



Proposed Text Amendments to the Land Development Code

Agricultural (A-S), Industrial (I1-B) & Economic
Development (ED-F) Districts

Additions related to cannabis legislation
Proposed rezoning of ~250 to ~528 acres

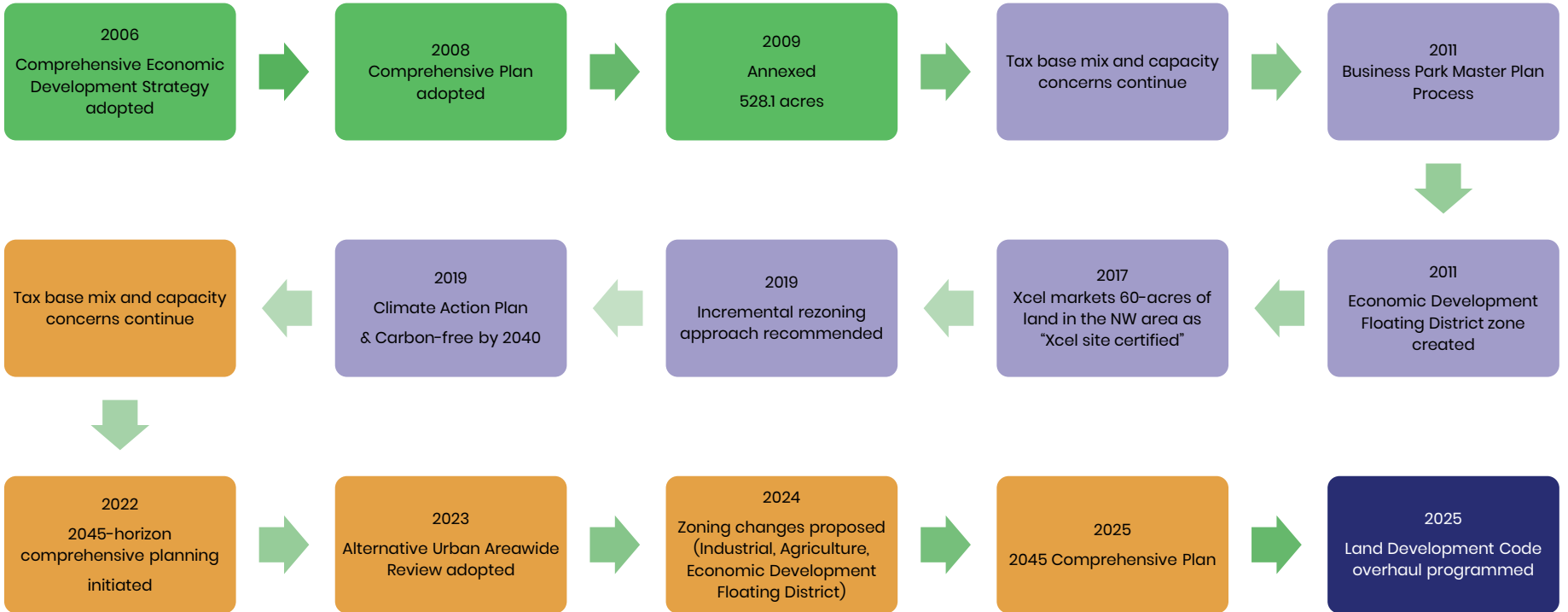
Tuesday, November 12, 2024

Presentation outline

- NW Area history and background
 - Planning, policy and direction
- Potential amendments
 - Remove ED-F district
 - Respond to cannabis legislation
 - Design and performance standards for industrial uses
- QUESTIONS
- Potential re-zoning
 - Agricultural to industrial
- QUESTIONS



