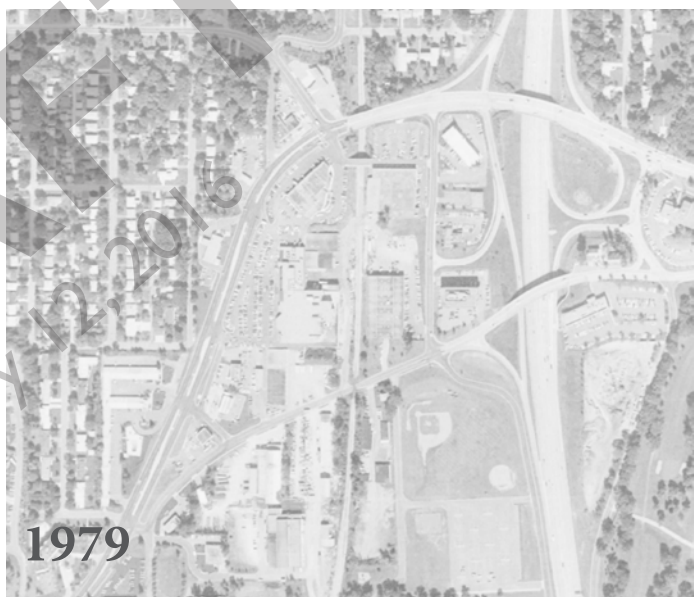
DRAFT
February 12, 2016

GRANDVIEW DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION STUDY

EXISTING CONDITIONS BRIEFING BOOK

CITY OF EDINA | FEBRUARY 2016 DRAFT



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTEXT | 4

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK | 9

PEDESTRIAN + BICYCLE | 13

LAND USE | 17

TRANSIT | 21

SAFETY | 23

ENVIRONMENT | 25

DEMOGRAPHICS | 28

DRAFT
February 12, 2016

Aerial photos showing GrandView change over time. Photos from the City of Edina.

CONTEXT

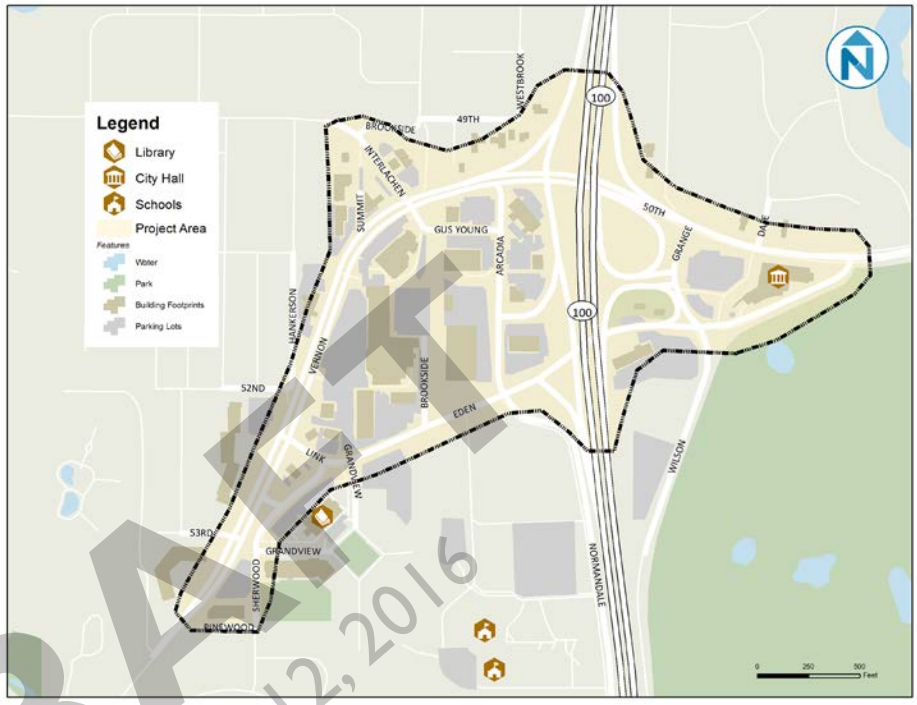
WHAT IS THIS STUDY?

In December of 2009, as a response to some unsuccessful planning studies, planning commissioners proposed a new kind of "community-led" Small Area Guide process for the GrandView District as a precursor to a Small Area Plan.

The Small Area Guide process started with a self-selected 18-person Community Advisory Team of residents, business and property owners, and a 10-person volunteer design team made up of architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and engineers, all of whom are Edina residents. This innovative and collaborative process was short but intense, including ten meetings in 20 days, resulting in the unanimous approval of seven guiding principles for the redevelopment of the GrandView District in May of 2010.

83.6

acreage of the GrandView District



Map of the study area (City of Edina)

DRAFT
February 12, 2016

Building on the momentum of the Small Area Guide process, City staff applied for and received a Met Council Livable Communities grant, enabling the hiring of a consultant team to work with a 52-member steering committee to create the GrandView District Development Framework.

This process began in April 2011 and was unanimously adopted by the City Council in April 2012. The Framework describes a catalytic new mixed use public/private project for the Public Workss Site that would set the tone for future development in the district.

7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES
FROM THE SMALL AREA GUIDE PROCESS

1. Leverage publically owned parcels
2. Meet the needs of businesses and residents
3. Turn barriers into opportunities
4. Pursue logical increments; make vibrant, walkable, and attractive
5. Organize parking; provide convenience
6. Improve movement for all ages and modes
7. Identity and unique sense of place

THIS STUDY WILL

- Identify needs, challenges and opportunities based on existing conditions and future "build-out" with lower-density and high-density scenarios
- Review, evaluate and affirm the recommended changes to the transportation network contained in the GrandView District Development Framework (2012)
- Offer specific recommendations but remain flexible enough to take into account future unknown challenges and opportunities
- Recommend prioritized, phased improvements tied to key redevelopment events
- Recommend improved connections to adjacent neighborhoods, with a focus on bicycle and pedestrian connections
- Analyze motorized travel to guide intersection and roadway modifications identified in the Development Framework
- Follow the Living Streets Policy and Implementation Plan guidelines.

DRAFT
February 12, 2016

In April 2013, the City Council discussed various strategies to implement the Framework and selected the Request for Interest (RFI) process to find a development partner for the Public Workss Site. A new GrandView Community Advisory Team (CAT) was convened to develop the RFI. For the first time since late 2009, the focus left the big GrandView vision where consensus had been building and zoomed in on the Public Workss Site where opinions differed on how much of site should be allocated for public vs. private uses.

The Council proceeded with an RFI for developers in June of 2014 and ultimately selected Frauenshuh as their developer partner. Together, the City and the Frauenshuh team worked with the community to arrive at a development program for the site that included a 60,000sf community center anchored by the Edina Art Center and Edina Senior Center, an 8,000sf restaurant, a 170-unit apartment building, public plazas, pedestrian friendly streets and amenities. The City Council received the development team report at the September 1, 2015 council meeting which included a traffic study and preliminary cost estimates.

Map of the study area in Edina and the Twin Cities (City of Edina, Census Bureau)

The Council approved the formation of a task force to work with Park and Recreation staff in an effort to determine the feasibility of a new community center. The task force hired a multi-faceted team led by HGA architects and engineers to facilitate community visioning and programming of a multi-generational community center. The work will include concept design and cost estimating, operational analysis and an arts market/feasibility analysis. The results of the community center study are intended to be complete in late May, at roughly the same time as this transportation study.

OTHER POLICY AND PLANNING WORK

While the GrandView process has been progressing, the Transportation Commission was working with staff on a Living Streets Policy, approved by the City Council in August of 2013. By May of 2015, a Living Streets Plan was approved by the Council outlining in detail how the policy will be implemented.

During this same period of time, the Metropolitan Design Center at the University of Minnesota approached the City about the idea of building a lid over Highway 100, similar to early sketches developed during the 2010 GrandView Guide Plan process. MnDOT has become increasingly interested in the lid concept as a way to create value from under-utilized State-owned land.

PROJECT GOALS

The primary purpose of this project is to prepare a comprehensive transportation study for the long-term redevelopment of the GrandView District that guides public and private investments in the area.

PREVIOUS PLANS + STUDIES

Several previous studies and planning efforts have focused on the GrandView District. The project team will review these documents and relevant elements of other citywide plans and documents. These documents include (but may not be limited to) the following:

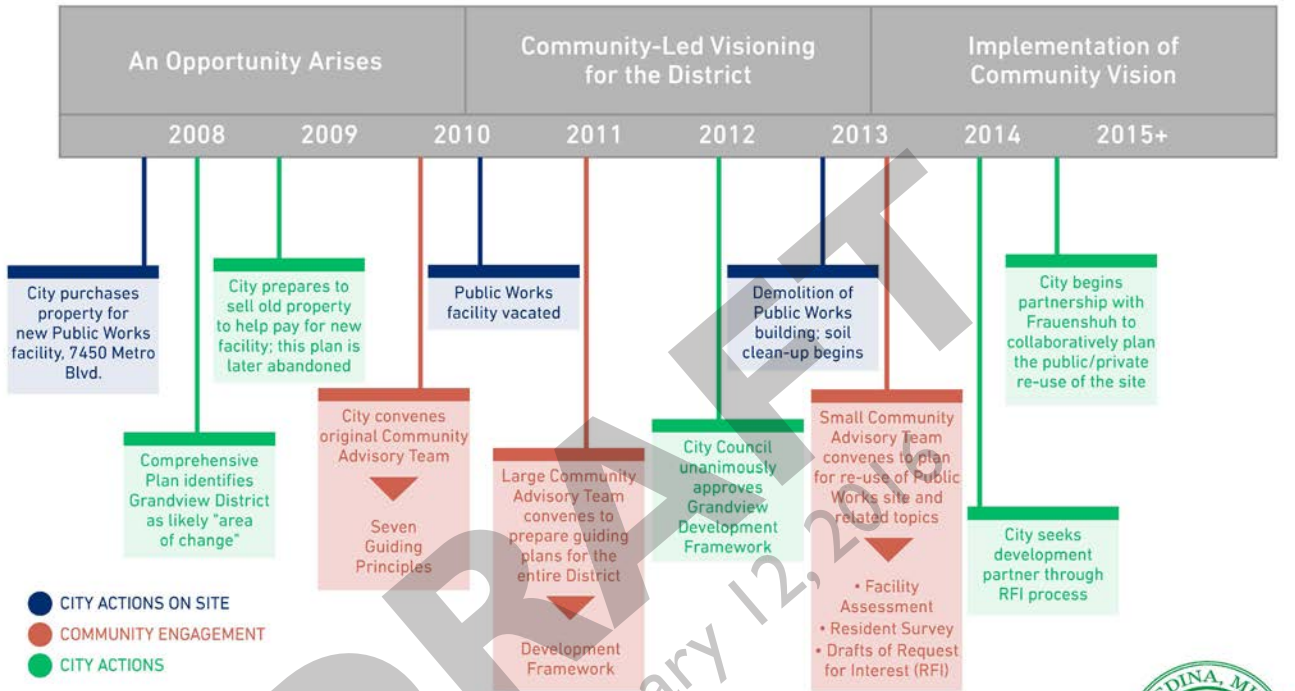
- GrandView District Development Framework (2012)
- GrandView Former Public Workss Site Traffic Study (pending 2015)
- GrandView Former Public Workss Site Redevelopment Planning (pending 2015)
- GrandView Transportation Summary prepared by consultant (March 6, 2014)
- Highway 100 Lid Preliminary Concept (July 2014)
- Edina Comprehensive Plan (2008)
- Living Streets Plan (2015)
- City of Edina Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan (2007)
- Northeast Edina Transportation Study (2006)
- Metropolitan Council 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (2015, see Chapter 6 for transit investments, including Figure 6-5 for Express Bus/Park-and-Rides and Chapter 7 for bicycle and pedestrian investments, including Figure 7-2 for regional bicycle trails)
- Hennepin County Pedestrian Plan (2013)
- Hennepin County 2040 Bicycle Transportation Plan (2015)
- City of Edina 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Plan (2014)

The City of Edina's GrandView District Transportation Study seeks to identify challenges and opportunities, evaluate previously recommended transportation changes, and offer additional recommendations to improve the area's transportation system. The findings of this study will inform planning and investment in the area for decades to come, and is an opportunity to tailor transportation infrastructure and development in a progressive multi-modal and mixed-use framework that meets the community's long-term needs.

DRAFT
February 16, 2016

GRANDVIEW HISTORY

GrandView Planning Timeline



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

Spanning 125 years, the GrandView District has evolved and changed throughout its history. In 2008 the Edina Comprehensive Plan identified the GrandView area as a "Potential Area of Change". The GrandView District has always changed and achieved a unique perspective among residents and admirers of Edina. Transportation infrastructure has long been an ally to the economic and cultural improvements of the area. In 1913, the Dan Patch Rail Line was developed through the high ground east of Brookside Avenue, providing passenger service to Minneapolis from 1915 to 1942. In 1927, new Highway 169/212 (current Vernon Avenue) was cut through the District, bringing new businesses including the Biltmore Motel and several restaurants. Over the years, the GrandView area has hosted cafes, restaurants, gas stations, hardware stores, office buildings, a funeral home, and the widely recognized Jerry's enterprises, a longtime business in the District.

The District continued to evolve during the 80s and 90s, where economic growth encouraged the distinct commercial aspect of the area. Currently, the GrandView District sits between multiple access points: 50th street, Vernon Avenue, Highway 100, Eden Avenue, and Arcadia Avenue. The District provides an entryway into several memorable cultural and historic sites in Edina, including City Hall, 50th and France, the Country Club District, Interlachen, the historic Grange hall and school house, and the Edina Library.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT

Photo of the study area.

