Stadium Village Station Area Plan
Site Conditions – 1/13/11 DRAFT

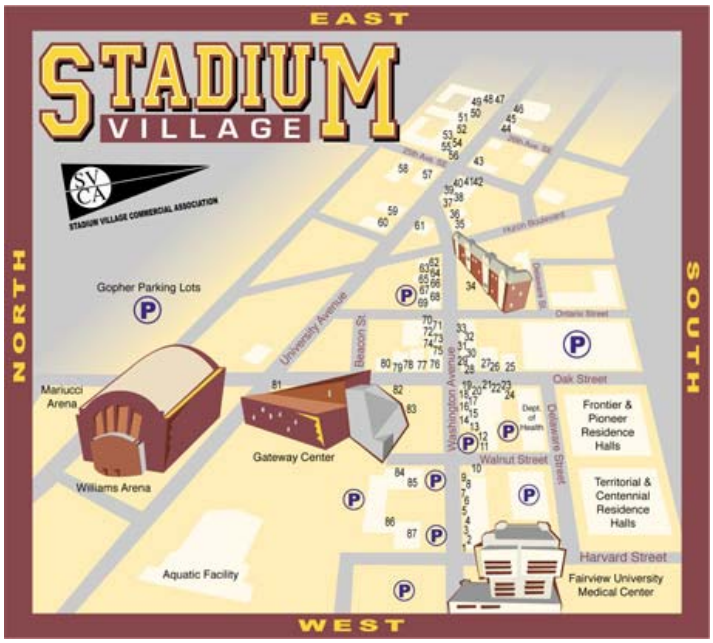
This chapter provides a summary of the existing land use, zoning, community facilities, property characteristics, and transportation systems within the study area.

Zoning and Land Use

The mix of uses around the Stadium Village station area is as diverse as any in the City of Minneapolis. On all sides are a variety of land uses and zoning classifications, as outlined below. See Map ___ for existing land use and Map ____ for existing zoning. This mix offers interesting implication for planning. On the positive side, there is potential for creative mixed use redevelopment projects, and a dense urban fabric where home, shopping, work, recreation, and school are all within walking or bicycling distance. It also offers the potential for transit oriented mixed use development to take advantage of the coming light rail and existing high frequency bus service. On the other hand, mixing uses requires careful attention to buffers and transitions, so that incompatible uses do not negatively impact their surroundings

- Institutional. The western side of the study area is dominated by the large institutional presence of the University of Minnesota. The campus is mostly zoned OR3, the city's highest density institutional zoning classification. The area around the TCF Bank stadium still shows up as industrial and is zoned I1. This reflects the fact the development was still in process in the past year or two, and that there was no need to rezone the property (from its original zoning reflecting the fact it was previously rail yards) as the University of Minnesota is exempt from all city zoning requirements.

- Commercial. The center of the Stadium Village business area, and properties along University Avenue to the St Paul border are primarily commercial mixed with some residential uses. The zoning is a patchwork of C3A, C2, C1, OR2, and a few others (including OR1 and I1). The character varies, from the walkable campus-oriented commercial district along Washington to the more destination business focus along University. These commercial areas are largely contained within a large Pedestrian Oriented overlay district which stretches from Harvard to Emerald.



- Industrial. North of the station area is the Southeast Minneapolis Industrial (SEMI) Area, the site of the planned Minnesota Science Park redevelopment. Presently, this area is industrial, dominated by rail yards served by Burlington Northern, Union Pacific, and Minnesota Commercial operations. The core of this area is zoned I2, though the parcels closer to

University are I1. While the policy guidance is for all areas north of the transitway to stay industrial (or other job-generating uses), the currently industrial area between the transitway and 4th St SE is largely guided for transition to mixed use commercial and residential.

- High Density/Mixed Residential. South of the station area is a residential neighborhood with a mix of densities and uses, commonly known as Motley, although it is technically part of the Prospect Park neighborhood. This includes some congregate living facilities and higher density residential development mixed in with older low to moderate density residences. The overall zoning classification is R5, reflecting past decisions to concentrate higher density housing near the University campus. A couple of the blocks in this area are being actively acquired by the University for future campus expansion, with land sitting vacant or as temporary surface parking in the interim. The University's campus master plan describes this as a "joint planning area," representing a need for coordination between the University and the community regarding the area's future.

- Low-Medium Density Residential. East of the station area is the residential core of the Prospect Park neighborhood. The blocks closer to campus, currently occupied by Glendale Townhomes, an affordable housing development, and several large-scale student housing developments is zoned R4. This area, some of which still has railroad spurs, has been transitioning from former industrial use and still have some isolated industrial properties and zoning. The lower density core (primarily single family, duplex, and small multi-family development) is zoned R1A and R2B.

Community Facilities

While not completely self-sufficient, the area has access to many community services which make a neighborhood work.

Parks and open space. There is access to the riverfront parklands along East River Road from several points in the study area, through both the University campus and Prospect Park neighborhood. The steep bluffs limit accessibility to some of this land for recreational use. The Prospect Park neighborhood core has both Tower Hill Park and Luxton Park. And the University campus itself, while not officially a park, has some attractive green spaces such as the Northrop Mall, which are available to campus students, staff, and visitors.

Schools. Prospect Park is home to Pratt Community School, a public school for grades pre-K through 5th that is the community school for the Prospect Park and University neighborhoods. This school serves a widely diverse population of students, and has an arts and science focus. Middle School students attend Sanford Middle School or Anwatin Middle, and high school students attend

South High School, both outside the study area. Busing to numerous other community and magnet schools is available. Obviously, the presence of the University of Minnesota provides many opportunities for continuing education.

Fire Station. The study area is served by Fire Station #19, centrally located near the commercial core of Stadium Village on Ontario Street. This is actually a newer location – the historic Station 19 still exists and is currently being used as a commercial building.

