

City of Northfield

*City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov*



Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, August 18, 2026

6:00 PM

City Council Special Meeting (Budget Listening Session)

Council Chambers

City Council

6:00 PM - CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor: Zweifel

Councilmembers: Beumer, Dahlen, Holmes, Ness, Peterson White, Sokup

REGULAR AGENDA

The public will have an opportunity to address the City Council on the following regular agenda items. Individuals who pre-registered may take one opportunity to address the Council for up to two (2) minutes. After all individuals on the sign-up list have spoken, other individuals may speak. Persons must give their name and address and if representing a business must give the name of the business or corporation. If an attorney or consultant is representing a client, the client must be identified for the record.

The intent of the public comment is to receive information from the public. Individuals who would like to have a question addressed may write their question on the back of the comment card and an appropriate person will follow up with them at another time.

1. [26-418](#) City Council 2027 Budget Public Listening Session (public highly encouraged to attend and provide feedback).

Attachments:

[1 - 07.29.2026 Town Hall Presentation Final](#)

[2 - Weblink to Submit Budget Clarifying Questions on 2027 Budget for this meeting](#)

[3 - Weblink to Budget Survey](#)

[4 - City Website Budget Page - See July 29 video for meeting & survey background](#)

ADJOURN

Note: The City Council may take a five minute break during the meeting. All regular City Council meetings end at 9:00 pm unless a simple (4/7) majority of the City Council vote to extend the time.

SPECIAL NEEDS: If you require special services to attend or participate in a public meeting, please call the City's Administration Office at (507) 645-3001 or e-mail Lynette Peterson, City Clerk, at lynette.peterson@northfieldmn.gov. TDD users can call (507) 645-3030. Please call at least 24 hours before the meeting, if possible.



Legislation Text

File #: 26-418, Version: 1

City Council Meeting Date: August 18, 2026

To: Mayor and City Council

From: City Administrator, Ben Martig
Finance Director, Brenda Angelstad

City Council 2027 Budget Public Listening Session (public highly encouraged to attend and provide feedback).

Action Requested:
Discussion Only.

Summary Report:

Community members are encouraged to attend to learn more about Northfield's proposed 2027 budget and property tax levy and provide questions and provide meaningful input before the City Council makes key decisions affecting property taxes and utility rates.

The Budget Listening Session on August 18 will start at 6 p.m. and be held in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. Community members will have the opportunity to engage with Council members and provide feedback on the proposed budget.

This meeting is structured as a City Council-hosted public listening session focused on the proposed 2027 budget and property tax levy. Unlike the earlier informational budget presentations, the primary purpose of this meeting is to provide residents an opportunity to share their perspectives directly with the City Council before Council begins making preliminary budget and levy decisions in September.

The meeting is anticipated to follow the general process below:

I. Welcome and Meeting Framing (estimated 5 minutes)

The Mayor will open the meeting, explain the purpose and format of the listening session, and emphasize that the primary focus of the evening is hearing from the community.

II. Summary of Public Input (estimated 5-10 minutes)

Staff will provide a concise summary of feedback received through the July Budget Town Hall and the public survey conducted in advance of the August 18 meeting. The intent is to identify major themes, areas of agreement or differing perspectives, and questions that may help frame the evening's discussion.

III. Budget and Levy Overview (estimated 15 minutes)

Staff will provide a brief, high-level review of the proposed 2027 budget and property tax levy. This will be a shortened and modified version of the presentation provided at the July 29th 2027 Budget

& Capital Improvement Plan Town Hall Meeting. Because more detailed budget presentations have already occurred, this portion is intended to provide sufficient context for the discussion rather than repeat previous presentations.

IV. Public Comment and Council Listening Period (estimated 45 minutes dependent on public attendance)

The majority of the formal meeting will be dedicated to hearing directly from residents. Community members may comment on any aspect of the proposed budget and levy and are encouraged to use the survey questions and identified budget tradeoffs to help provide specific, meaningful feedback. Depending on attendance, the Mayor may adjust the amount of time available to individual speakers to provide everyone an opportunity to participate. See the “Survey Questionnaire” reference later in this memo for suggestions on appropriate questions that may be helpful in meaningful feedback to the City Council on the 2027 budget.

V. Council Reflection (estimated 15-20 minutes)

Following public comments, Council members will have an opportunity to individually provide any reflection of what they heard during the discussion, and offer initial reflections. This is not intended to be a final budget decision-making session; rather, it provides Council an opportunity to better understand and reflect on the input received before upcoming budget deliberations.

VI. Informal Council/Community Conversation (estimated 30 minutes dependent on public attendance)

Following the formal portion of the meeting, Council members will individually be available away from the dais for additional conversation with community members. This provides an opportunity for residents to ask follow-up questions, expand on comments, or discuss issues in a less formal setting.

Post Meeting - Council Use of Feedback & Deliberation on 2027 Budget

Feedback from the survey and listening session will be documented and carried forward into Council's upcoming budget deliberations, including the September 8 budget review, September 15 budget and levy worksession, and September 22 consideration of the preliminary property tax levy. This approach is intended to create a clear connection between the community input received and the choices subsequently considered by the City Council.

Community members can also provide feedback by completing an online survey about budget options the City Council is deliberating. See additional information in this memo titled “Submit Questions on the 2027 Budget” and “Survey Questionnaire” for additional detail. There are also attachments included with weblinks to complete these surveys.

These meetings build on the City's ongoing efforts to increase public engagement and transparency throughout the budget process. Following the July budget town hall, the City is continuing the conversation by providing additional opportunities for community members to learn about the proposed 2027 budget and share feedback before key decisions are made.

The City Council will continue discussing the proposed budget throughout the fall. In September, the Council is expected to adopt the preliminary budget, the maximum property tax levy, and 2027 utility rates. The final budget and property tax levy will be considered for adoption in December.

More information about the budget process, upcoming meetings, ways to provide feedback, and budget resources is available at [northfieldmn.gov/Budget](https://www.northfieldmn.gov/Budget) <<https://www.northfieldmn.gov/193/Budget>>.

The following attachments are also provided as preparation and feedback opportunities related to this public listening session:

July 29, 2026 Budget & Capital Improvement Plan Town Hall Meeting

The City hosted this other town hall meeting for the public to provide information and offer input from various staff. Attached is the full presentation from that event. This will be helpful information to reference in preparation of this upcoming Council 2027 Budget Public Listening Session. Additionally, the video of the verbal presentation is attached for viewing in advance.

Staff will integrate feedback from the July 29 post-meeting attendee survey results at the meeting along with responses of questions from the survey that is being submitted for this upcoming meeting.

Submit Questions on the 2027 Budget

The link below directs the public to the City's website, where questions can be submitted in advance of the meeting. Staff will share submitted questions with the Council and work to address any clarifying questions we receive.

Submit questions: www.northfieldmn.gov/BudgetQuestion
<<http://www.northfieldmn.gov/BudgetQuestion>>

Survey Questionnaire

Staff strongly encourages community members to complete the short 2027 Budget Survey in advance of the listening session. The survey is designed to move beyond general reactions to property taxes and provide Council with meaningful feedback about residents' priorities, preferred tradeoffs, and the relationship between taxes and City services. Results will be summarized at the August 18 listening session, used to help focus the public discussion, and carried forward as an important source of community input during Council's September budget and property tax levy deliberations.

Complete the 2027 Budget Survey: <<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KY3W2FC>>

Staff also will distribute the survey through other media communications and on the City's budget webpage.

During the public comment portion of the listening session, community members are also encouraged to use the survey questions and budget tradeoffs as a framework for their comments, including highlighting issues or priorities they feel most strongly about. This provides an opportunity to expand on survey responses and have individual comments shared directly with the City Council as part of the public meeting record.

Following the formal listening session at this meeting, Council members will also be available for additional conversation with attendees to hear further thoughts, respond to questions, and better understand the perspectives shared during the meeting.

Alternative Options:

Not applicable.

Financial Impacts:

See attached presentation materials.

Tentative Timelines:

See attached timelines in the attached presentation.

2027 Budget & Capital Improvement Plan Town Hall Meeting

July 29, 2026



A safe transportation network for all



Minnesota
GreenStep Cities



Budget 2027–2028

Council Meeting Calendar



April 14 5-Year Financial Management Plan – Initial Draft Overview

August 17 Chamber Budget Presentation
August 18 Council Town Hall



May Budget entries are submitted from departments. Finance holds initial budget reviews with teams.

September 15 Review budget and levy & 2027 utility rates

September 22 Adopt preliminary budget/levy; adopt final 2027 utility rates



June 9 5-Year CIP/CEP & Presentation of Independent Audit
June 16 Acceptance of 2025 audit

October
Public Information and Engagement of Proposed Budget 2027–2028 & Levy



July 14 “High Level” Budget Summary
July 29 Town Hall Budget Meeting

November 17 Final 2027–2028 Budget and Levy, 5-Year CIP/CEP and 5-Year Financial Plan and Adopt Street Reconstruction Bonds

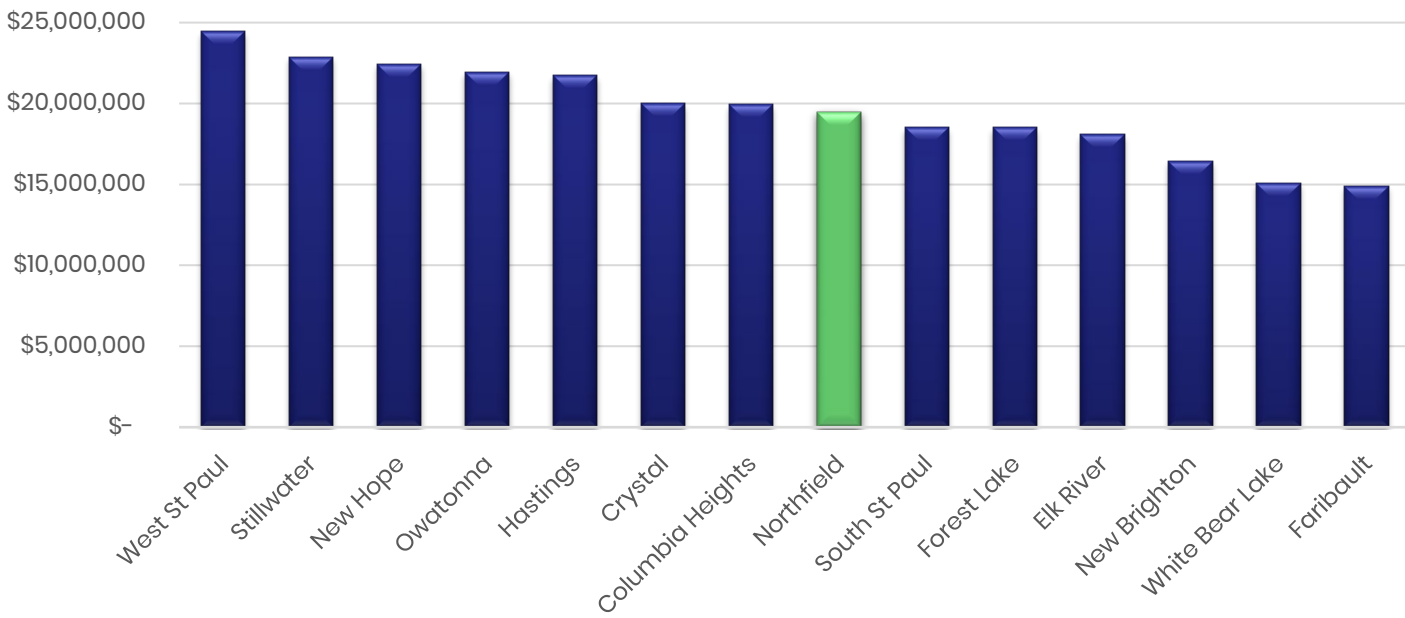
December 1 Public Hearing on Budget & Levy and Public Hearing on 2027 Street Reconstruction Bonds