No new development has occurred in the GrandView District since the GrandView Square development including condominiums, office, parking, library and senior center in the early 2000's. Prior to that, the newest development was the mid-1980's Jerry's office tower and municipal parking ramp.

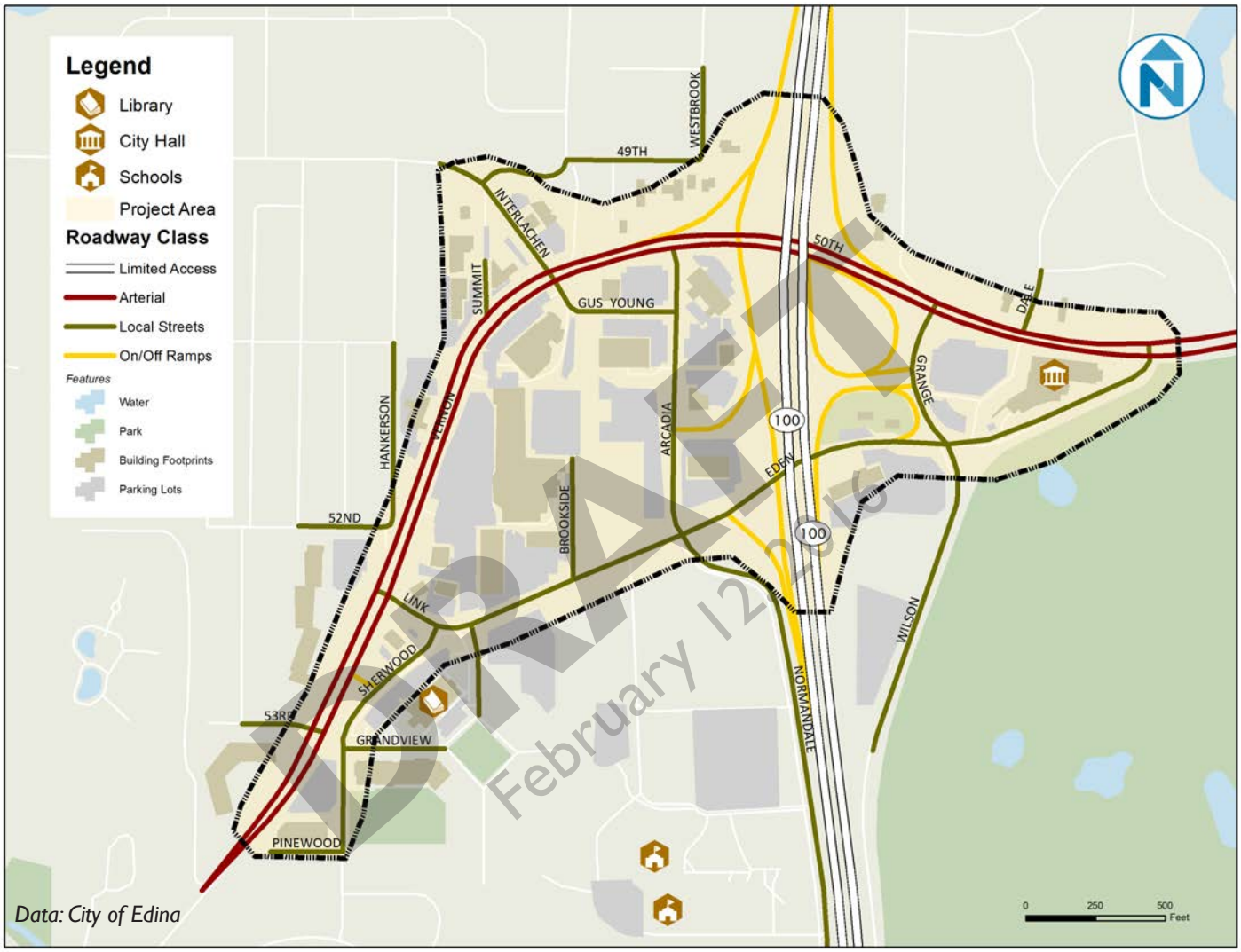
The Eden Avenue Grill added a sunporch to the south side of their building in 2014 and is currently undergoing a major interior remodel. Many other businesses have remodeled their interiors, including Jerry's grocery store, Davanni's, GrandView Tire and Auto and Edina Liquor.

In 2011, Jerry's enterprises sold their hardware store location to Walgreens and moved the hardware store into a former pharmacy space adjacent to the grocery store. The CSM retail building on Gus Young Lane immediately north of the Public Workss Site has consistently updated tenant spaces through the years.

Two significant demolition projects have created development opportunity in the District. Our Lady of Grace church (OLG) purchased the former Wanner Property, demolishing several small industrial buildings. Meanwhile, the City demolished the old Public Workss building in 2013.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

STREETS



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

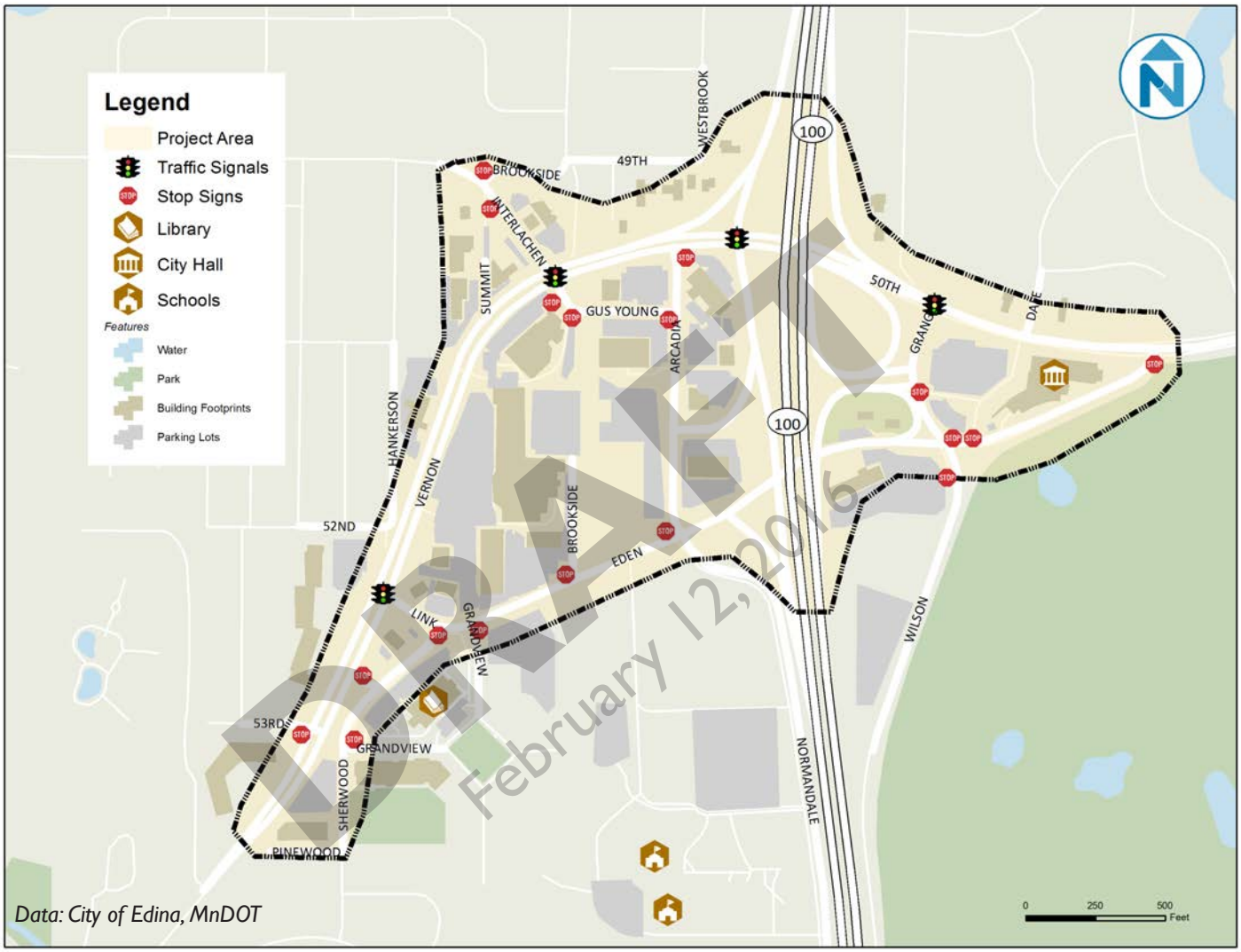
The GrandView area is bounded by Vernon Avenue and Eden Avenue and bisected by Highway 100 and the active CP freight rail corridor. The remaining local streets are a patchwork of discontinuous pieces. The excessive transportation infrastructure visible today is the remnant of Highway 169/212 intersecting with Highway 100, before Highway 169/212 was relocated to its present location.

The sweeping curves and width of Vernon Avenue were appropriate for a highway, but currently, they form a barrier to the neighborhoods on either side.

The excessive entrance and exit ramps on both sides of Highway 100 occupy valuable real estate, impede pedestrian and bicycle movement, and create unfriendly highway merges for motorists.

Eden Avenue is designated as a primary bike route through the District while Vernon Avenue and Interlachen Boulevard are designated as secondary bike routes. In general, bicycle and pedestrian facilities range from poor to non-existent, effectively excluding the surrounding neighborhoods of from the businesses and public facilities at GrandView.

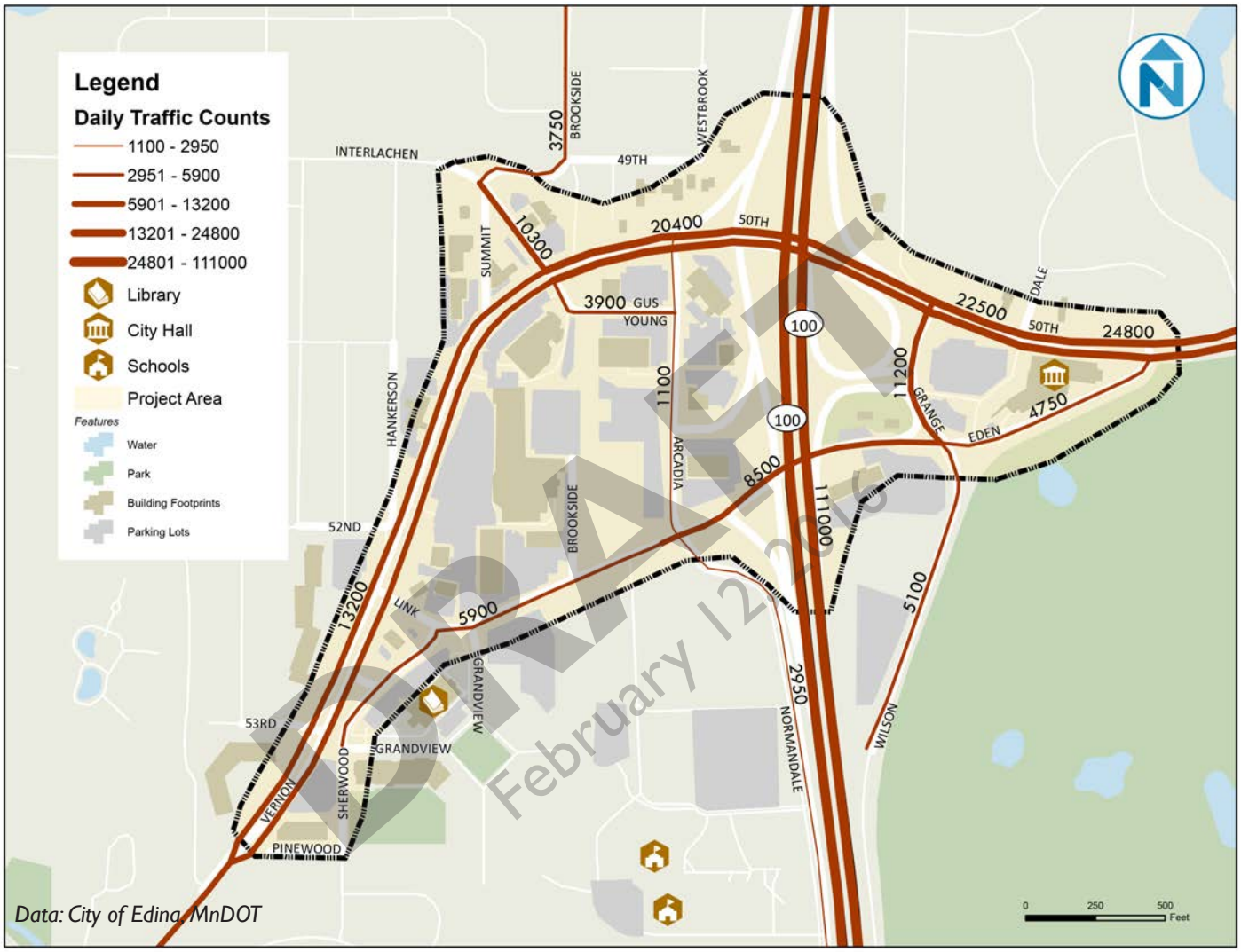
TRAFFIC SIGNALS + STOP SIGNS



Most intersections along Vernon Avenue are signalized, while stop signs are more common on smaller side streets and on Eden Avenue.