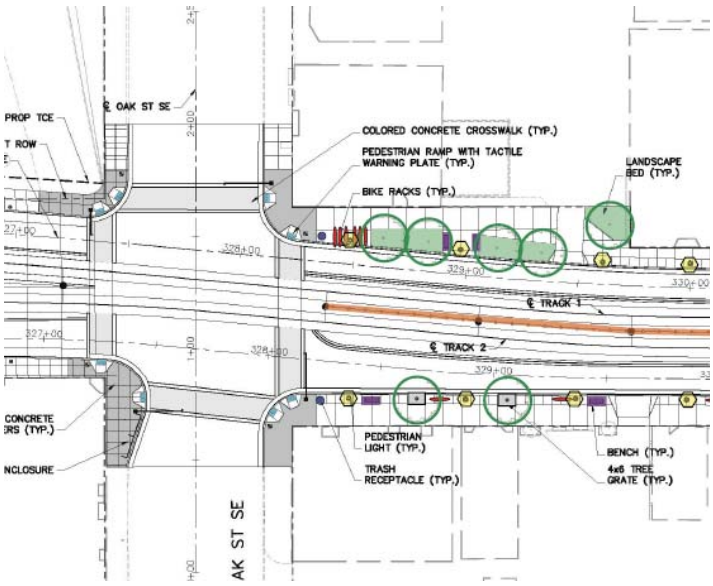
Police Station. The study area is located within the 2nd Police Precinct, whose main offices are outside the study area on Central Avenue. The campus area is patrolled by the University of Minnesota Police Department.

Library. The nearest public library is Southeast Library, located just west of the study area on 4th St SE in Dinkytown. The University of Minnesota has numerous general and specialized libraries on its campus that have some availability to the public. There has been some discussion that this location may be substantially renovated or moved, but no details are available at this time.

Transportation System

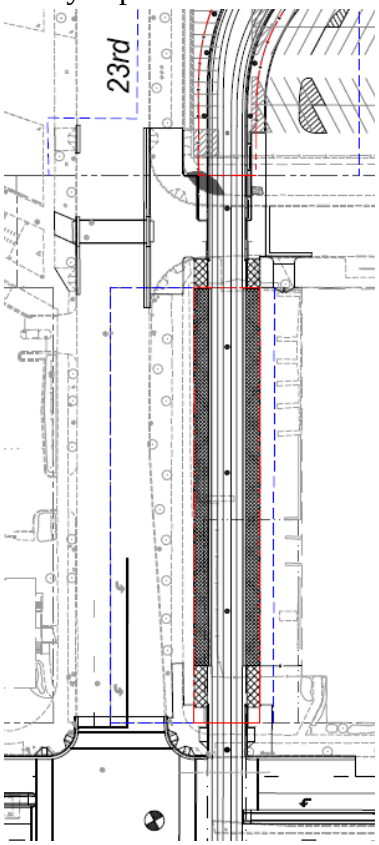
Just as this area is characterized by a diverse mix of land uses, it is also marked by a diversity of transportation facilities and options. The upcoming Central Corridor is definitely the focus at this time, but many other modes need to be taken into account as well. See Map ____ for existing transportation facilities.

Light Rail. The planned Central Corridor LRT project, now under construction, cuts right through the middle of the study area along University Avenue SE and Washington Ave SE, including the Stadium Village commercial area and the University of Minnesota campus. Linking the downtowns of both Minneapolis and St Paul, this route will also serve the University of Minnesota, with an automobile free transit mall through the center of the East Bank main campus area along Washington. Indeed, due to the student population and other University-related riders, the stretch of LRT through campus is projected to be among the busiest on the entire route. The line is expected to be completed and open for service in 2014.



The light rail project has both long term and short term implications for this study. In the short term,

the loss of on-street parking and the disruption caused by construction will impact many property owners, businesses, residents, and others in this area. This planning process may capture some of these concerns and offer solutions – although the Central Corridor project itself has the responsibility for short-term mitigation efforts regarding transportation, and business outreach groups are working on other related angles regarding business impacts. The plan will more extensively inform the long term, in which the LRT service both provides a high quality transportation option and sets the stage for transit oriented development.



While this study is centered on the Stadium Village station, located on 23rd Avenue SE near University Avenue, the study area also includes two other stations: East Bank (located in the middle of the University Campus on Washington Avenue) and 29th Avenue/Prospect Park (located on 29th Avenue near University Avenue).

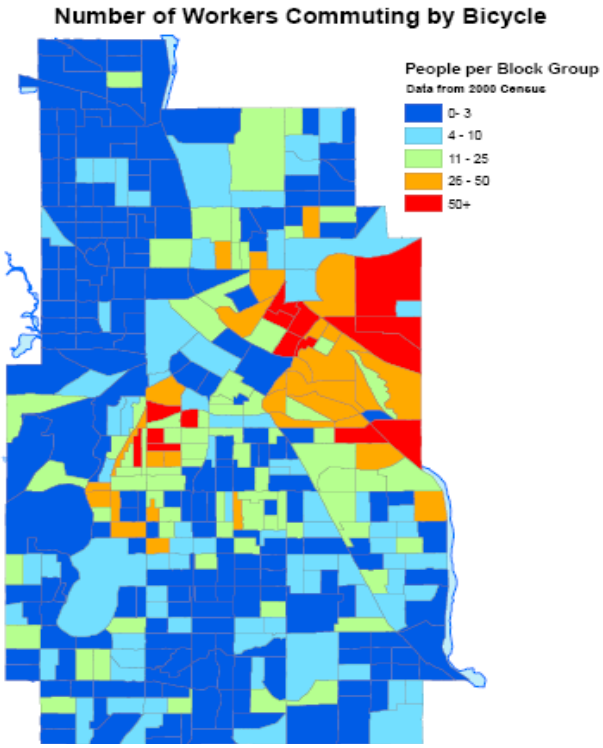
Bus Transit. While the light rail will greatly enhance the transit options for this area, it is already well-served by transit. In fact, the LRT route is very similar to the existing bus Route 16, a Metro Transit Hi-Frequency route. Hi-Frequency routes run every 15 minutes (or better) throughout most of the day on weekdays and Saturdays. Another Hi-Frequency line, Route 6, serves the area from areas to the west of the study area. Also in the area are routes 2, 8, 50, and numerous commuter and express buses. Most of these are expected to continue when the LRT is open, though some routes, stops, and schedules will change.

The Campus Connector is a University-run shuttle bus that connects the Minneapolis campus to the St Paul campus via its own dedicated transitway. This will also be impacted by the LRT but will continue to serve the route.

