

**ITEM:** Public Hearing - Recommendation for an Amendment to the Future Land Use Plan Map for a Business Park in Greenvale Township

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**SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:**

The Planning Commission is being asked to hold a public hearing for a Future Land Use Map Amendment for property located west of the Northfield Hospital in Greenvale Township in Dakota County. This request is submitted for review concurrently with a request for annexation (Agenda Item #4b). This request is to bring three properties into the “Priority Growth Area” on the Future Land Use map and to change the future land use map designation from “Residential Cluster” to “Business Park/Light Industry.” Below is a summary of what is being proposed:

- The properties are currently used as farmland. The applicant represents four property owners who would like to annex an approximately 530-acre parcel of land into the City for a future business park development (one of the four property owners involved in the annexation request, St. Olaf College, is not requesting a Future Land Use Map Amendment for their 90-acre parcel, and is also not proposing to develop their property at this time). If both the Future Land Use Map Amendment and Annexation are approved by the City Council, the property owners would request at some future time that the properties be rezoned to an appropriate commercial and/or industrial zoning classification, and then request a redrawing of the property lines through the subdivision application process.
- The three property owners requesting the Future Land Use Map Amendment are:
  - David Sorem – approximately 264 acres
  - John Fink – approximately 136 acres
  - Donald and Ruth Lysne – approximately 40 acres
- City Code Section 34-130 (a)(2) requires that if that a conceptual development plan for an annexation does not comply with the Comprehensive Plan, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan must be pursued and granted prior to further consideration of the annexation request.

**RELATED INFORMATION:**

**Existing and proposed land use categories:**

With the exception of a smaller area of the Fink property, most of the properties are designated on the Future Land Use map as within the “Urban Expansion Area”. Also, all of the Fink and Lysne properties, and about one-half of the Sorem property, are not within the “Priority Growth Area.” Currently about one-half of the properties are guided

“Residential Cluster”, which allows for one housing unit per 40 acres of land. According to the Comprehensive Plan, the existing “Residential Cluster” land use designation is:

“...intended to serve as a holding zone for future development - beyond the 2020 time frame of this plan – served with municipal utilities. In order to discourage large lot rural residential developments, density would be limited to 1 unit per 40 acres. If residential development does occur in this area, the development pattern should be clustered in a way that makes the future extension of urban services cost effective and environmentally responsible. Clustering residential development also preserves open space close to natural resources such as creeks, streams, wetlands, woodlands, and habitat areas. Clustering also reduces the amount of impervious cover by minimizing the need for roadways and other infrastructure needed to serve a development. Cluster housing would be implemented at the County or Township level.” (Pages 7-18).

The proposed “Business Park/Light Industry” land use designation for the site is described in the Comprehensive Plan as follows:

“The principal objective of this category is to provide opportunities for job growth and tax base diversification. The types of uses in this category include office warehousing, warehousing/distribution, light manufacturing, or office showroom uses, and would also incorporate existing industrial uses. The Business Park connotation is meant to encourage a business environment that will attract and retain a strong work force. The light industry connotation broadens the scope of Business Park by including light manufacturers in this land use. Aside from existing industrial area, new growth areas in the business park/light industry category are located west along TH 19 and north along TH 3.” (Page 7-21)

As stated previously, according to the Future Land Use Map, most of the properties are located in the “Urban Expansion Area”, and about one-half of the properties are not within the “Priority Growth Area.” The Comprehensive Plan describes these two areas as follows:

- The Urban Expansion Area is a planning boundary first established by Rice County in an attempt to direct growth to urban centers, thus preserving the rural, agricultural atmosphere of the County. The City of Northfield established a similar boundary in Dakota County in an effort to anticipate future urban growth (Pages 7-27).
- The Priority Growth Area is a 20-year supply of developable land, which will accommodate forecasted household growth as well as commercial and industrial demand based on historical absorption rates and regional market demand. During the process of estimating land needs to 2020, a 50% overage was calculated into the total land demand to allow for fluctuations in the market place and unanticipated spikes in land demand (Pages 7-27).

### Description of “Priority Growth Area”:

The following is a description in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan of how the urban expansion area and priority growth area were established: “The urban expansion boundary was created to limit the growth of the City within this boundary. This line was first drawn as an urban expansion boundary, essentially limiting growth to within this boundary according to a staging plan concept. However, as the planning process proceeded, it became evident that landowners in other areas of the community were showing development interest. The floating “Priority Growth Area” is intended to assure a growth pattern that balances the intentions of the Comprehensive Plan with the needs of private landowners.” (Pages 7-27).