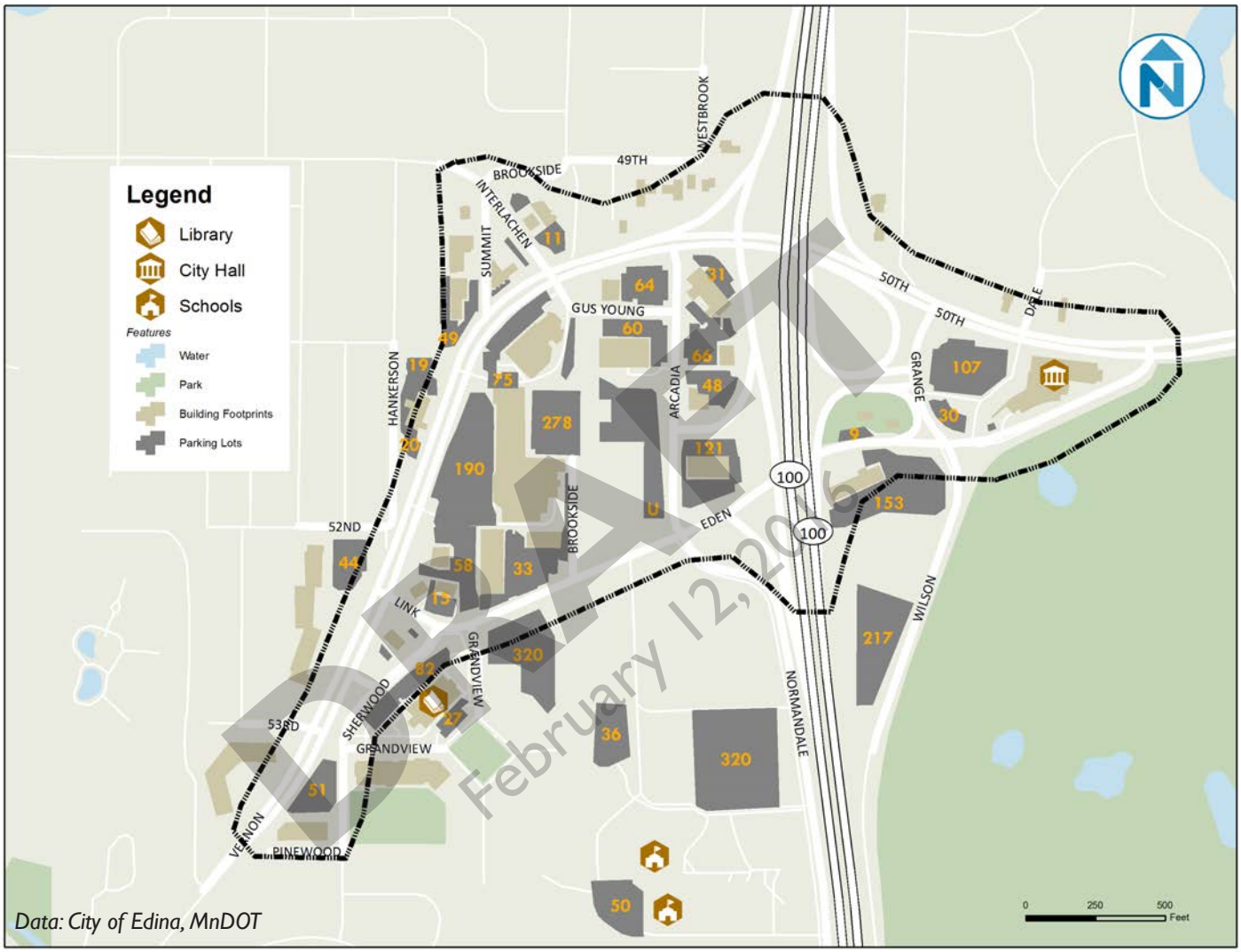
Community members have provided feedback that some intersections are not safe due to the wrong signal or stop configuration.

TRAFFIC COUNTS



Naturally, Highway 100 is the busiest road passing through the study area, carrying over 110,000 vehicles per day. The next-busiest street, Vernon Avenue, carries one-fifth that amount, with just 22,500 vehicles east of Highway 100 and 20,400 vehicles west of Highway 100. Interlachen Boulevard and Eden Avenue are other well-used streets in the study area, though they carry just 10,300 and 8,500 vehicles, respectively.

PARKING



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

There is extensive parking in the study area. Parking lots cover BLANK percentage of the study area, while over 2500 parking spaces are available. In general, parking appears to be adequate for existing uses with the exception of during peak events at the Senior Center and Library.

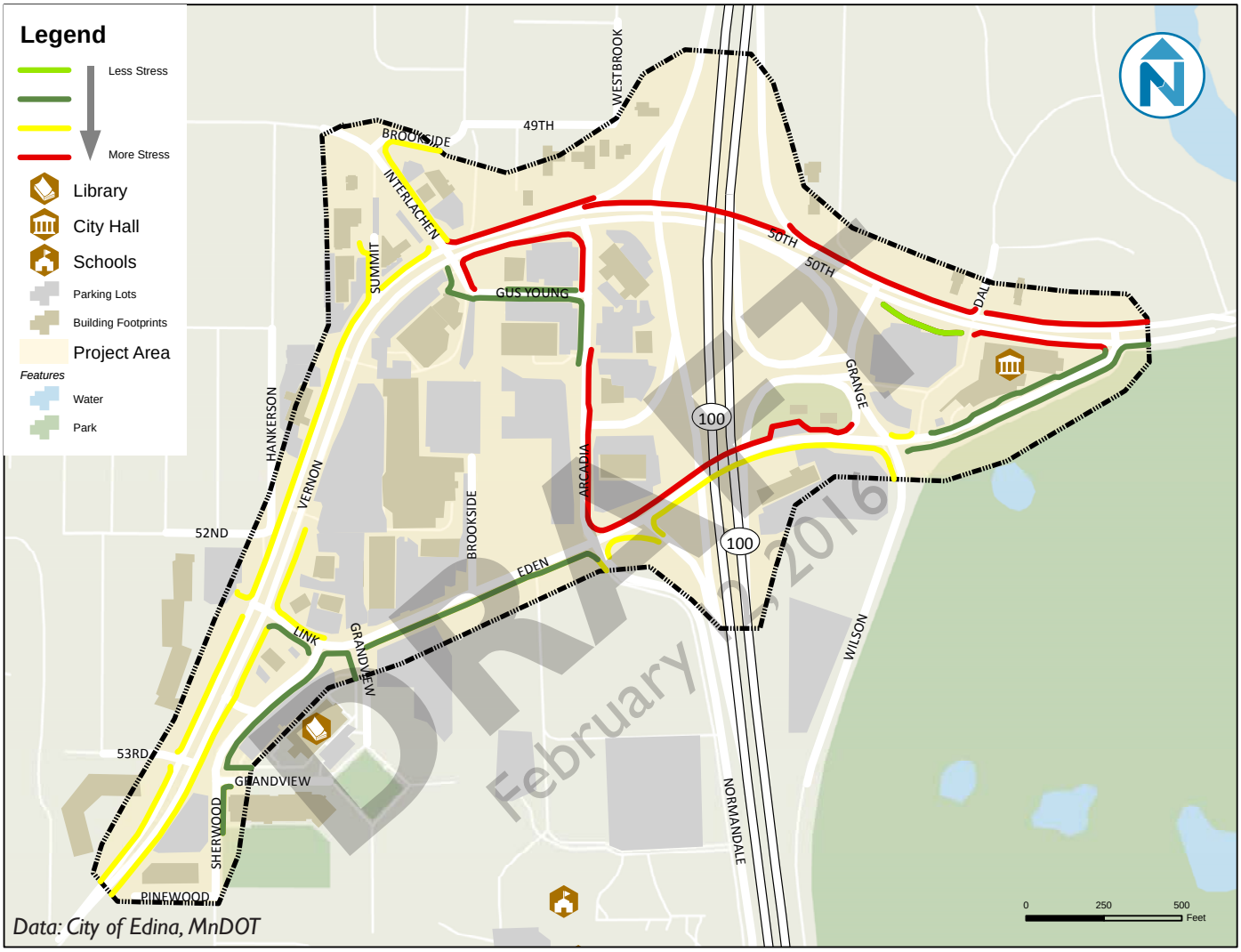
2552
marked parking spaces in GrandView (calculated using aerial photos)

16.7%
of GrandView is used for parking

13.96
acres of parking in GrandView

PEDESTRIAN + BICYCLE

SIDEWALKS



This is a map of sidewalks in the Edina GrandView area. Gaps in the sidewalk network exist along one or both sides of the following roadways:

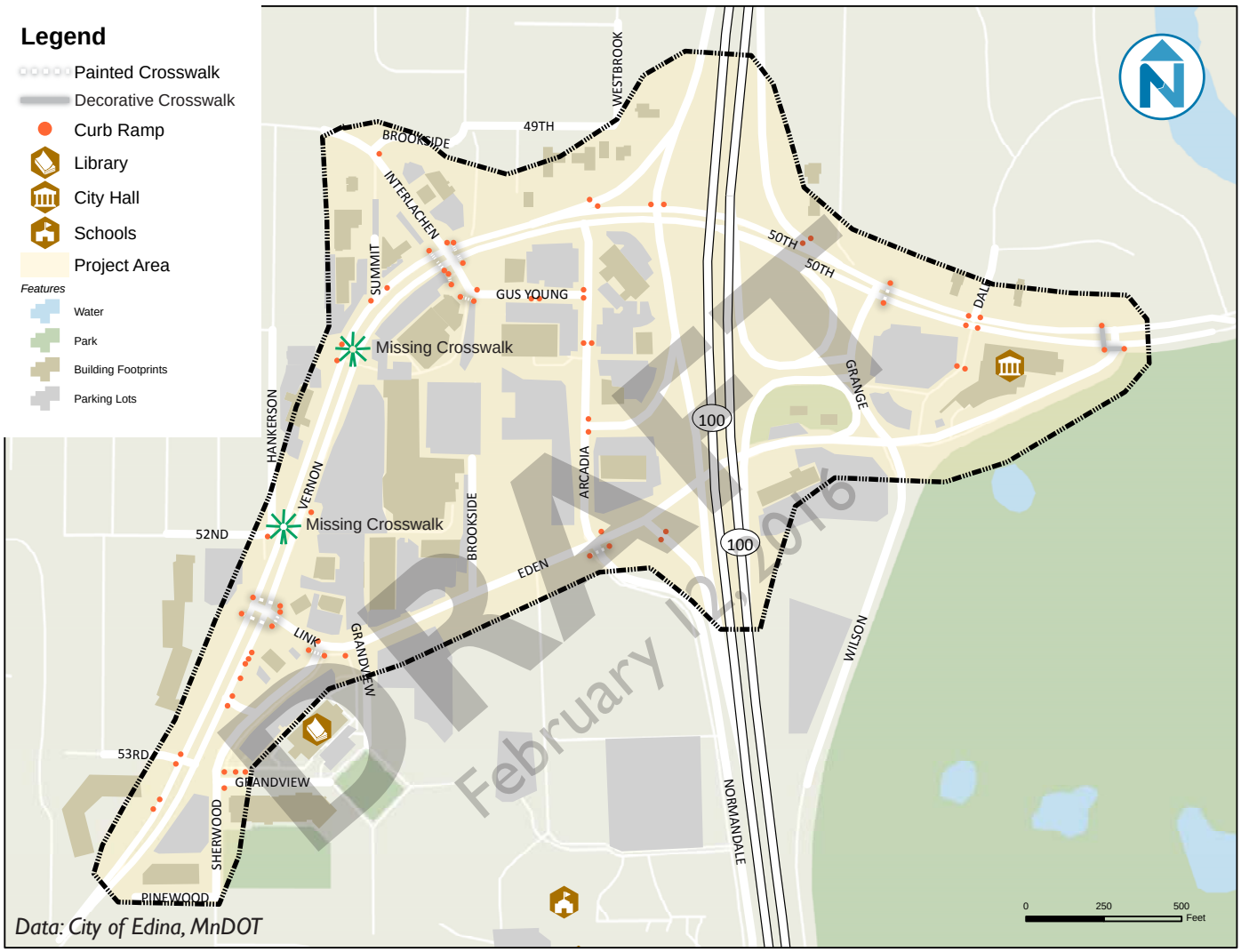
- 52nd
- 53rd
- Arcadia
- Brookside
- Eden
- Grange
- Gus Young
- Hankerson
- Interlachen
- Pinewood
- Sherwood
- Summit
- Vernon

The on- and off-ramps for State Route 100 pose concerns for pedestrians' comfort, particularly when traveling along 50th Street and Eden Avenue.

The map represents the relative stress level a pedestrian might experience when walking in the project area. Routes are scored based on proximity to the roadway and roadway traffic volumes. Since almost all sidewalks in the project area are 5 feet wide, sidewalk width was not a major consideration. Portions of 50th Street and Arcadia Avenue scored highest in terms of pedestrians' estimated stress level. Segments of Eden Avenue, a block of 50th Street, Gus Young Lane, and Link Road scored lowest in terms of estimated stress level.