December 1 Adopt Final 2027–2028 Budget and Levy, 5-Year CIP/CEP and 5-Year Financial Plan and Adopt Street Reconstruction Bonds

Peer Comparison 2026 Current City Property Taxes (i.e. levy)



2026 Total Levy \$



Proposed 2027 property tax option

6.8% levy increase



Property type	Estimated market value	2026 city tax	2027 city tax	Yearly change	Monthly change
Residential homestead	\$200,000	\$1,311.08	\$1,363.46	\$52.39	\$4.37
	\$300,000	\$2,144.60	\$2,230.29	\$85.69	\$7.14
	\$350,000	\$2,561.36	\$2,663.71	\$102.34	\$8.53
	\$500,000	\$3,811.65	\$3,963.95	\$152.30	\$12.69
Commercial/Industrial	\$500,000	\$7,073.48	\$7,356.11	\$282.63	\$23.55
	\$1,000,000	\$14,720.48	\$15,308.66	\$588.18	\$49.02

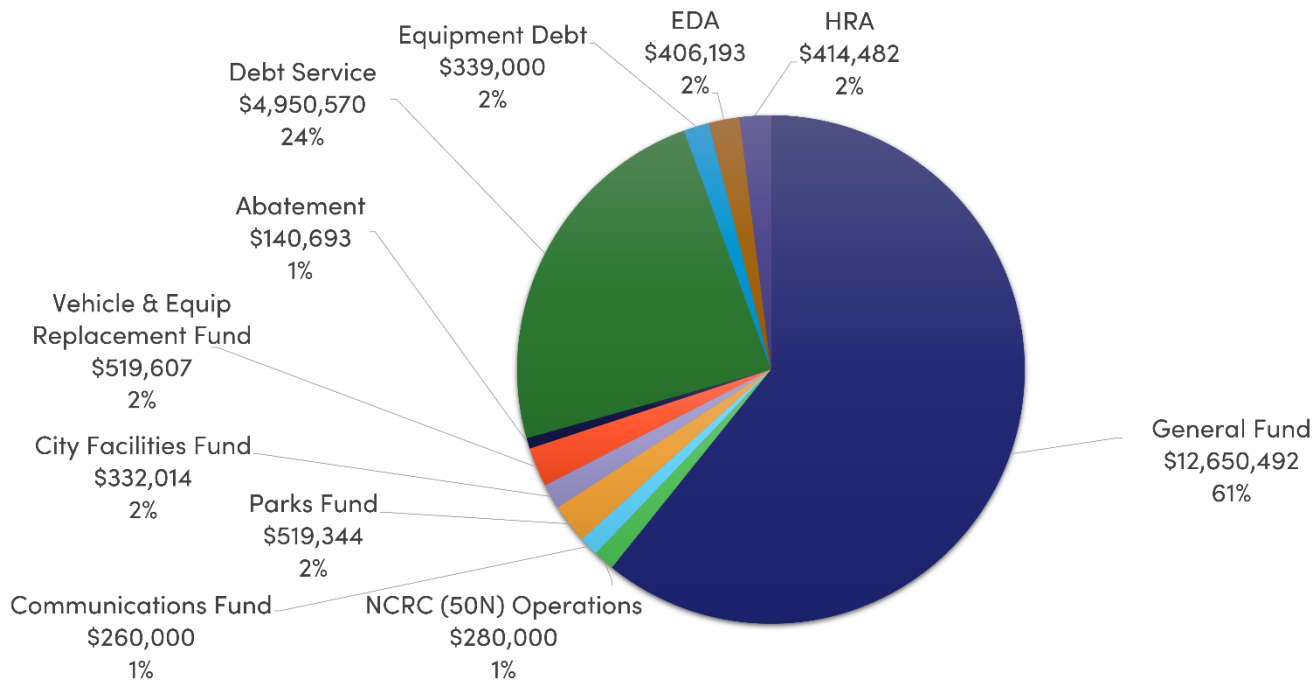
Proposed 2027 property tax option

9.0% levy increase

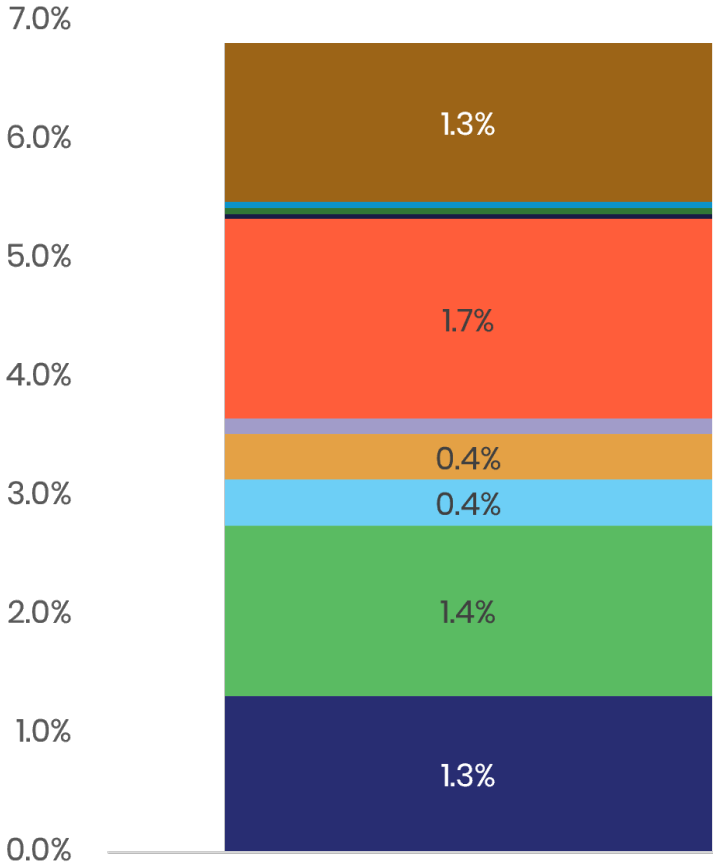


Property type	Estimated market value	2026 city tax	2027 city tax	Yearly change	Monthly change
Residential homestead	\$200,000	\$1,311.08	\$1,391.41	\$80.34	\$6.69
	\$300,000	\$2,144.60	\$2,276.01	\$131.41	\$10.95
	\$350,000	\$2,561.36	\$2,718.31	\$156.95	\$13.08
	\$500,000	\$3,811.65	\$4,045.21	\$233.56	\$19.46
Commercial/Industrial	\$500,000	\$7,073.48	\$7,506.90	\$433.43	\$36.12
	\$1,000,000	\$14,720.48	\$15,622.48	\$902.00	\$75.17

2027 Preliminary Citywide Levy

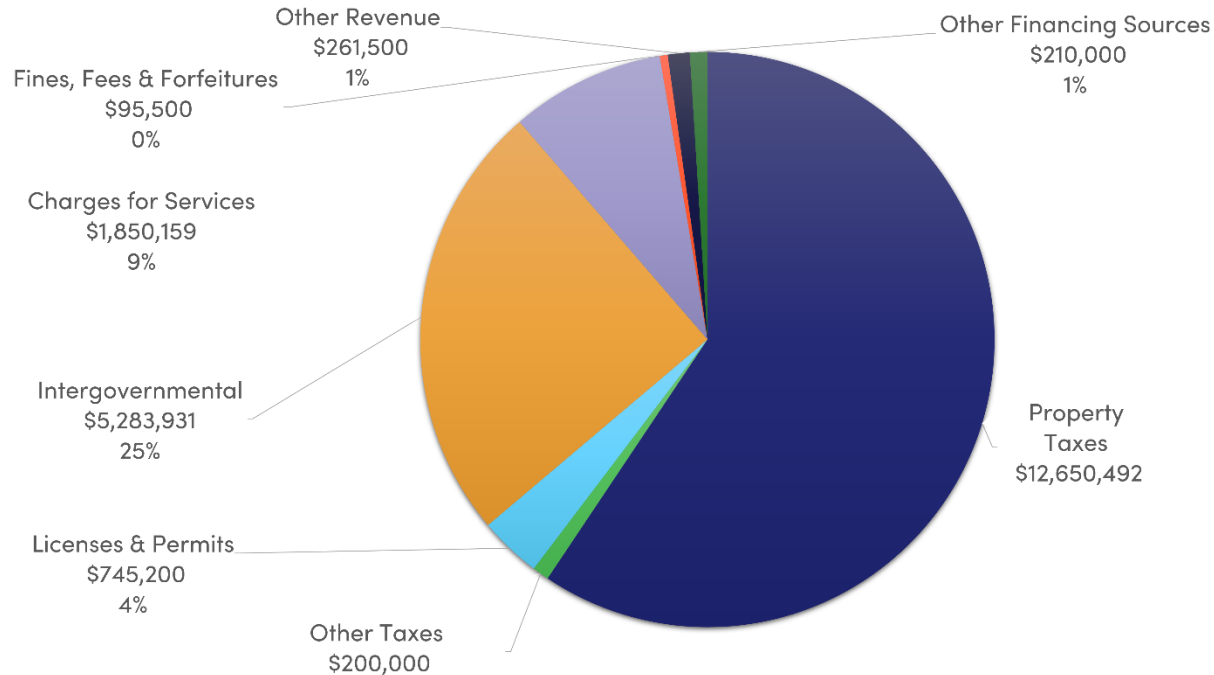


Proposed 2027 Levy Increase

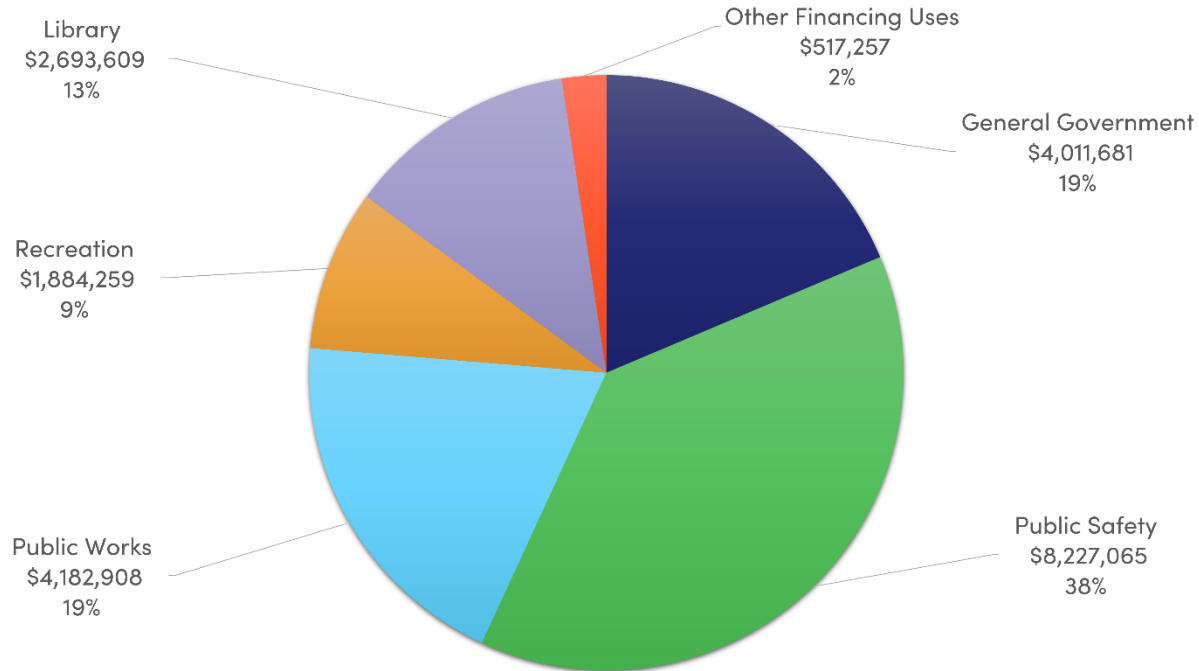


Fund type	% change	\$ change
Debt	1.3%	\$255,639
50North	1.4%	\$280,000
Parks	0.4%	\$75,000
Facilities	0.4%	\$75,000
Vehicles and Equipment	0.1%	\$24,743
General	1.7%	\$327,864
Abatement	0.0%	\$7,876
EDA	0.1%	\$10,345
HRA	0.1%	\$10,556
Communications	1.3%	\$260,000
Total	6.8%	\$1,327,023