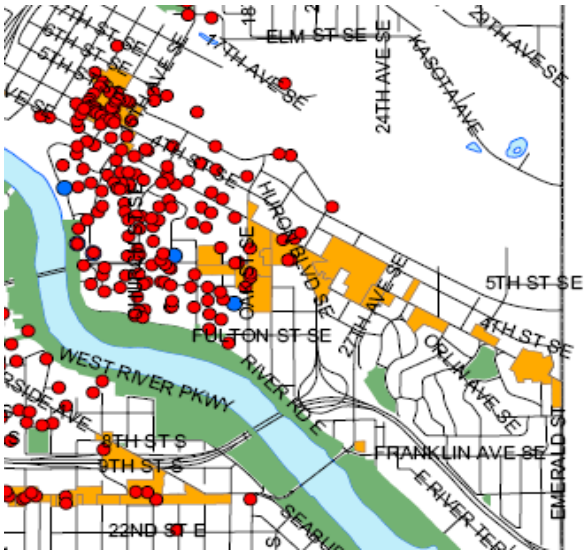
Bus ridership is very high in this area, in part due to the large employment destination, frequent service on multiple routes, and availability of the U-Pass, a deeply discounted bus pass available to students at the University, and the Metropass, a similar program for University faculty and staff. In addition to Metro Transit and Campus Connector buses, the area is also a destination for suburban opt-out lines like Southwest Transit.

Roads. See Map ___ for additional details on the road network in the study area. The area is served by Interstate 94, providing access to the downtowns of both Minneapolis and St Paul. Several arterial roads run through here as well, including University Avenue SE, 4th Street SE, Washington Avenue SE, Huron Avenue SE, and Franklin Avenue SE. These roads are owned and maintained by Hennepin County. Oak Street SE, Fulton Street SE, 27th Avenue SE, and Essex Street SE serve as

collectors. Currently, the highest volume street is University Avenue with over 21,000 vehicles per day, followed by Huron Avenue with 19,000 and Washington Avenue with 17,000.



The closure of a segment of Washington Ave SE for the campus transit mall as part of the Central Corridor project is projected to shift some traffic onto parallel routes like University and 4th. The exact impact is not yet known. In preparation, some changes are being made to the local road network through the University campus to accommodate changes in traffic patterns and shifting volumes.



Planning for a new east-west connecting road through the SEMI industrial area has been underway for some time. The first phase, currently in right-of-way acquisition, will provide access to some underutilized industrial parcels and set the stage for new development in that area. If the route is completed as planned in the SEMI Master Plan, it will stretch from I-35W into St Paul to 280 and beyond. This route would provide an alternative to University and 4th and other east-west routes. However, the future phases are uncertain and unfunded at this time. A feasibility study/cost-benefit analysis will be underway in 2011 for one of the future phases.

Bicycle. The Stadium Village area sits near what could be considered the most prominent hub of bicycle commuting in the city. Based on Census data, no

other area has higher bicycle commuting than the University campus and its environs. Bicycle traffic counts collected in 2009 revealed some of the highest bicycle path usages on area streets: 3,500 trips per day on 15th Ave SE, 3,400 on Washington Ave on campus, and 1,700 on E River Parkway. The busiest location is close by: the Washington Ave bridge over the Mississippi, with over 6,800 trips per day.

Interestingly enough, despite the high levels of bicycle usage, the crash rates involving bicyclists do not appear abnormally high compared to other parts of the city - perhaps because bicyclists are so prevalent than automobile drivers are more alert to their presence than they would be otherwise.

Not surprisingly, there are a number of bicycle facilities serving the area. A series of lanes and paths run along major corridors including University Ave, 4th St, 27th Ave, and the University Transitway. A new path follows the Dinkytown trench and crosses the Mississippi River to the West Bank campus. Recent investments in lanes and paths have created an intentional ring of bicycle access around the entire East Bank and West Bank campuses. Additionally, on campus routes provide access through the campus itself. The campus and its surroundings have numerous bicycle parking facilities.

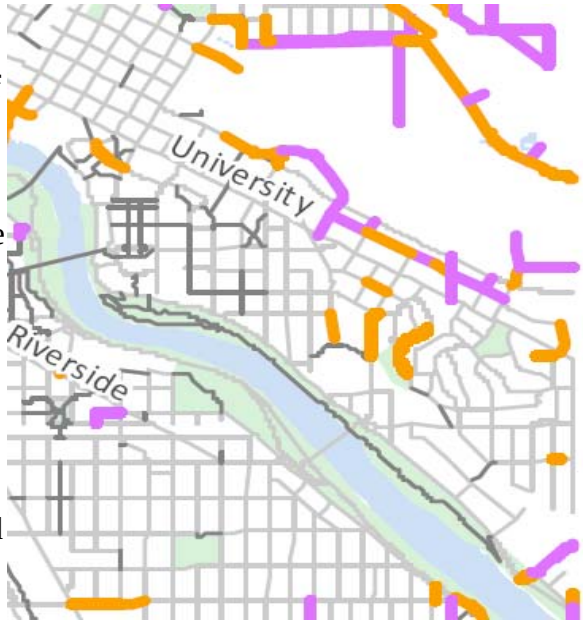
However, there still are some gaps in the network. The most obvious is in the core of the Stadium Village commercial area itself. While a number of paths lead up to this area, there is no designated bicycle facility through it. At present, bicyclists are directed to take more roundabout routes that bypass this busy area. However, with so many destinations in near proximity and such a high level of bicycle traffic, it seems there should be a more defined plan for how they should be accommodated. This topic will be undertaken as part of this study.

Additionally, there is a significant hole in the network in the area of the rail yards, in terms of a connection to northern neighborhoods such as Como. Bicycle traffic does find its way around on 15th Avenue SE, which is effectively the highest traffic on-street bicycle lane in the city according to recent bicycle counts. Plans for Granary connections and the Grand Rounds Missing Link address this, but funding and feasibility are still in question.

Pedestrian. For the most part, like much of the city, the pedestrian network is fairly intact. There are typically limited pedestrian amenities, but that doesn't prevent a high level of pedestrian traffic using the area, especially the areas on and immediately adjacent to the campus. A recent pedestrian count of select locations throughout the city showed the center of the East Bank campus as by far the highest volume pedestrian area, with over 20,000 pedestrians per day. The Walkscore.com rating of this campus area is 94 out of 100, one of the highest outside of Downtown.

