
	1192, 432, 60
	2660, 1090, 550
	2278, 951, 400
	3352, 1307, 690
	City Boundary
	Roads
	Major River
	Water

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Source: City of Mendota Heights,  
 Dakota County, Metropolitan Council, and  
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

August 2010.

**FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: HIGHWAYS AND ROADS**

Mendota Heights’ street system consists of Principal Arterials, “A” Minor Arterials, community collectors, and a series of local streets. The Functional Transportation Classification Map illustrates the classification of the roads within the City of Mendota Heights. All City streets are constructed to a nine ton capacity.

**Principal Arterials**

Interstates 494 and 35E, State Trunk Highway (TH) 55, and the western part of State Trunk Highway 110 – from I-35E to TH 55 – are all designated Principal Arterials. Interstate 494 forms the southern boundary of the City. Interstate 35E and TH 110 create four geographic quadrants, with TH 55 further dividing the southwestern part of Mendota Heights.

**“A” Minor Arterials**

TH 110 (located east of I-35E), TH 149 (Dodd Road), and TH 13 are all designated “A” Minor Arterials. TH 13 is located along the western border of the community in the southwest part of the City and is classified as Minor Arterial. TH 110 bisects the community and runs parallel to and about 2.5 miles north of Interstate 494. Dodd Road, also known as TH 149, traverses the entire length of the City from north to south and is located in the eastern part of the community.

All of these highways are classified as “A” Minor Arterials and are maintained by the State Department of Transportation. Traffic on the Principal and “A” Minor Arterials has increased steadily over the last ten years.

Wentworth Avenue east of Dodd Road, as well as County Road 31, are classified by the Dakota County Comprehensive Plan as Minor Arterials. The Functional Classification Map identifies them as “B” Minor Arterials.

**Community Collectors**

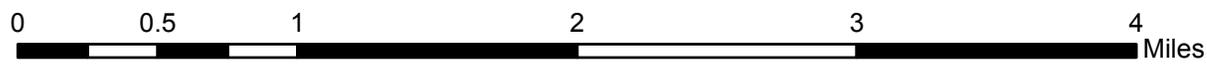
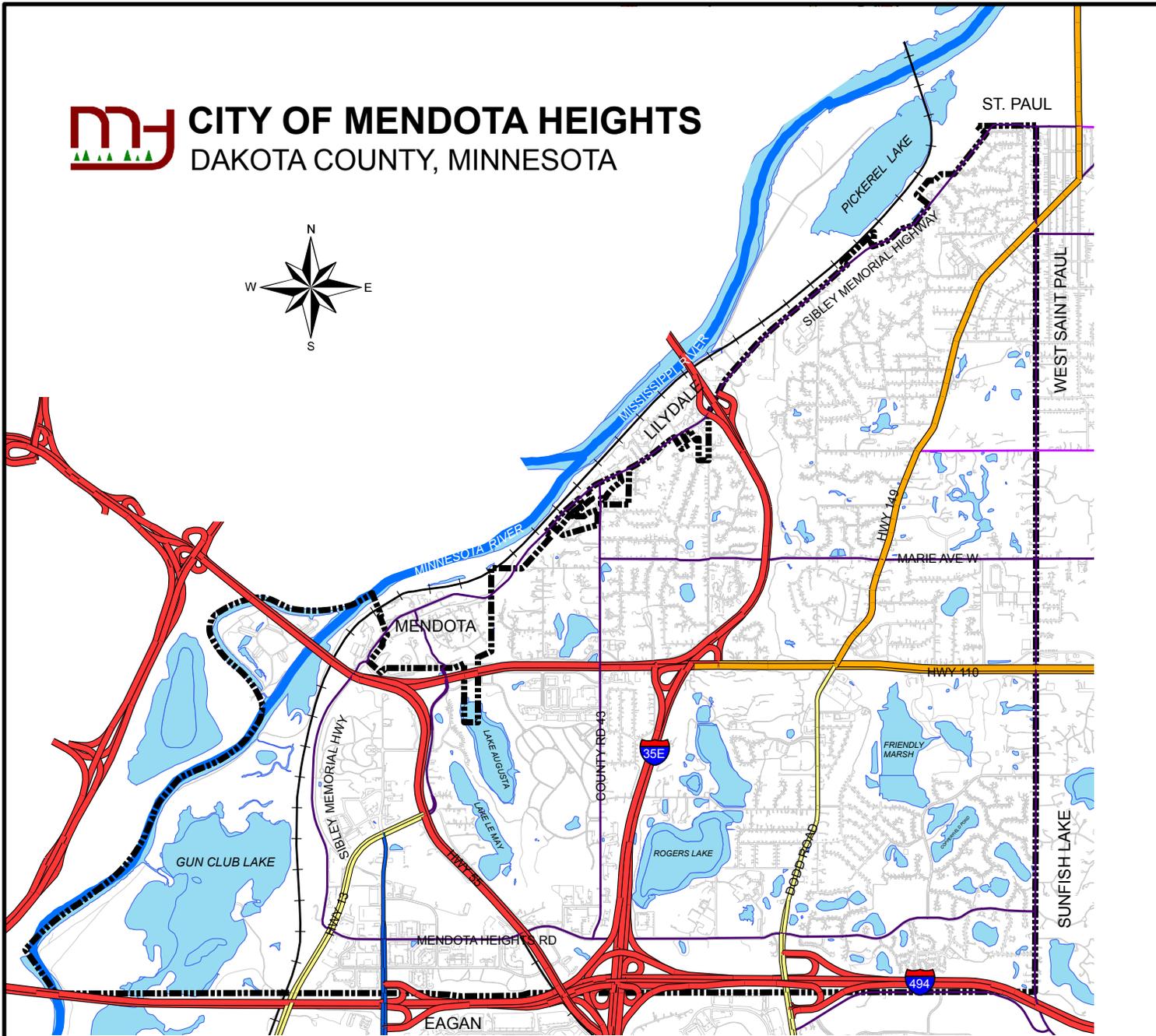
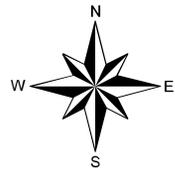
Delaware Avenue functions as a collector on the City’s eastern border. It is otherwise known as County State Aid Highway 63 and is maintained by Dakota County. Other roads within Mendota Heights that are designated as Collector Streets in the Dakota County Comprehensive Plan are: Lexington Avenue, County Road 43, Mendota Heights Road, Marie Avenue, Wachtler Road, and the section of Wentworth Avenue, located east of Wachtler Road. County Roads 43 and 31 are both maintained by Dakota County.