General Fund Revenue



General Fund Expense



City Services



General government



- Administrative services
- Business development
- Housing
- Elections
- Permits

Culture & Recreation



- Library
- Parks, ice rink and pool
- FiftyNorth senior center
- Recreation

Public Safety



- Police
- Fire and Rescue
- Emergency management
- Building inspections

Public Works



- Street repair and construction
- Snow plowing
- Drinking, storm and waste-water
- Garbage, recycling and yard waste
- City buildings

Pictured: Bridging Communities: a Celebration of Somali Culture, Nov 2025



In a recent citywide survey, residents expressed strong support for the library, with 89% reporting satisfaction with the overall quality of public library services.

Pictured: Staff engaging youth and families in storytime, 2026

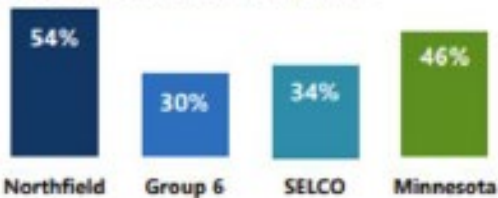


In 2023, the library opened full-service a satellite location in the Northfield Community Resource Center. The Library Oasis provides convenient 24-hour access to holds pickup, reference, programs, collections, computers and other services.

Pictured: Bookmobile and library mascot "Sparkles" with a family at a Dundas Dukes game, 2024



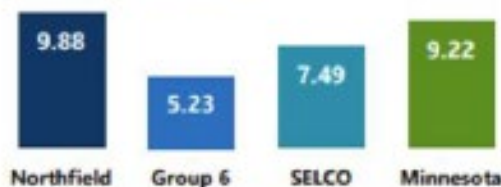
% Population w/Library Cards



Library Visits per Capita



Circulation per Capita



Data source: Minnesota Public Library Annual Report, collected and maintained by State Library Services in the Minnesota Department of Education.

Pictured: Staff presenting our community cookbook to colleagues at American Library Association annual conference, 2026

43



Relationships to Recipes: Preserving the Stories of Our Latino Community Through a Collaborative Cookbook



AT-A-GLANCE

Location: Northfield, MN
Partners: Northfield Public Library, Southeastern Libraries Cooperating, Friends of the Library, community members
Timeline: 2024-2025
Goal: use food as a storytelling tool for immigrant and Latino communities



SECURING FUNDING

What grant funding might be available for you?

 Community Reads Grant

How can we expand upon the Midwestern community cookbook tradition to celebrate our Latino community?



18 recipe contributors

32 attendees at the launch party

13.2% Latino population

12 countries represented



MAKING IT HAPPEN

- choosing our photographer
- getting the word out
- ensuring community buy-in

ANGELICA LINDER, OUTREACH SERVICES MANAGER
 ALEXUS KREFT, ADULT OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING LIBRARIAN



OUTCOMES

- programming opportunities
- fostering pride and belonging
- historical preservation
- community building
- cross-cultural engagement

Best Small Library in America 2024

Honorable Mention

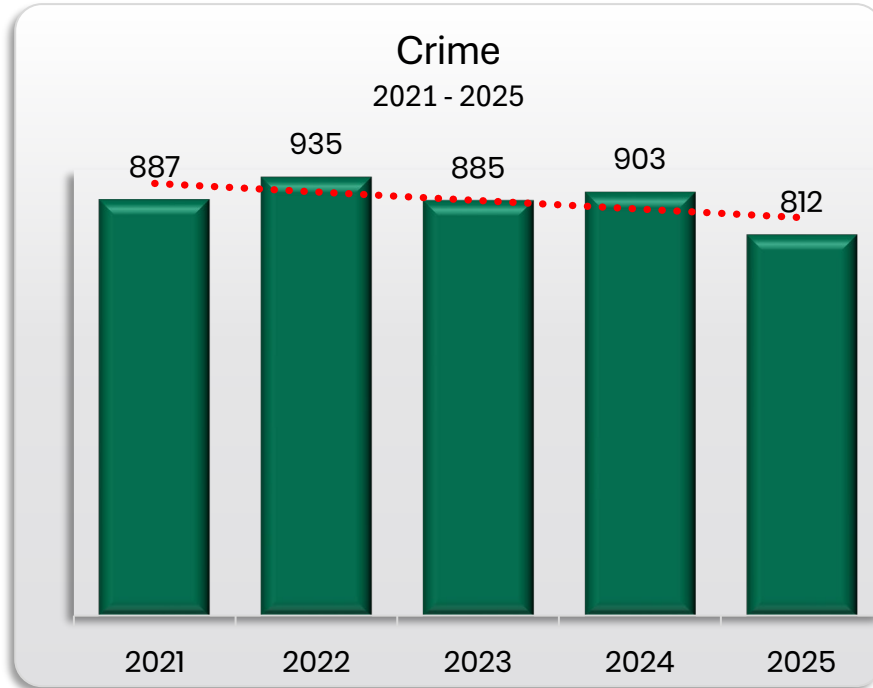


MOVER & SHAKER





Crime



- 10% decrease from 2024
- 8.4% decrease from 2021
- Slight decreasing 5-year trend

Noteworthy – March 16th

Conversation, Cops & Coffee



FiftyNorth hosted the Police Department for our first-ever Conversation, Cops, and Coffee / Coffee with a Cop event. Officer Murphy, Sergeants Kramer and Jandro, Deputy Chief Haider and Chief Schroeffer enjoyed the company on that wintery day!





Northfield Police Mentorship Program

Connecting youth and
law enforcement for a
stronger community

Maintaining Quality Infrastructure & Facilities



9

Water facilities



156

Lanes miles of roads



58

Storm ponds



230

Miles of pipes



120

Miles of trails and sidewalks



150

Pieces of large equipment



1

Swimming pool



35

Parks



13,530

Trees



1

Ice arena



21

Playgrounds



8

Buildings

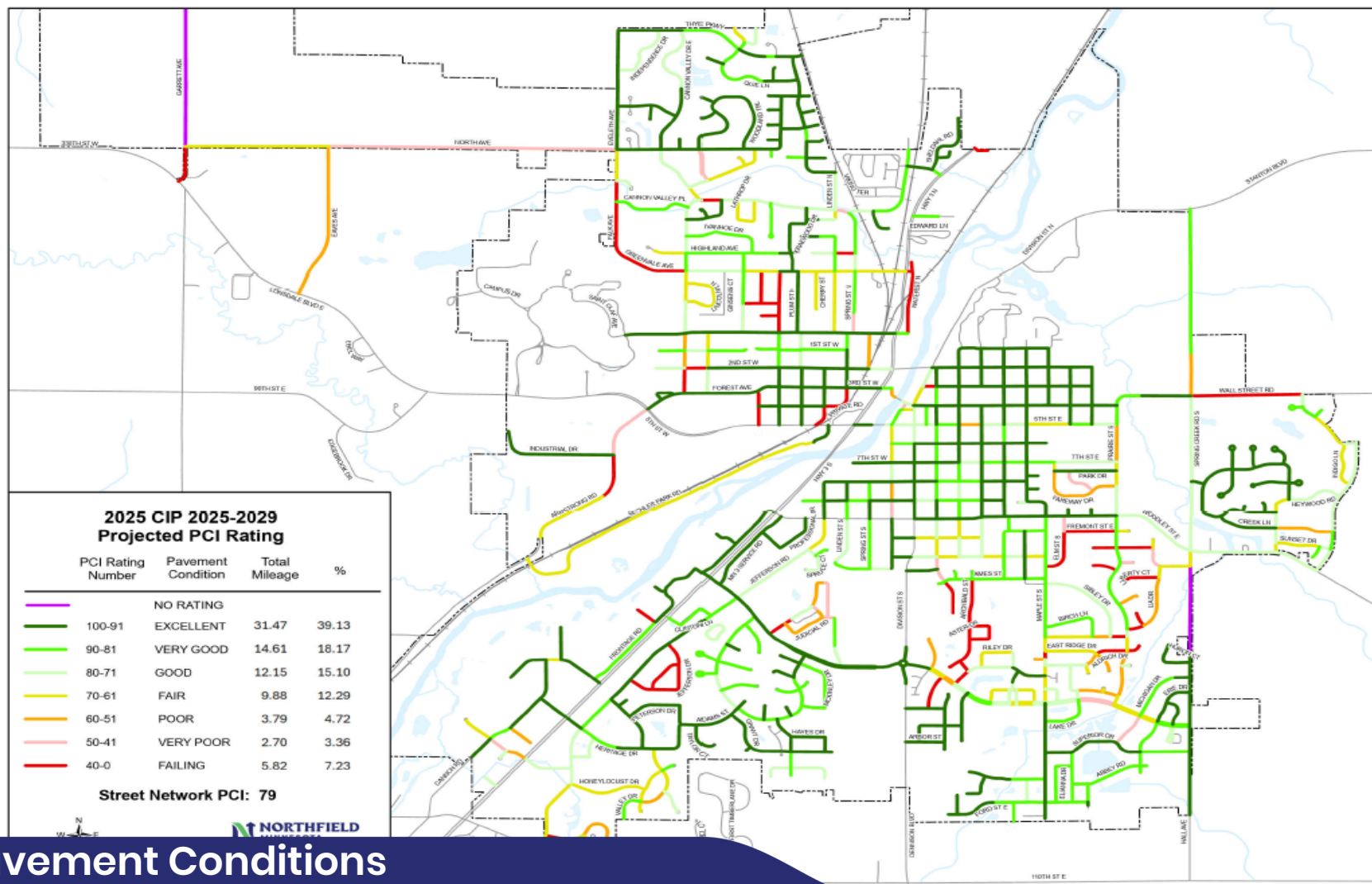
Maintaining Streets



- City surveys $\frac{1}{4}$ of City Street Annually for Pavement Condition
- Streets Rated 100 brand new & below 50 Condition need reconstruction

Year	Overall Network Pavement Condition Rating
2025	79
2024	79
2023	78
2022	78
2021	76

- 89% of Roadway in good condition
- 11% of Roadway has streets in poor condition



Difference is options: staffing



Public Works

- 0.4% mechanic (1)
- 0.8% operator (2)



Police

- 1.0% lieutenant (1)



Comparable Organizations

City	Northfield	Stillwater	Faribault	Owatonna	Farmington	Willmar	Albert Lea	Average of Comparisons
Population	20,790	19,394	24,453	26,420	23,632	21,015	18,016	22,155
Total Number of Employees	114	114	207	166	98	118	138.67	140.28
Streets and/or Maintenance FTE	6	9	12	19	11	4.6	12.54	11.36
Parks FTE	6	9	9	18.2	10	21.7	9.5	12.91
Total	12	18	21	31.2	21	26.3	22.08	23.10

- Northfield has ½ the staff compared to other similar cities in streets and parks

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Lieutenant

1. Current supervisory capacity stretched thin
2. Command staff are performing operational management duties
3. The Department has outgrown its current structure.





