



Lent Township
Chisago County
Minnesota

Development Plan for the Rural Transit Center District



February 2008

CONTENTS

Section 1: Purpose

Section 2: Scope

- A. Comprehensive Plan
- B. Land Use Regulations

Section 3: Site Characteristics

- A. Location
- B. Physical Characteristics
 - 1. Topography
 - 2. Geology & Soils
- C. Infrastructure
 - 1. Transportation
 - 2. Drainage
 - 3. Wastewater Treatment
 - 4. Water Supply
- D. Land Use & Development

Section 4: Growth Management

- A. Goals
- B. Strategies

Section 5: Implementation

- A. Vision Statement
- B. Implementation Strategies

Section 6: Appendices

- A. Comprehensive Plan
- B. Land Use Regulations

Section 7: Adoption and Date of Effect

This Development Plan has been commissioned, reviewed and approved by the:

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Lent Township Planning Commission
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Section 1: Purpose

This document is focused on the lands immediately adjoining the intersection of U.S. Interstate Highway 35 and Chisago County Road 17, within Lent Township, Chisago County, Minnesota. This highway intersection is precisely located at 45°27'3.50" North latitude and 92°59'21.78" West longitude. During 2005 and 2006, a new traffic interchange was constructed linking these two highways. The area adjoining the intersection is unusual in that no prior development, other than agricultural and residential uses, existed before the construction of the interchange.

During the preparation of the ***Lent Township Comprehensive Plan***, the impending construction of the new interchange and its future impact on land use and development was carefully considered. Consequently, the final version of the Lent Township Comprehensive Plan clearly established goals and strategies necessary to define a unique land use district for this area... the ***Rural Transit Center (RTC) District***.

This document, to be known as the ***Development Plan for the Rural Transit Center District***, is specifically intended to provide for the intelligent and orderly development of those lands included within the RTC District established pursuant to the *Lent Township Comprehensive Plan* and *Lent Township Land Use Regulations*. Although this Development Plan is a free-standing document, it is also intended to build upon and supplement the original *Lent Township Comprehensive Plan*. As with the original Comprehensive Plan, it is intended that this document shall be implemented through the adoption or amendment of specific Land Use Regulations.

Section 2: Scope

Although Lent Township established a basic framework for controlling and guiding development within the RTC District, neither the Lent Township Comprehensive Plan nor the Lent Township Land Use Regulations have addressed the full range of issues and objectives necessary to provide a detailed means for controlling and guiding development within the RTC District. The ultimate scope of this document is to provide "specific and detailed" goals and strategies to direct and guide the intelligent and orderly development of those lands included within the RTC District.

A. Comprehensive Plan

Under State Law, townships are empowered to develop, adopt and implement comprehensive land use planning and management activities in order to provide a *"...means of guiding future development of land so as to insure a safer, more pleasant and more economical environment for residential, commercial, industrial and public activities, to preserve agricultural and other open lands, and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare."* (MN Statutes §462.351)

The method for undertaking a program for comprehensive land use planning and management is to first develop and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, and then develop and adopt appropriate regulations (i.e. ordinances) to implement the Plan. The ***Lent Township Comprehensive Plan*** was officially adopted on August 16, 2005. The specific portions of this Plan that are relevant to the RTC District are fully set forth in Section 6, Appendix A of this document. This Development Plan is intended to build upon and supplement the original *Lent Township Comprehensive Plan*.