It appears from this above statement that at least some properties were placed in the “Priority Growth Area” due to a request from the property owner. However, it is unclear how much of the “Priority Growth Area” was delineated in this way (the Plan does state that a 50% overage was calculated into the land demand within the “Priority Growth Area” to meet potential market demand). It is Staff’s belief that these properties were not included in the “Priority Growth Area” due to the differing sewer sheds in this area.

In discussions held as part of the updating of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission and City Staff have discussed that that the “Priority Growth Area” should offer benefit to the City in the installation of public infrastructure such as sanitary sewer and transportation connections. Several detailed plans for potable water, sanitary sewer, and surface water, were completed in 2006 and 2007 to help determine where it is fiscally responsible for the City to focus its growth (the Transportation Plan is due to be completed this year). In analyzing this property relating to public infrastructure, the property can be readily served by potable water and storm water. The property can also be served by sanitary sewer, but the construction of a lift station will be required due to the drainage pattern on the properties. The property has readily accessible transportation connections in the area, including existing North Avenue, Garrett Avenue, and State Highway #19.

### 2001 Comprehensive Plan Criteria:

Under the Priority Growth Area boundary, urban services (principally sewer and water) would be allowed to extend to any area within that boundary provided that the following criteria are met by the proposed development (Staff response to these criteria in relation to the subject property is shown in **bold**):

1. Each individual development will be built consistent with the densities and policies established in the Comprehensive Plan. This will ensure that projections are met without having to prematurely expand the Priority Growth Area, and that the general intent of the development is consistent with Northfield’s vision. **The 2001 Comprehensive Plan placed about one-half of these properties in the “Priority Growth Area”. Essentially, there are only five areas shown on the 2001 Future Land Use map that are guided**

for “Business Park/Light Industry” within the “Priority Growth Area.” These areas are the Sorem property, areas north and south of the Sorem property, a small area near Armstrong Road, and an area north of the City limits along Highway #3 in Waterford Township. Besides the Sorem property, these areas amount to approximately 219 acres in the “Priority Growth Area” that would be appropriate for a business park. In Staff’s opinion, this is not an excessive amount of acreage guided for business park development. Since this development is proposed as a business park, there are no densities to adhere to.

2. New development is contiguous to the urban areas already served by municipal infrastructure. Skipping over vacant undeveloped land is not a cost effective approach to extending urban services and makes the skipped over parcel less useable from an agriculture or development perspective. **This property is adjacent to the existing City limits and contiguous to urban areas already served by municipal infrastructure. Therefore, no undeveloped land would be skipped over.**
3. Development can be accommodated within the planned capacity of the sanitary sewer system. Adequate “trunk” pipe size for sanitary sewer and storm sewer must be available (or programmed for in the City’s Capital Improvement Program) to handle the demands of the development.

**The annexation area was included in the planning area for the Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan completed in 2007 and found not to over-extend the capacity of existing interceptors. However, since most of the Lysne property, all of the Fink property, and a portion of the Sorem property cannot be served by gravity sewer due to the sewer shed drainage patterns, the construction of a lift station would be required to serve those two areas. All three property owners would be responsible for the costs in constructing the lift station and corresponding infrastructure, but the City would be responsible for maintenance of these facilities.**

4. Utility improvements should adequately respond to environmental, health, safety and general welfare concerns. **Any utility improvements (sanitary, storm, and water) within the development would be approved through the subdivision process. Adequate engineering review would occur at that time to ensure that any environmental and health concerns are addressed.**
5. The development project shall be contained within the limitations of the Priority Growth Area Boundary except where all criteria can be reasonably accomplished. **If the proposed Future Land Use Map Amendment is approved by the City Council, the entire property would be located within the City’s “Priority Growth Area.” Currently, about one-half of**

**the development is proposed outside of the “Priority Growth Area.” These criteria suggest that if these eight criteria in this section are reasonably accomplished, the property may be developed.**