Strengths

Profitable since 1948

\$3.3 million

in the last 14 years



Profits go to the city's General Fund
to lower property taxes

Proposed utility rates



- Sample bill for an average home
 - Based on 589 cubic feet of water on a 0.33 acre lot.

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Water	\$25.97	\$28.31	\$30.85	\$33.63	\$36.66	\$39.96	\$41.16
Sewer	\$41.74	\$42.99	\$44.28	\$44.28	\$45.61	\$46.98	\$49.84
Garbage	\$12.55	\$13.30	\$13.77	\$14.25	\$14.75	\$15.27	\$15.80
Storm water	\$11.41	\$11.98	\$12.58	\$12.83	\$13.09	\$13.35	\$13.62
Total	\$91.67	\$96.58	\$101.49	\$106.32	\$111.47	\$116.96	\$120.41
% change	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	3 ³³

Utility projects



Water refill station



NW area water tower



Water meter replacement



Pond dredging



Questions



WELCOME

Budget and Capital Improvement Plan Town Hall



A safe transportation network for all

Overview: what to expect



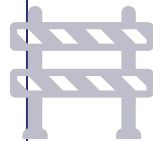
Why Safe
Transportation
Network for All?



Understanding the
network



Your influence



2027-2031 projects

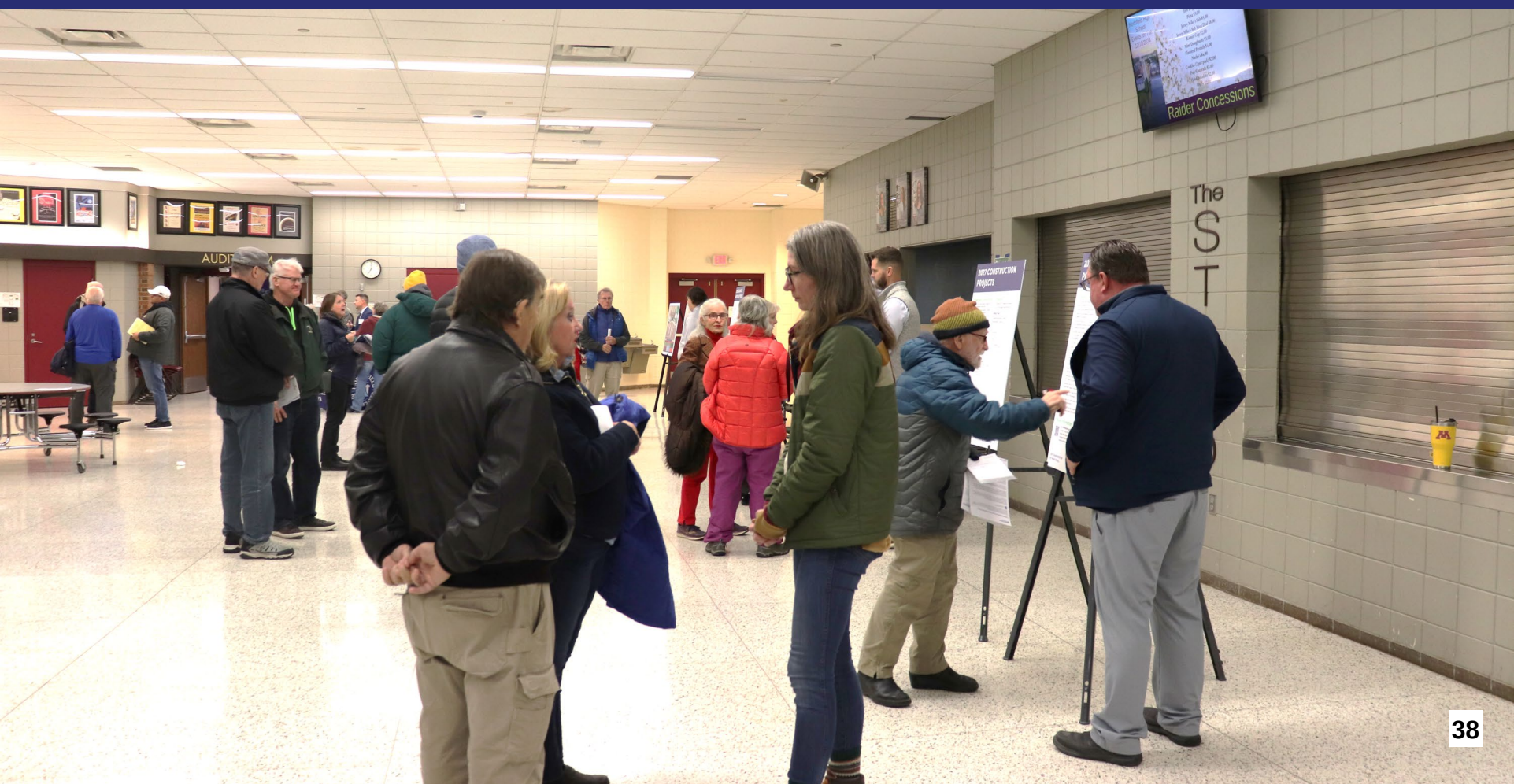


How decisions are
made



Questions and
answers

Specific questions and clarifications in the cafeteria.



Minnesota Serious & Fatal Crashes

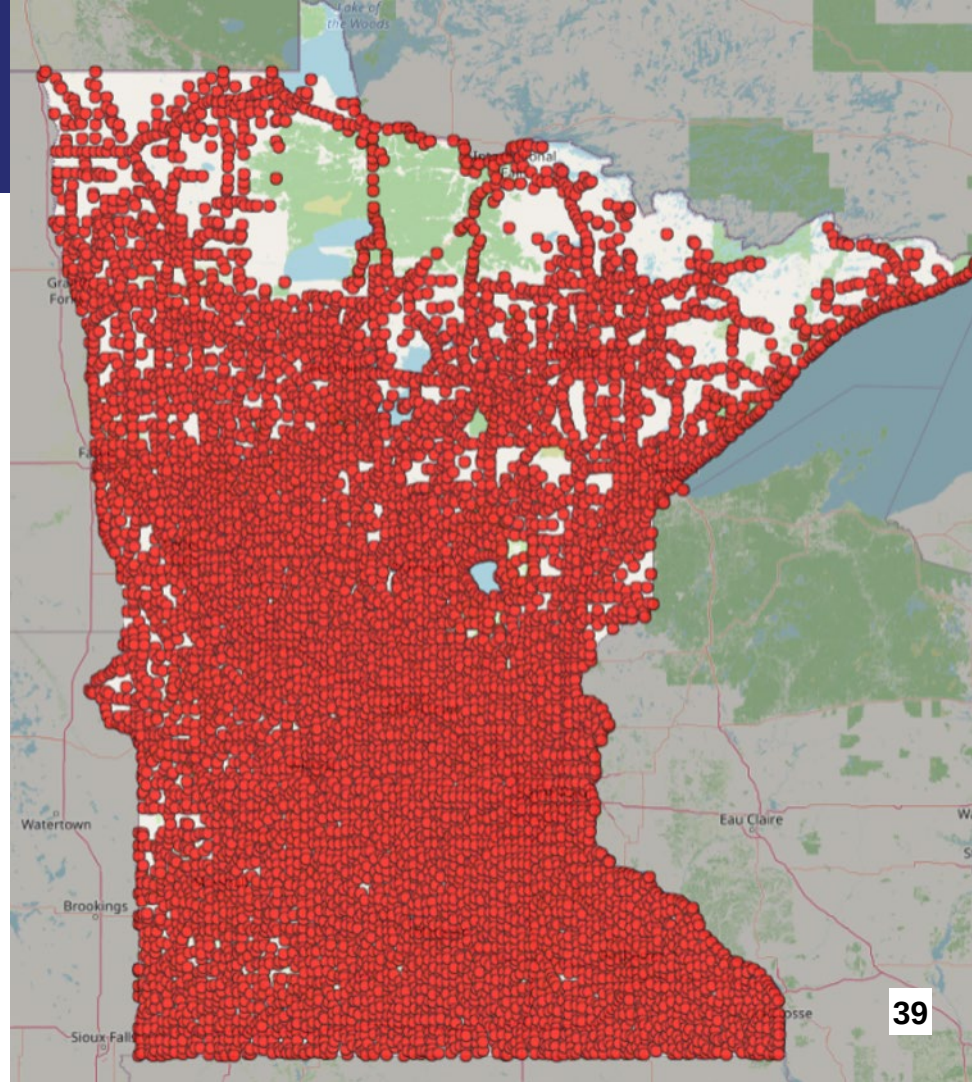
2016–2025

712,452 crashes

19,107 lives lost or changed

677 more serious and fatal
injury crashes from last
year.