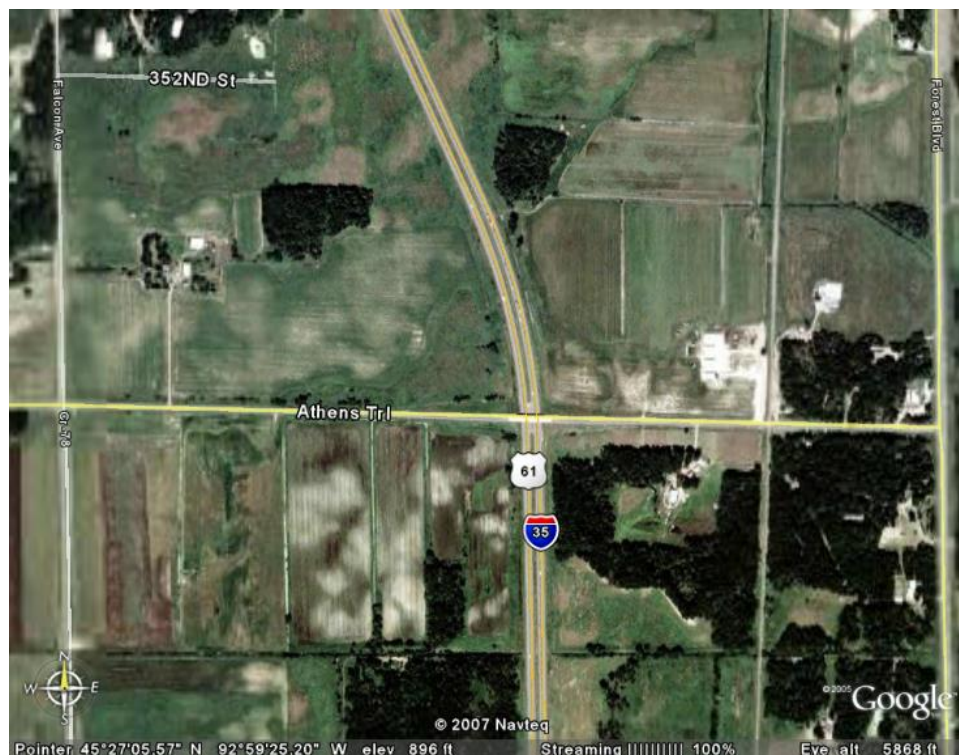
B. Land Use Regulations

Under State Law, the primary means by which a Comprehensive Plan, or any type of Land Use Plan, is implemented, is through the formal adoption of Land Use Regulations (usually in the form of ordinances). Lent Township officially implemented its Comprehensive Plan by the adoption of a suite of Land Use Regulations on January 16, 2007. These regulations, collectively referred to as the **Lent Township Land Use Regulations**, took effect on February 1, 2007.

Section 5 of the **Lent Township Zoning Ordinance** (Chapter Two of the Lent Township Land Use Regulations) specifically implements the Comprehensive Land Use Plan by defining and establishing standards for **Land Use Districts**. The specific portions of this Ordinance that are relevant to the RTC District are fully set forth in Section 6, Appendix B of this document. This Development Plan will serve as the basis for enacting specific criteria and standards providing for the intelligent and orderly development of those lands included within the **Rural Transit Center (RTC) District**.

Section 3: Site Characteristics

As stated earlier, the RTC District established by Lent Township is unusual in that no significant development existed before the construction of the interchange between Interstate Highway 35 and Chisago County Road 17. The prior land uses in this area required little, if any, public infrastructure and were generally consistent with the natural limitations (geology, soils, drainage, etc.) of the land. The construction of the new highway interchange and the creation of the RTC District open new options and possibilities for development and growth. This new development and growth will certainly require additional public and private infrastructure, and will need to address the natural limitations imposed by the site.



(aerial photograph obtained from Google Earth® website)

A. Description & Location

The Lent Township Comprehensive Plan includes a graphic depiction of the various Land Use Districts established within the Plan. This document has been designated and adopted as the **Official Land Use Map of Lent Township**. The **RTC District** is delineated on this Map as those lands bounded on the north by the section line between Section 5 and Section 8 of Township 34 North, Range 21 West; on the east by Chisago County Road 30 (Forest Boulevard); on the west by Chisago County Road 78 (Falcon Avenue); and on the south by Chisago County Ditch Number 5. In other words, the RTC District encompasses the four (4), eighty (80) acre parcels of land immediately adjoining the intersection of U.S. Interstate Highway 35 and Chisago County Road 17 (Athens Trail). Including the lands within the highway rights-of-way, the RTC District encompasses approximately three hundred and twenty (320) acres of land.