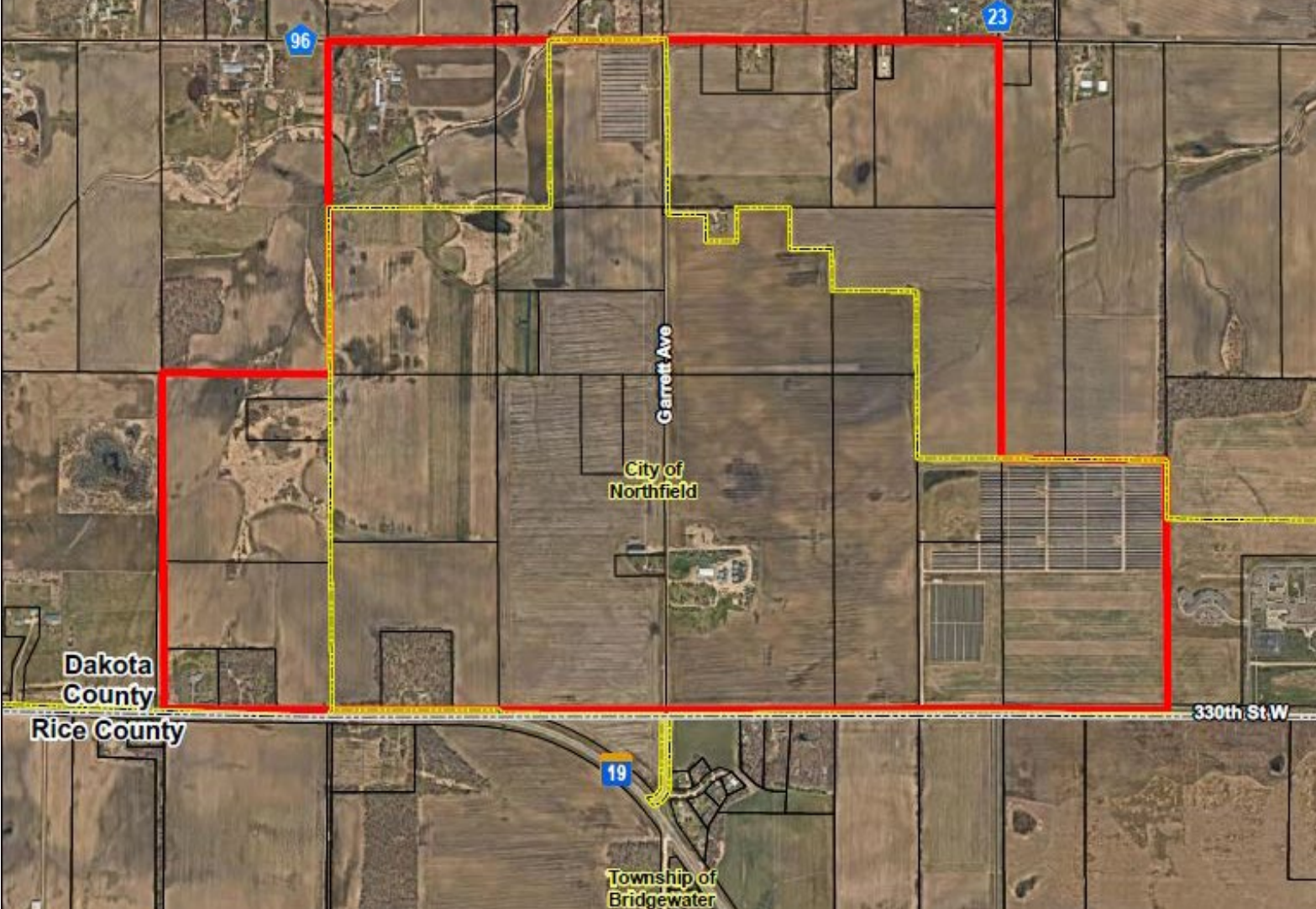
Timeline



Background



- 2008 Comprehensive Plan identifies need for more land for industrial/business users
 - Future land use: “District...typically...large business or industrial.”
- 2011 Land Development Code update
 - Economic Development Floating District (ED-F) established
 - Contains most uses allowed in commercial and industrial areas
 - Not been used or requested to date
- 2017 Xcel Energy certifies 60-acre St. Olaf Business Park
- 2023 City and Xcel complete environmental review



Location

Yellow: city limits
(~528 ac.)

Red: AUAR boundary
(~730 ac.)