↑ trend



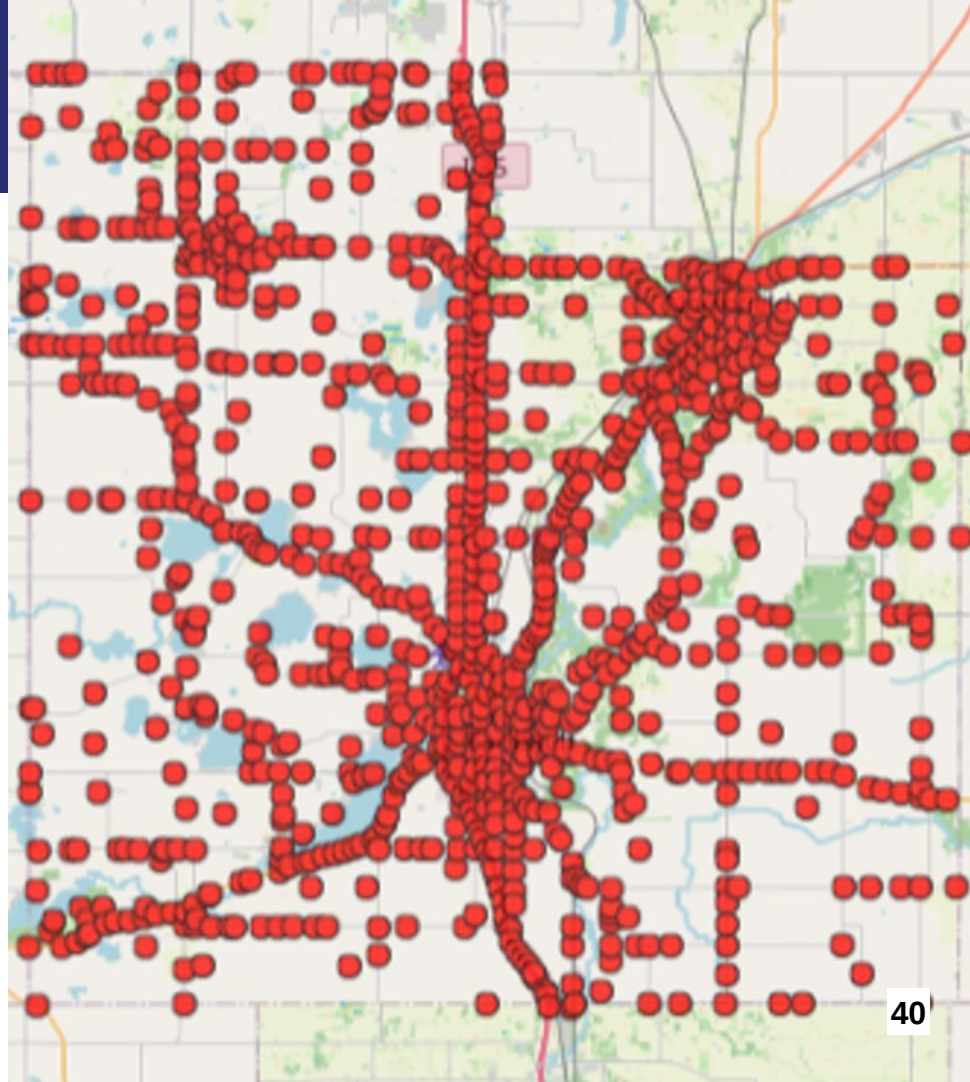
Rice County Serious & Fatal Crashes

2016–2025

7,773 crashes

263 serious & fatal

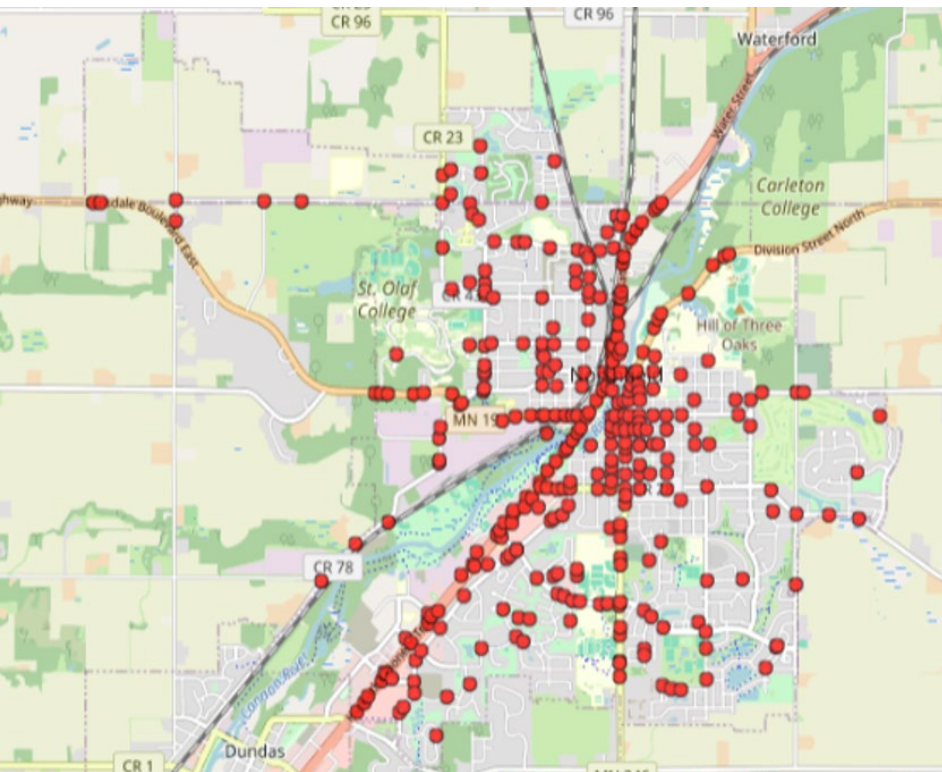
↑ trend



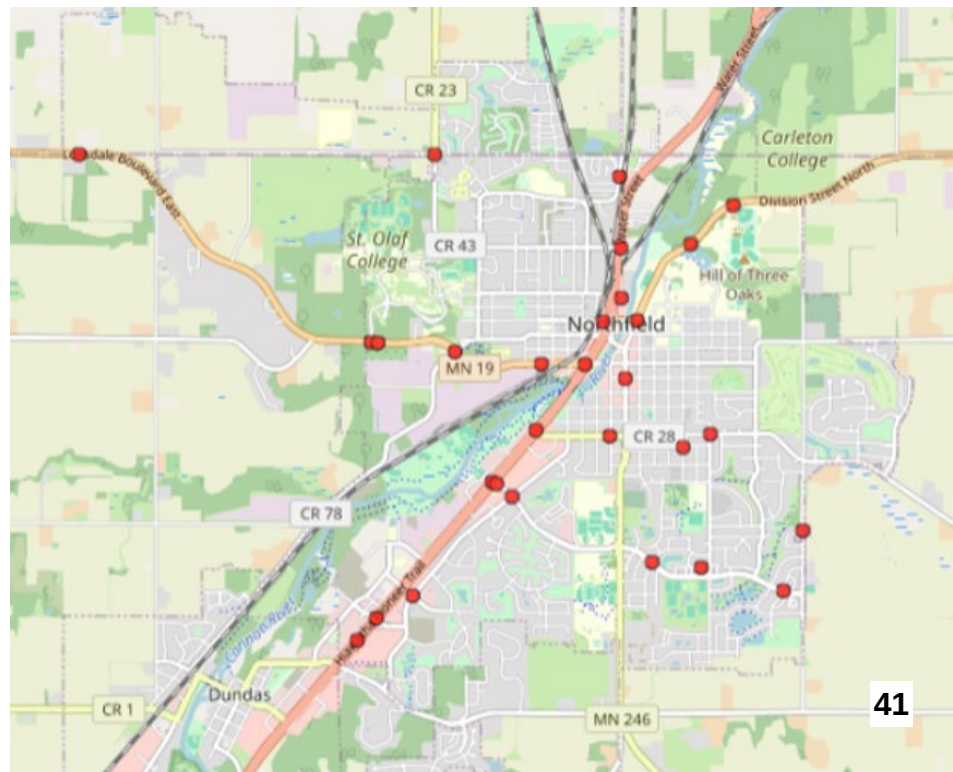
Northfield 2016–2025

911 crashes, 31 series & fatal crashes

All crashes



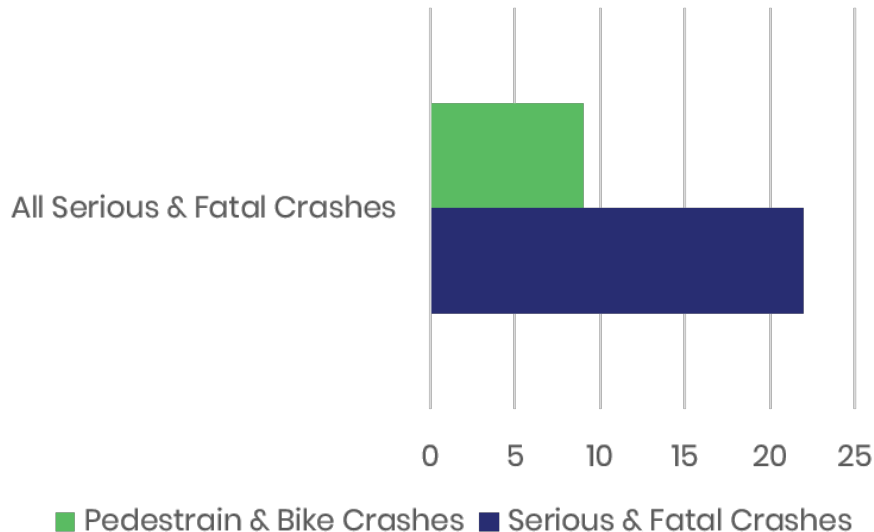
Serious & fatal crashes



Northfield 2016–2025

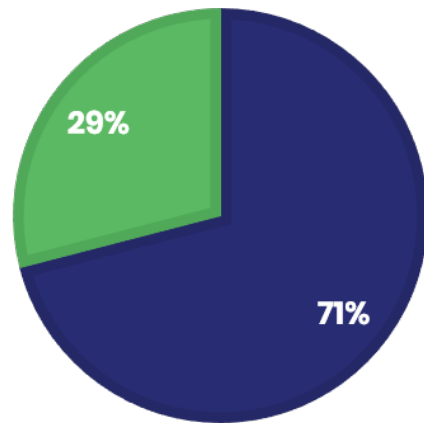
31 series & fatal crashes, 9 involve pedestrian or bike

Northfield Crash Data



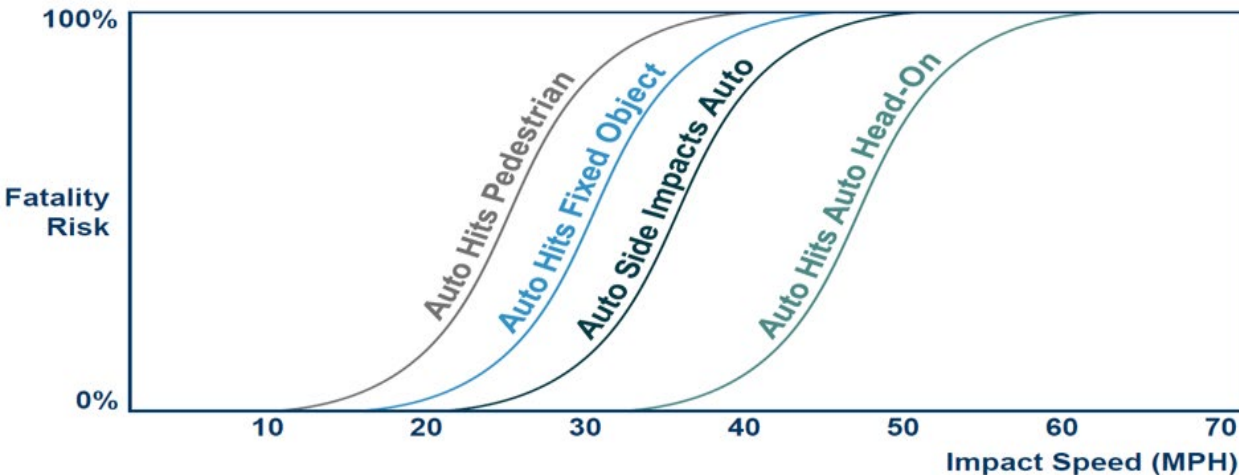
SERIOUS & FATAL CRASH DATA

■ Motor Vehicle ■ Pedestrian & Bike



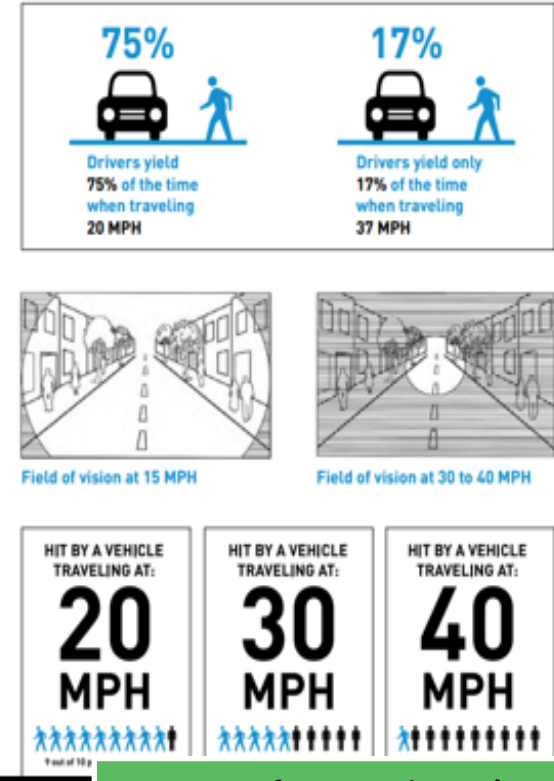
Safe Speeds

Lower speeds means less fatalities



Source: FHWA

WHY SPEED MATTERS



9 out of 10 pedestrians survive at 20 mph

Safe Transportation Network for All



Creates a balanced, highly interconnected and attractive surface transportation network



Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Plan



Promotes the latest and best “Complete Streets” design for greater community planning and public’s safety

Layering safety

Roadway users
are humans,
humans make
mistakes



Separating bikes from
vehicles



Narrowing/raised
pedestrian crossings



Improved crossing
flasher



Intersection
improvements

PEDALING OUR WAY TO A MORE ACTIVE FUTURE.