6. Connections to the existing and future Northfield transportation system are adequately studied and planned for. **If the property is annexed, it would be adjacent to and be accessed by existing North Avenue, Trunk Highway #19, and Garrett Avenue (called Decker Avenue as it crosses into Rice County). Also, three are three transportation studies being completed, which seek to determine future transportation connections in this area, especially a realignment of Cedar Avenue (County Road 23). These studies are scheduled to be completed in 2008.**
7. The development does not promote premature growth in areas beyond the Priority Growth Area Boundary. Development proposals should not lead into areas beyond the Priority Growth Area that may lack adequate storm water drainage capacity, road infrastructure, park facilities, or emergency services. **The property is currently located beyond the “Priority Growth Area.” It could be argued that if this 530-acre property is brought into the “Priority Growth Area”, this would satisfy Northfield’s expected business park and industrial needs for some 20 or 30 years. Therefore, it is Staff’s opinion that the development of this property would not spark premature growth in areas beyond this annexation area. With the exception of sanitary sewer (see #3, above), serving this property with public infrastructure is not a concern.**
8. The development must be consistent with orderly annexation agreements. **Currently, the City and Greenvale Township do not have an annexation agreement. If these properties were annexed, such an agreement would be signed between the Township and the City.**

2008 Draft Comprehensive Plan:

The Planning Commission is aware that the City is considering adopting an update to the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. This draft, which has not yet been adopted by the City Council, also does not identify this property as being in the “Priority Growth Area.” Generally, the draft Plan identifies the St. Olaf College and Sorem properties as “Managed Growth”, which states that when industrial development occurs in these area, it is not expected to conform to the neighborhood or open space/clustered pattern of development, which allows for development, but of a less intense, less dense, open space/clustered development pattern. This is due to the typical size, function, and configuration of this type of development. The Fink and Lysne properties are described as “Restricted Development”, which have value as open space but are subject to development because County zoning entitlements are in place. These areas include a predominantly open space/clustered development pattern.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Since the approval of this request will have a significant impact on Northfield's future land use, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission at this time hold a public hearing and then take public testimony on the Future Land Use Map Amendment request. Staff then requests that the Planning Commission be prepared to make a recommendation to the City Council on the request at their meeting on May 13, 2008.

**REQUESTED BY:** Land Vista, LLC, Northfield, MN

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dan Olson, City Planner

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Site Location Map
2. Existing Future Land Use Plan Map
3. Proposed Future Land Use Plan Map

**ITEM:** Public Hearing - Recommendation on Annexation Request for a Business Park in Greenvale Township

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**SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:**

The Planning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation to the City Council for an annexation request in Greenvale Township in Dakota County. The following is a summary of what the applicant is proposing for this request:

- The annexation request is submitted simultaneously with a request to amend the Future Land Use map to bring the property into the City's "Priority Growth Area" and to amend the land use classification from "Cluster Residential" to "Business Park/Light Industry" (Agenda Item #4a).
- The Greenvale Township board has reviewed the request and given preliminary approval to the annexation request (Attachment #1). If the City Council approves the annexation request, the Board would enter into an annexation agreement with the City Council that would be sent to the Minnesota Municipal Boundary Adjustments office in St. Paul.
- The properties are currently used as farmland. The applicant represents four property owners who would like to annex an approximately 530-acre parcel of land into the City for a future business park development (one of the four property owners involved in the annexation request, St. Olaf College, is not proposing to develop their property at this time). If both the Future Land Use Map Amendment and Annexation are approved by the City Council, the property owners would request at some future time that the properties be rezoned to an appropriate commercial and/or industrial zoning classification, and then request a redrawing of the property lines through the subdivision application process.
- The four property owners requesting annexation are:
  - David Sorem – approximately 264 acres
  - John Fink – approximately 136 acres
  - Donald and Ruth Lysne – approximately 40 acres
  - St. Olaf College – approximately 90 acres

**A. Information about Annexation Area:**

1. Location of Property

The parcel is located directly north of North Avenue and a portion of State Highway #19, in Greenvale Township. The properties are adjacent to the City limits.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

The parcel is surrounded by property within Dakota County as being used for agricultural purposes. The Northfield Hospital lies directly east of the St. Olaf

College property. There are five single-family homes located between Highway #19 and North Avenue on Decker Court and 80<sup>th</sup> Street East in Rice County.

3. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

See Agenda Item #4a for detailed information about the Future Land use map designation.

4. Existing and Proposed Land Uses

All of the parcels are currently used for agricultural purposes. St. Olaf College has indicated that they will continue to use their land for no-till agricultural purposes. St. Olaf College has indicated that they are participating in the annexation request so as to ensure that the properties owned by the other three property owners would be contiguous with City limits in order to support the future economic growth and vitality of the city, if the annexation is approved. St. Olaf has also stated that they will not be supportive at this time of any infrastructure improvements on their property, except the extension of utility and road improvements along North Avenue. Sorem, Fink, and Lynse have indicated that they will continue to use their properties for agricultural purposes for the foreseeable future, and eventually sell these properties for a business park development.