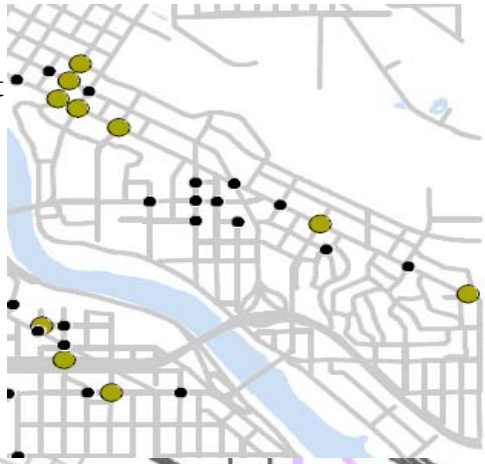
The streetscape reconstruction that will occur as part of the

Central Corridor project will improve the pedestrian experience through new sidewalks and landscaping, some new street furniture, and a significant amount of new pedestrian lighting. The transit mall on the campus will feature an "amenity zone" for pedestrians along with high quality streetscape. The lighting is a particularly significant addition as the majority of the study area, outside of the University campus and the residential core of Prospect Park, has very little in terms of pedestrian level street lighting.



A few gaps in the system do remain, though. The industrial areas, including those along 4th Street south of the transitway, typically lack sidewalks on one or both sides of the street. The city's Pedestrian Master Plan identifies this as a "medium" priority for correction in terms of gaps needing attention. These areas do not have a lot of pedestrian traffic, but this still is a concern, as students and business patrons often park in these areas and walk to destinations. Furthermore, the minimal or nonexistent streetscape does not really set the stage for new transit oriented development.

Additionally, the development of University Avenue as a pedestrian friendly corridor, in support of transit oriented development, is hindered by its width and the subsequently daunting task of crossing it on foot. This issue will need to be addressed if the area is to develop as a cohesive whole rather than a string of single destination establishments.



Like with bicycles, the crash rates in the area are quite low in comparison with the pedestrian volumes. However, this may not be capturing all the crashes as University crash statistics are sometimes reported separately from city totals.

Freight. Although the focus of this study will be on transportation for people, freight transportation also plays an important role in this study area. The SEMI area serves as a main rail yard for BNSF, Union Pacific and Minnesota Commercial operations. Likewise, truck traffic (associated with both the rail and other industries/businesses) is prevalent on the designated truck routes. Although some peripheral storage areas have been sold off and converted, the mainline remains an important part of the rail network in the area, as it has been for over 100 years, and will continue to function as such. However, redevelopment adjacent to these parcels is unlikely to be as rail-oriented as it was in the past - when the area was predominately focused on grain storage and transport.

Most of the rail activity is fairly isolated from other uses, and the mainline tracks are generally grade separated from

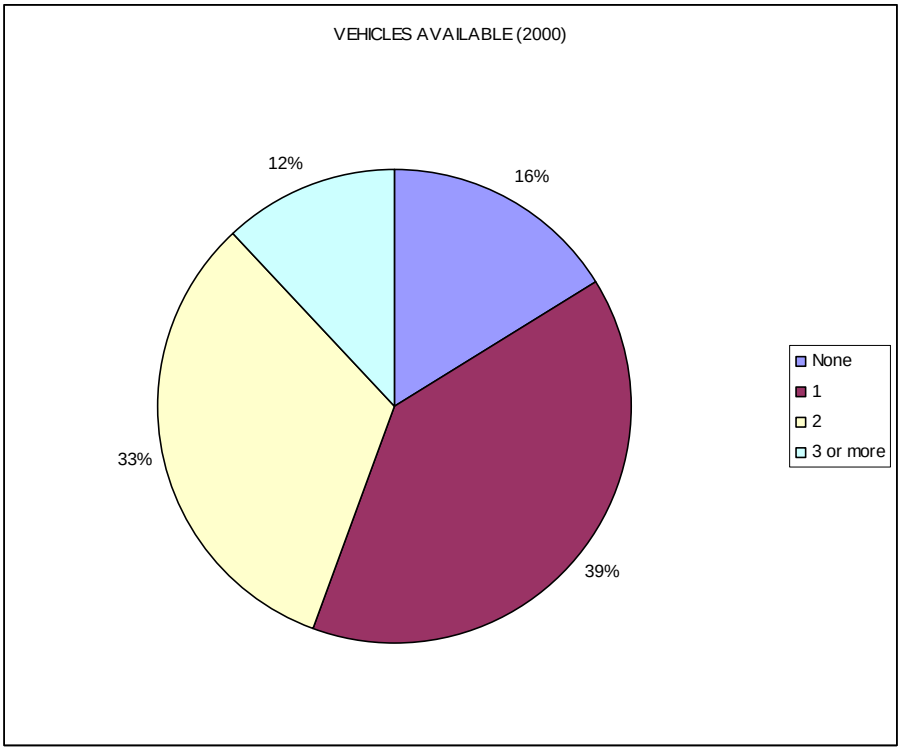
streets and pedestrian activity. There are three at grade crossings on a spur track near Huron Blvd/I-94 in the transitioning industrial area there, but they are very low volume serving only one user.