Pre-construction bicycle and pedestrian counts were completed in 2023; post-construction counts were collected in October 2023 and 2024.

Heritage Dr has had up to **9x** more activity with an off-street bikeway.

Roosevelt Dr has had up to **4x** more activity with the cycle track.

Nevada St has had over **7x** more biking activity.

Maple St (north of Ames St) has had **10x** more biking activity.

Maple St (south of Birch Ln) has had **4x** more biking activity.



Off-street bikeway along Heritage Dr



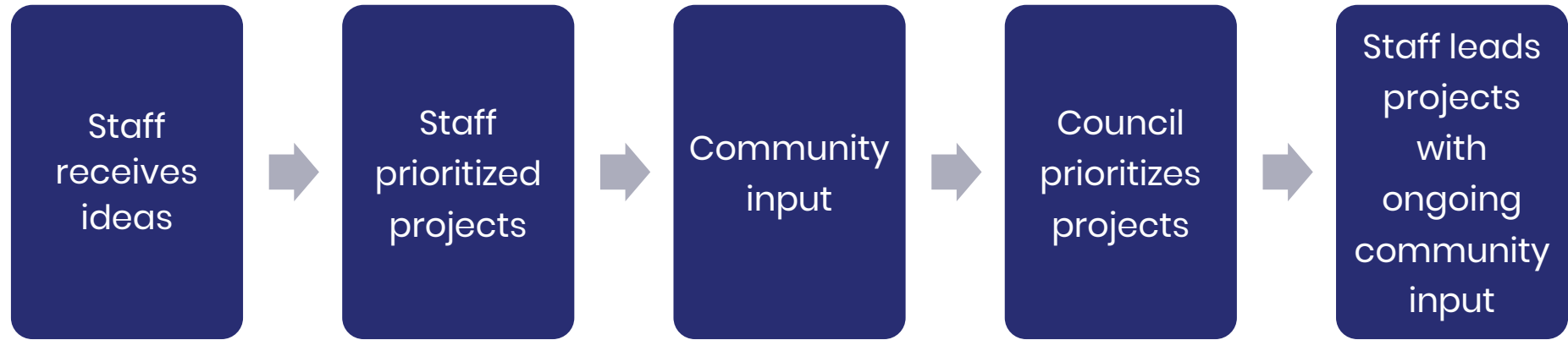
On-street cycle track along Maple St



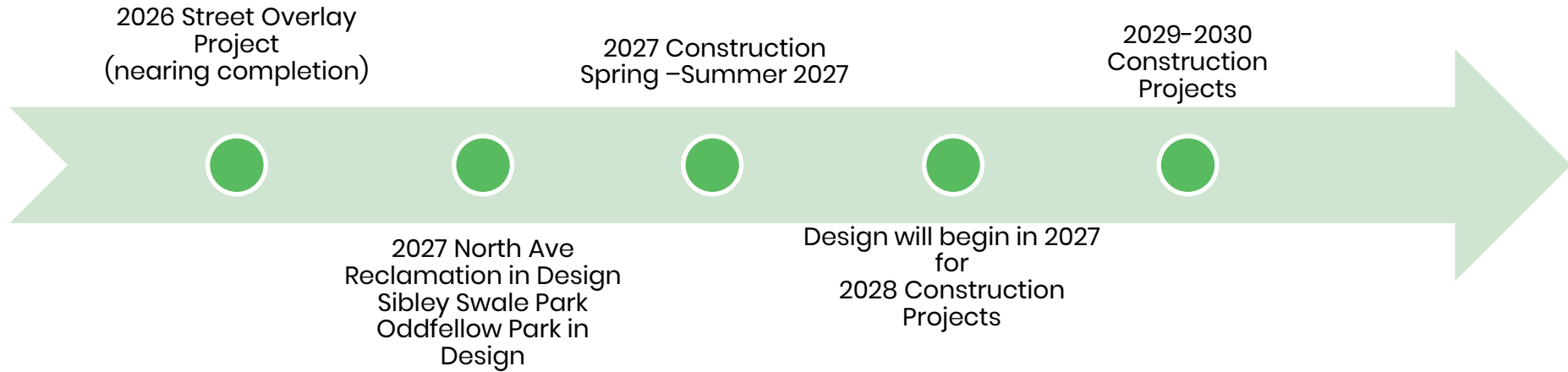
2027 – 2031

**Transportation Network &
Park Improvements**

How are decisions made in transportation planning?



Timeline



Timeline

Major Influence

Rapidly Declining Influence

Low Influence

Comprehensive
Plan

Capital
Improvement
Program (CIP)

Budget

Feasibility
Report

Order
Improvement

Final Plans

Construction

2028-2031 Projects

2027 Projects

2027 Projects

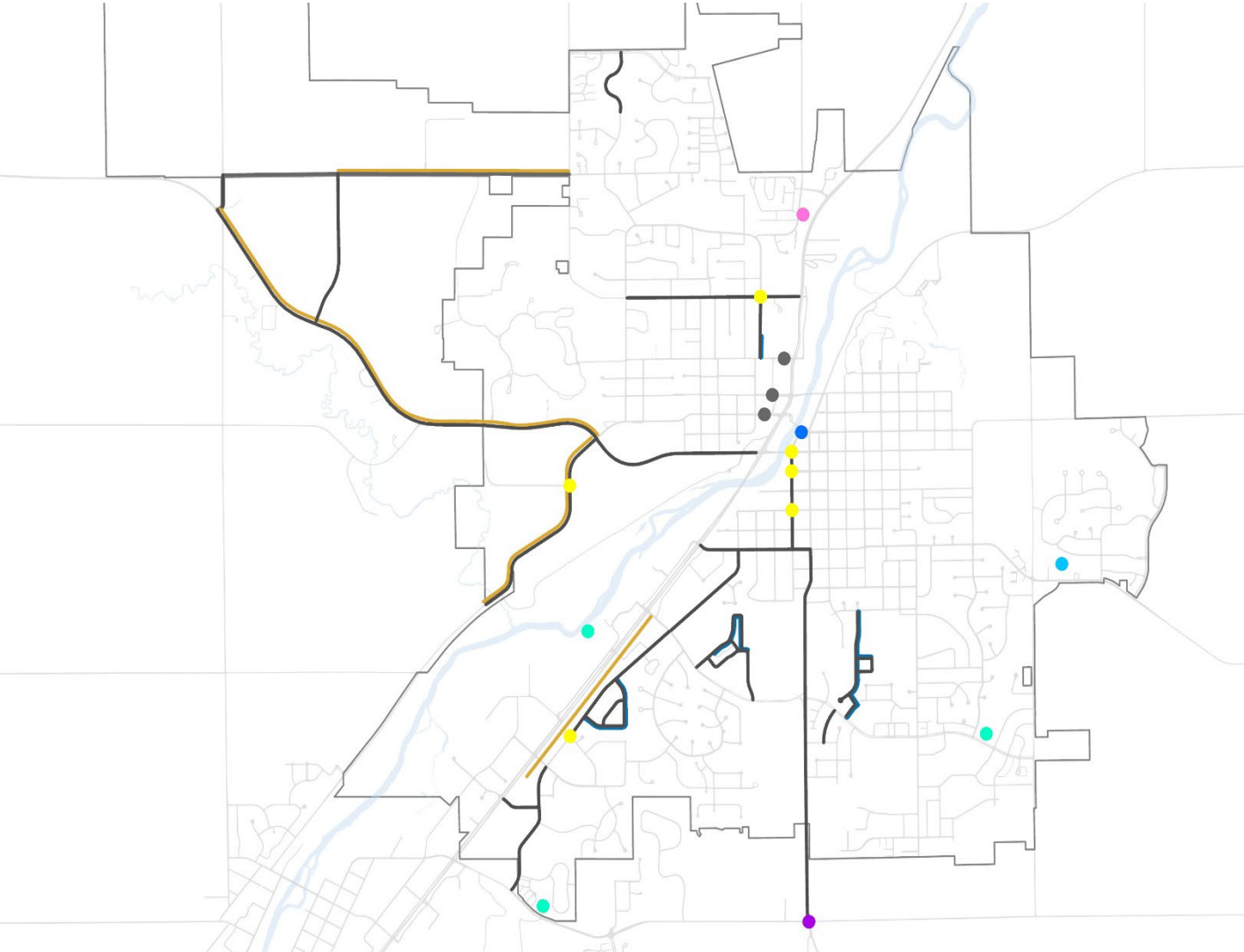
2027
Projects

Opportunity for Influence

Cost of Changes

2027-2031

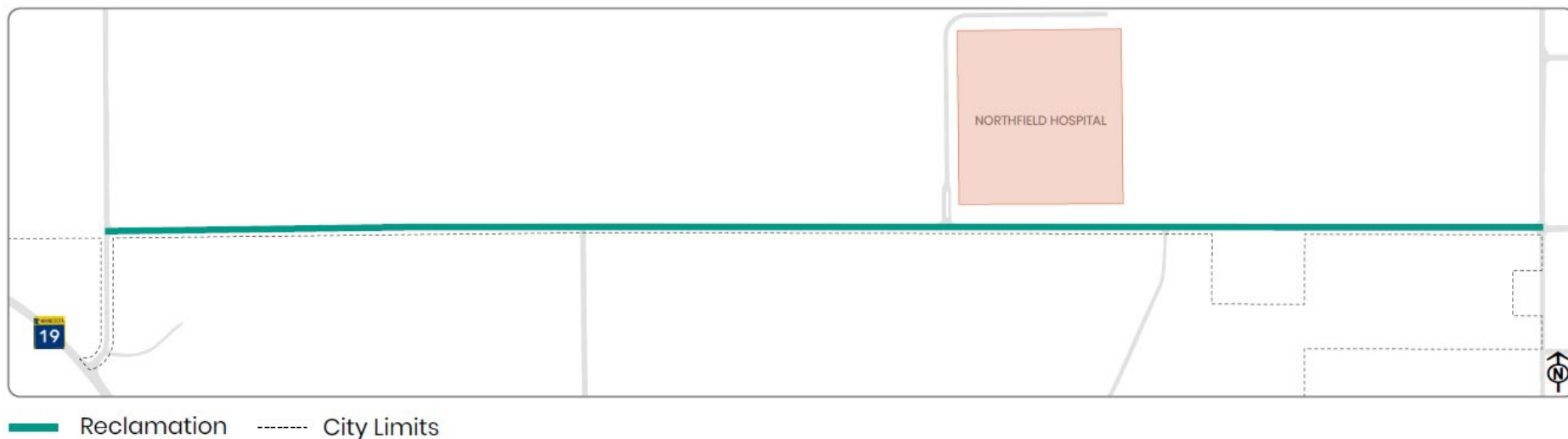
Transportation Planning and Network Improvements