**TRAFFIC VOLUMES**

The Traffic Volume Map illustrates the current daily traffic counts and the forecasted 2030 traffic volumes.



**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



**2030**  
**COMPREHENSIVE**  
**PLAN**

**Functional**  
**Transportation**  
**Classifications**

- Principal Arterial
- A Minor Arterial - Augmentor
- A Minor Arterial - Expander
- A Minor Arterial - Reliever
- B Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- City Boundary
- Major River
- Water

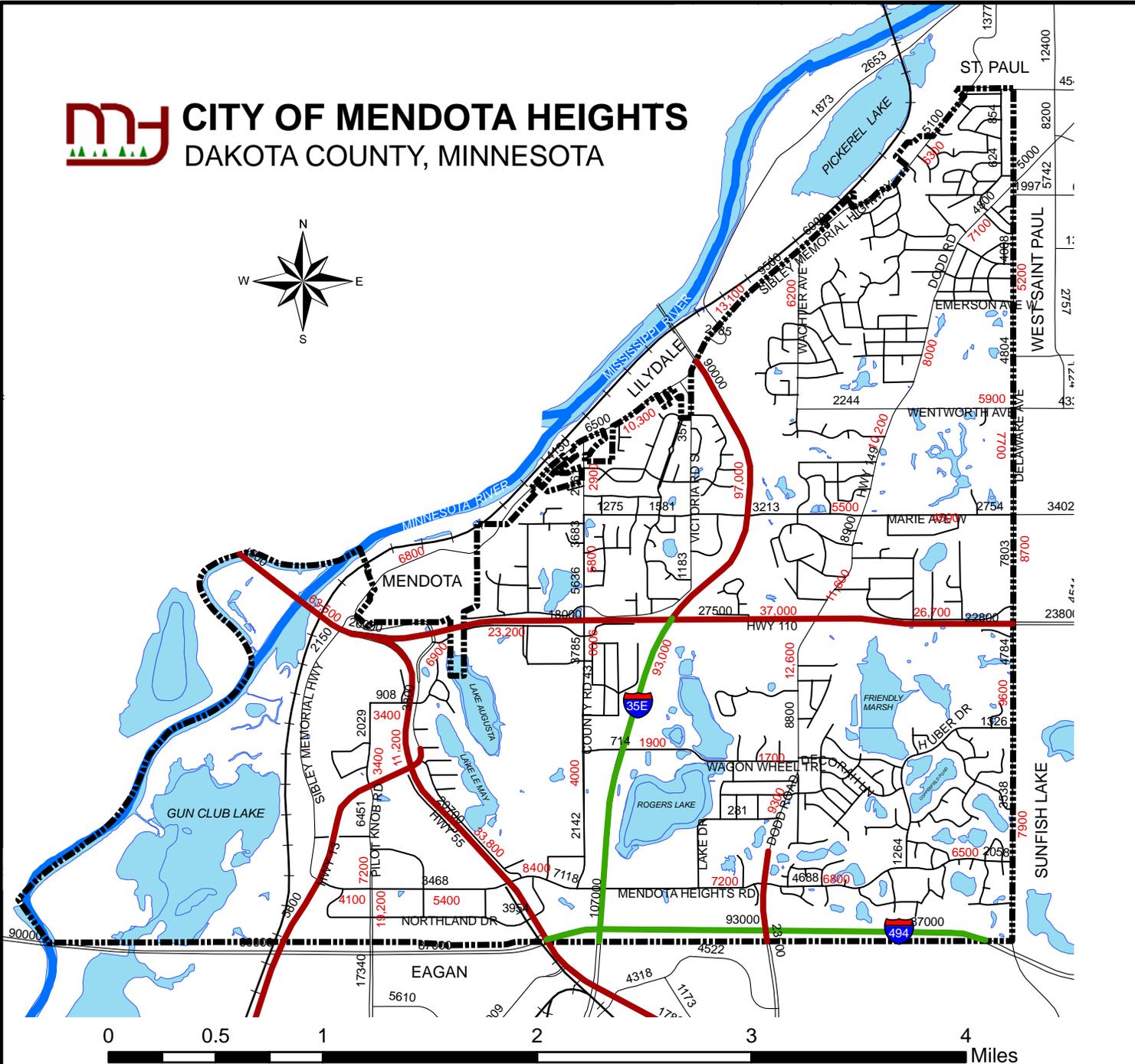
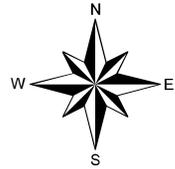
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Source: City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County, Metropolitan Council, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

July 2008.