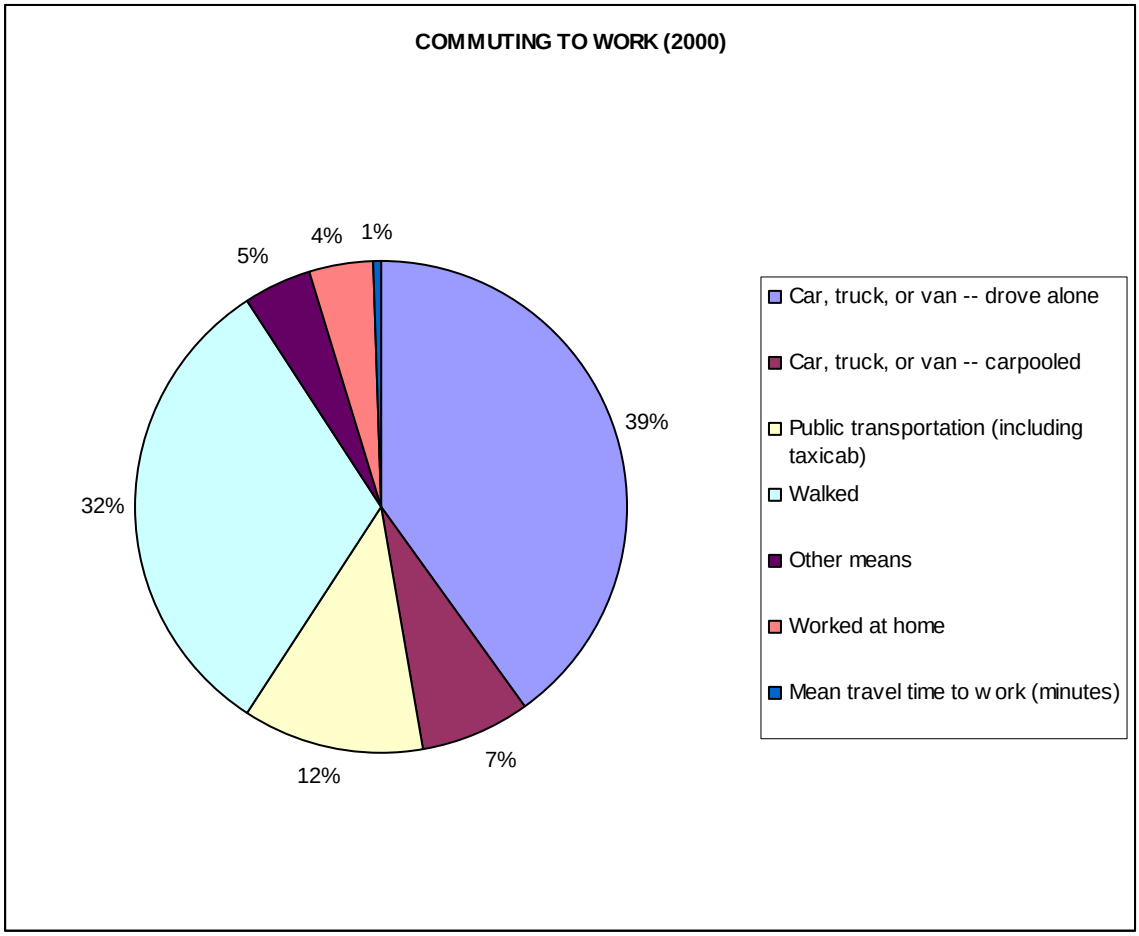
Travel Patterns

Given the context of this area, it is not surprising that residents this area does not rely exclusively on automobile for travel. In fact, according to 2000 Census data, only 40% of the employed residents drive alone to work – much less than the city or regional averages. Of the remainder, 32% walk to work and 12% take public transportation.

Looking at the area closest to campus, it is even more pronounced: only 31% drive alone and 42% walk. These totals are very high and point towards the need to heavily prioritize creating a walkable environment in and around campus.

Despite this high non-auto mode split, most households still own at least one automobile – only 16% are car free. With student housing this might be somewhat skewed, as "households" of roommates are frequently comprised of more than the typical percentage of licensed drivers. On the other hand, the more student dominated areas nearest campus have higher percentages of auto-free households: 24% compared with 7% in the remainder of the area. Still, it indicates that despite the pedestrian focus, parking and general accommodation of automobiles must be taken into account.





The University of Minnesota keeps parking statistics on travel to and from campus. Some recent facts they have compiled include:

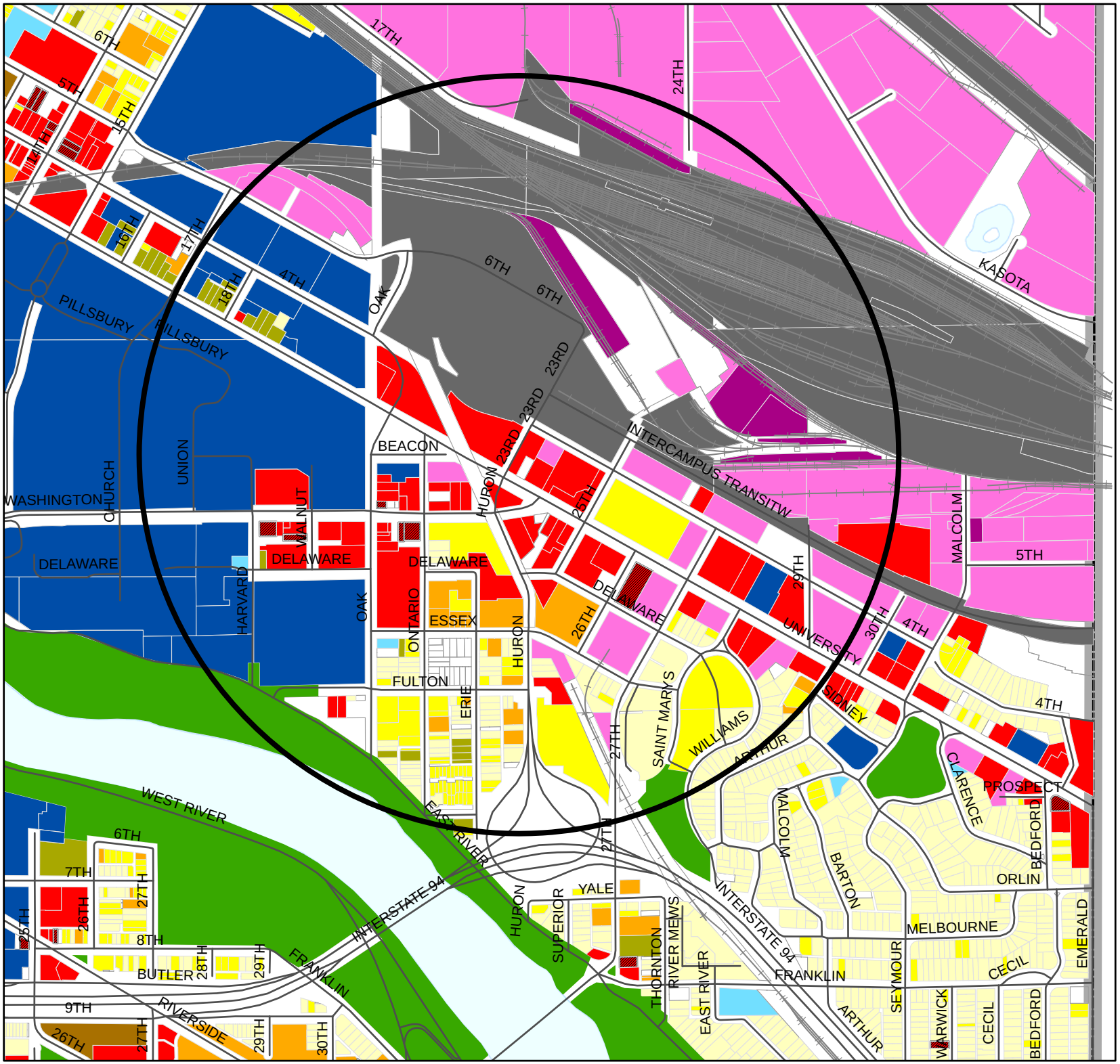
- 80,000 people per day arrive on campus
- Only 30% drive alone
- Only 40% are traveling more than five miles to get to campus