5. Concept Plan

On July 9, 2007, the City Council passed a motion regarding the concept plan for this annexation request. The motion allowed the applicant to “submit a modified concept plan which identifies’ future land use, existing physical features, current transportation systems, and topography as illustrated by the USGS Quadrangle maps prior to the annexation requests being processed and considered for approval.” The applicant has submitted a concept plan as an example of how the properties could develop over a four-phase time period (Attachment #4). Staff has also shown an example of two building footprint locations that serve as an example of what could occur on the site (Attachment #6).

The concept plan submitted by the applicant is for illustrative purposes only, and is not meant to define the future land use vision for the properties. Staff recommends that a visioning process be created for how the property should be developed. The creation of this process could be made a condition of approval of the annexation request. The annexation agreement would also make it clear that the concept plan submitted by the applicant is NOT approved at the time of the annexation approval. City Code Section 34-131 (b) requires that the concept plan be in substantial conformance with any subsequent plat filed by the applicant with the City. The applicant may agree in writing that the concept plan is not approved with the annexation request.

## 6. Public Utilities

Most of the area has been included in the recent updates to the water, sanitary sewer, and surface water management comprehensive plans. The entire area can be served by the City's public utilities with some special provisions:

- Because water distribution systems are pressurized there is not a concern providing potable water to the area. As development occurs, the need for a water tower should be assessed so that adequate storage is provided for fire flows.
- The annexation area was included in the planning area for the Comprehensive Sewer Plan completed in 2007 and found not to over-extend the capacity of existing interceptors. However, since most of the Lysne property, all of the Fink property, and a portion of the Sorem property cannot be served by gravity sewer, the construction of a lift station would be required to serve those areas. All three property owners would be responsible for the costs in constructing the lift station and corresponding infrastructure, but the City would be responsible for continued maintenance of these facilities. It should also be noted that those areas to be served by gravity are at the top of the sewersheds. Extension of interceptors (Heath Creek Interceptor and Mud Creek Interceptor) to serve these areas is forecasted to take 20-50 years. These areas will have to be served by the lift station in the interim.
- In general, the development will have impacts on the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant and available source water. However, this impact would be expected for development of this type regardless of the location. The City completed updates to the utility plans on a regular basis to account for development of this type.

## 7. Traffic Analysis

The implications of development of the annexation area on traffic have been generally evaluated as part of the ongoing transportation studies. A more detailed analysis should be completed once a road network is proposed for the area. Generally the following has been determined as part of the evaluation:

- The transportation plan and modeling efforts have assumed the development will support 12 employees per acre or 4,050 people.
- The traffic generated from full build-out is anticipated to result in 10,050 daily trips into and out of the area.
- Primary access will be from a north/south connection that will be identified in the NW Northfield Highway Corridor Study (new CSAH 23 alignment) and an east/west connection anticipated to be the extension of Thye Parkway.
- Modeling shows impact on the following corridors:
  - East/West on TH 19 – 74% of development traffic ~ 7,450 daily trips
  - North on new CSAH 23 alignment – 12% of development traffic ~ 1,200 daily trips

- South on existing CSAH 23 alignment – 14% of development traffic ~ 1,400 daily trips

It is anticipated that there will be a noticeable increase in turning traffic at the following intersections:

- New CSAH 23 alignment and TH 19
- The Existing CSAH 23/43 intersection with North Avenue
- TH 19 and Garrett Avenue (depending on future configuration)
- TH 19 and Eaves Avenue (depending on future configuration)

## 8. Soils

Soils in the annexation area are indicative of all land surrounding Northfield according to the soils survey. The surveys are used as a guidance tool to the general suitability of soils for various functions including building site development, land management, military operations, recreational development, sanitary facilities, vegetative productivity, waste management, and water management. However, these surveys are not meant to make ultimate conclusions about a site. The level of detail and accuracy needed to make a sound evaluation of the site soils is typically determined from soil borings. As with other sites in the Northfield area, the survey does identify areas that should be evaluated further to determine actual building construction methods to produce sound facilities. The Natural Resources Inventory does indicate a wetland area that should be considered in the platting process.