**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



# 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Traffic Volumes & Existing Traffic Lanes

### Traffic Volumes

2006 Traffic Volumes...1,040

2030 Traffic Volumes...7,080

### Existing # of Traffic Lanes

4 Lanes

6 Lanes

\* All other roads are 2 lanes.

City Roads

Railroad

City Boundary

Major River

Water

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Source: City of Mendota Heights, MnDOT, Dakota County, Metropolitan Council, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Jan 2010.

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

**Interchange 494 at Argenta/Delaware**

The Inver Grove Heights Comprehensive Plan and Eagan North-South Corridor Study talk of plans for a new interchange with Interstate 494 at Argenta Trail/Delaware Avenue to promote commercial development in this location. The Cities of Mendota Heights and Sunfish Lake have both voiced their opposition to this proposal. Contact with the Minnesota Department of Transportation revealed no plans for a new interchange on I-494 within the next 20 years, and the Dakota County Transportation Planner indicated that the interchange is only a long-range planning concept at this point in time. The City of Mendota Heights is participating in a regional study led by Dakota County.

**I-35E Between TH 5 & TH 110**

I-35E between TH 5, on the St. Paul side of the Mississippi River, & TH 110 is planned for expansion within the City of Mendota Heights. The length of the project is estimated to be 2.3 miles with the addition of a 3rd lane.

**POTENTIAL SAFETY ISSUES/SPECIAL TRAFFIC SITUATIONS**

The City does not foresee a significant amount of new development occurring within its jurisdiction as it is almost completely developed. However, the City contains two main highway systems within the metropolitan area, Interstates 494 and 35E, which bring with them the positives and negatives of two major transportation systems.

The City has already seen the negative impacts that major transportation systems can have on a community: increased traffic congestion, pollution, and noise within the community. By virtue of its location, the City has a disproportionate share of regional infrastructure impacts that are not shared by other communities.

Therefore, potential transportation safety issues should be identified in order to protect the health and wellness of the residents of Mendota Heights and in order to protect the areas of public open space, wetlands, lakes, bluffs, and wooded areas that are so vital to this community and to its residents. The following is a look at two specific potential safety issues that the City is currently facing:

**Roundabout at Lake Drive and Mendota Heights Road**

In August of 2007, a Traffic Study Report was conducted by WSB and Associates, Inc. in response to several issues relating to traffic conditions in and around the St. Thomas Academy and the Visitation School/Convent campus areas. Concerns regarding pedestrian crossings, intersection capacity, and traffic speeds around the campus area resulted in the City commissioning a study to develop alternatives to potentially alleviate traffic concerns. The issues identified are listed below:

1. Visitation School Access at Visitation Drive
2. Access to Visitation Parking Lot from Lake Drive

3. Visitation School Site Circulation and Access to Lake Drive
4. Capacity Improvements (Right –Turn Lanes) for Eastbound Mendota Heights Road to Southbound Dodd Road (TH 149)
5. Pedestrian Crossings on Mendota Heights Road
6. School Speed Zone

Current traffic counts, historical traffic volumes, existing geometry of the intersection, intersection control, posted speeds, and signal timing were all analyzed, and several alternative solutions were provided.

It was concluded that capacity and access changes would improve traffic conditions that are currently experienced and expected to worsen if no improvements are made. Doing nothing (No Build) would result in significant delays as traffic volumes increase. Mendota Heights Road traffic volumes are increasing at a high rate of 4 to 6% per year. The 2027 forecast AADT based on this average growth rate is 7,300 to 8,400 vehicles per day. The forecast AADT is slightly higher than the 2007, 24-hour tube counts of 5,400 to 8,400 vehicles along this roadway. Traffic during school session is considerably higher than average daily traffic. However, the growth at St. Thomas Academy and the Visitation School did not seem to be a major part of this change in traffic volume, based on historic growth in the student body. However, in general, parent drop-offs have increased over the years nationwide which may be a factor in increase in traffic specifically at the Visitation School which houses preschool through 12th grade school children.

The study provided recommendations to address the six issues identified at the start of the study.

### **ACCESS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

Access management is the planning, design, and implementation of land use and transportation strategies in an effort to maintain a safe flow of traffic while accommodating the access needs of adjacent development.

Effective access management provides numerous benefits:

- Reduce congestion and crashes.
- Preserve road capacity and postpone the need for roadway widening.
- Improve travel times for the delivery of goods and services.
- Ease movement between destinations.
- Support local economic development.

In order to ensure safe and convenient travel within the City, access management guidelines shall be applied when making development decisions. The following access management guidelines of the Minnesota Department of Transportation shall be incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan update:

**1. Think land use and transportation.**

Before approving a subdivision or rezoning, consider what road design and improvements will be needed to support the development and link it to the surrounding area.