2008 Framework Map

FRAMEWORK

NORTHFIELD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Legend

Context

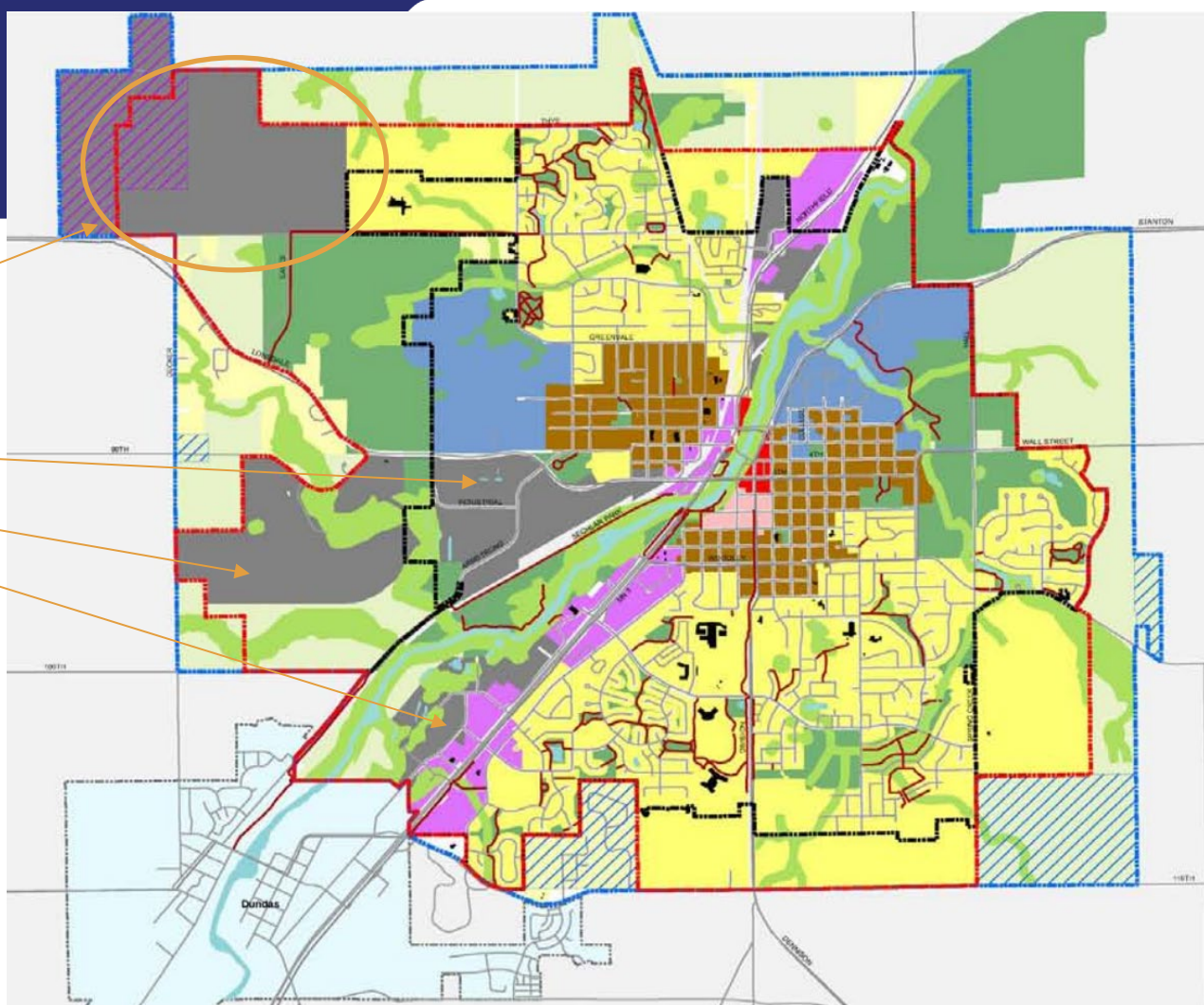
- Core
- Center
- Corridor
- District
- Educational District
- Neighborhood Central
- Neighborhood General 1
- Edge
- Rural
- Areas potentially not meeting sanitary sewer level of service
- Areas potentially not meeting water level of service

- Major Road
- Existing Trail/Sidewalk
- Water
- Environmentally Significant Area
- Preserve
- Civic Use
- City Boundary
- Priority Growth Area
- Urban Expansion Area
- City of Dundas



North

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



2018 Council committee convened to discuss NW Area and found:



- The 500 acres in the northwest area cannot be viewed in isolation from the overall economic development strategies employed by the City; 500 acres represents about 10% of the entire area of the City and must be integrated physically and economically into the community.
- Downtown is one of Northfield's most important assets; development should support and not draw business from downtown.
- Five hundred acres is more land than is needed for new growth within the foreseeable future. Since the 2011 Business Park Master Plan included the entire area, any proposed plan would need updated information, e.g. market feasibility; market absorption rates; fiscal analysis & return on investment for the City's estimated capital and maintenance costs for infrastructure including the expected timeline for breakeven on that investment.
- Staff and both appointed and elected decision makers should strive for vertical certainty and general agreement about development policy and process to reduce development uncertainty and risk.