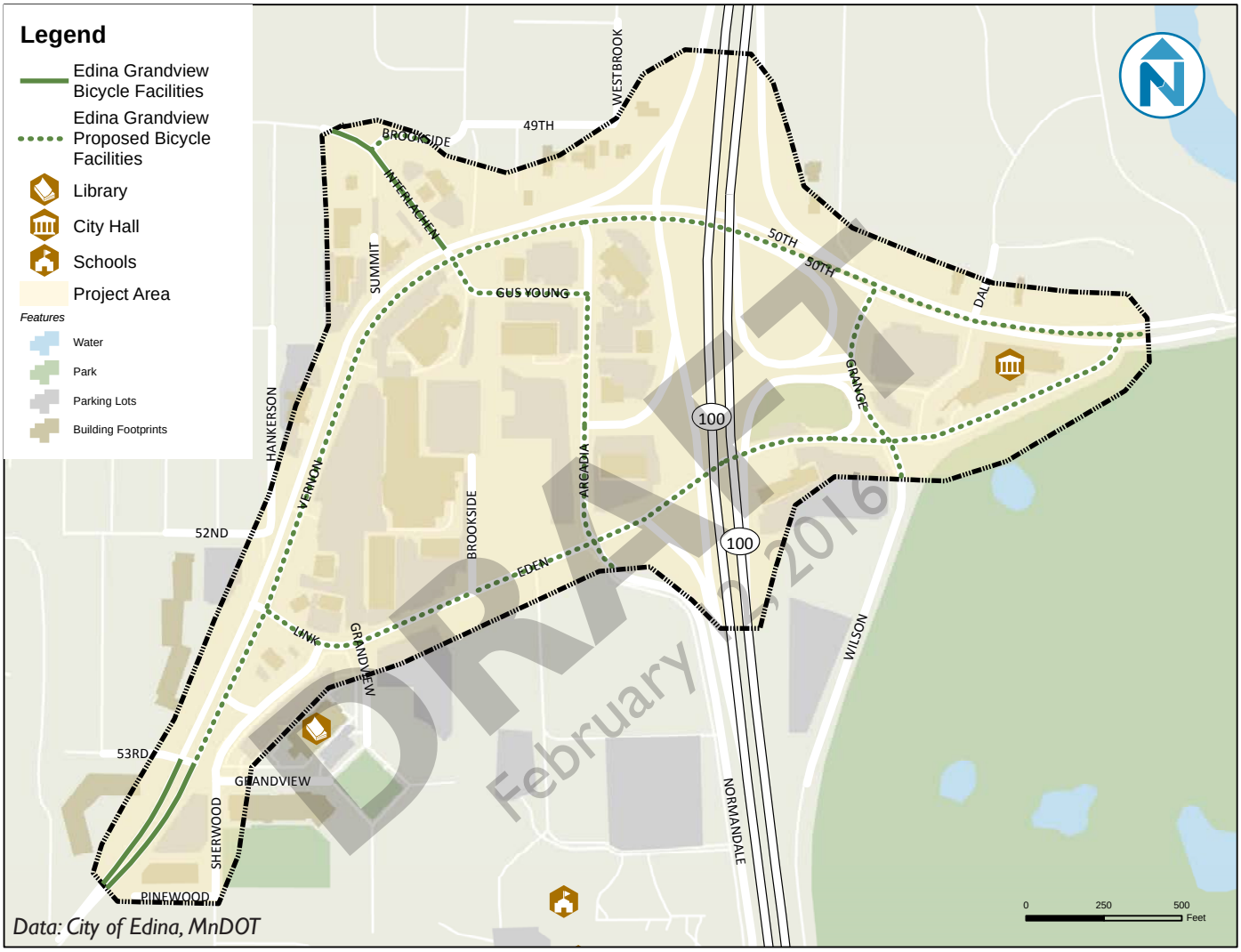
PEDESTRIAN + BICYCLE

CROSSWALKS + CURB RAMPS



This is a map of crosswalks and curb ramps in the study area. Dashed white lines with gray backing show painted, continental-style crosswalks. Solid gray lines show decorative crosswalks. The latter is found at one intersection (Eden Avenue and W 50th St) near Edina City Hall. Orange circles show locations with curb ramps. All crosswalks within the study area feature curb ramps.

BICYCLE NETWORK



This is a map of the study area's existing and proposed bicycle facilities. Vernon Avenue currently has bicycle lanes on both sides of the street, south of W 53rd Street. Bicycle lanes are also found on Interlachen Boulevard; they begin at Boyce Street on Blake Road and extend to the intersection of Interlachen Boulevard and Vernon Avenue S. Previously produced plans propose bike lanes along:

- Arcadia
- Brookside
- Grange
- Gus Young
- Link/Eden
- Vernon/50th

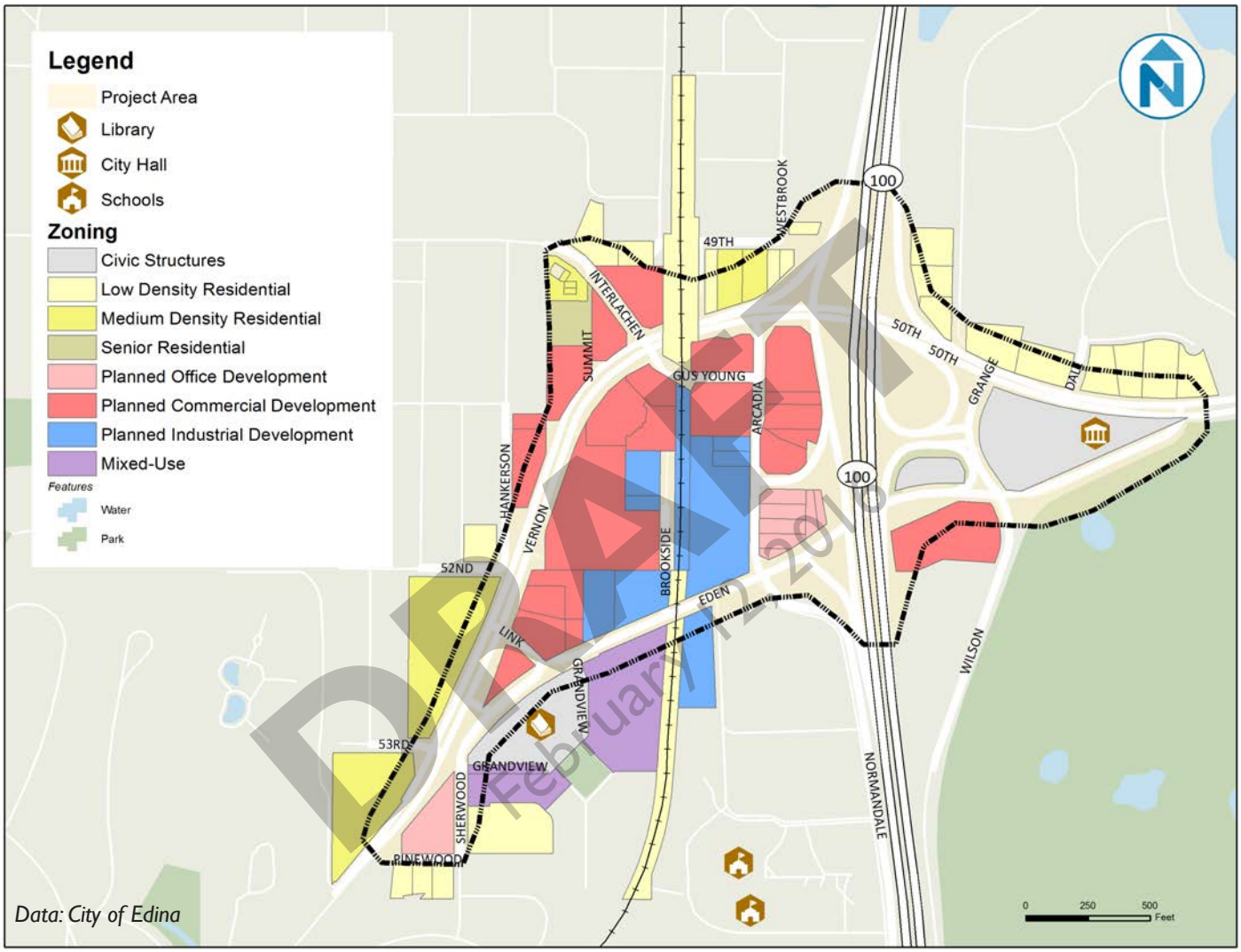
BICYCLE LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS

This map shows the results of a Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analysis of the study area. LTS investigates roadway characteristics (i.e., speed, number of lanes, presence of bike facilities) to estimate a given route's stress level for an adult bicyclist. Stress levels increase with an LTS score. Most roadways in Edina GrandView scored LTS 4, indicating a stressful roadway environment, which is not accessible for a casual bicycle rider. Bicycle lanes on Interlachen Boulevard and Vernon Avenue score LTS 2 and LTS 1, respectively, indicating their accessibility to the general population.

No routes scored LTS 3, which would indicate a moderate level of traffic stress. Well-designed bicycle facilities can decrease a route's level of traffic stress.

LAND USE

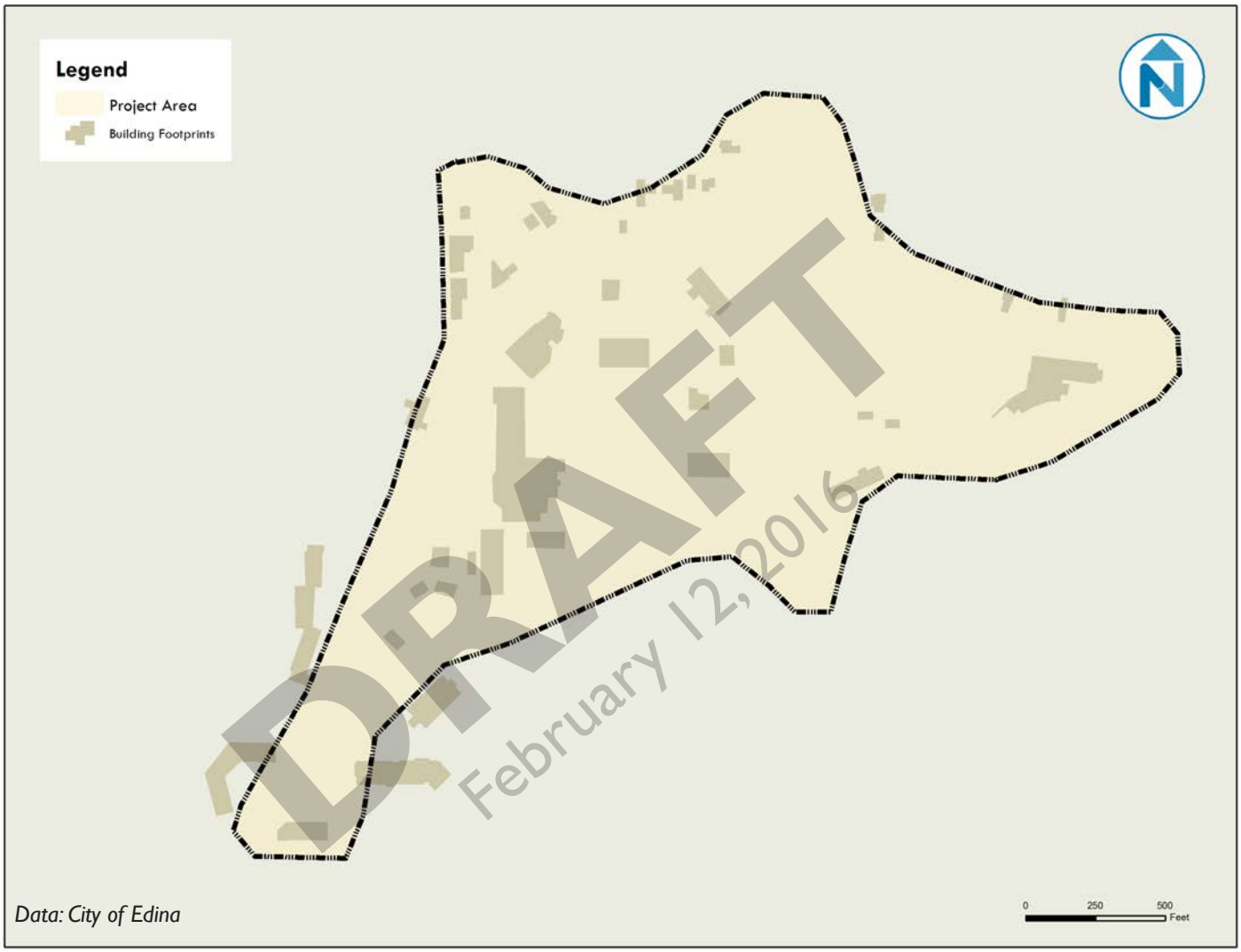
ZONING



Data: City of Edina

The study area is zoned a mix of land uses, though it is predominantly commercial in nature. Commercial and industrial zoning dominates the area bounded by Vernon Avenue, Eden Avenue, and Route 100, while residential zoning is more common north and west of Vernon Avenue. Mixed-use zoning occurs south of Eden Avenue.