**2. Identify and plan for growth areas.**

Incremental and uncoordinated development will not lead to a livable community or a healthy business climate. Support economic growth by planning and investing in a local road network to support development.

**3. Develop a complete hierarchy of roads.**

A viable community requires a variety of roadways organized as an integrated system. Highways and arterials are needed for longer, higher speed trips. Local streets and collectors provide access to homes and businesses. Recognize that different roads serve different purposes.

**4. Link access regulations to roadway function.**

Access requirements in zoning and subdivision regulations should fit each roadway's functional classification. Recognize that the greatest access control is needed for those roads intended to serve longer, higher speed trips.

**5. Avoid strip development. Promote commercial nodes.**

Commercial development can be located adjacent to and visible from the highway, but should be accessed via a system of parallel local roads and side streets that complement the state highway system.

**6. Connect local streets between subdivisions.**

Give residents convenient options for travel from one neighborhood to another by connecting local streets from one subdivision to the next.

**7. Design subdivisions with access onto local streets.**

Avoid lot designs with driveways that enter onto major state or county highways. Orient business and residential driveways to local streets that feed onto the highway at a few carefully designed and spaced intersections.

**8. Practice good site planning principles.**

Locate entrances away from intersection corners and turn lanes. Provide adequate space on the site for trucks to maneuver and for vehicles to queue at drive-through windows without backing or stacking on the roadway. Adjacent businesses should provide shared driveways and cross access so customers can make multiple stops without entering the arterial.

**9. Correct existing problems as opportunities arise.**

Adopt a long range vision for improving access along older, developed corridors. Correct unsafe accesses as individual parcels expand or redevelop. Work with affected property owners to consolidate driveways and provide internal access between parcels.

Fill in the supporting roadway network with local access roads as part of the redevelopment process.

**10. Coordinate local development plans with Mn/DOT and county road agencies.** Share plans for subdivisions, rezonings, and site plans with affected road authorities early in the development process. Contact Mn/DOT and the County Highway Department to talk about long range plans and development needs.

## **BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS**

New trail segments have recently been constructed along Highways 13 and 149. New trails have also recently been constructed on the following roads: Mendota Heights Road, Northland Road, and Wachtler Road. Dakota County has completed a segment of the North Urban Regional Trail from Delaware Avenue to Dodd Road.

The City of Mendota Heights continues to seek out and address gaps in the existing trail system. The trail system, as depicted on the Parks and Trails Map, serves the community as a recreational amenity and as an opportunity for multi-modal transit.

## **TRANSIT PLAN**

### **Public Transit Service**

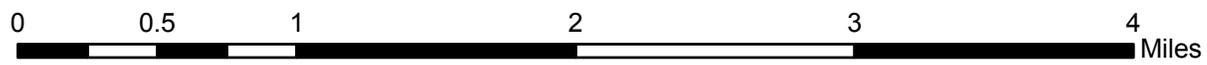
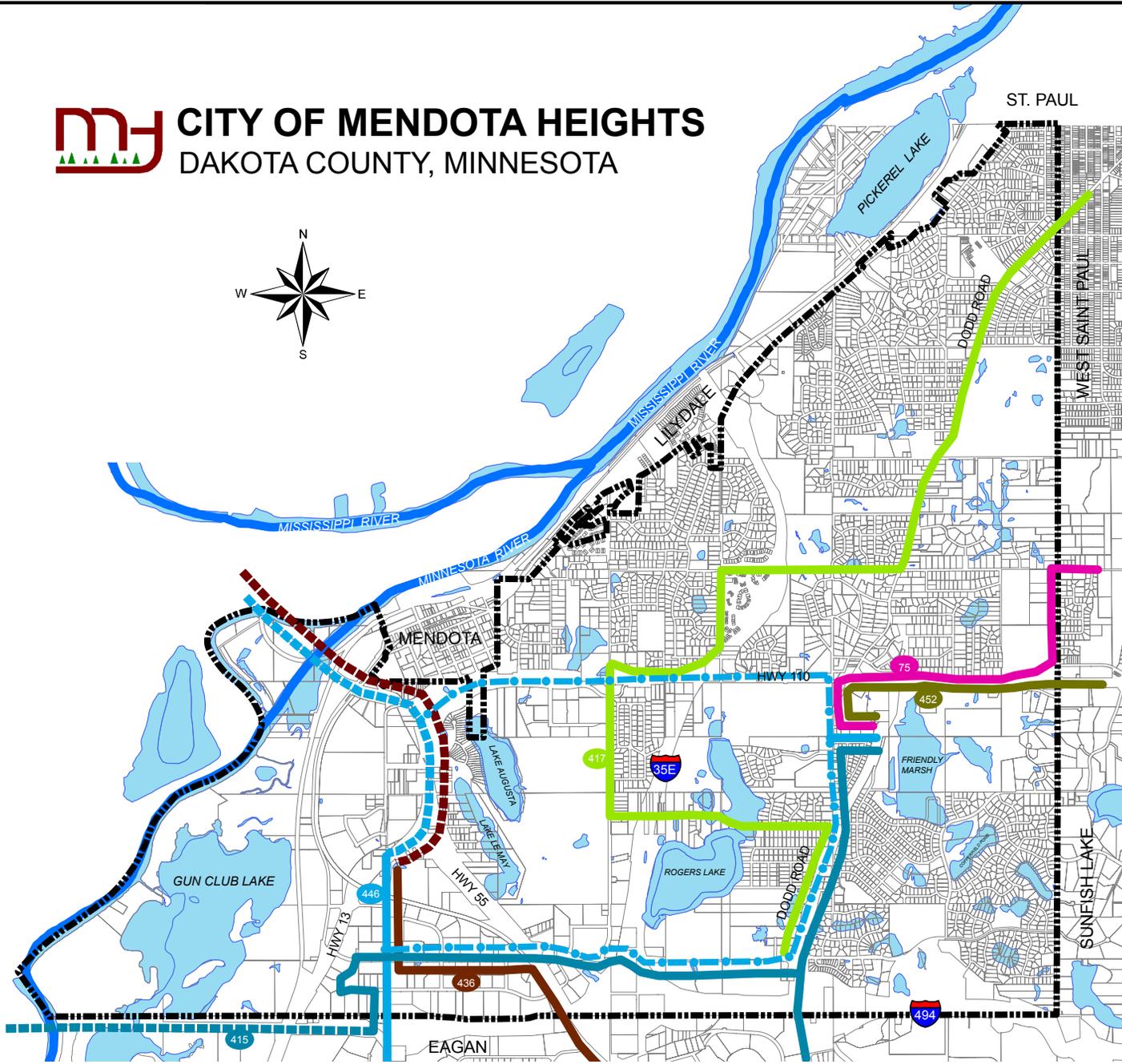
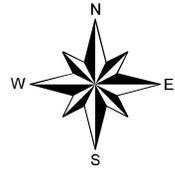
Mendota Heights is within the Metropolitan transit Taxing District. Mendota Heights is within Market III. Service options for Market Area III include peak-only express, small vehicle circulators, midday circulators, special needs para-transit (ADA, seniors), and ridesharing.