2027 North Avenue reclamation and trail repair

Current phase: declining influence

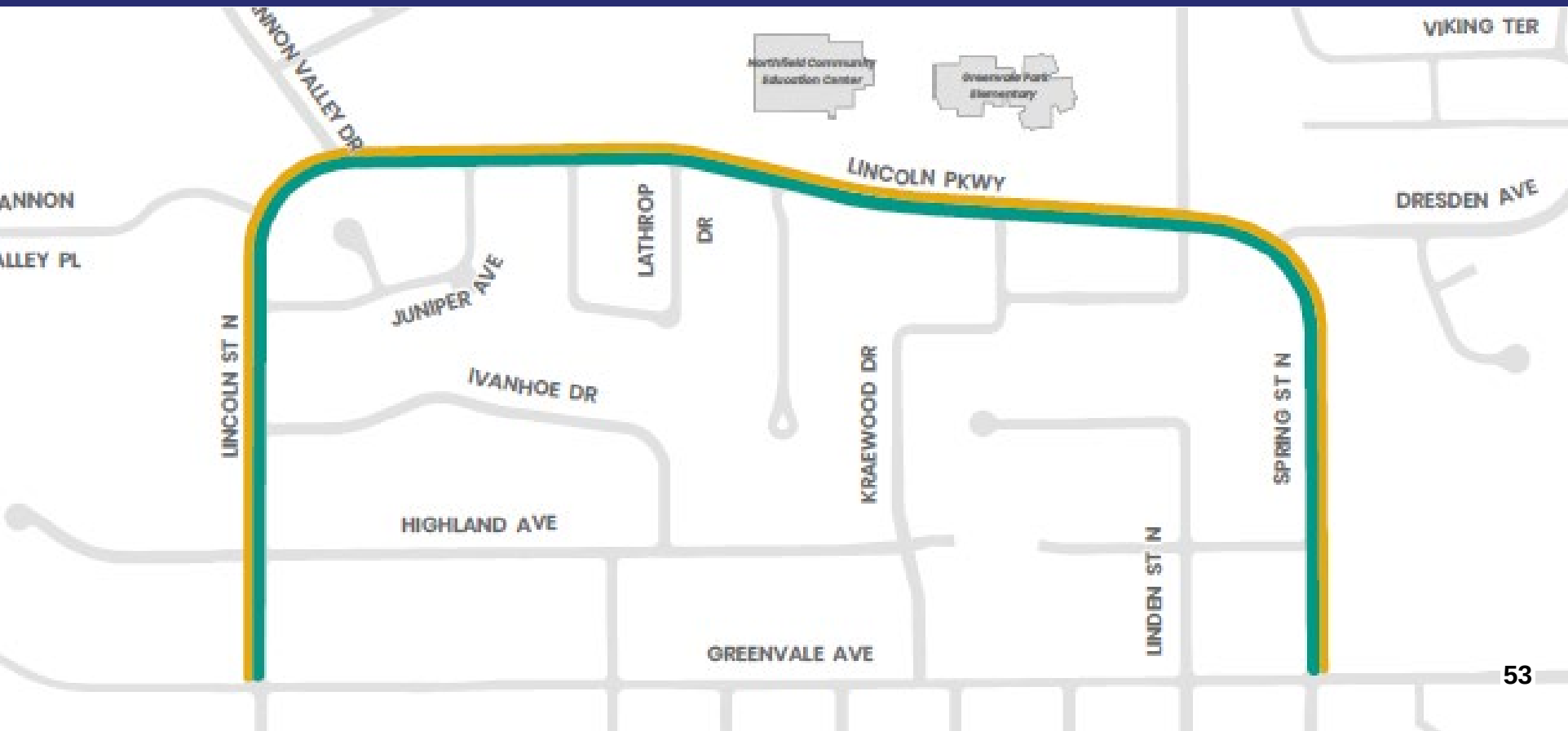
Project map



SAFE TRANSPORTATION
NETWORK FOR ALL

2028 Lincoln Parkway Overlay & Safety Improvement

Current phase: Declining influence

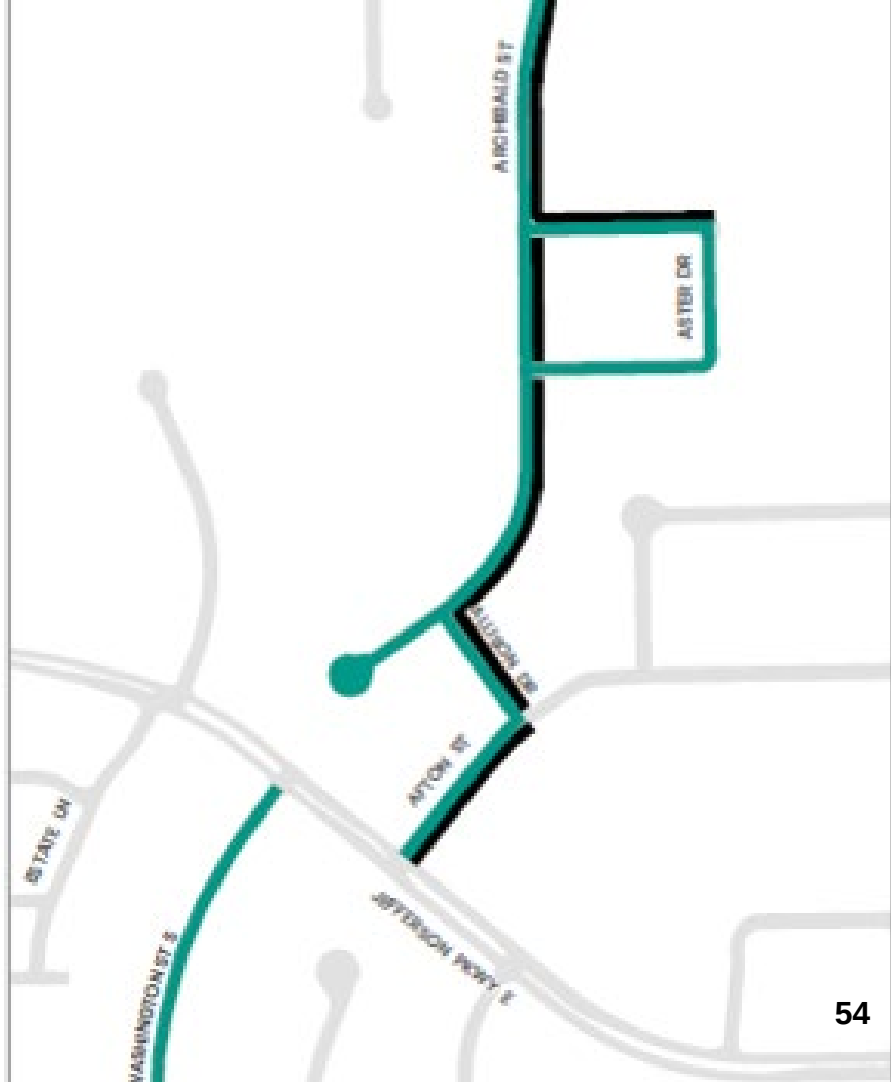


2028 project

Current phase: Major influence

Reclamation & Walking Improvements

- Archibald Street
- Archibald Cout
- Allison Drive
- Afton Street
- Aster Drive
- Washington Street