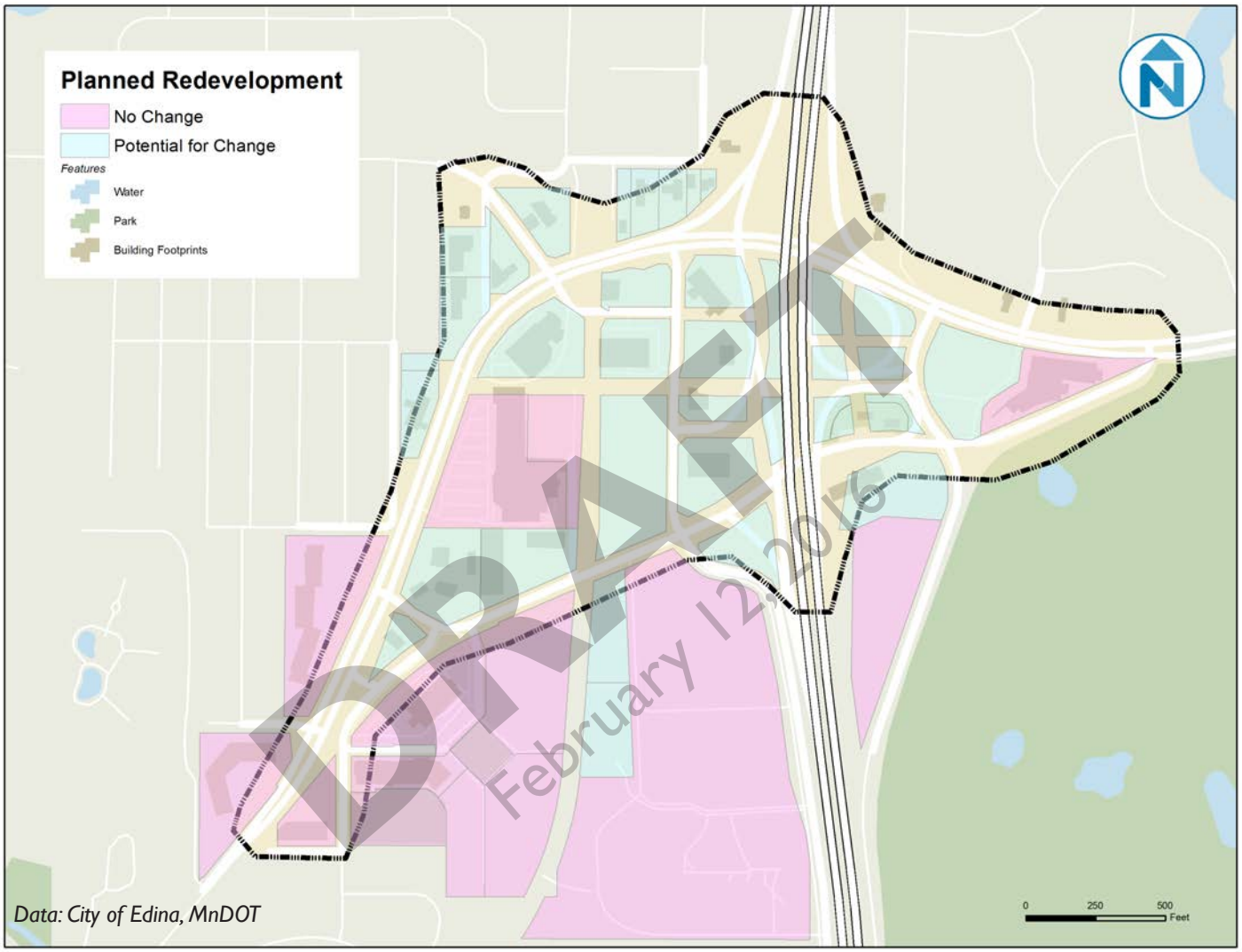
BUILDING FOOTPRINTS



Like many suburban areas built during the mid-20th century, the GrandView District consists primarily of low-rise, horizontal building types, such as strip malls, drive-thrus, and office parks. Most buildings are set back behind large parking lots. The result is an urban fabric that consists mainly of buildings scattered among large open spaces.

More recent development, such as GrandView Square, has a more urban pattern with buildings tightly clustered around streets and public spaces.

POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE



Many of the parcels in the GrandView district have the potential to change significantly if the GrandView District Framework Plan or the GrandView Green are implemented. Others are fairly stable and seem unlikely to change in the planning timeframe of this study. Understanding the potential for change helps us predict how much additional traffic may be generated by development in this area.

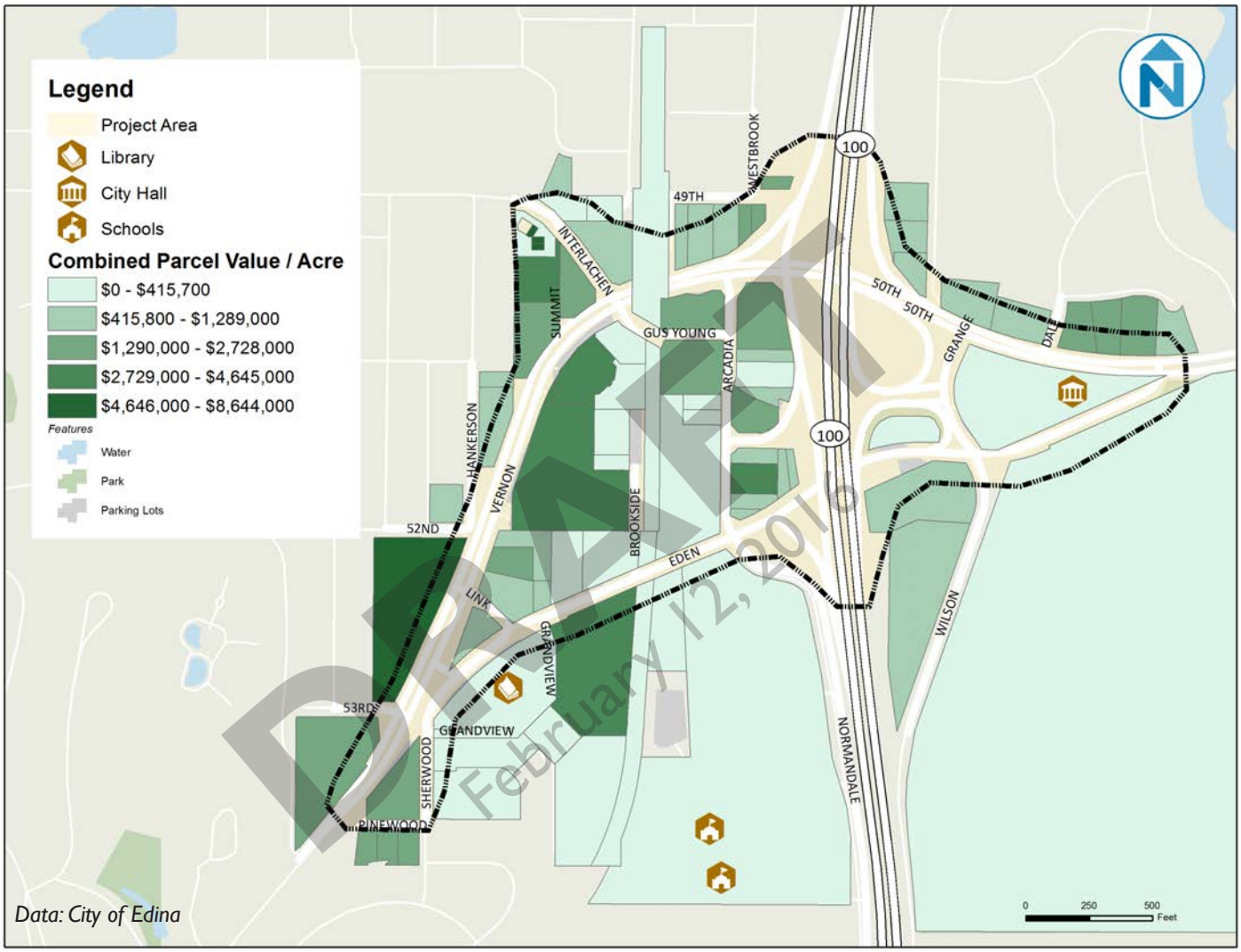
959

new units in GrandView if the land is developed at 30 units/acre

1917

new units in GrandView if the land is developed at 60 units/acre

LAND VALUES



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

Land values per acre vary widely throughout the study area. The highest-value properties are commercial and residential uses along Vernon Avenue.

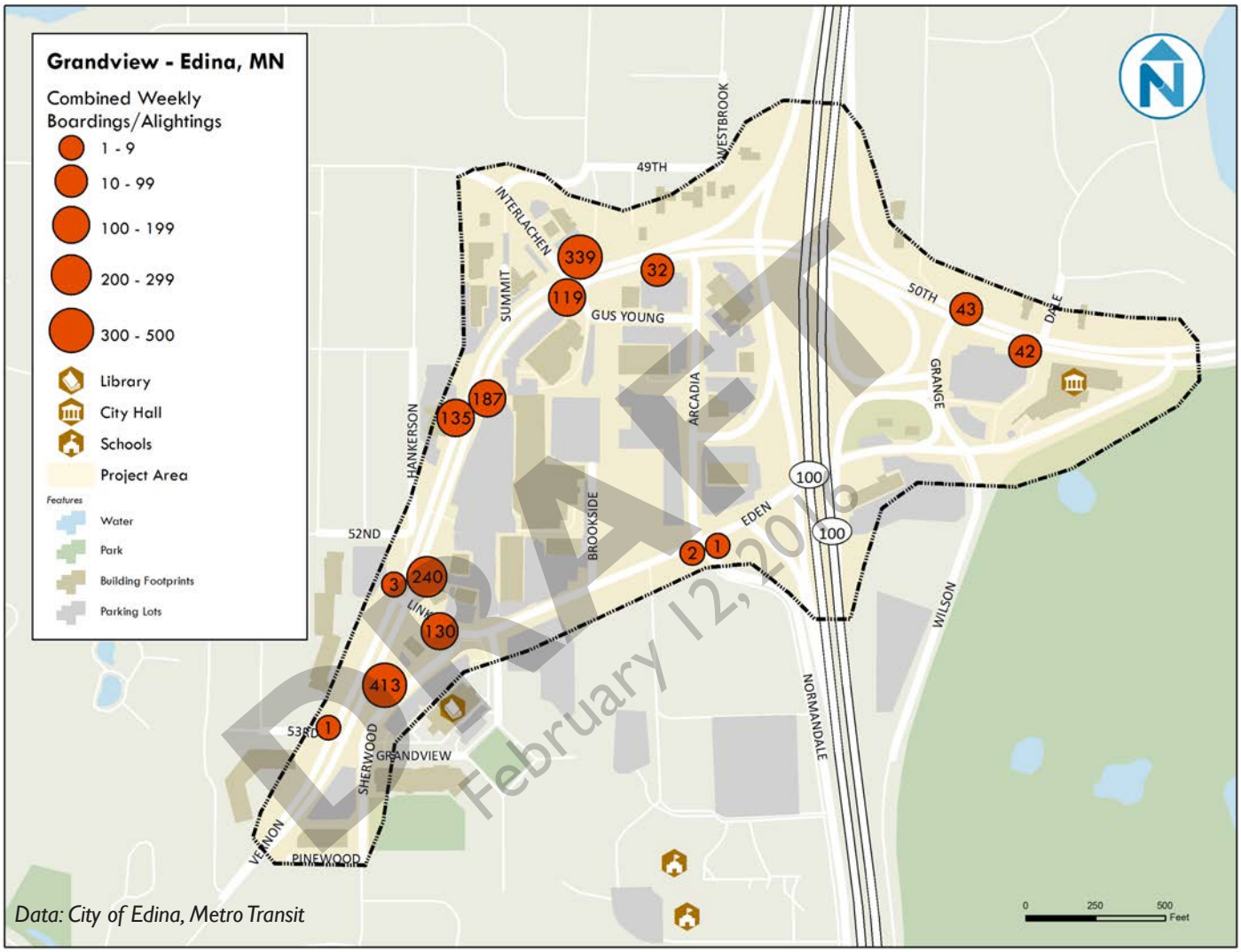
$2,000,000

The average value per acre of land in GrandView

TRANSIT NETWORK

ROUTE	FREQUENCY	SERVICE
46	15-30 minutes	Weekdays
146	15-20 minutes	Rush hour, peak direction
568	One trip	Rush hours, peak direction
587	30 minutes	Rush hour, peak direction

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP



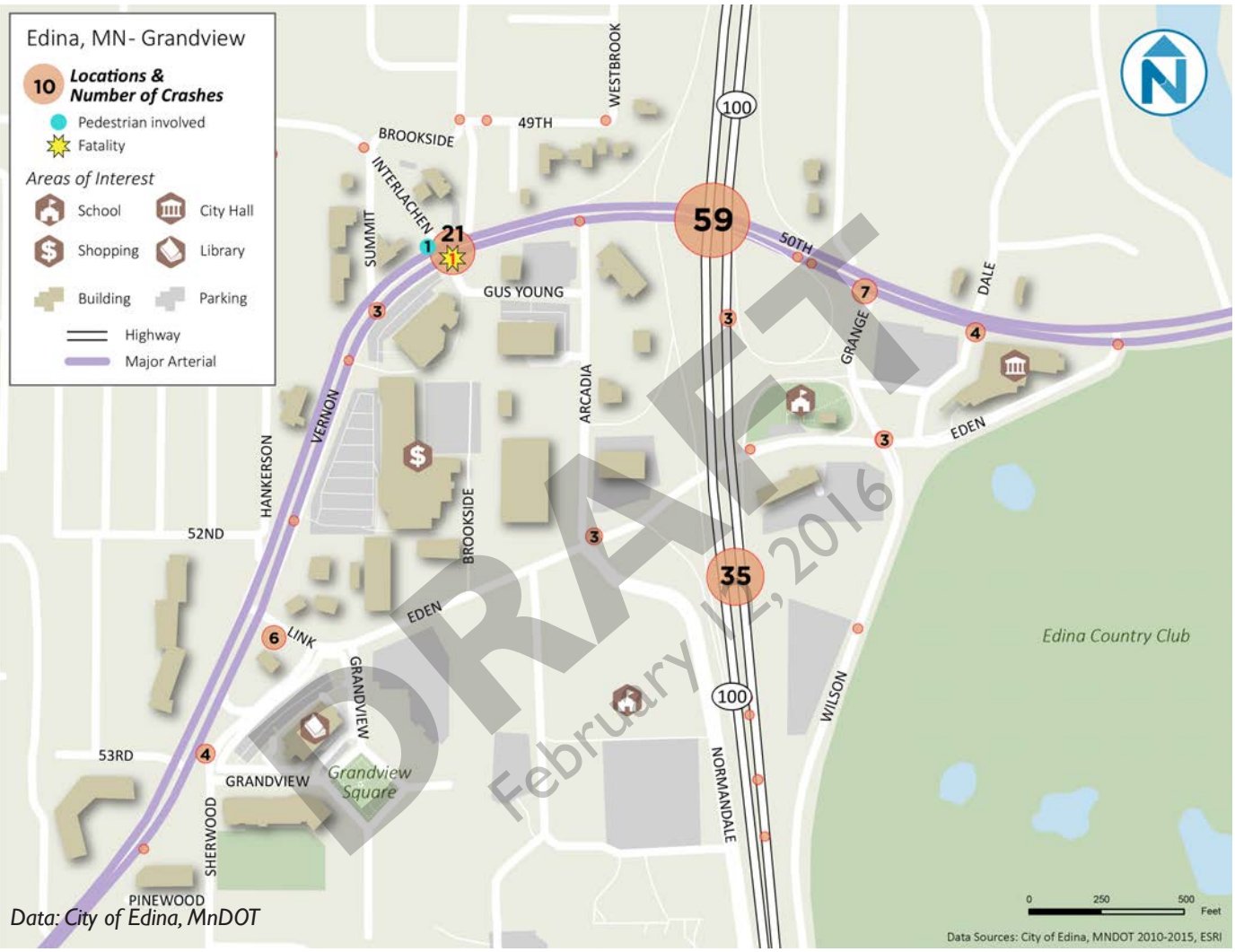
DRAFT February 12, 2016

This is a map of transit ridership. Overall, the busiest bus stops are located along Vernon Avenue. The most boardings and alightings are at Vernon and Interlachen Boulevard, followed by Vernon and Eden Avenue.