(from the Official Land Use Map of Lent Township)

As noted earlier, the predominate use of these lands prior to the construction of the highway interchange was agricultural and residential. Specifically, the lands were primarily used to produce small grains and/or sod, with some residential use being associated with the agricultural operations. The only exception to this pattern being several small, wooded parcels of residential property along Chisago County Road 30 and several small, commercial parcels on the northwest intersection of Chisago County Roads 17 (Athens Trail) and 30 (Forest Boulevard).

B. Physical Characteristics

1. Topography

The lands lying within the RTC District are typical of most of Lent Township. They are a continuation of a much larger feature known as the **Anoka Sand Plain**. The natural relief is fairly flat (less than 15 feet), with elevations varying from slightly above 910 feet to slightly below 900 feet above mean sea level. The natural topography is only interrupted by the artificial grades of the major public roadways (Interstate Highway 35, Chisago County Highways 17, 30 and 78); the former Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way (Sunrise Prairie Trail); Chisago County Ditch Number 5; and several private ditches constructed as laterals to County Ditch 5. The highest portions of the RTC District occur in the center of the northwest quadrant and on the east side of the southeast quadrant (see contours on RTC District map in Section 3.A.). Topography limits development and land use within the RTC District only with respect to the innate limitations of the underlying soils.

2. Geology & Soils

As mentioned above, the surficial geology of the RTC District is dominated by the **Anoka Sand Plain**. This is a thick mantle of fine-grained, well-sorted sands deposited by glacial outwash during the retreat of the continental ice sheet, some 12,000 years ago. In many areas of Lent Township, the depth of these sands is over 100 feet. Shallow depressions, formed when isolated blocks of ice melted, are common within the plain. These depressions are generally filled with shallow peat deposits and/or wetland soils. Water tables are at or near the surface in these depressions and at depths varying from 3 to 10 feet below the surface on the upland areas. The thick sands of the Anoka Sand Plain are usually underlain by a thin mantle of older glacial sands, gravels or tills before bedrock is encountered.

The bedrock underlying the RTC District is the **Jordan Sandstone**. This is a highly porous and permeable sandstone of late Cambrian age. The Jordan Sandstone is the primary aquifer furnishing high-quality groundwater for the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. In fact, the Anoka Sand Plain constitutes the principal recharge area for this aquifer, within the larger geologic feature known as the **Twin Cities Basin**.

The soils present on top of the Anoka Sand Plain deposits within the RTC District (and most of Lent Township) belong to the **Zimmerman-Isanti Association**. These soils are derived from the underlying outwash sands, have slopes that vary from 0 to 12%, a wide variance in drainage from excessive to very poor, and exhibit rapid percolation rates (permeability).

The official **Soil Survey of Chisago County** (United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service 1995) identifies six (6) specific soil types present within the RTC District (see map below):

Zimmerman loamy fine sand (map code **158B**) generally occurs on knolls and side slopes on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits a very dark grayish-brown, loamy, fine sand from 0 to 8 inches; a dark yellowish-brown, fine sand from 8 to 20 inches; and a yellowish-brown, fine sand, with thin bands of dark yellowish-brown, loamy, fine sand from 20 to 60 inches. Zimmerman loamy fine sand is characterized by excessive drainage, rapid permeability, low water retention capacity, low organic matter content, slow runoff, and a depth to water table of 6 feet or more.

