



Northfield 2045

A 20-year vision for the future development of
the City of Northfield

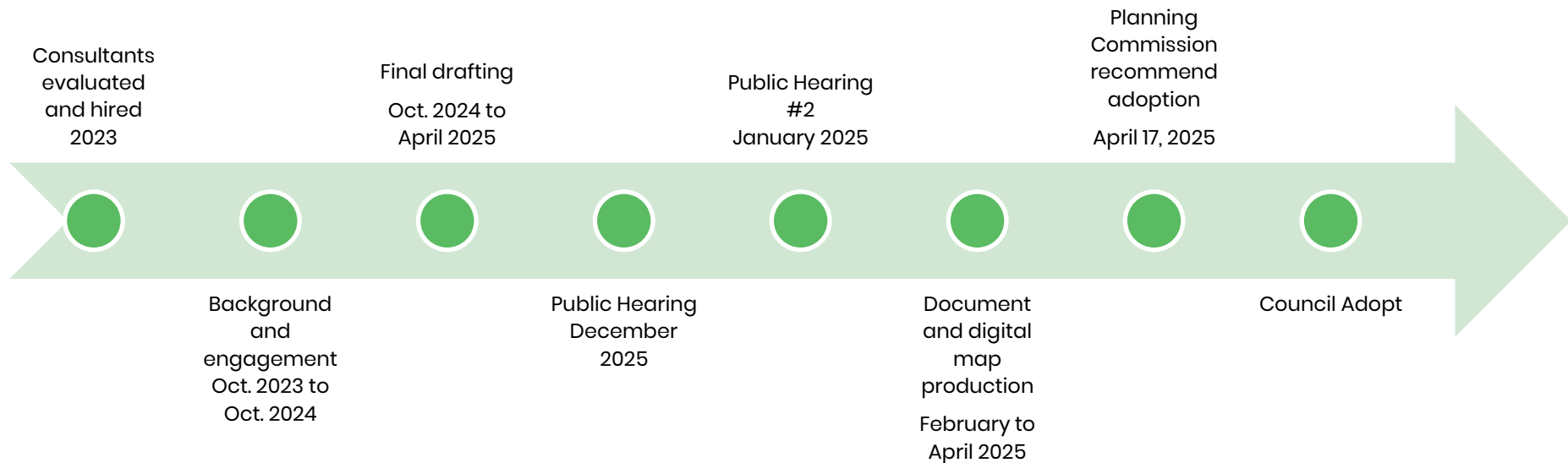
City Council Meeting May 6, 2025

An aerial photograph of a city, likely St. Paul, Minnesota, showing a river (St. Paul River) flowing through the center. The river is bordered by a concrete wall on the right side. On the left bank, there are several large, multi-story buildings, including one with a prominent dome. The right bank is also lined with buildings, including a large, multi-story brick building. The city is surrounded by dense trees and greenery. A bridge is visible in the upper left corner, crossing the river. The overall scene is a mix of urban development and natural landscape.

**Requested action: formal adoption by
resolution**

**Recommended by Planning Commission
April 17, 2025**

Timeline



Vision, mission and values



Vision



Northfield is an open, safe, and welcoming community, recognized for its world-class colleges and historic riverfront downtown, and is dedicated to sustainably enhancing and preserving its vibrant culture, celebrated arts, strong economy, and an excellent quality of life where all can thrive.

Mission



The City of Northfield works for the common good of our residents and businesses and the improvement of our community by providing excellent, innovative municipal services that carry out the city's vision for a high quality of life for all.

Values



- Teamwork
- Excellence & Innovation
- Integrity
- Celebration
- Stewardship

Vision

Northfield is a welcoming city, providing equitable access to a high quality of life.

We are a city with a strong identity rooted in history while growing as a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable place. We maintain our integrity as an independent and distinct city shaped by our historic and natural resources, the Cannon River, rural neighbors, and our colleges.

Guiding values overview



CREATIVITY

Northfield will develop **creative solutions to local challenges** by working with the community, ensuring staff understand and have tools to implement best practices in their fields, and using consultants who understand Northfield and its values.



ECONOMY

Northfield's capital planning and budgeting advances the goals of this Plan in **economically responsible and sustainable** ways to ensure revenue is sufficient to meet the City's needs for the long term.



HOME

Northfield promotes **safe, stable housing** in a wide variety of types, sizes, and ownership models, to support local business and accommodate residents in all stages of life



RESILIENCE

Northfield develops infrastructure, policies, and practices to **foster resilience and mitigate the effects of climate change**.



MOBILITY

Northfield works to provide a full complement of **mobility options** so all Northfield residents and visitors can get where and how they want.