Regularly scheduled transit route service is provided by the Metro Transit, Metropolitan Transit Services, and the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority. There are six (6) transit routes that operate within the City of Mendota Heights. These bus routes provide service to downtown Minneapolis, St. Paul, the University of Minnesota, the Mall of America, as well as other suburban areas, including Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, and West St. Paul. Several express routes, as well as local limited routes, are available for use by community residents.

The City does not have a designated Park and Ride facility; however, some residents utilize the Mendota Plaza parking lot for this purpose.

Metro Mobility, which serves people who need specially-equipped vehicles for transportation, is offered throughout the Twin Cities and within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area. Dial-a-ride service for all community residents is provided by Dakota Areas Resources and Transportation for Seniors.

**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
 DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



**2030**  
**COMPREHENSIVE**  
**PLAN**

**Existing**  
**Transit**  
**Routes**

-  City Boundary
-  Major River
-  Lakes
-  Bus Route
-  Nonstop Service
-  Limited Service

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Source: City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County, MN DNR, and Metro Transit.

July 2008.

## **AVIATION PLAN**

Mendota Heights is a community directly affected by aircraft operations at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). Aircraft noise is a major issue for Mendota Heights because of the detrimental impacts of increased operations on the quality of life in existing neighborhoods and the impact of land use compatibility guidelines and noise contours on development options.

Since the opening of the 17/35, “North-South” runway, previous issues with the distribution of air traffic have been reduced. All residential areas in Mendota Heights were in conformance with the original aviation guidelines and their previous projections of air noise and air traffic. Until recently, Mendota Heights was the only city that adopted the original Metropolitan Council noise zones and guidelines and is the only city to adopt and enforce a Noise Attenuation Ordinance.

The Runway Use System at MSP relies heavily on “land compatibility” as a guiding principle for departure determination, thereby increasing the volume of traffic and the percentage of exclusive use of the southeast corridor, which was zoned commercial/industrial in cooperation with regional and local planning agencies. This increased traffic has impacted existing compatible residential neighborhoods in Mendota Heights.

The City of Mendota Heights has worked strenuously to address airport noise issues. A citizen Airports Relations Commission provides recommendations to the City Council on airport issues. This plan is a compilation of the City’s work and history regarding the airport. An annual plan of action outlines the City’s approach to future airport decisions and actions to monitor the impacts of the airport on the community. In addition to these local efforts, the City has adopted a Zoning Ordinance for MSP consistent with State and Federal requirements for height control jurisdictions.

Mendota Heights understands the importance of protecting airspace from potential electronic interference and obstructions to air navigation. Notification to the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) concerning potential obstructions to navigable airspace is of utmost importance to the City. To address this issue, Mendota Heights shall submit Form 7460 to notify the FAA of any potential obstructions.

## **AIRPORT – RELATED GOALS AND POLICIES**

The overall goals in relation to airport related issues are as follows:

1. Support improvements to keep MSP operating safely and efficiently.
2. To reduce negative airport impacts in Mendota Heights.
3. Work with the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) on joint planning efforts (including participating in Joint Airport Zoning Board proceedings).

4. To reduce aircraft noise through equitable distribution of flights among all communities located adjacent to MSP.
5. To work diligently with all noise issues and agencies to decrease aircraft noise in volume and to decrease the area of noise impacts.