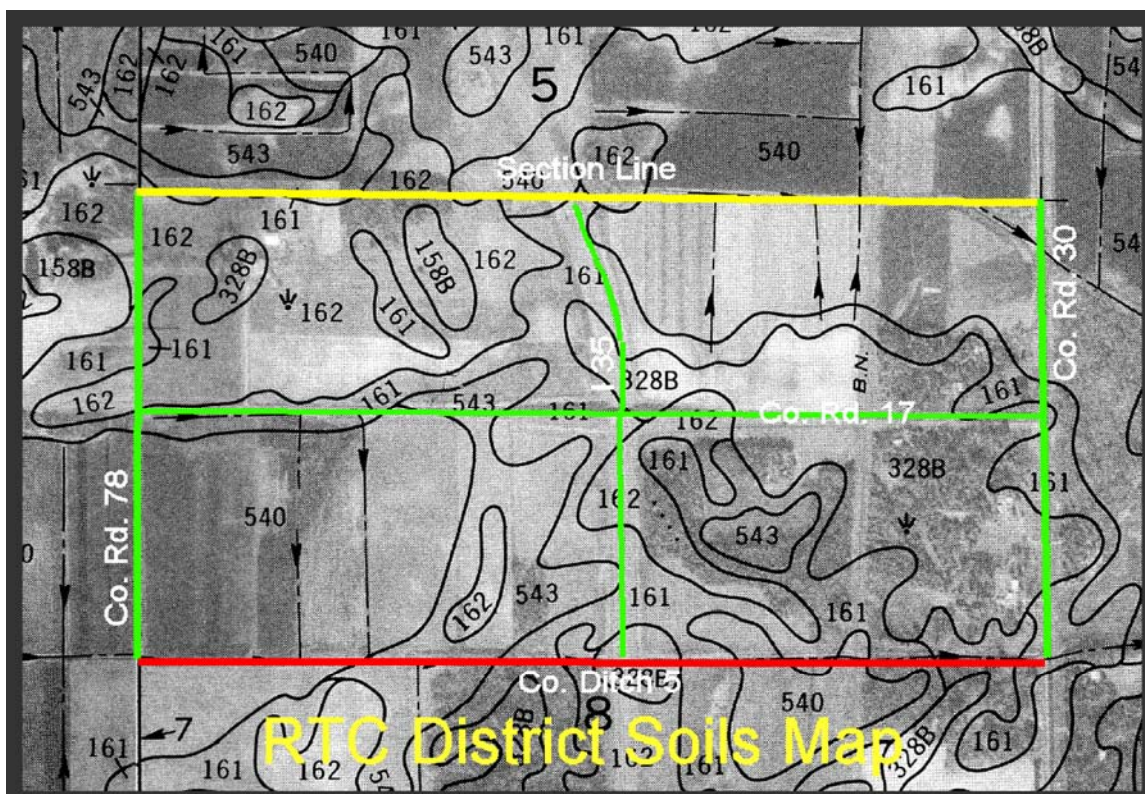
Isanti loamy fine sand (map code **161**) generally occurs in shallow depressions and drainageways on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits a black, loamy, fine sand from 0 to 12 inches; and a grayish-brown, mottled, fine sand from 12 to 60 inches. Isanti loamy fine sand is characterized by very poor drainage, rapid permeability, low water retention capacity, moderate to very high organic matter content, very slow runoff, and a depth to water table of 0 to 2 feet.

Lino loamy fine sand (map code **162**) generally occurs on side slopes, low rises and drainageways on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits a very dark grayish-brown, loamy, fine sand from 0 to 8 inches; a brown, mottled, loamy, fine sand from 8 to 24 inches; a yellowish-brown, mottled, fine sand from 24 to 42 inches; and a brown, mottled, fine sand from 42 to 60 inches. Lino loamy fine sand is characterized by poor drainage, rapid permeability, low water retention capacity, low to moderately-low organic matter content, slow runoff, and a depth to water table of 2 to 4 feet.

Sartell fine sand (map code **328B**) generally occurs on knolls and side slopes on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits a very dark grayish-brown, fine sand from 0 to 8 inches; a dark-brown, fine sand from 8 to 25 inches; and a brown, fine sand from 25 to 60 inches. Zimmerman loamy fine sand is characterized by excessive drainage, rapid permeability, low water retention capacity, low to moderately-low organic matter content, slow runoff, and a depth to water table of 6 feet or more.

Seelyeville muck (map code **540**) generally occurs in depressions on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits black muck from 0 to 32 inches; a very dark-brown, mucky peat from 32 to 36 inches; and black muck from 36 to 60 inches. Seelyeville muck is characterized by very poor drainage, moderately-slow to moderately-rapid permeability, very high water retention capacity, very high organic matter content, very slow or ponded runoff, and a water table varying from 1 foot above to 1 foot below the surface.

Markey muck (map code **543**) generally occurs in depressions on outwash plains. Its soil profile exhibits very dark-brown muck from 0 to 30 inches; and a grayish-brown sand from 30 to 60 inches. Markey muck is characterized by very poor drainage, moderately-slow to rapid permeability, very high water retention capacity, very high organic matter content, very slow or ponded runoff, and a water table varying from 1 foot above to 1 foot below the surface.