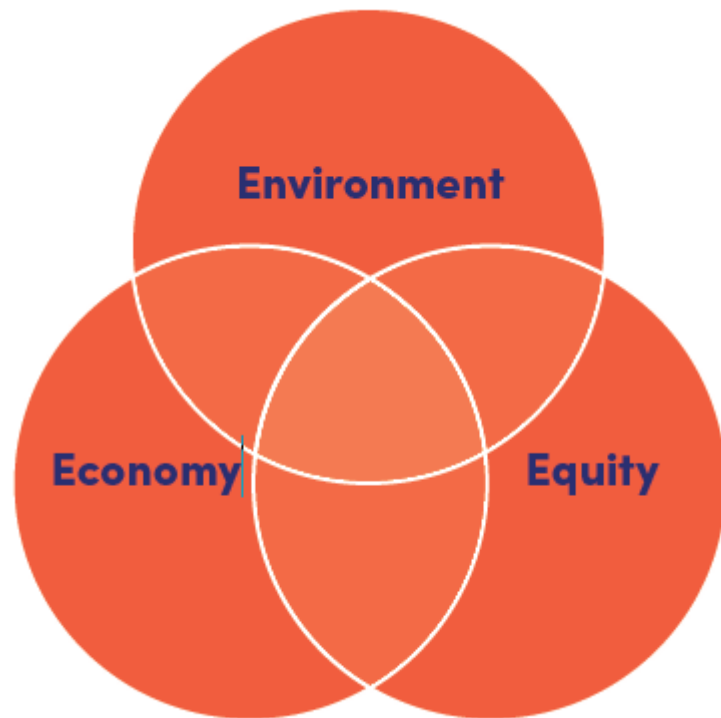
EQUITY

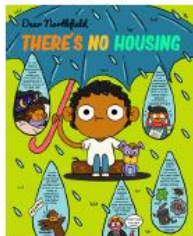
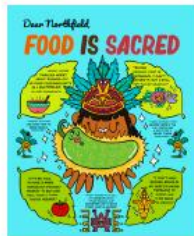
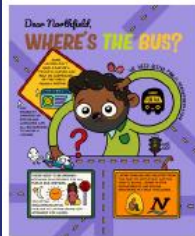
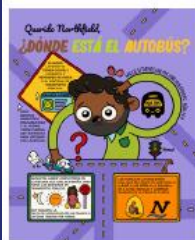
Northfield **emphasizes equity** to address disparities and to ensure equitable access to jobs, housing, education, essential services, retail, mobility options, and open space for all.



CONNECT

Northfield **fosters human connections** in our increasingly diverse community through well-designed neighborhoods, gathering places, and business districts that are inclusive for all, independent of age, economic status, mobility, gender, or racial and ethnic background.





Vision

What We Want to Be – Guiding Values

Strategy

What we must achieve to get there

Policy topics

Access, Sustainable & Secure
Economy, Infrastructure

Outcomes

Context – Core Principles – Actions

Implementation

Timeline – Things to Measure – Who is Accountable – How will we pay for

Dear Northfield, we dream of a town where
WE FEEL CONNECTED



Northfield 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Planning Commission recommendation April 17, 2025
Adopted May xx, 2025
northfieldmn.gov/2045



General policy direction



Chapter 2: Vision and Guiding Values

- Form the foundation of the plan
- Developed directly from community input
- Refined by the Steering Committee and Planning Commission

General policy direction



- Chapter 3: Connects land use and transportation
 - Plan for accessibility
 - Prioritize compact development
 - Target areas of underinvestment
 - Design for resiliency and sustainability

General policy direction



- **Chapter 4: Connects housing and economic development**
 - Providing housing which is affordable
 - Supporting business and jobs
 - Improving tax base diversity

General policy direction



- **Chapter 5: Connecting municipal services and sustainability**
 - Sets the stage for updating future water/wastewater planning
 - Sets the stage for updating future transportation planning
 - Sets the stage for additional sustainability work

Chapter 6: Implementation



- Describes how the plan will be accomplished
- Connects actions and goals to achieve outcomes
- Dovetails with the strategic plan

Next steps



- Recommend plan to Council for adoption
- Online, accessible web document
- Printable, accessible and translated [executive summary](#)
- Use the plan!