The University itself has been a major advocate of encouraging alternative forms of transportation, ranging from transit passes to car sharing. They are also the biggest owner and manager of parking in the area by far. Their information and analysis will be incorporated in this planning process to help provide a full and comprehensive picture of transportation dynamics.

WILL ADD SECTION ON PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS: land/value ratio, ownership, age, condition, etc.

Stadium Village Existing Land Use

from 2009 comprehensive plan



Legend

- Half Mile Radius
- Centerline
- Low-Density Housing (up to 20 DU/acre)
- Medium-Density Housing (20-50 DU/acre)
- High-Density Housing (50-120 DU/acre)
- Very High-Density Housing (>120 DU/acre)
- Congregate Living
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Public/Institutional
- Cultural/Entertainment
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Parks/Open Space
- Vacant
- City Boundary

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Planning Division
January 7, 2011

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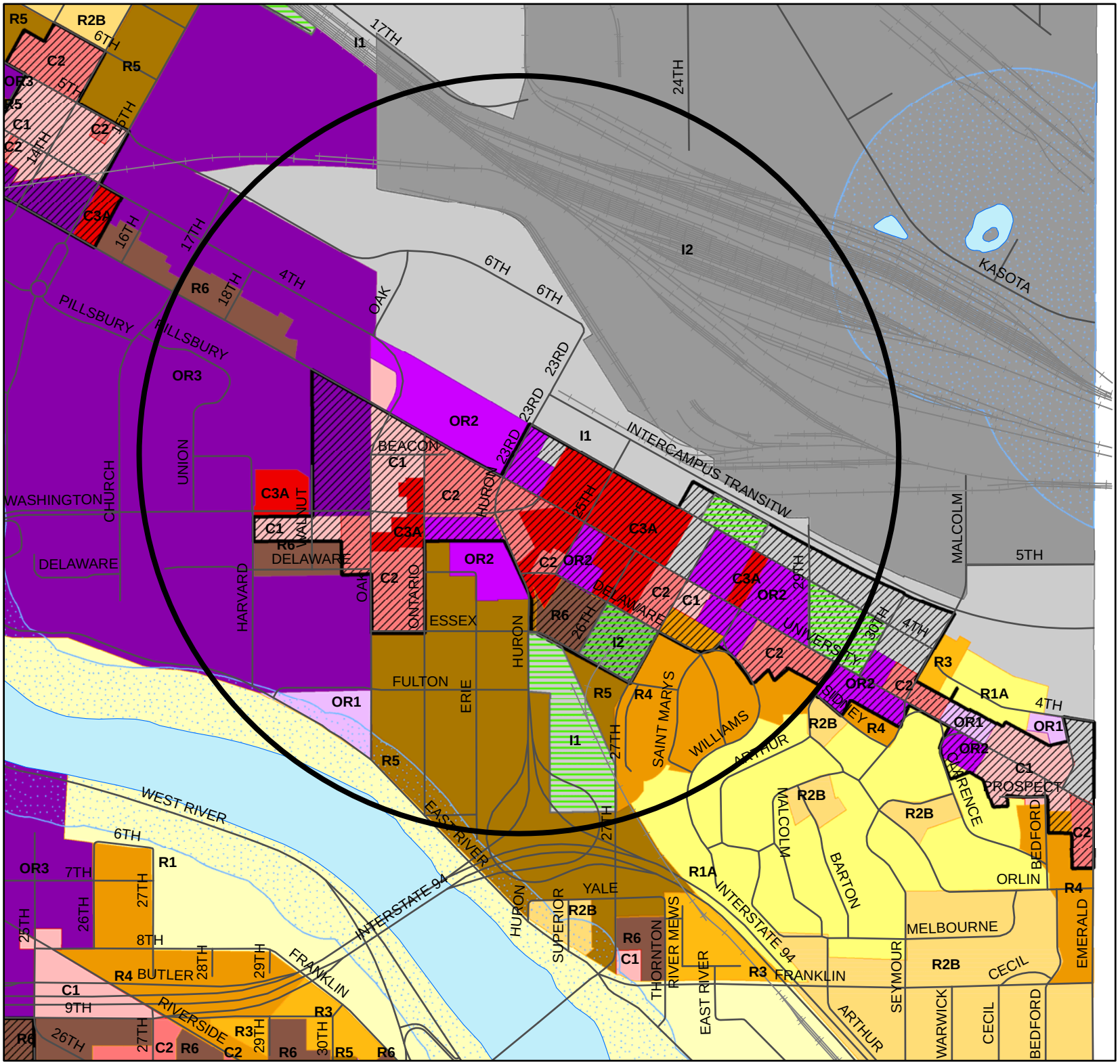
Miles

Stadium Village Existing Zoning



Legend

- Industrial Living
- Pedestrian Oriented
- Shoreland

Zoning Areas

- C1
- C2
- C3A
- C3S
- C4
- I1
- I2
- I3
- OR1
- OR2
- OR3
- R1
- R1A
- R2
- R2B
- R3
- R4
- R5
- R6
- Centerline
- Half Mile Radius