(adapted from the *Soil Survey of Chisago County*, United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service 1995)

As previously mentioned, soil conditions present the most severe limitation on development and land use within the RTC District. In particular, the generally poor drainage, fairly rapid permeability, generally low water retention capacity, and shallow ground water table will require very detailed soil surveys and borings before any land use approvals and/or decisions are given. In particular, the design, planning and siting of wastewater treatment systems will be the primary concern. Secondary issues will include the control, retention and treatment of surface runoff.

On the other hand, there is a readily accessible supply of abundant, high-quality groundwater from the deeper portions of the Anoka Sand Plain and the underlying Jordan Sandstone.

C. Infrastructure

The historical land uses within the RTC District had little need for any public infrastructure, other than roads and the basic utilities necessary to support those uses. In order to fully exploit the development potential of the RTC District, significant attention will have to be given to providing adequate infrastructure that is compatible with the natural features and limitations of the area.

1. Transportation

a. Highway System

There are four primary roadways serving the RTC District: U.S. Interstate Highway 35, and Chisago County Highways 17, 30 and 78. U.S. Interstate Highway 35 is a controlled-access, four-lane, divided highway that passes beneath Chisago County Highway 17 at the new interchange. The other nearest interchanges on Interstate Highway 35, are four miles north at North Branch and four miles south at Stacy. Chisago County Highway 17 is a two-lane, bituminous roadway which was significantly widened, resurfaced and had turning lanes added during the 2005-2006 construction of the new interchange. Chisago County Highways 30 and 78 are also two-lane bituminous roadways that are well-maintained by Chisago County.

U.S. Interstate Highway 35 is the primary roadway connecting the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with Duluth. As such, it is the major artery of commerce in eastern Minnesota. Since it continues as far south as the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area, Interstate Highway 35 is also a significant artery of interstate commerce. The southern terminus of Interstate 35 is at the border with Mexico in Laredo, Texas.

Chisago County Highway 17 intersects with U.S. Highway 65, via its extension as Isanti County Highway 9, two miles south of the City of Isanti. U.S. Highway 65 is a major north-south artery of commerce, connecting the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with the communities of the Mesabi Iron Range. Although Minnesota Highway 95 connects Interstate Highway 35 and U.S. Highway 65 between North Branch and Cambridge, Chisago County Highway 17 represents a significant secondary connection between these two major highways. In addition, plans are in preparation to extend Chisago County Highway 17 three and one-half miles east to intersect with Chisago County Highway 14. Chisago County Highway 14 is a two-lane, bituminous roadway that provides the primary connection between U.S. Highway 8 at Lindstrom and Minnesota Highway 95 at North Branch. From North Branch, Minnesota Highway 95 provides a primary highway link to Saint Cloud and U.S. Highway 10, in central Minnesota.

Based on the above description of primary and secondary highways, it is no exaggeration to say that the U.S. Interstate Highway 35 and Chisago County Road 17 interchange is a potentially significant transportation nexus within the larger system of roadways.

b. Other Transportation Facilities

In addition to the major highways serving the RTC District, there are several other facilities that either serve or have the potential to serve the transportation needs of the RTC District. The old Burlington-Northern Railroad right-of-way running parallel to Interstate Highway 35 is an all-season trail known as the Sunrise Prairie Trail. This trail has a well-maintained, bituminous surface and is used for biking, hiking and rollerblading during the months without snow-cover, and as a snowmobile trail during the winter months.

In addition, the right-of-way on which the Sunrise Prairie Trail is constructed has been “reserved” for possible future use as a railroad line to connect the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with Duluth. If such use were to materialize, the RTC District will take on added importance, since a large and well-maintained Park & Ride area has been provided (as part of the construction of the highway interchange) immediately adjoining the Sunrise Prairie Trail, off Chisago County Road 17. Any railroad service between the Twin Cities and Duluth would likely make use of this area because of its strategic location within the larger roadway system.