### **AIRCRAFT NOISE POLICIES**

To address the issues described herein and to pursue the goals of the City, the following are the policies of the City of Mendota Heights:

1. Increase public participation and representation through the Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) and the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC).
2. Achieve noise reduction through advocating modified takeoff procedures and corridor compliance.
3. Advocate an equitable distribution of aircraft traffic and a more equitable runway use system.
4. Monitor the continued implementation of the Minneapolis/St. Paul (MSP) airport Comprehensive Plan.
5. Advocate for specific noise control measures through operational changes and advance technology.
6. Establish a physical capacity for the Mendota Heights/Eagan corridor and transfer general aviation use to other reliever airports.
7. Notify and work with MAC in the event that potential airspace obstructions are encountered.

### **HISTORY OF NOISE REDUCTION EFFORTS**

The City of Mendota Heights has addressed aircraft noise issues in several ways, including the following formal actions:

1. Membership in the NOC.
2. Modification of the Land Use Plan consistent with the established aircraft flight corridor.
3. Adoption of the Aircraft Noise Attenuation Ordinance.

4. Establishment of the citizen Airports Relations Commission (ARC) to study airport issues and make recommendations to the City Council.
5. Agreement to a contract with MAC prohibiting construction of a third parallel runway.

The City has worked through the various agencies on issues including: modification of aircraft landings and departures, supporting the installation of ANOMS, supporting the prohibition of Stage II aircraft, and educating homeowners about the Part 150 program.

The City of Mendota Heights planned its land use according to the flight corridor, as originally established, and adopted land use guidelines into an ordinance format in 1987. Operations have strayed to existing residential areas outside of the planned corridor however, significantly impacting several neighborhoods.

### **IMPACTS ON FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING**

Mendota Heights has planned its land uses in relation to the City's experience with air noise and the airport's aviation guidelines. New development and redevelopment in the areas affected by air noise is closely scrutinized, and has been accomplished with success through strict adherence to site planning and building design regulations.

The City of Mendota Heights has adopted the Metropolitan Council's model Sound Attenuation Ordinance and has enforced the provisions of this ordinance for all building permits in the Noise Zones since 1986. Town home projects are considered to be consistent with the Aviation Policy compatibility guidelines for Noise Zone 4, which allows residential land uses, as a conditional use. The conditional use for residential land use in Noise Zone 4 is satisfied through the enforcement of the City's Sound attenuation Ordinance, thereby, allowing residential construction to meet the Aviation Guide Plan's land use compatibility guidelines.

The City of Mendota Heights considers town home development to be consistent with Aviation Guide Plan land use compatibility guidelines for the following reasons:

The experience of the City of Mendota Heights with the Sound Attenuation Ordinance has shown that single family homes and multiplex residential structures (in Noise Zone 4) can be sound attenuated as successfully as larger buildings with shared entrances.

1. A continuing reduction in experienced air noise, as evidenced by the airport's planning documents, new runway construction, and enhancements in aircraft technology, will result in the protection of current Mendota Heights residential areas from the prospect of new negative air noise impacts.
2. The City of Mendota Heights will allow for the development of town home projects, consistent with the policy direction associated with the City's recent

housing developments around Lake Augusta, provided the project demonstrates compliance with the following:

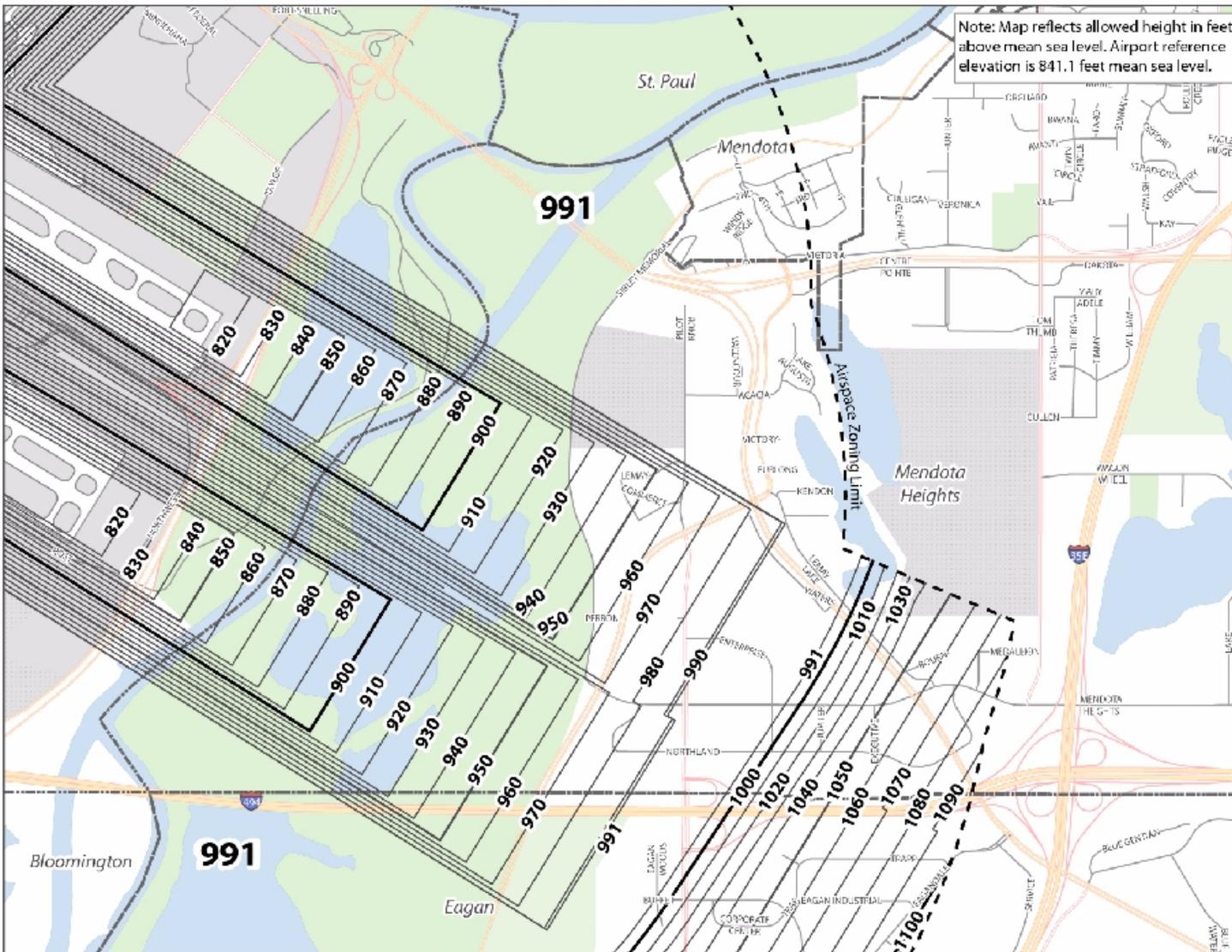
- a. Future town home developments shall be required to limit the exterior use on the site through unit design and the layout of the site plan.
- b. Future town home developments shall be designed compliant with the building requirements of the City's Sound Attenuation Ordinance.
- c. Future town home developers shall file notice against the property deeds notifying all future property owners that the parcels exist within the Metropolitan Council's Air Noise Zones.



**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
 DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



Note: Map reflects allowed height in feet above mean sea level. Airport reference elevation is 841.1 feet mean sea level.



**2030**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
 PLAN**

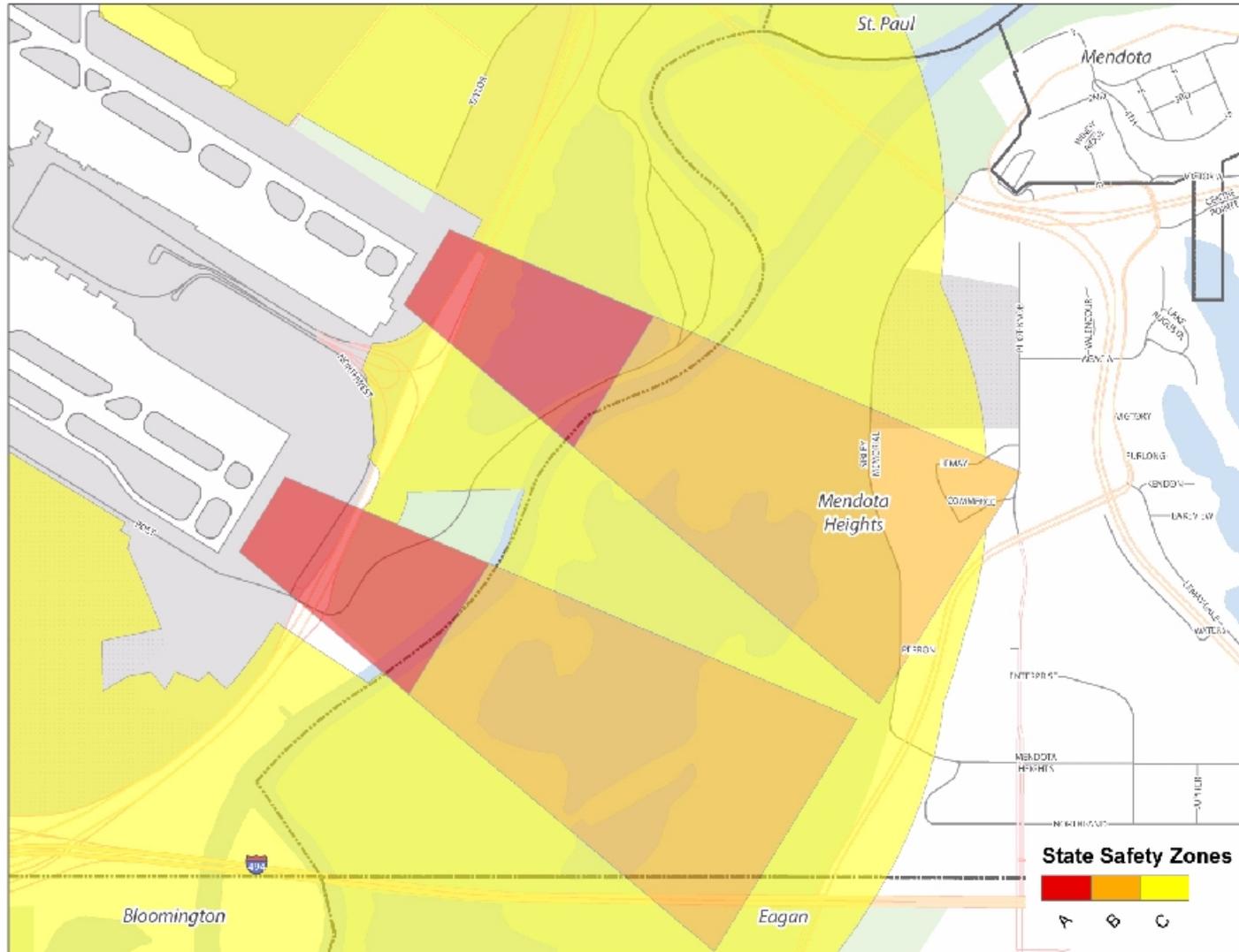
**Minneapolis Airport  
 Height Restrictions**