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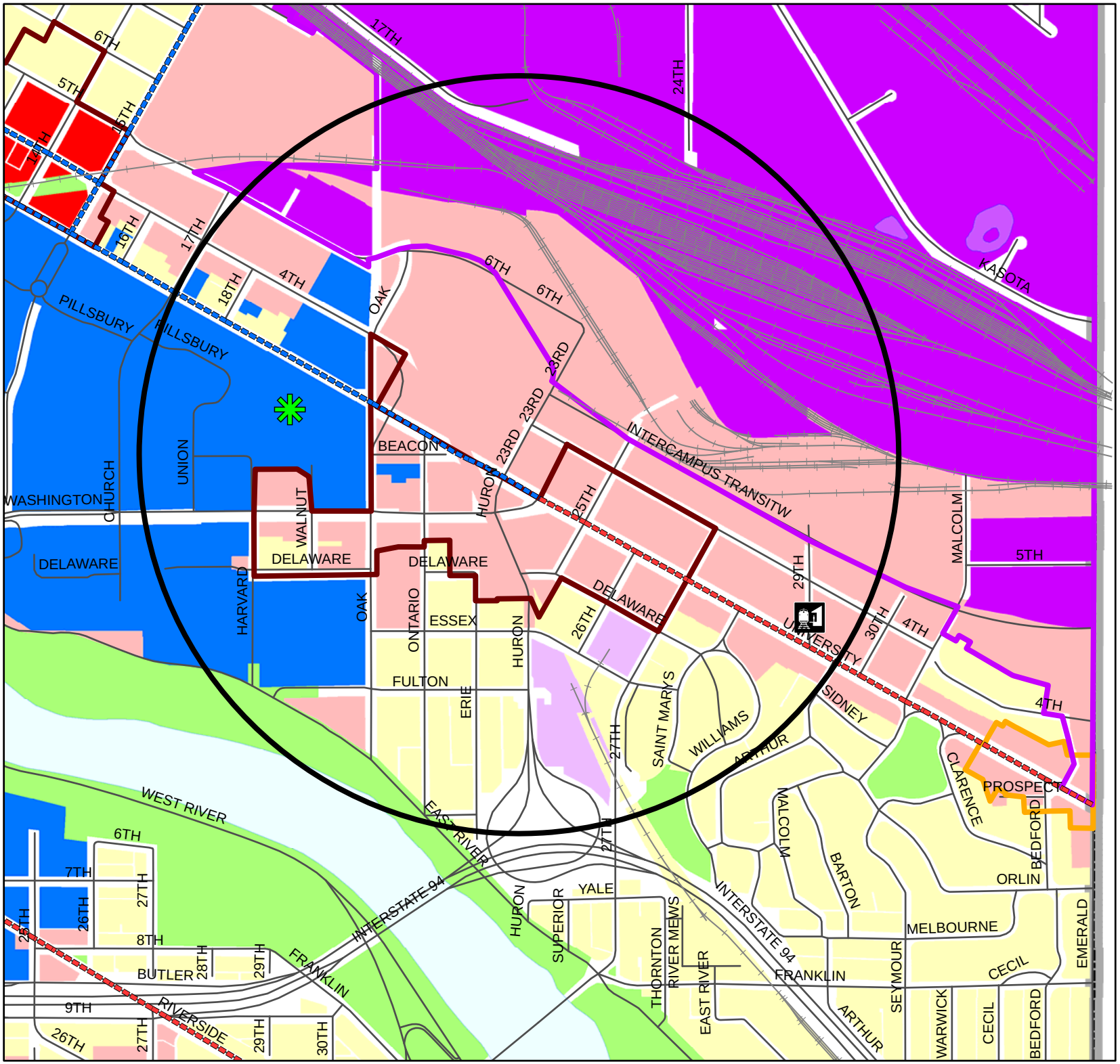
Stadium Village Future Land Use

from 2009 comprehensive plan



Legend

- Half Mile Radius
- Community Corridor
- Commercial Corridor
- Industrial Employment District
- Growth Center
- Transit Station
- Activity Center
- Neighborhood Commercial Node
- Centerline
- Urban Neighborhood
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Public and Institutional
- Transitional Industrial
- Industrial
- Parks and Open Space
- City Boundary

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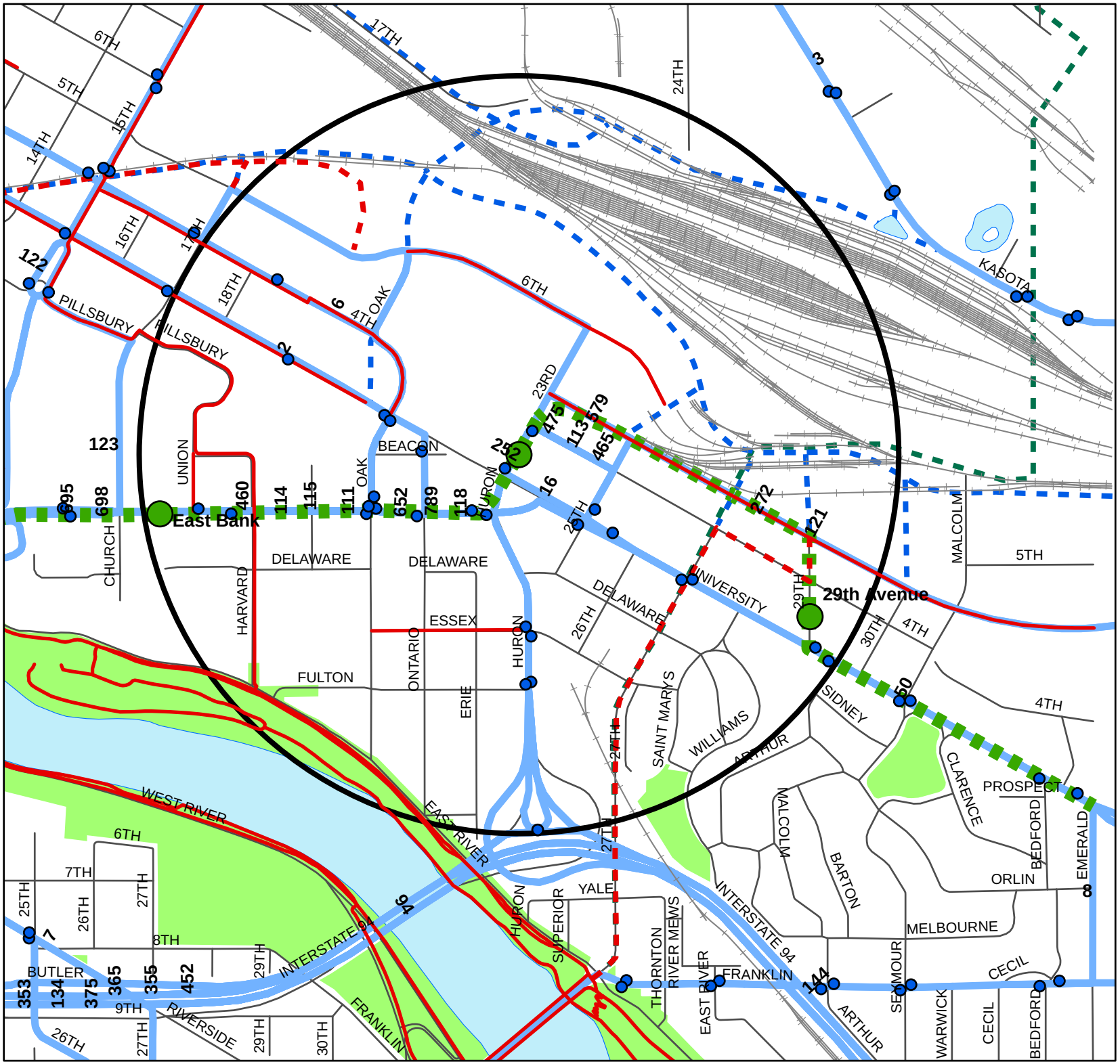
Stadium Village Existing/Planned Transportation