1,687

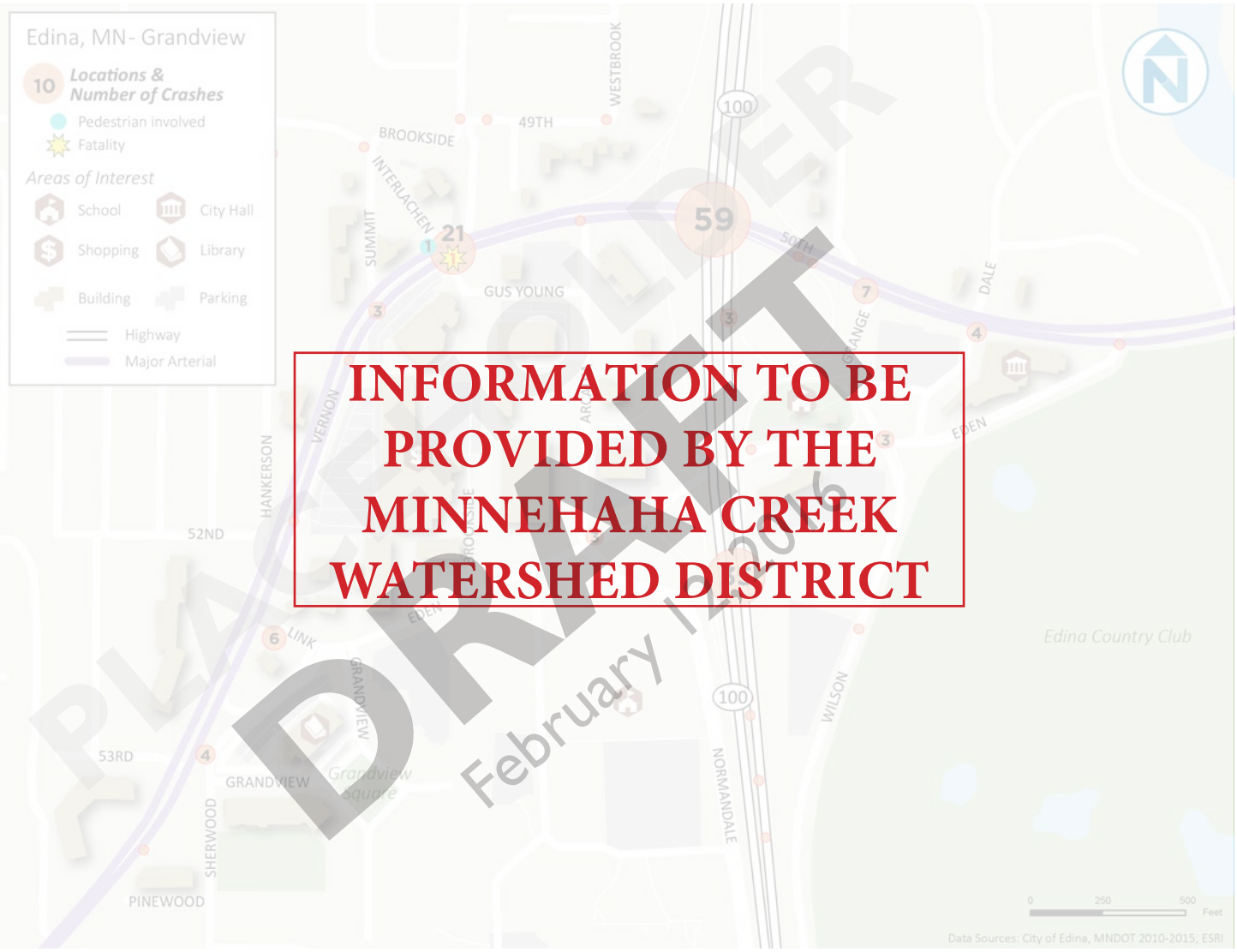
transit boardings and alightings each week in the GrandView District

AUTO, BIKE + PED COLLISIONS



The Highway 100 interchange is the site of many automobile collisions in the study area, followed by the intersection of Vernon Avenue and Interlachen Boulevard. There are just one pedestrian collision and one fatality, both of which occurred at that intersection as well.

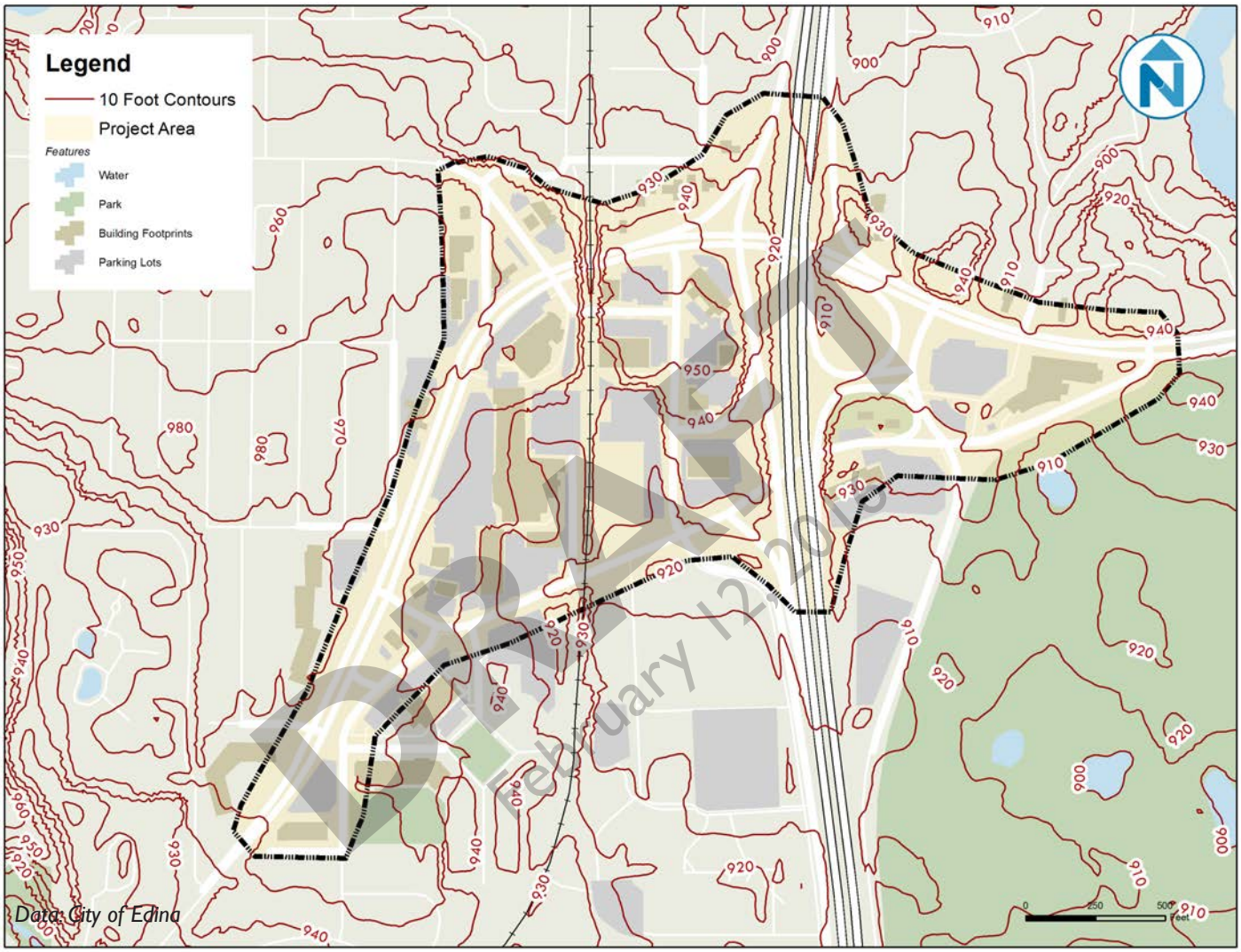
IMPERVIOUS SURFACE



INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

Information to be provided by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

TOPOGRAPHY

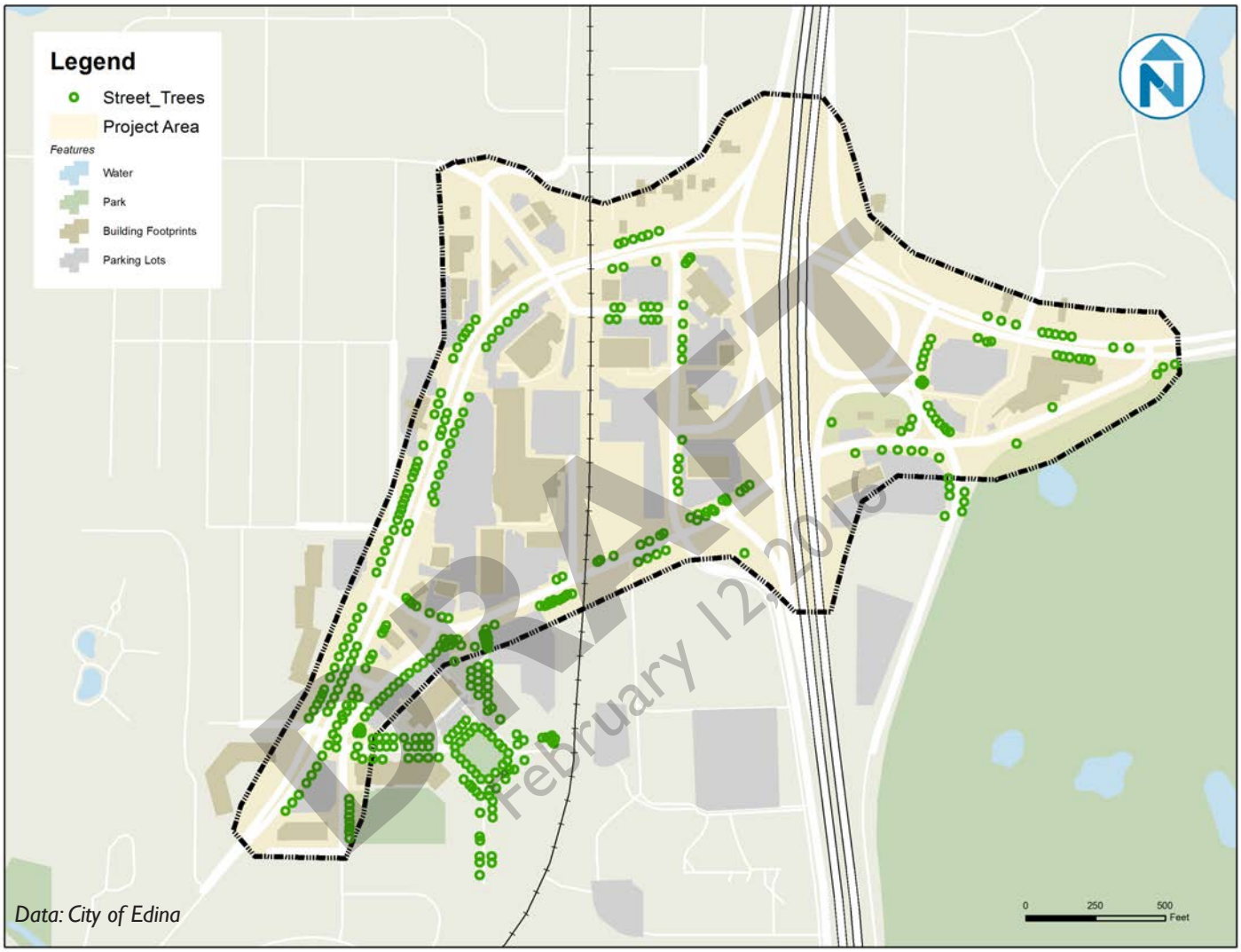


The study area is generally flat with a gentle slope from north to south. However, there is a significant change in elevation around the railroad line and Highway 100.

SEWER SYSTEMS

There are a variety of sewer utilities serving the GrandView district, including sewers, manholes, inlets, and lift stations.