 **ROBINSON ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.**  
 8875 Oakwood Parkway, Suite 200, Eden Prairie, MN 55329  
 Phone: 952.941.1111 Fax: 952.941.1112

Source: Metropolitan Airports Commission, Jan 2010.



**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
 DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



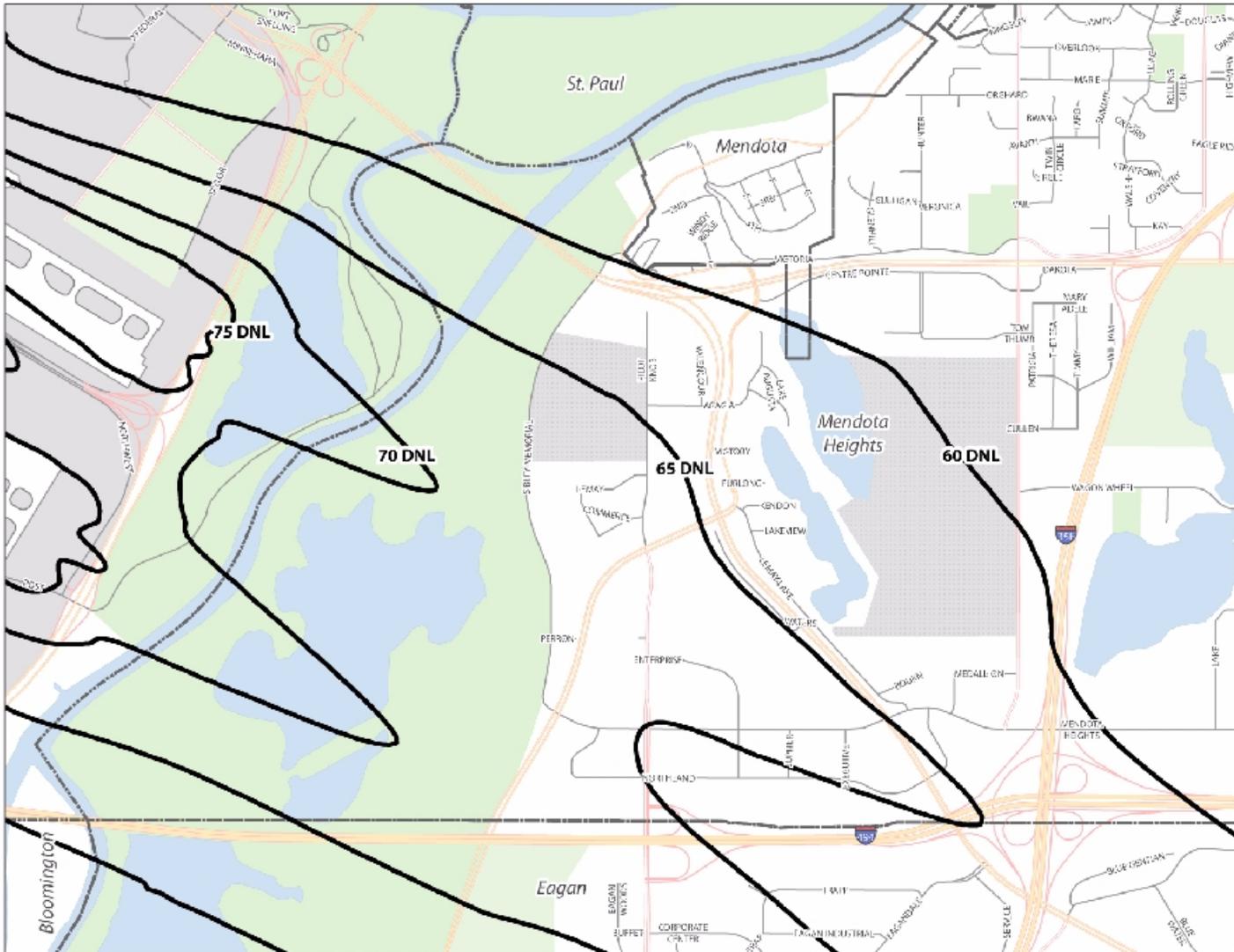
**2030**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
 PLAN**

**Minneapolis Airport  
 State Safety Zones**



**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**  
 DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



**2030**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
 PLAN**

**Minneapolis Airport  
 Noise Contours  
 (2007 Mitigated)**

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Source: Metropolitan Airports Commission,  
 Jan 2010.