## 9. Floodplain and Wetlands

Attachment #9 shows the general floodplain for the annexation area. A smaller portion of the Fink property is located within the Mud Creek floodplain. If the annexation is approved, Staff recommends that the property owner be required to complete a detailed flood analysis that would delineate the floodway and floodway fringe districts as part of the annexation agreement. According to the National Wetland Inventory, there is a wetland on the Fink property. This would need to be delineated prior to development during the subdivision process. The City will require the property owner to complete this delineation as part of the annexation agreement.

## 10. Natural Resources Inventory

Attachment #10 is a map of the annexation area showing the important natural features as identified in the City's Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). The natural feature on the Fink property is a wetland according to the National Wetland Inventory. The natural feature on the Lysne property is described as a maple-basswood forest of good quality. If the annexation is approved, the property owners would request a subdivision of the property at some future point. At that time, an analysis will be made of the site's natural features and a determination made as to whether the feature should be protected, restored, or allowed to be altered. A further description of the maple-basswood forest in the NRI is as follows:

“Nice quality Big Woods woodlot adjacent to farmstead, just north of Highway 19. Canopy is somewhat open and patchy and composed of a mix of mature

maple, red oak, and green ash, with tall, straight trunks and narrow crowns characteristic of forest-grown trees. Subcanopy, understory and tall shrub layers grade together, and are dominated by abundant young sugar maple and occasional red oak, especially in the subcanopy. The shrub layer of young maple trees creates dense shade within the site, and ground cover is correspondingly sparse. Ground layer species present include characteristic mesic forest forbs including bloodroot, false Solomon's seal, and Jack-in-the-pulpit. Woody debris in all sizes is abundant. Some past grazing is evident in the subcanopy and sparse subcanopy. Age of the understory suggests grazing ceased 15-20 years ago. Overall, moderate to good quality site, which will improve with time. Wetlands are present on the northwest corner."

## 11. Environmental Review

The property owners may be required by the State of Minnesota's Environmental Quality Board (EQB) to complete an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EAW is a screening tool to determine whether a full EIS is required, and is a questionnaire about the project's environmental setting, the potential for environmental harm, and plans to reduce the harm. The EIS is an in-depth analysis used for major development projects that will significantly change the environment. The statement covers social and economic influences, as well as environmental impact, and looks at alternate ways to proceed with the project. Which of these two reviews is required is determined by the building square footage proposed for the properties. Since that is unknown at this time, the property owners would be required in the annexation agreement to complete either an EAW or an EIS at the time the property is subdivided.

### C.

### Community Character

#### 1. Land Use Principles

As you are aware, the City is in the midst of updating its Comprehensive Plan and revising its Land Development Regulations. In completing these projects, there has been a considerable amount of discussion by the Planning Commission and City Staff, as well as input from the public, on what the character should be for future development projects, including a business and industrial park. This discussion eventually led to the creation of 12 land use principles, which were endorsed by the Planning Commission and City Council in 2007. Some of these principles relating to a business and industrial development are listed below. In general, proposed industrial and business parks in greenfield areas are to be compatible with the rural landscape in which they are located, but not necessarily designed to look like "Old Northfield."

- a. **The preference for accommodating future growth is in infill locations, then redevelopment opportunities, and then on the edge of existing developed areas.**

- Priority areas for future development will be identified for all three areas (infill, redevelopment and greenfield). It should not be implied that infill and redevelopment capacity must be consumed prior to support for any greenfield development.
  - When new development occurs at the edge of the community through annexations, it will be done with great care by creating well defined residential neighborhoods, a green edge or a well designed place for commerce, so as not to compromise the rural landscape or the small town character.
  - When new growth occurs on the edge of the community through annexations, it will be done with a planned growth pattern, which minimizes infrastructure and community services.
- b. Places with a mix of uses that are distinctive and contribute to increasing the city's overall vitality are preferred.**
- Districts will be designated for business and industrial uses that are not appropriate in a mixed-use setting. Business and industrial development is vital to distinguish Northfield in the larger regional context. The creation of jobs and the expansion of the business and industrial tax base will continue to set Northfield apart from the suburban residential communities of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. This will also support the City's economic development agenda as outlined in the 2006 Economic Development Plan.

#### **D. Fiscal Impacts**

Staff has completed a "business plan" (Attachment #11), which outlines the estimated public infrastructure costs and the expected revenues that could come from the development of the properties. This business plan was distributed and discussed at the joint Planning Commission and Economic Development Authority (EDA) meeting held on April 22, 2008.