STREET TREES

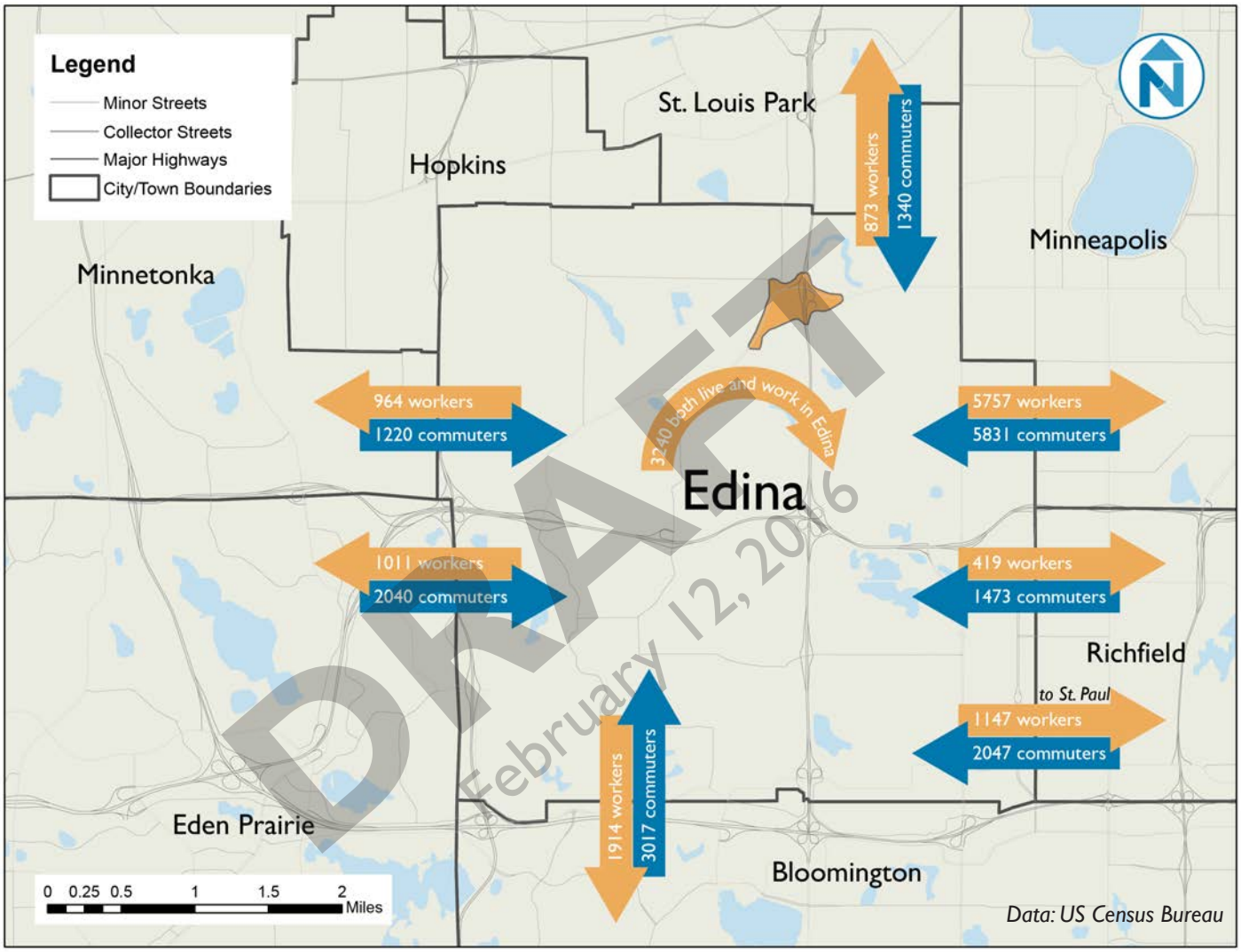


Street tree cover is inconsistent throughout the district. The greatest concentration of trees is along the streetscape of Vernon Avenue and within the semi-private roadways in the senior housing development by the library. However, most of the these trees are very small to moderate in size. Mature street trees are rare in the district.

The species diversity of the street trees have not been assessed at this stage of exploration. This bears further inquiry as more refined plans for the district are developed, in an effort to increase species diversity and therefore resiliency of the district's flora.

Trees that contribute to the streetscape experience were included in this assessment, even if they are located within private property. Trees that are significantly setback from the roadway, in the highway right-of-way, or the railroad right-of-way were excluded from this assessment. Exceptionally large shrubs were also excluded.

WHERE PEOPLE WORK



DRAFT February 12, 2016

The City of Edina is a destination for commuters across the Twin Cities area, while residents commute to activity centers throughout the Twin Cities as well, according to the US Census Bureau.

The largest group of workers living in the city commute to Minneapolis, followed by Bloomington, St. Paul, and Eden Prairie. These four cities are also the largest contributors of commuters into the city. Meanwhile, over 3200 Edina residents both live and work in the city.

26%

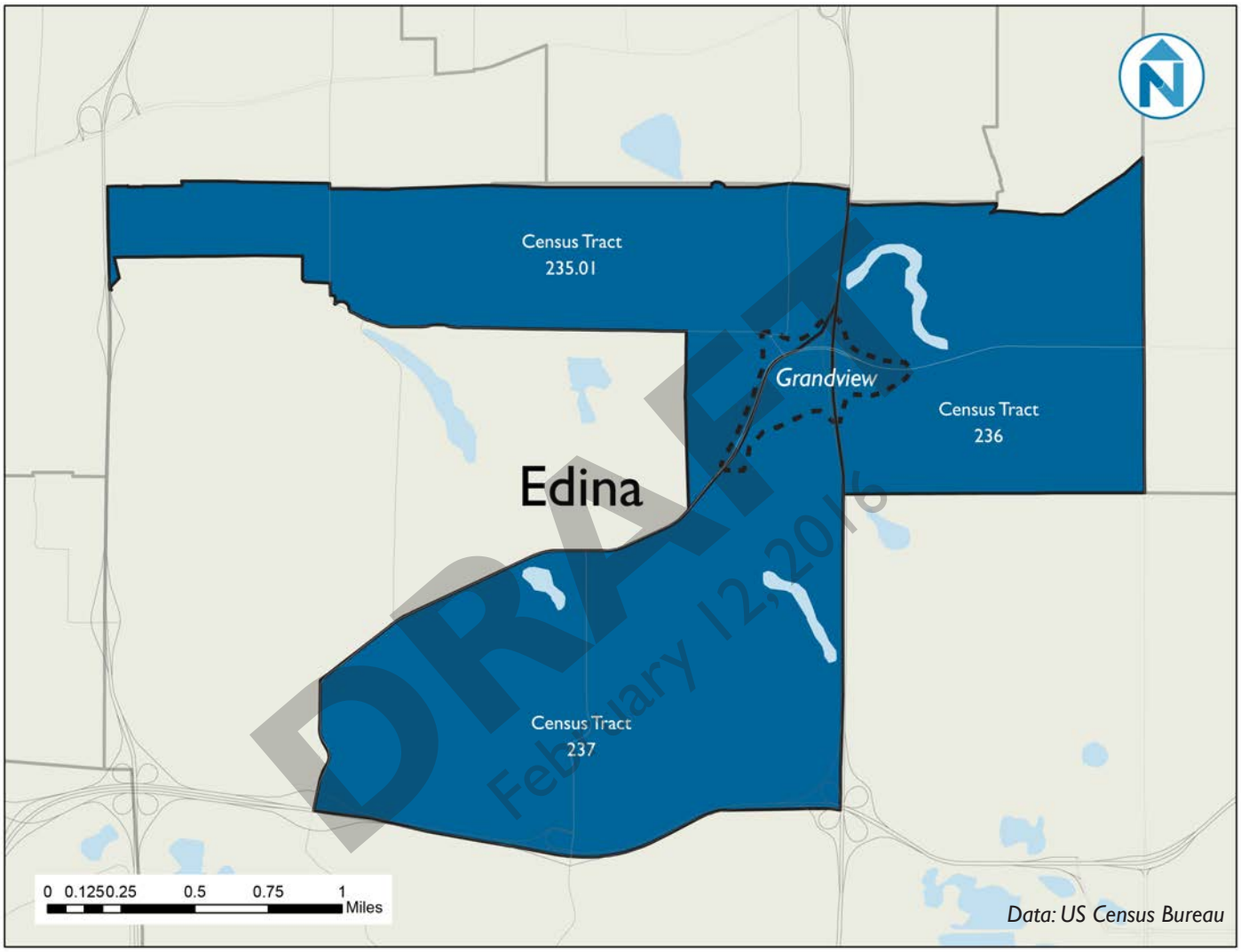
of Edina workers commute to Minneapolis

14%

of employed Edina residents work in Edina

DEMOGRAPHICS

STUDY AREA



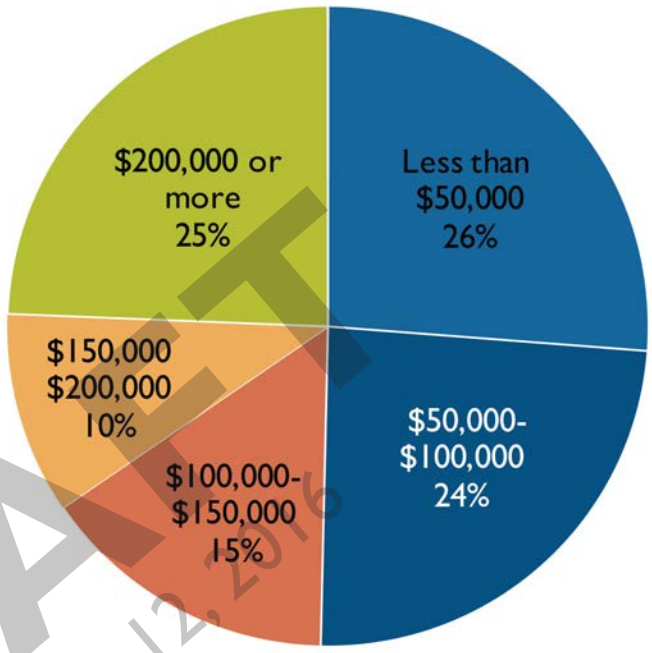
The following pages illustrate many demographic trends in and around the GrandView District using data from the US Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey. The GrandView District straddles three Census tracts, which are the geographic areas used to publish Census data. As a result, the data on the following pages refers to the area shown above in blue.

DEMOGRAPHICS

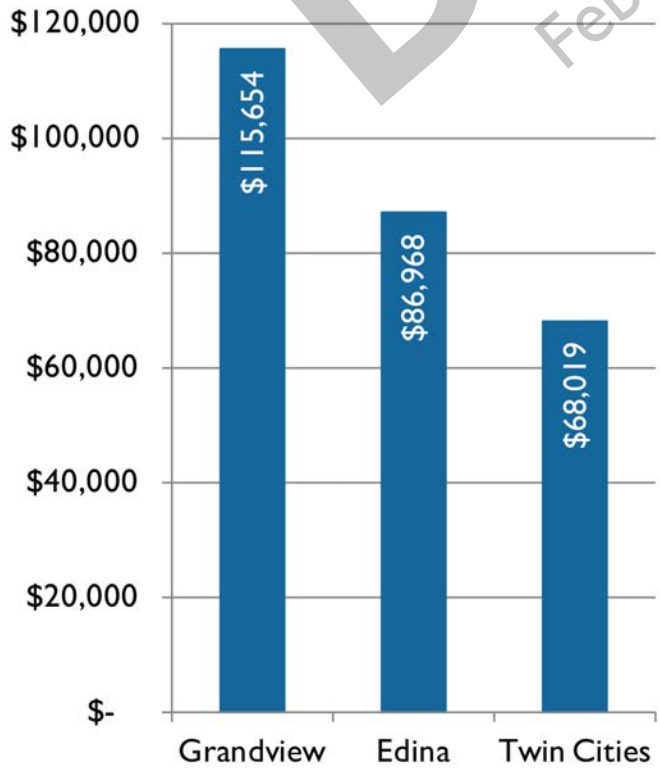
INCOME

GrandView has a diverse socioeconomic mix. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey, one-quarter each of households have an income of over $200,000 per year, between $50,000 and $100,000 per year, or below $50,000 per year. Households making between $100,000 and $200,000 per year make up the final quarter. GrandView has a higher median income, and lower poverty rates, than Edina or the Twin Cities, though unemployment is higher than in Edina as a whole.