2018 Council committee convened to discuss NW Area and recommended:



- *Planning documents* should be reviewed, analyzed, and updated:
- Consider further analysis of citywide land use and infrastructure to inform the planning process including official mapping of proposed road and infrastructure corridors.
- Create and adopt a Future Land Use map.
- Updating plans and policy should also reflect other City priorities such as climate action, equity, and transportation choice.
- *Sustainability*: The fiscal security of Northfield's future with respect to development opportunities and sustainability practices should be at the forefront of planning discussions. Northfield must evaluate the return on public investment for all projects including maintaining and replacing infrastructure improvements.

Responding to recommendations :



- *2045-horizon Comprehensive Plan underway*
- *Evaluation of tax base needs and infrastructure costs and viability underway*
- *Set up land development code language to accommodate and promote area for growth that is sustainable and provides tax base diversification*
- *Market site for users that meets or exceeds Northfield's adopted climate goals, is complementary to primary industry sectors (education, medicine, industry/agricultural-related industry), family-sustaining wages*

Proposed amendments:



- Removal of ED-F: Economic Development Floating District zones
- Limited update to the existing A-S Agriculture, I1-B: Industrial
 - Considers the goals of the Climate Action Plan; recent changes in building materials and technology and best-practices for industrial users regarding energy efficiency and environmental and economic sustainability.
 - Provide clear guidelines and standards for potential industrial users interested in building in Northfield.
- Additional updates respond to MN Session Law Chapter 63 regarding adult-use cannabis.
- More complete update would take place during the 2025–2026 Land Development Code update process.

ED-F: Economic Development Floating district



- **Floating district:** Zoning rules that apply on top of existing zoning rules
- **Not yet used**
- **Established during 2011 rewrite of Land Development Code**
- **A mixed-use commercial/industrial district**
- **Does not match 2008 Framework Map** (future land use map)
- **Staff would recommend different approach to commercial/industrial zoning during 2025–2026 update**

II-B: Industrial



- Proposed amendments:
 - **Definitions and standards for accessory uses**
 - **Definitions and standards for new uses**
 - **Bio-industrial uses**
 - **Data processing facilities**
 - Performance standards
 - **Cannabis cultivation and manufacture**
 - **Site development guidelines**
 - **Commercial solar considerations**

Existing uses refined; New uses defined:



- **2.9.14 Data processing facility**

- **Purpose.** The purpose of this section is to minimize conflicts with adjacent land uses and to ensure the effect of any such enterprise is minimized. Potential effects include, but are not necessarily limited to, very high energy usage, noise pollution, and the disposal of electronic waste. The high energy consumption of data processing operations runs counter to the City of Northfield and State of Minnesota objectives to reduce contributions to climate change. Equipment at these facilities has the potential to create noise pollution that negatively impacts nearby residents, businesses, and wildlife. In addition, electronic waste contains heavy metals and known carcinogens that have the potential to damage human health, and air and water quality if not handled correctly

Performance standards and design guidelines for industrial uses defined:



- **Standards:**

- Noise
- Exterior Lighting
- Height
- Linkages
- Electric grid connectivity and use
- Renewable energy
- Site Design

- **Performance Standards:**

- Air quality and odors
- Heat and humidity
- Water use
- Energy use
- Hazardous material handling and recycling

A-S: Agricultural



- All land enters the city upon annexation as agricultural unless rezoned upon annexation
- Proposed amendments:
 - **Commercial solar installations considerations**
 - **Definitions and standards for new uses**
 - **Cannabis cultivation and manufacture**

Existing uses refined; New uses defined:



- **2.8.1 Agricultural Use Category**

- **Crop Raising.** The growing and harvesting of legal agricultural crops or produce for commercial agricultural purposes, including cannabis and hemp cultivation.
- **Wholesale or Commercial Plant Nurseries.** An establishment used for the growing, storage, and sale of legal garden plants, shrubs, trees, or vines, including commercial cannabis cultivation over 15,000 sq. ft for retail or wholesale sales.