#### **E. Comprehensive Economic Development Plan**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, adopted in 2006, states the following strategy was created regarding the development of a business park:

**"Make land available for business expansion. The EDA should focus its efforts within this challenge on assembling land for a commercial/industrial center. Priority should be given to 1) the**

property surrounding the Northfield Hospital, including lands owned by St. Olaf, and 2) the area west of the existing industrial area. The focus of this work should be on development of a mixed-use, “blue ribbon” project that can help diversify the city’s economic base while advancing Northfield’s image in the region.” (page 14)

Furthermore, the Economic Development Plan details two approaches to City ownership of land for a business park:

“Under a master developer scenario, the City serves as a primary participant. The City acquires land, and then leases or sells land to a private developer and allows that party to develop the land according to pre-approved guidelines. In return, the developer is allowed to realize the long-term revenue streams. Under this approach, Northfield would purchase the property, then set forth specific standards for development and invite developers (through a competitive bidding procedure) to meet these standards. The community (including existing companies) could then serve an advisory role to the City and developer. Additional funding (state or federal) could be sought if the development were designed to include research facilities.

Formation of a public/private partnership is another option. In this case, the City serves as both a participant and a facilitator. The City could choose to develop a portion of a development on its own or could confer the rights to a property in exchange for certain rights. This is similar to the approach employed by the City in the “Crossings” project.” (page 15)

The EDA has investigated the possibility of land for a business park in two other areas surrounding Northfield. These areas south of Highway #19/west of Armstrong Road in Bridgewater Township, and the area north of the City limits along Highway #3 in Waterford Township. The City has not received annexation applications from property owners in either of these two areas. The following table provides a comparison of the three areas that have been identified as potential business park locations:

<b>Proposed Area</b>	<b>Status of Site</b>	<b>Estimated Infrastructure costs</b>	<b>Projected revenues to the City (SAC, WAC, utility fees, property taxes)</b>
NW 3 <sup>rd</sup> Business Development Area (Greenvale township)	Annexation application received; letter received from township giving support to request	\$3.7 million to extend to and through the site. An additional \$1.9 million for looping, upsizing, water storage for full build-out	Estimated \$2.1 million in SAC & WAC fees; estimated \$38.5 million in annual revenue at full build-out (see Attachment #11)
West 3 <sup>rd</sup> Business Development Area, west of Armstrong Road (Bridgewater	No application received; township has not expressed position on annexation	\$0 – \$1 Million, depending on timing, area annexed, and phasing	Information for analysis incomplete until annexation area identified

Proposed Area	Status of Site	Estimated Infrastructure costs	Projected revenues to the City (SAC, WAC, utility fees, property taxes)
township)			
North 3 <sup>rd</sup> Business Development Area north of City (Waterford township)	No application received; agreement with township states that annexation cannot occur without township support	Costs are unknown No analysis has been completed	Information for analysis incomplete until annexation area identified

**F. Annexation Approval Process:**

**The City Code does not have specific criteria for approval of an annexation request. However, City Code Section 34-130 (c), states:**

“Approval of the request for annexation and the conceptual development plan by the City shall be limited to the general acceptability of the land uses proposed and their interrelationship and shall not be construed to endorse the precise location of uses, arrangement of structures or site improvements; the economic or engineering feasibility of structures or site improvements; or the economic or engineering feasibility of the proposal. Final acceptance of the conceptual development plan shall be subject to applicable land development ordinances and policies of the City.”

**After the Planning Commission makes a recommendation on the annexation request, the request is then forwarded to the City Council. If the Annexation is approved by the City Council, then a joint resolution signed by the City and the Township is submitted to the Minnesota Municipal Boundary Adjustments office in St. Paul, who has been given the responsibility to approve alterations to municipal boundaries. If both the Township and the City have approved the annexation, the request is considered a “non-contested proceeding”, and no public hearing on the request would be held by the Boundary Adjustments office.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Since the approval of this request will have a significant impact on Northfield’s future land use, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission at this time hold a public hearing and then take public testimony on the annexation request. Staff then requests that the Planning Commission be prepared to make a recommendation to the City Council on the request at their meeting on May 13, 2008.

**REQUESTED BY:** Land Vista, LLC, Northfield, MN

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dan Olson, City Planner

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Letter from Greenvale township board
2. Narrative from applicant describing annexation request
3. 2005 aerial photo, with parcel dimensional data
4. Concept Plan
5. Boundary survey for St. Olaf property
6. Sample building footprints
7. Sewer sheds map
8. USGS Topographical map
9. FEMA floodplain map
10. Natural Resources Inventory map
11. Business Plan Fiscal Impact Analysis