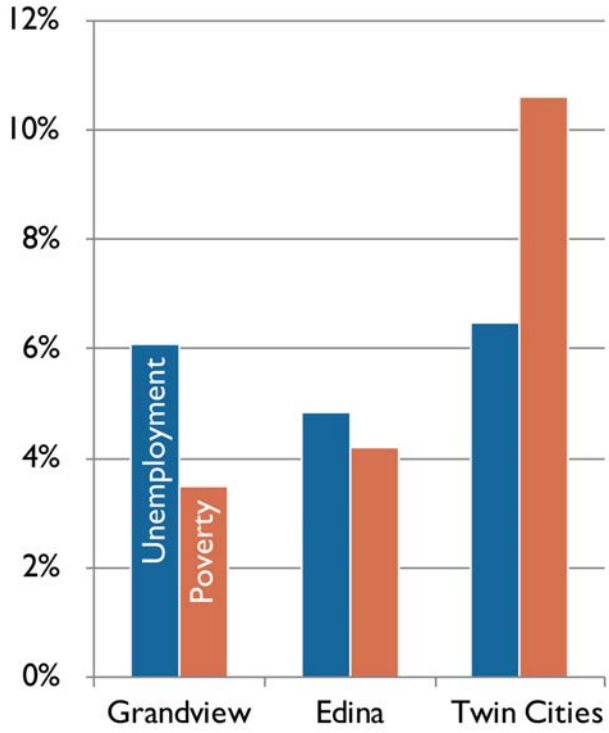
INCOME LEVELS



MEDIAN INCOME



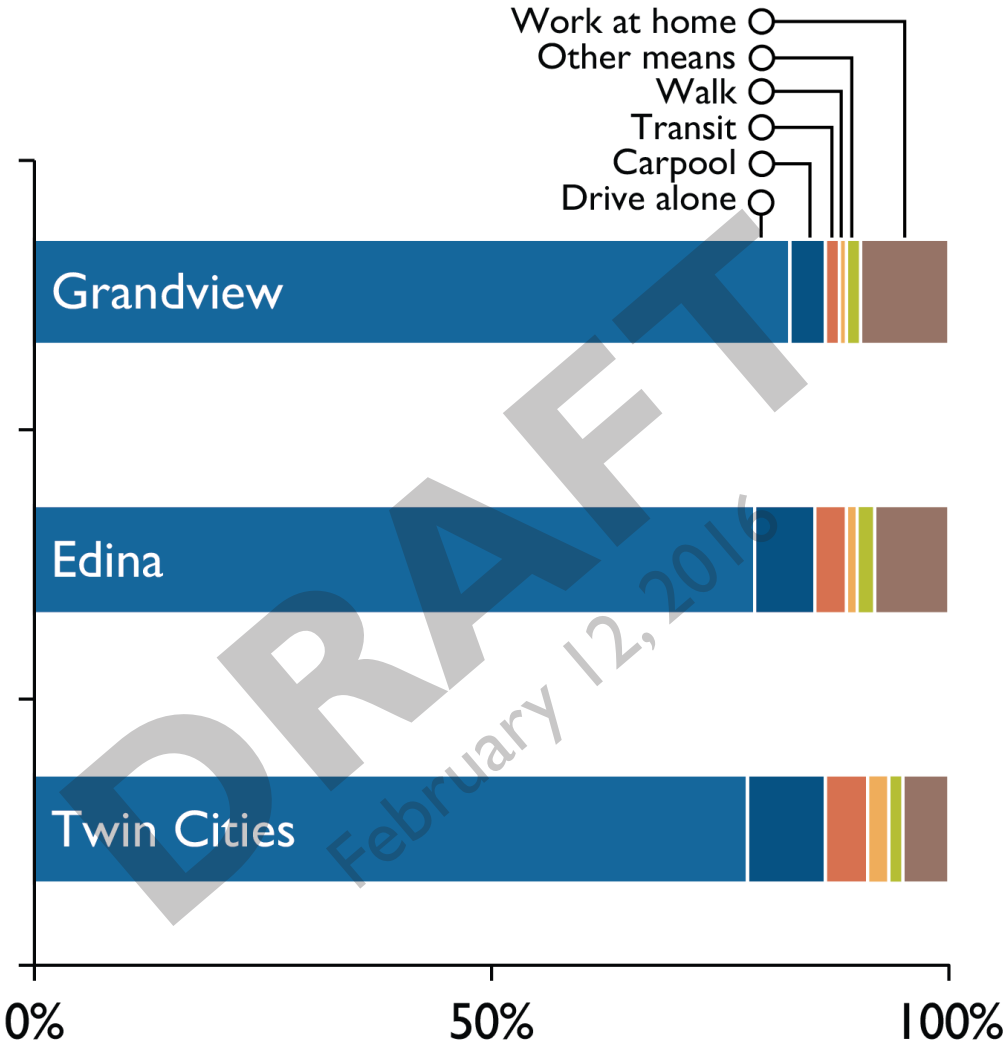
UNEMPLOYMENT + POVERTY



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

MODE SHARE

GETTING TO WORK



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

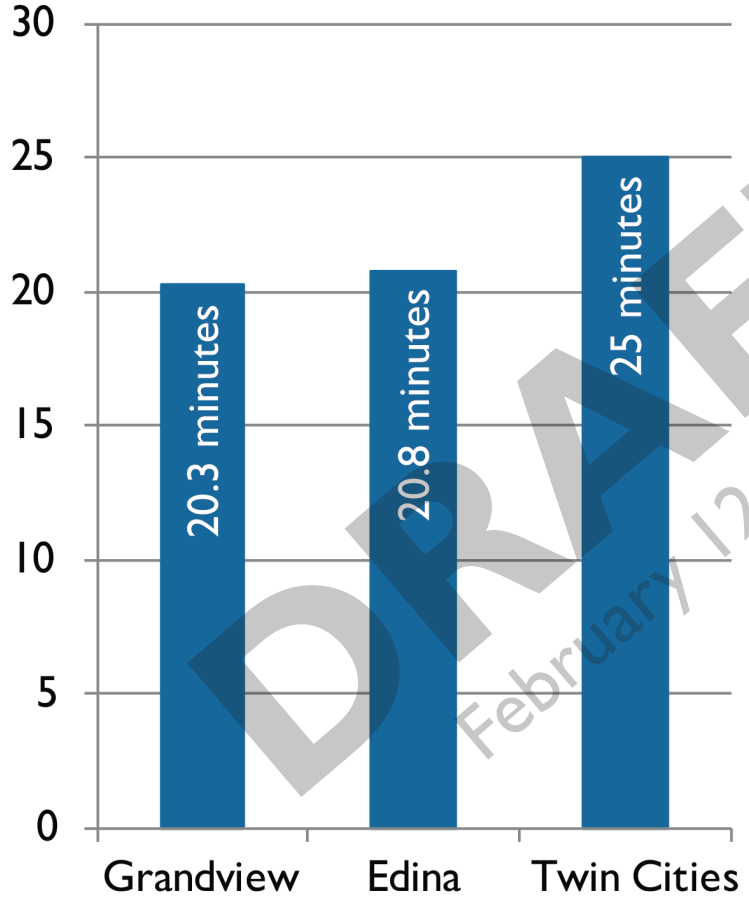
More than four out of five workers living in the GrandView study area drive alone to work, while about 10 percent work from home, according to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey. Both of these rates are higher than in Edina and the Twin Cities as a whole. This may be an opportunity to improve carpool options in the area, such as providing a park-and-ride.

82%

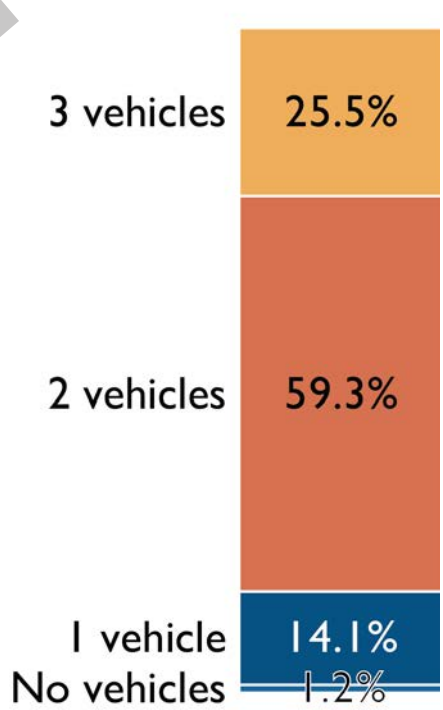
Of GrandView workers drive alone to work

JOURNEY TO WORK TRAVEL TIME

GrandView workers have shorter commutes than those in Edina and the Twin Cities, according to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey.



VEHICLES PER HOUSEHOLD



DRAFT
February 12, 2016

15.3%

Of GrandView households have one or no vehicles available

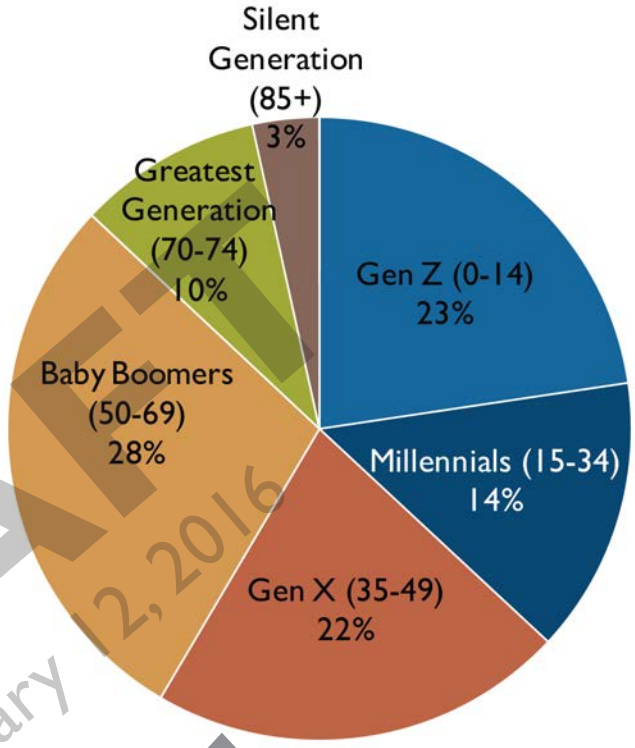
DEMOGRAPHICS

RACE, ETHNICITY + AGE

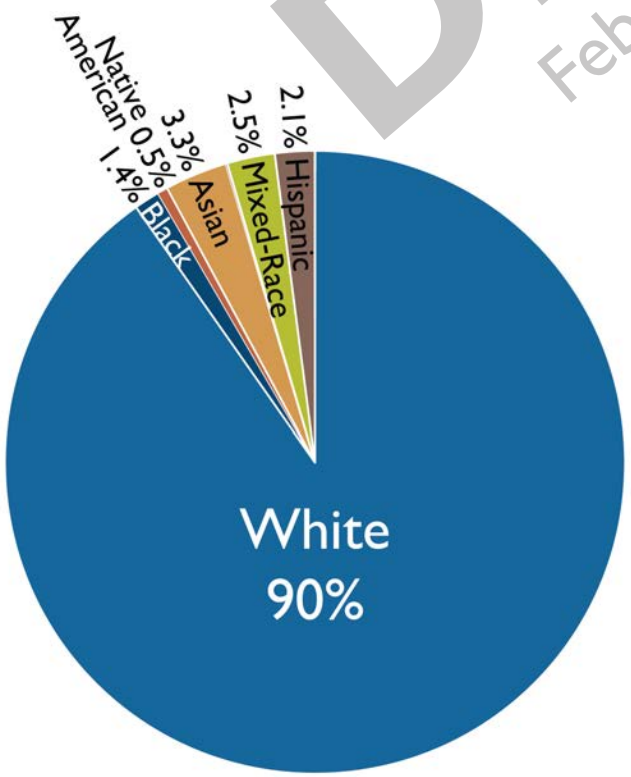
The GrandView study area is predominantly white, but has a diverse age makeup. Baby Boomers, or adults between 50 and 69, are the largest age group in the study area, followed by Generation Z (children under age 14) and Generation X (adults between 35 and 49). The study area has comparably smaller numbers of adults over 70 and of Millennials, or individuals between 15 and 34.

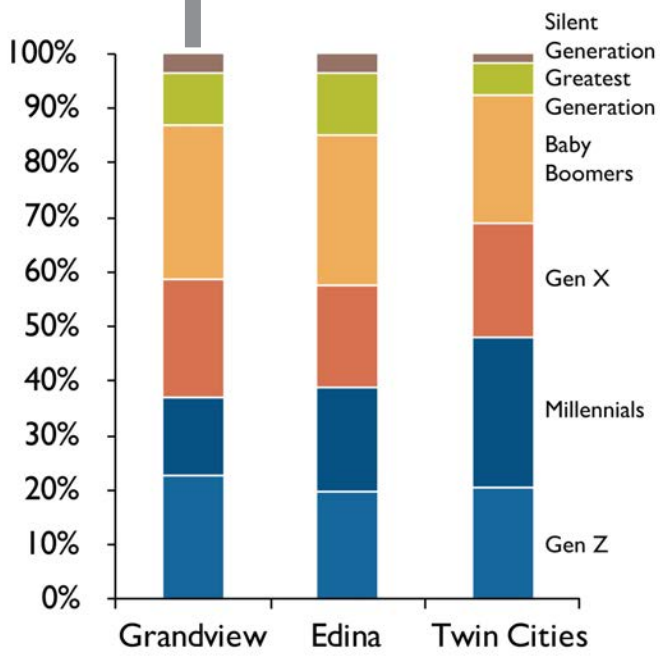
Overall, GrandView is older than Edina and the Twin Cities, which both have larger populations of Millennials and Generation Z.

GENERATION BREAKDOWN



RACIAL BREAKDOWN





DRAFT
February 12, 2016

OUTCOMES OF DESIGN WEEK

Priorities identified at Public Meeting

- Consider all modes of movement
- Incorporate Complete Streets
- Reconnect zones within district for all modes
- Transit
  - » Bus routes and access
  - » Advocacy for Park and Ride
  - » Consider commuter rail
- Pedestrian experience
  - » Enhance both safety and routing
  - » Improve experience
- Motorists
  - » District parking strategy
  - » Reorganize highway ramps
  - » Explore street and intersection configurations
  - » Consider through-traffic and to-traffic

DRAFT
February 12, 2016

Identified 4 scenarios for analysis

- Existing conditions
- New development at Edina Comprehensive Plan levels
  - » 30 housing units per developable acre
  - » 1.5 FAR (Floor Area Ratio)
- New development at GrandView Framework levels
  - » Incorporates Former Public Works Site development density
  - » 60 housing units per developable acre
  - » 2.0 FAR
- New development with a Highway 100 GrandView Green
  - » 125 housing units per developable acre

Stakeholder Discussions

- MetroTransit
- MnDOT and Hennepin County
- Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) and Nine Mile Creek Watershed District (NMCWD)
- Bike and Pedestrian Focus Group