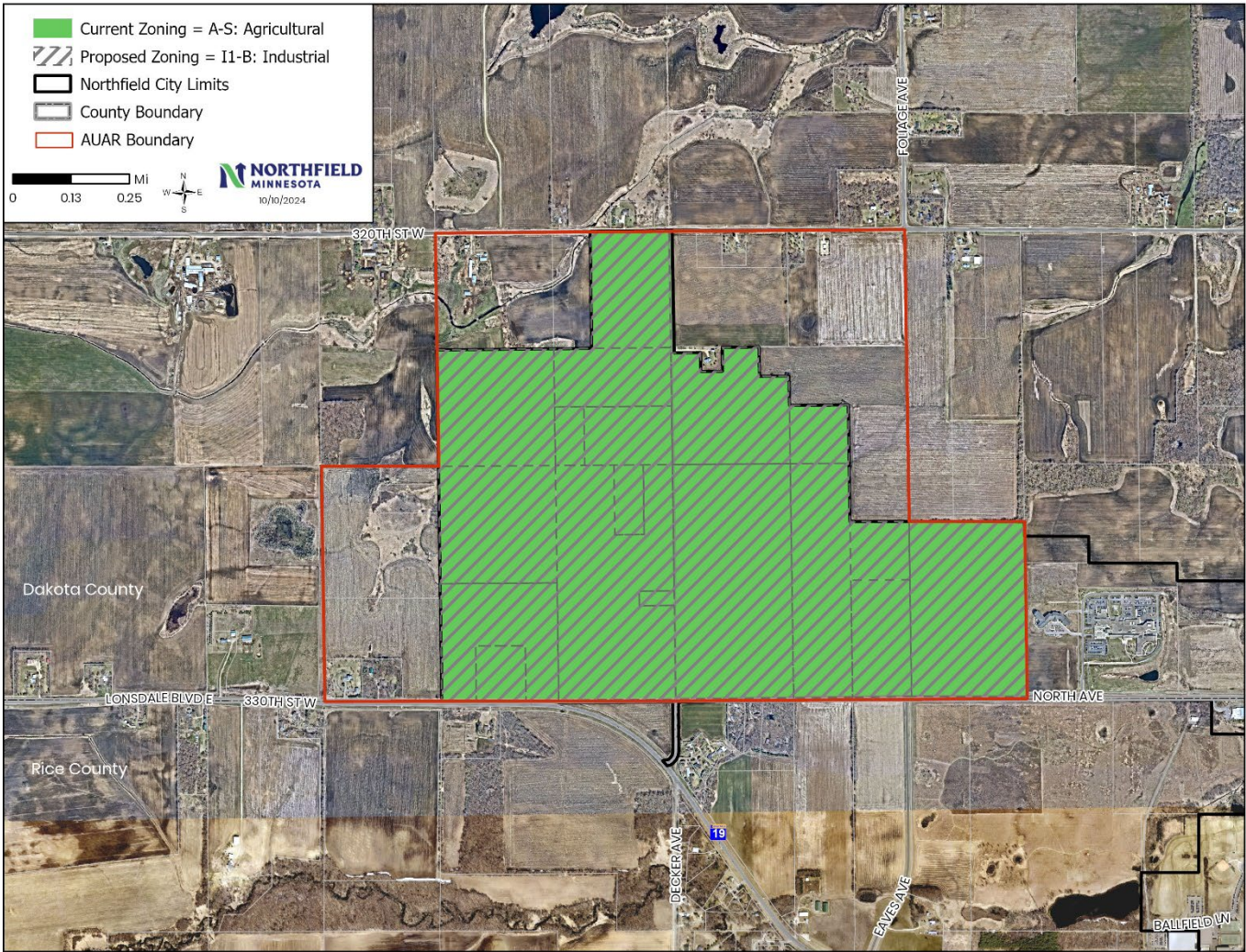
Cannabis manufacture/cultivation








- Proposed amendments to accommodate cannabis cultivation and production:
 - **limited cultivation and manufacturing** (under 15,000 sq. ft.) on most commercial corridors
 - **industrial-scale production** (over 15,000 sq. ft.) in industrial and agriculture districts
 - **Outdoor cultivation** regulated as “agriculture” with conditional use permit




Questions?