2. Drainage

The natural drainage of the lands included within the RTC District was significantly altered by the construction of public and private ditches to facilitate agriculture during the early Twentieth Century. The primary drainage-way for surface waters in this area is Chisago County Ditch Number Five (5). As shown on the accompanying maps, Chisago County Ditch 5 serves as the southern boundary of the RTC District. This ditch receives waters from both privately-owned “lateral” ditches and an unknown number of drain-tile outlets carrying subsoil waters from adjoining agricultural lands.

Chisago County Ditch 5 flows from west to east under Interstate Highway 35 and Chisago County Road 30. It eventually empties into an unnamed tributary of the Sunrise River along the southern boundary of Section two (2) of Lent Township. This unnamed tributary enters the Sunrise River in Section six (6) of Chisago Lake Township. The Sunrise River drains into the Saint Croix River just north of the historic Village of Sunrise. The Saint Croix River merges with the Mississippi River near Hastings, and all of the waters draining from the RTC District eventually reach the Gulf of Mexico.

The path taken by the waters leaving the RTC District is significant because the Saint Croix River is a Federally designated and managed Wild & Scenic River. In addition, certain reaches of the Mississippi River within Minnesota (primarily Lake Pepin) are regarded as “threatened” or “impaired” waters by the State and Federal governments. These management designations impose stringent requirements on the quality and quantity of waters that may be discharged to the Saint Croix and Mississippi Rivers. This poses a significant consideration for wastewater treatment, which will be discussed in the next section.

In addition, Minnesota Water Laws grant Chisago County the power (as the Public Drainage Authority) to control the maintenance and modification of Chisago County Ditch 5. No work affecting the alignment, hydrology or hydraulics of this Public Ditch can be undertaken without the prior review and consent of the Chisago County Board of Commissioners.

3. Wastewater Treatment

The prior land uses within the RTC District had little or no need for wastewater treatment. Since the agricultural uses focused on the production of small-grains and sod, there was no need to treat the waters draining these lands. The small number of rural residential and commercial uses relied exclusively upon individual, onsite, soil treatment systems. The “classic” design for an individual, onsite, soil treatment system consists of a large, sealed septic tank for primary settling and treatment of solids and a soil absorption system (e.g. drain field) for secondary treatment of the remaining effluent water. There are no public wastewater treatment facilities (i.e. public sewer systems) serving this area or within a reasonable distance of this area.

The primary purpose of the RTC District will be to allow and encourage appropriate commercial and residential development on the lands adjoining the new highway interchange. Consequently, there is a significant need to provide accessible, adequate and effective wastewater treatment to serve the RTC District. Since no publicly or privately operated wastewater collection and treatment facilities exist on or near the RTC District, providing such facilities must take a high priority.

Although a small portion of the RTC District has adequate soil and water-table conditions to support individual, onsite, soil treatment systems, such systems are totally inappropriate for higher density residential development and moderate to large-scale commercial uses. As noted earlier in this document, large portions of the RTC District contain either unsuitable soil types and/or high groundwater tables. These areas would require substantial landscape alterations, in the form of soil removal, grading and filling, in order to make them suitable for individual, onsite, soil treatment systems.

As mentioned in the previous section on Drainage, there are severe limitations on the surface discharge of any effluent waters that could eventually reach the Saint Croix-Mississippi River system. The nearby cities of North Branch and Stacy do have publicly-owned and operated sanitary sewer systems, but they pose a secondary set of limitations. First, they are not near enough to the RTC District to offer wastewater treatment service. Second, they are also subject to the same constraints on surface discharge to the Saint Croix-Mississippi River system and may not have adequate, additional, “permitted” capacity to accept effluent from the RTC District.

The most practical solution to providing wastewater treatment for the RTC District would be to construct a single, large “package” treatment facility to serve the entire site. Such a facility would need to use state-of-the-art technology to treat wastewater ON SITE and ensure that no surface discharge reached the Saint Croix-Mississippi River system. The size and complexity of such a system would require that it be either owned and operated by a “public” entity (i.e. Lent Township) or by a carefully regulated “corporate” entity. Of course, such a system would also have to be designed and operated in full compliance with ALL local, State and Federal requirements.