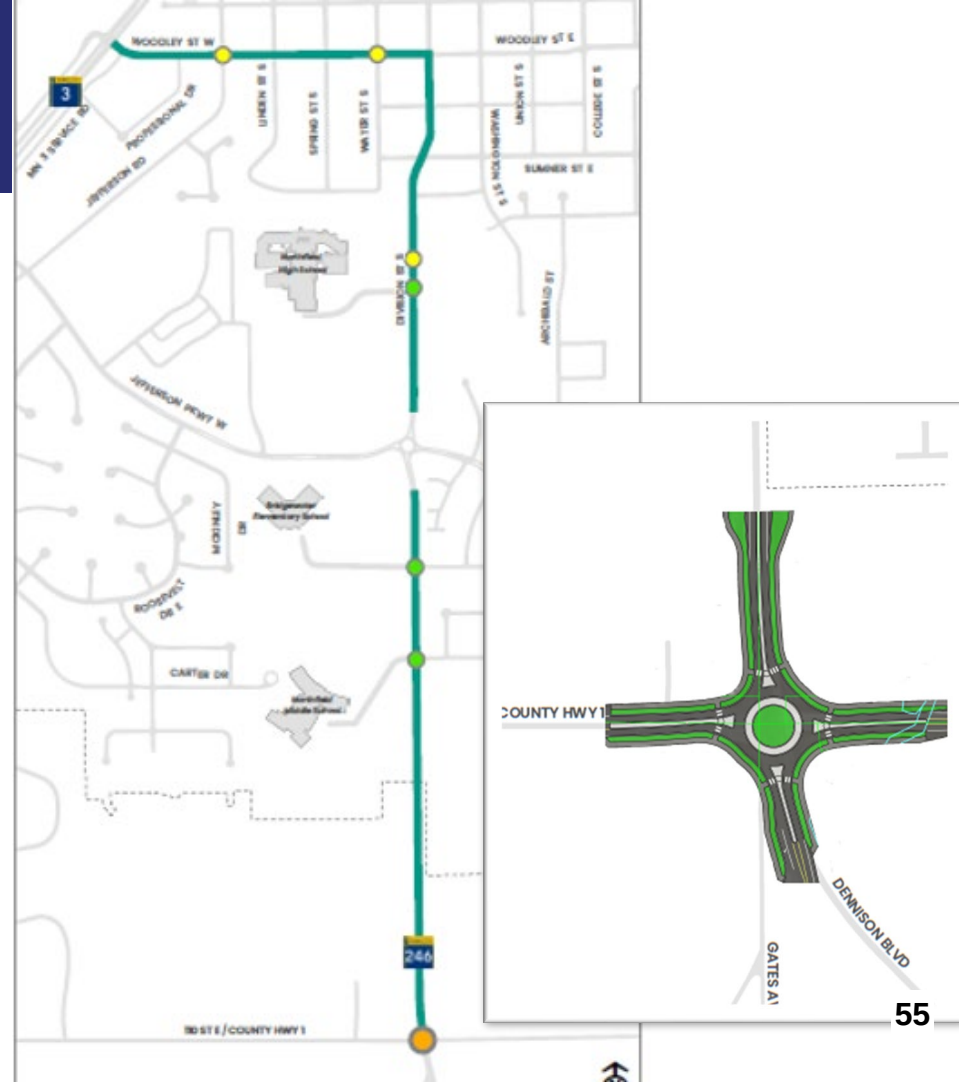


2028–2029

Current phase: Declining influence

Highway 246

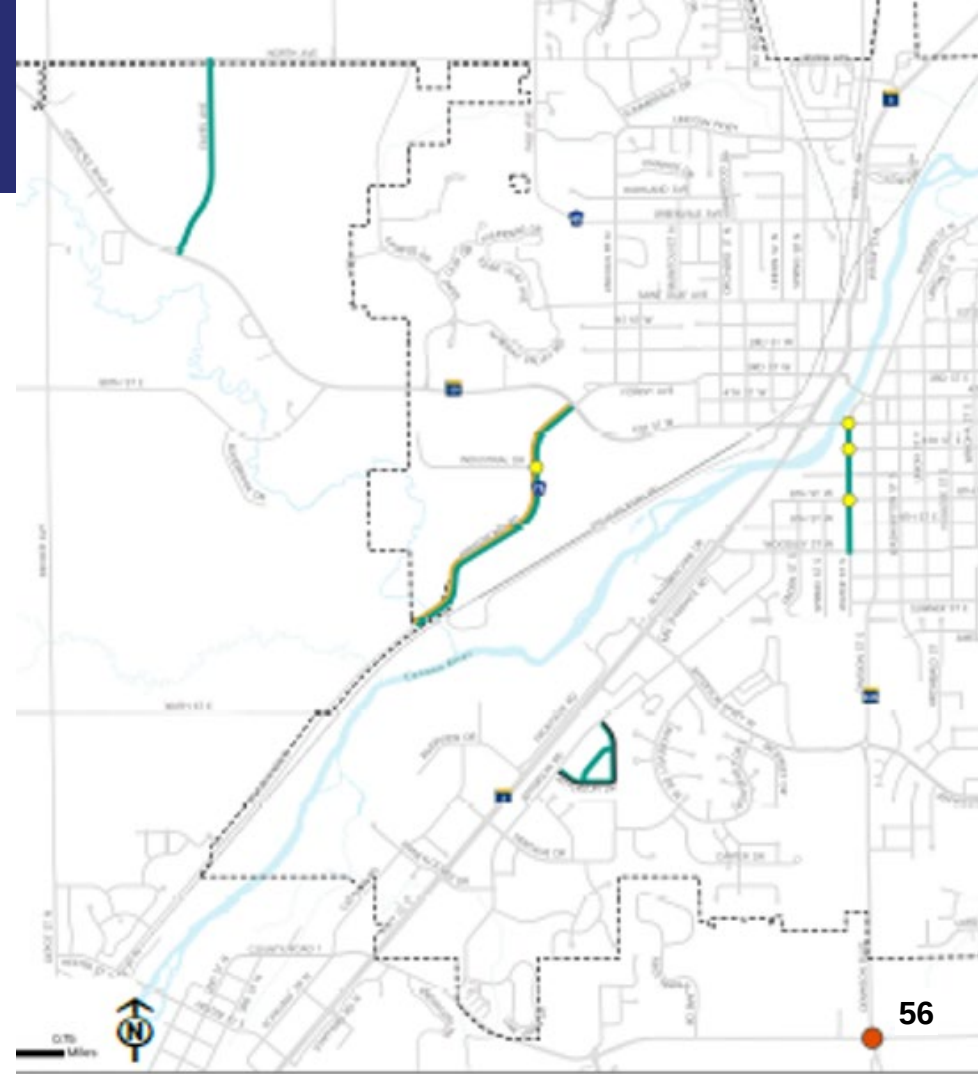
- Reconstruction from high School to Highway 3
 - Includes walking and biking improvements
 - Pedestrian crossing improvement
- Roundabout at County Road 1 & Highway 246
- Mini-roundabouts at school entrances



2029 projects

Current phase: Major influence

- Eaves Avenue Overlay
- County 78/Armstrong Road Reclamation and Reconstruction
- Jefferson Drive & Jefferson Lane Reclamation
- Water Street Overlay and Intersection Pedestrian Crossing Improvements

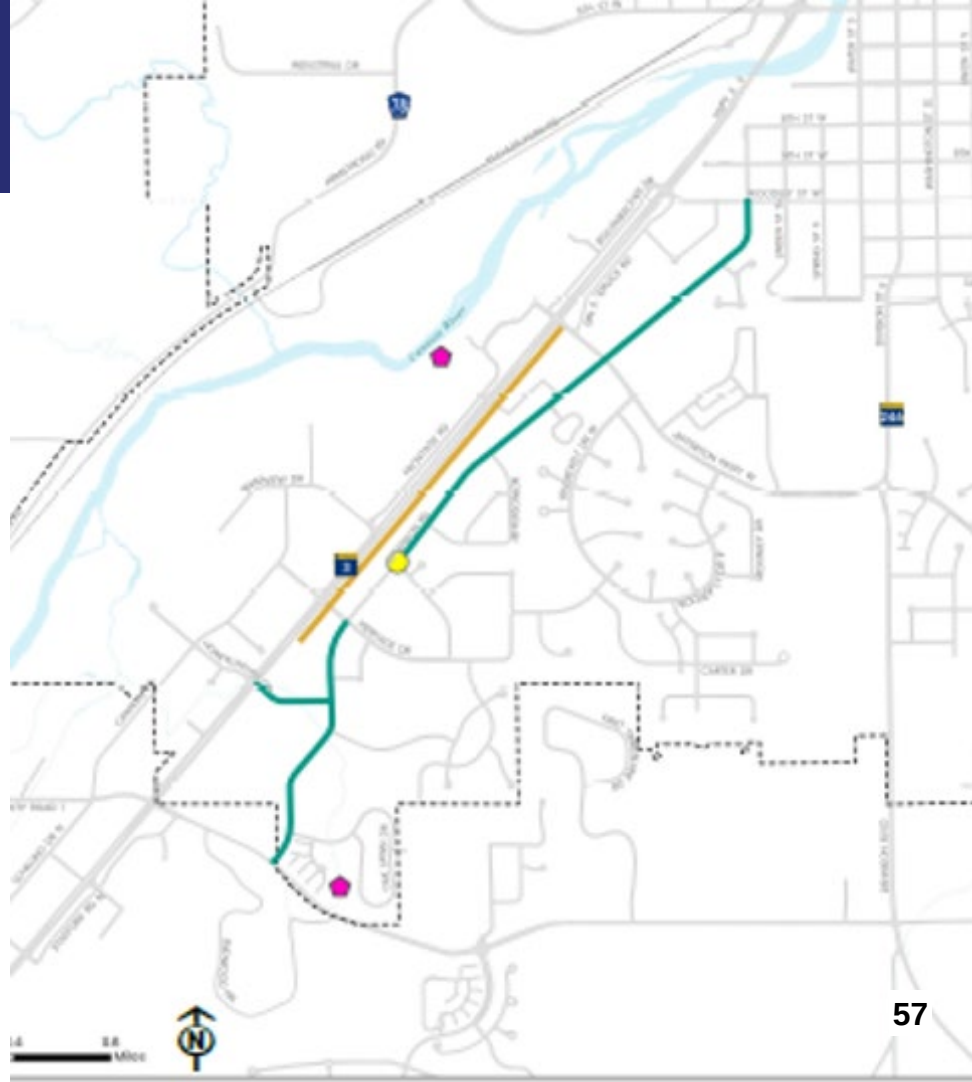


2030 projects

Current phase: Major influence

Overlays

- Jefferson Road
- Honey Locust Drive



2030: Bridge Square

Current phase: Declining influence

- Reconstruction of deteriorated roads and sidewalks
- Improving walkability, seating, shade, and gathering at Bridge Square

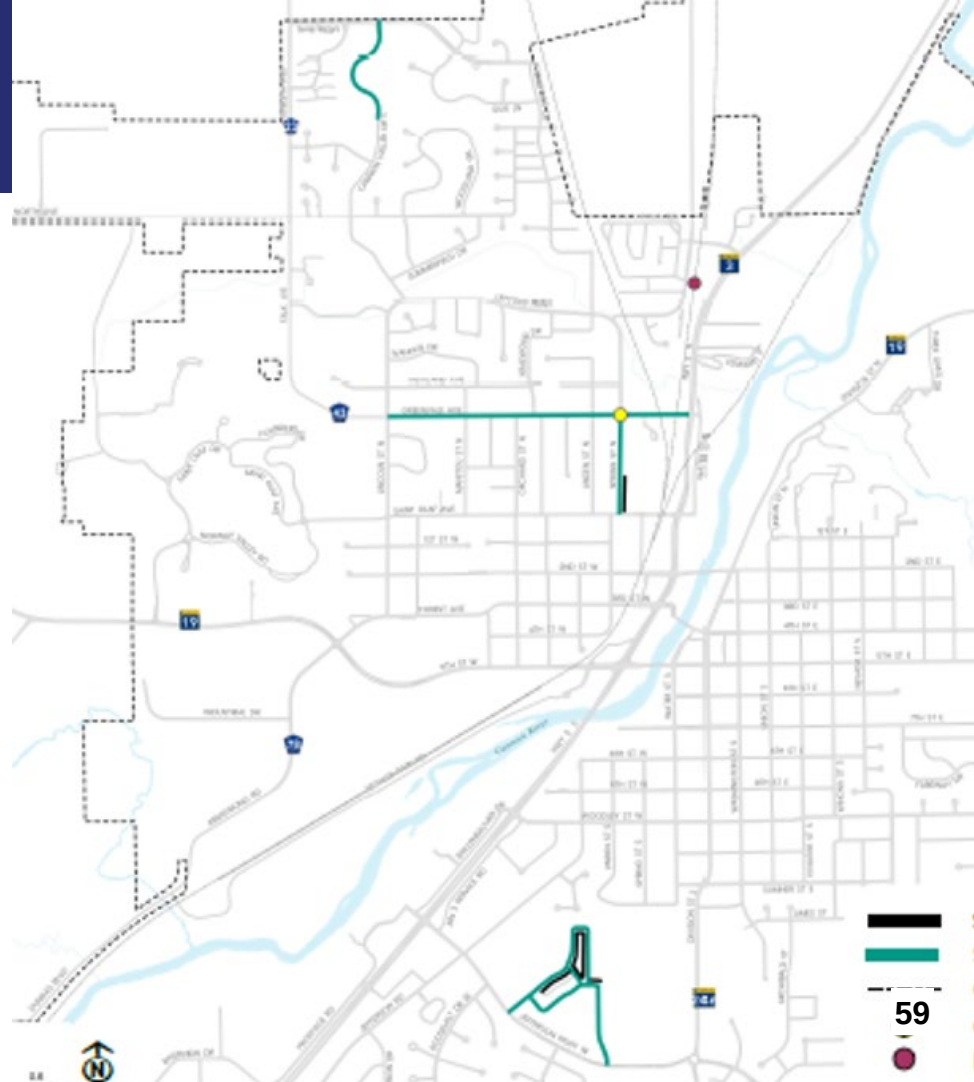


2031 projects

Current phase: Major influence

Overlays

- Greenvale Avenue
- Spring Street
- Cannon Valley Drive
- Judicial Road
- Judicial Way
- Presidential Drive



2027: Sibley Swale Park

Current phase: declining influence



2027: Oddfellows Park

Current phase: Declining influence



2028–2029: Riverside Lions Park

Current phase: Major influence





2029: Heritage Park

Current
phase:
Major
influence

Questions



Thank you for attending.

We look forward to your
conversation in the
cafeteria.