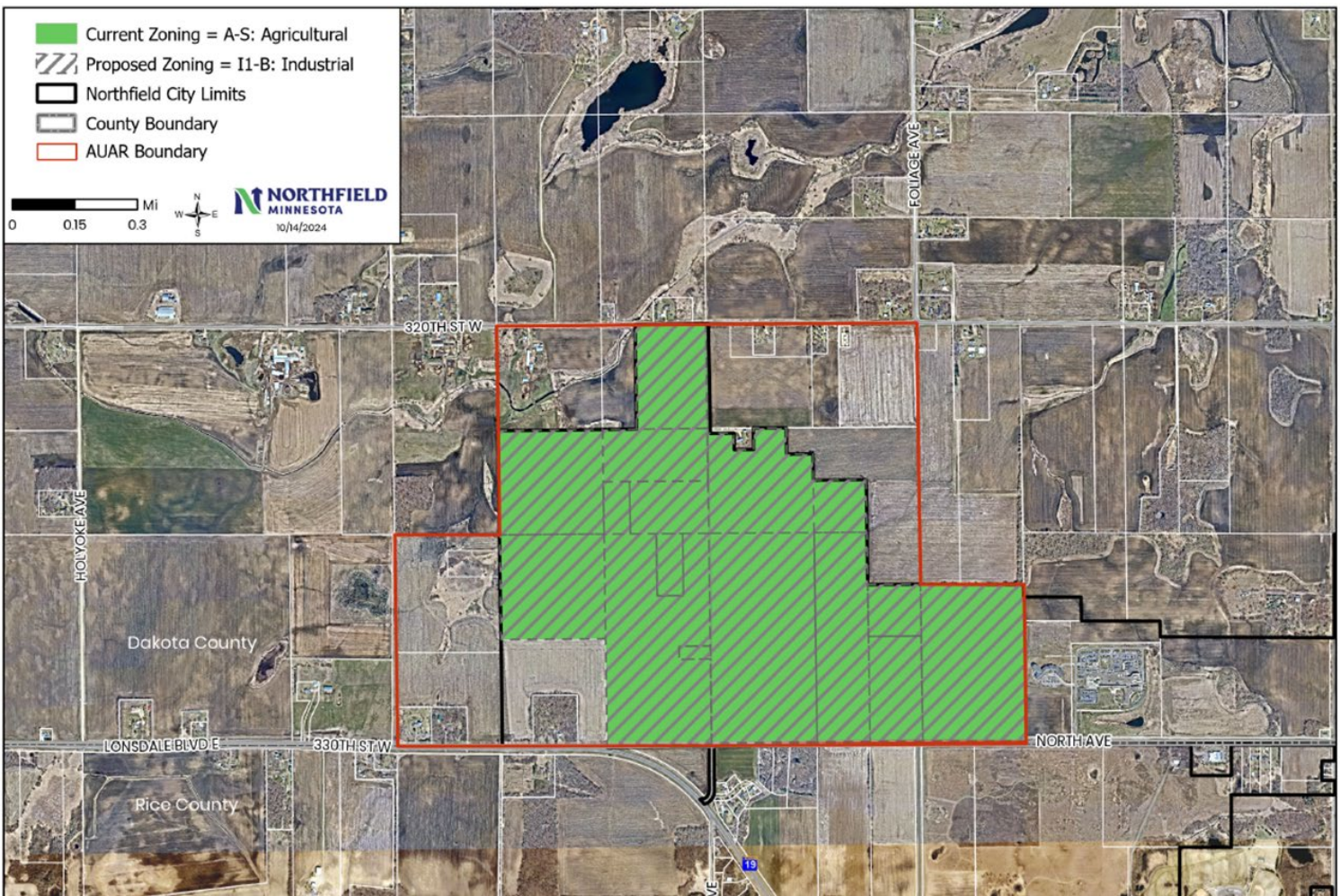




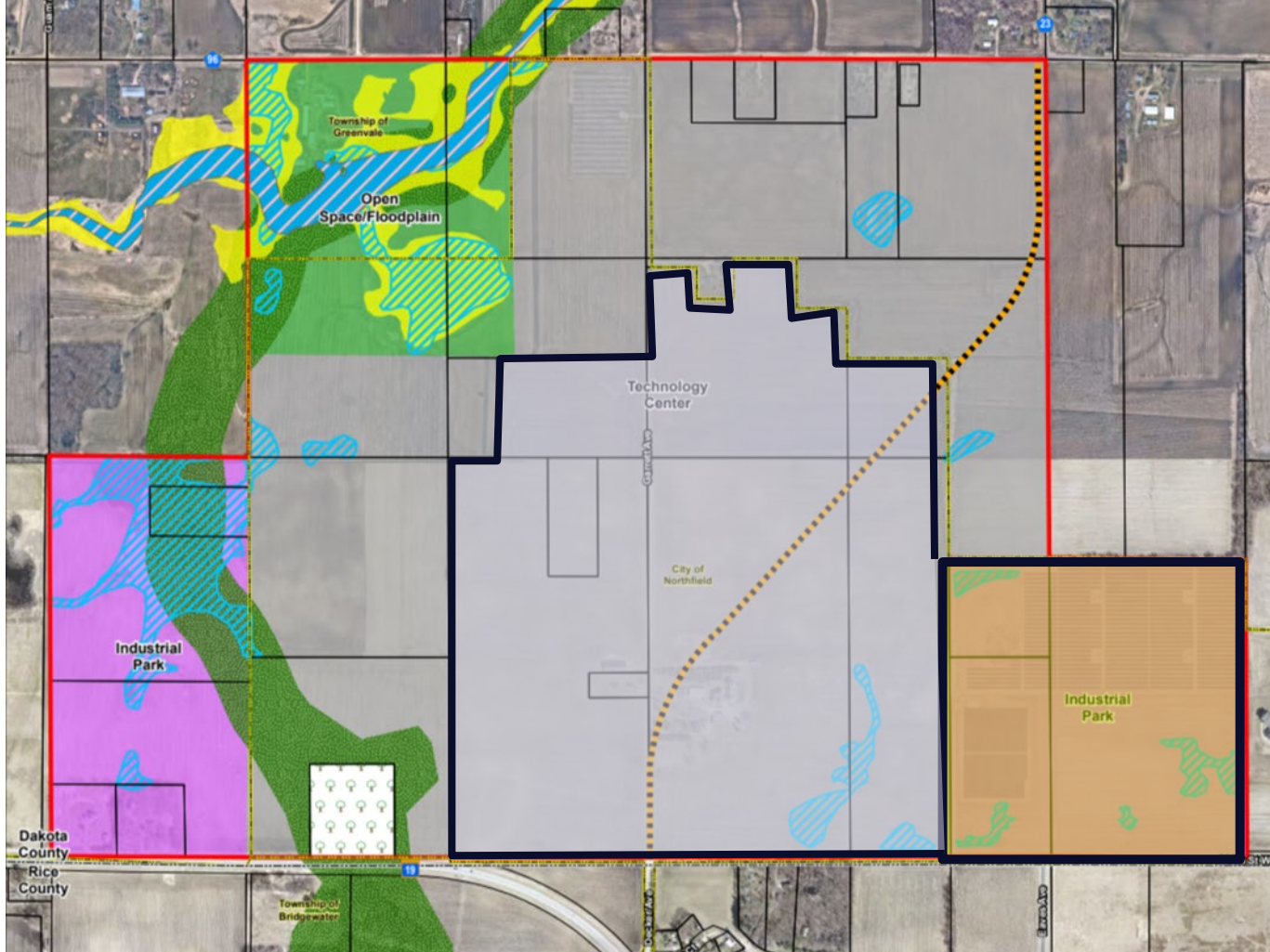
If rezoned
 as
 described
 in 2008
 Framework
 Map

 Current Zoning = A-S: Agricultural
 Proposed Zoning = I1-B: Industrial
 Northfield City Limits
 County Boundary
 AUAR Boundary