Until such a “community” wastewater treatment system can be provided, it will be necessary for Lent Township to ensure that only those uses that can safely utilize individual, onsite, soil treatment systems are permitted to operate within the RTC District. Furthermore, if Lent Township does permit such uses, it should be done with the full understanding that these uses will be REQUIRED to abandon their individual, onsite, soil treatment systems and connect to a “community” wastewater treatment system when it becomes available.

4. Water Supply

As mentioned earlier, there is a readily accessible and abundant supply of high-quality groundwater within the RTC District. Unlike the inherent site limitations requiring the use of “community” wastewater treatment facilities, there are no “physical” reasons to require a “community” water supply system. However, it may be desirable for “economy of scale”, to eventually develop a “community” water supply system for the RTC District.

Individual residential water-users, even within higher density residential developments, can generally obtain adequate volumes of water from drilled, bedrock wells. The types of commercial development that may be allowed within the RTC District should also have modest needs for water supply. In addition, no high-volume, industrial water use will be allowed within the RTC District. The most significant use of water may come from car and/or truck washing facilities.

Finally, all groundwater supplies are currently regulated by the Minnesota Department of Health and/or the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. There is no need for Lent Township to directly regulate the use and installation of wells, except to ensure that they comply with the siting and setback requirements of the Township’s land use regulations.

D. Land Use & Development

As mentioned earlier, the historic agricultural, rural residential and limited commercial uses within the RTC District invariably utilized moderate to large-sized parcels of land. Because of the location and inherent value of lands within the RTC District, this pattern will certainly shift.

It is likely that future residential uses will focus on higher-density patterns of development (i.e. conservation subdivision) and that modest commercial uses will seek smaller individual parcels or “clustered” facilities. It is also quite likely that one or more large-scale commercial retail and/or wholesale facilities may wish to locate within the RTC District. Such operations would invariably desire larger parcels for development. The various permutations and combinations of potential uses will certainly require much more detailed delineation of those areas within the RTC District that are most suitable for specific uses.

Based on the dimensional standards established in Section 5.08 of the ***Lent Township Zoning Ordinance*** (Chapter Two of the Lent Township Land Use Regulations), parcels (lots) intended for residential use may be as small as four (4) acres (for conservation subdivisions); parcels intended solely for public parking and transit facilities may be as small as two and one-half (2½) acres; and there are currently no minimum size standards for parcels intended for commercial or other non-residential uses.

In order to allow for a practical and rational mix of commercial and residential uses, it will be necessary for the Township to establish much more specific density and/or lot size requirements for each type of land use. In addition, land use standards should be crafted to recognize limitations imposed by the physical characteristics of the site.

As stated earlier, careful attention should be given to delineating specific areas within the RTC District based on their suitability for particular types of development. Because of the limited amount of land included within the RTC District, it may also be necessary to control the timing or phasing for certain types of development. This would ensure that less suitable/desirable uses do not preempt or preclude the development of more suitable/desirable land uses. The Township should work closely with individual landowners in developing such criteria and standards... before they commit to specific and expensive planning to develop their lands.

Section 4: Growth Management

As alluded to above, there is an urgent need for the Township to develop and adopt more definitive Growth Management goals and strategies for the RTC District. The purpose of this Section is to define and elaborate upon these points. As explained in the final Section of this document, these goals and strategies and policies are intended to supplement the original Lent Township Comprehensive Plan and provide specific direction for the wise development, growth and development of the RTC District.

Goal 1: To provide for *interim administrative procedures* to be used by Lent Township until such time as appropriate development criteria and standards are adopted for the RTC District, in order ensure that uncoordinated or poorly planned growth does not preempt or negate future development criteria and standards.

Strategies:

- No commercial uses will be approved by the Township Board of Supervisors or Planning Commission that cannot utilize an onsite sewage treatment system, until such time as the strategies contained within this Plan have been fully enabled via appropriate Township regulations;
- No residential or commercial subdivision consisting of 3 or more lots or parcels, of any size, will be approved by the Township Board of Supervisors or Planning Commission, until such time as the strategies contained within this Plan have been fully enabled via appropriate Township regulations;
- No commercial use utilizing a lot or parcel of 10 acres or more will be approved by the Township Board of Supervisors or Planning Commission, until such time as the strategies contained within this Plan have been fully enabled via appropriate Township regulations;
- All applications for conditional use permits, subdivisions and/or variances which do not meet the criteria of the preceding strategies will be considered “incomplete applications” for the purposes of Minnesota Statutes, Section 15.99 and shall be held in a “pending approval” status until such time as the strategies contained within this Plan have been fully enabled via appropriate Township regulations; and

- The Township Board of Supervisors will effectuate all of the preceding strategies via appropriate actions at the earliest possible date and will only rescind such action upon the official adoption of appropriate Township regulations to enable all of the strategies contained within this Plan.