Legend

- Central Corridor LRT
- Central Corridor Stations
- Bus Routes
- Bus Stops

Bike Lanes & Trails

- Existing
- Funded
- Half Mile Radius
- Railroad
- Centerline
- Granary & Kasota - proposed
- Missing Link - proposed

N W E S

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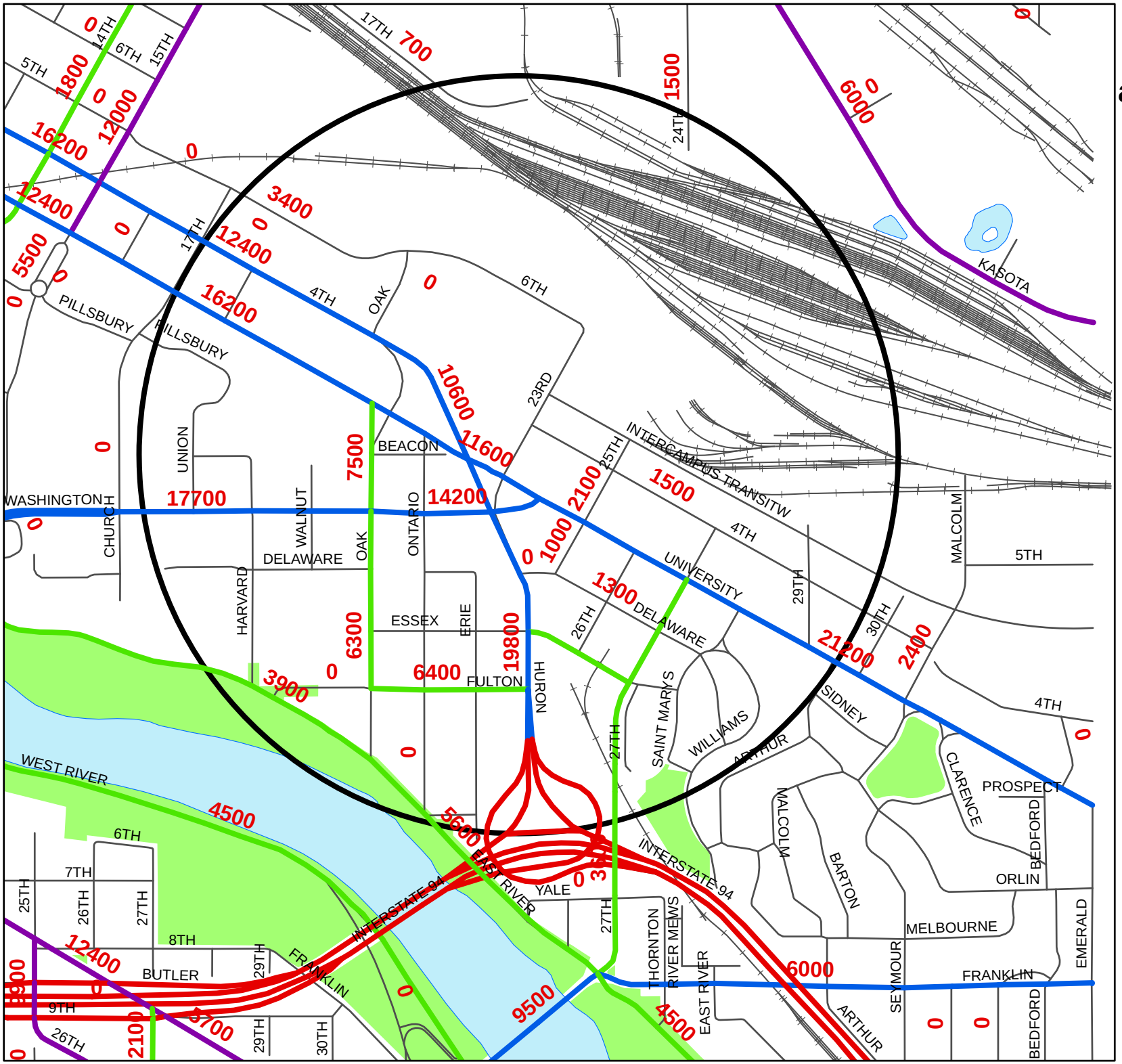
0.025 0.05 0.1 0.15 0.2 Miles

Stadium Village Road Network and Traffic Counts

Traffic counts are labeled in red



Legend

Functional Class

- Principal Arterial
- A Minor Augmentor
- A Minor Reliever
- B Minor
- Major Collector
- Local
- Half Mile Radius
- Railroad

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