 0 0.15 0.3 Mi
 N
 W E
 S
 **NORTHFIELD**
 MINNESOTA
 10/14/2024



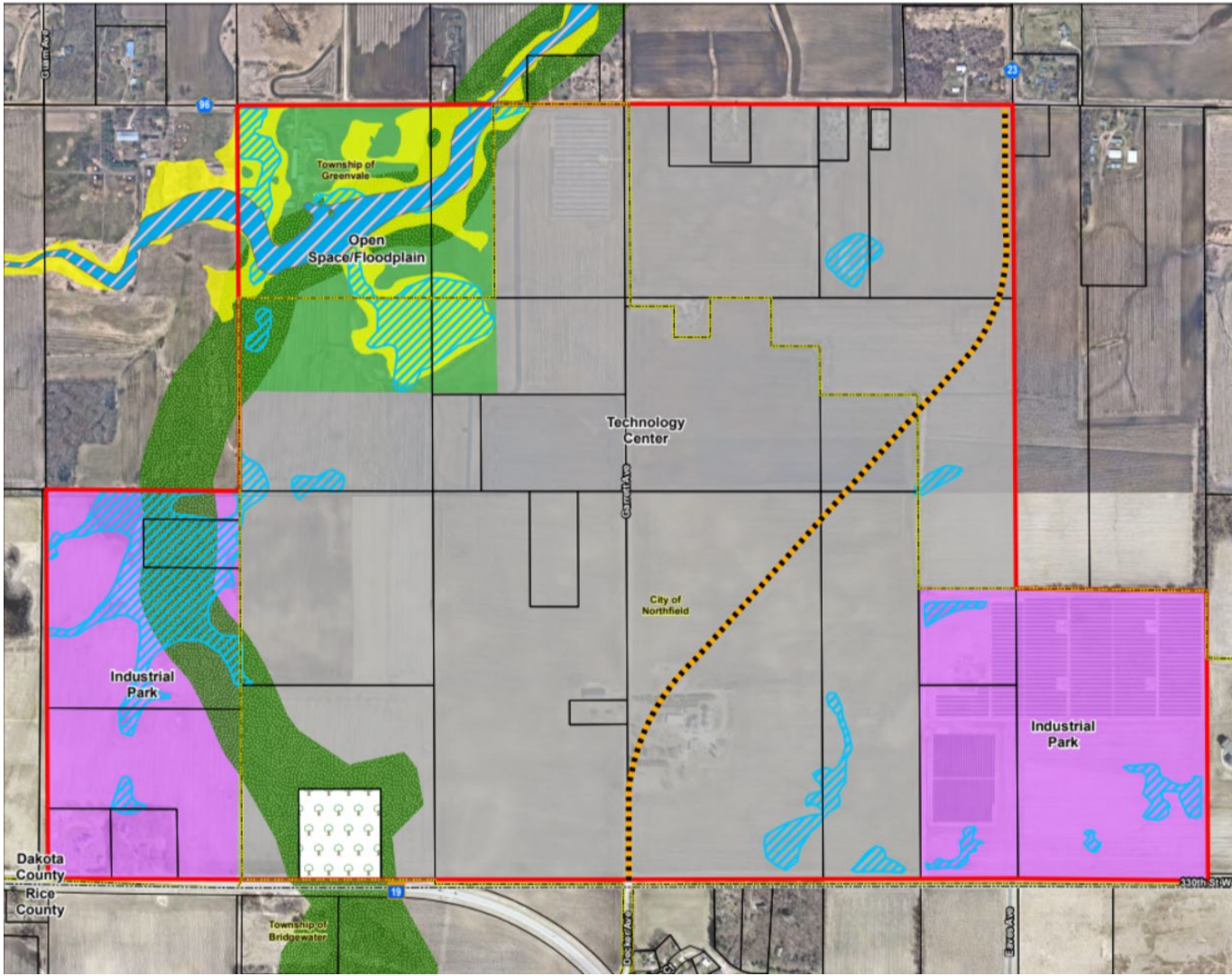
Proposed
 Map
 Amendment
 as noticed



Option B: Rezone easternmost parcels

St. Olaf: ~80 ac

Sorem: ~212 ac



Technology
Center
scenario

One major
user

Helpful definitions



- **Accessory uses**
 - Additional uses that can happen on the property along with a main use
- **Conditional uses**
 - Uses that may impact neighbors & benefit from local input
 - Must meet standards
 - Local input may result in additional conditions
- **Performance standards**
 - Technical rules generally addressing measurable, potentially negative aspects of a building
- **Permitted uses**
 - Allowed if meets all expressed standards
- **Principal uses**
 - The main activity that happens on the property
- **Site development guidelines**
 - How the buildings and other equipment can be arranged on/around the property

Questions:

Jake Reilly
Community Development
Director