Using the plan



- Standard staff report & presentation template with comp plan conformance
- Redesign Chapter 34 (land development code)
- Work plans for CD boards/commissions



THANK YOU



COWS, COLLEGES & COMMUNITY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Boards and commissions

- Arts and Culture Commission
- Charter Commission
- Economic Development Authority
- Environmental Quality Commission
- Heritage Preservation Commission
- Hospital Board
- Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- Human Rights Commission
- Library Board
- Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention
- Northfield Area Fire and Rescue Services
- Northfield Transportation Advisory Committee
- Mayor's Youth Council
- Park and Recreation Advisory Board

Community groups

- Age Friendly Northfield
- Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative
- Carleton College
- Community Action Center of Northfield
- FiftyNorth
- Friends of Downtown Northfield
- Health Community Initiative
- Laura Baker Services, Inc.
- Northfield Chamber of Commerce
- Northfield Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Northfield Promise Council of Champions
- Northfield Racial and Ethnic Equity Collaborative
- Northfield Rotary
- Northfield Union of Youth
- Three Rivers Community Action
- St. Olaf College

City staff

- Ben Martig, City Administrator
- Jake Reilly, Community Development Director
- Mikayla Schmidt, City Planner
- Mathias Hughey, Associate City Planner
- Bryanna Paarman, GIS Technician
- Kara Trygstad, Communications Specialist
- Claudia Garcia, Interpreter/Translator

Consultants

- Bruce Jacobson
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Maxfield Research
- NEOO Partners
- Stanlec
- Visible City/SRF Consulting

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NORTHFIELD 2045
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Design credits

Artwork *Dear, Northfield* by Rocky Casillas Aguirre

Photography provided by City of Northfield, Carleton College, St. Olaf College, NEOO Partners, Luke Marks

Design and layout by Kara Trygstad, City of Northfield

Artist Statement

In 2023, as part of *Arte en Acción*—a collective of Latine artists and activists who live and work in Northfield—at the request of the City of Northfield crafted a multi-faceted public art project that connected community members to one another, while placing an emphasis on Latine voices. As part of this effort, Rocky Casillas Aguirre launched a poster campaign titled “Querido, Northfield” or “Dear, Northfield” and interviewed over 100 Latine residents, asking them: “If you could write a letter to the people who govern our city, what would you tell them?”

The campaign aimed to raise awareness on the challenges Latines face in our town through large posters that visually represent six recurring themes Latines are concerned about daily: transportation, housing, visibility, food access, language barriers, and community isolation. To encourage Latines to speak freely, their quotes were anonymously shared, along with statistics uplifting the voices and contributions of Latines to our country and community.

The following year, the City of Northfield proposed a continuation of this project, with a new set of color illustrations. This time, seeking

to answer the questions: “What do Latine community members dream of? What is their vision of Northfield?” The hope in returning to the Latine community for this conversation was that the City would gain insight on both the challenges and possible solutions to help improve the lives of Latine residents.

Over 2,000 Latines live in Northfield, Minnesota—an estimated 10% of the city's population. Most Latine families are segregated into apartments and mobile home parks on the north side of the Cannon River, making it more difficult for them to access important services and resources. Latines are the largest minority demographic in town, yet often remain invisible to the greater population. Dozens of Latine artists, farmers, entrepreneurs, parents, youth, and elders were asked to dream about what would make Northfield feel more inclusive. Their responses were shared once more visually through posters displayed at City Hall. Additionally, all of the illustrations produced through this effort will be included in Northfield's Comprehensive Plan.

Rocky Casillas Aguirre is a Latino artist, originally from Tijuana, Mexico. Rocky grew up in Northfield and has been part of the community for more than 20 years. Creating art that promotes social justice is one of his greatest passions and what he devotes his artistic career to doing, as the owner of Rokaturas—an art studio, business, and brand on a mission to help youth struggling with mental health.

This project was made possible by the City of Northfield Art in Public Places Program, funded through the 1% for the Arts.

Community members

Special thanks to all the community members who generously gave their time to attend meetings, complete surveys, visit the website, review drafts, and provide thoughtful input and feedback that serves as the foundation of this plan. Additional thanks to community members who volunteered and provided additional technical assistance based on professional expertise.

Steering Committee

- Betsey Buckheit, Steering Committee chair
- Tracy Davis Heisler, Steering Committee vice chair
- Brian Nowak
- Sean Allen
- Beth Kallestad
- Crystal Mulvihill
- Tyler Westman
- William Estrella
- Francisco E. Murillo Ponciano
- Juan Trinidad
- Rachel Estrella
- Lahna Tran
- Chao Troung
- Robert Morrison
- Rhonda Pownell
- Davin Sukup
- Aki Gupta
- Patricia Owusu

Planning Commission

- Xiomara Conde Arenas
- Chad Beumer
- Betsey Buckheit
- Clarie Casson
- Griffin Dahle
- Tracy Davis Heisler
- Philip Holleran
- Kathleen Holmes
- Bill Kuhlmann
- Brian Nowak
- Julia Menard
- Steven Schmidt
- William Schroeder
- Don Stager

City Council

- Rhonda Pownell, mayor
- Erica Zweifel, mayor
- Chad Beumer
- Peter Dahlen
- Kathleen Holmes
- Brad Ness
- Jessica Peterson White
- Jami Reister
- Davin Sukup
- George Zuccolotto

Thank you

Questions?

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