Goal 2: To elaborate and refine the **types of uses** that are appropriate and compatible within the RTC District, based on the physical characteristics of the land, and the ability to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure.

Strategies:

- The Township Planning Commission will review all permitted and conditional uses currently allowed within the RTC District to determine if they remain appropriate and consistent with the goals and strategies set forth in this Plan;
- The Township Planning Commission will review all permitted and conditional uses currently allowed within the RTC District to determine if additional specific uses may be appropriate and consistent with the goals and strategies set forth in this Plan;
- The Township Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission will take action to amend and/or revise the current Township Land Use Regulations to effectuate changes in permitted land use identified through the preceding strategies; and
- Pursuant to the strategies set forth above, the following revised listing of Permitted, Conditional and Prohibited Uses shall be incorporated into Section 5.08 of the Lent Township Zoning Ordinance:

5.08 Rural Transit Center District

B. Permitted Uses.

1. Single family dwellings and accessory structures subject to the following provisions:
 - a. Dwellings sites shall not exceed a maximum density of eight (8) residential lots per forty (40) acres.
 - b. Each parcel shall contain a minimum buildable area of one (1) acre.
 - c. The lot upon which the dwelling is located shall have frontage on a public road, or access approved as part of a conservation subdivision or planned unit development.
 - d. A dwelling located on a parcel meeting the conditions of Section 4.10 E. may be permitted access via a private road easement access strip which is a minimum two (2) rods in width.
 - e. Any parcel less than five (5) acres in size will be subject to the requirements of Section 7.19.
2. Public parking and transit facilities, provided:
 - a. The facility site is not less than two and one-half (2½) acres, nor more than ten (10) acres in size.
 - b. Adequate and appropriate on-site waste treatment, storm water management and water supply systems are utilized.
 - c. No more than fifty percent (50%) of the site is covered by impervious surfaces.
- ~~3. Local government administration and service buildings.~~
- ~~34.~~ Agriculture uses, including farm structures which are accessory to agriculture uses.
- ~~45.~~ Farm drainage systems, flood control and watershed structures and erosion control devices

meeting all County, State and Soil Conservation Service minimum standards.

56. Temporary or seasonal roadside stands for sale of agricultural products raised on the premises upon which the stand is located, but not to exceed one stand per farm.

67. Greenhouse or nursery.

78. Forestry and sod farming.

89. Wildlife areas, forest preserves, public parks owned or operated by a government agency or nonprofit organization, and other open space uses.

10. ~~Home occupations in accordance with Section 4.04.~~

11. ~~Daycare and residential facilities as required in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 462.~~

C. Conditional Uses.

1. Two-family dwellings and accessory structures subject to the following provisions:

- a. Dwellings sites shall not exceed a maximum density of eight (8) residential lots per forty (40) acres.
- b. Each parcel shall contain a minimum buildable area of two (2) acres.
- c. The lot upon which the dwelling is located shall have frontage on a public road, or access approved as part of a conservation subdivision or planned unit development.
- d. A dwelling located on a parcel meeting the conditions of Section 4.10 E. may be permitted access via a private road easement access strip which is a minimum two (2) rods in width.
- e. Any parcel less than five (5) acres in size will be subject to the requirements of Section 7.19.

2. Public parking and transit facilities larger than ten (10) acres in size, provided:

- a. Adequate and appropriate on-site waste treatment, storm water management and water supply systems are utilized.
- b. No more than thirty percent (30%) of the site is covered by impervious surfaces.

3. ~~Home occupations in accordance with Section 4.04.~~

4. ~~Daycare and residential facilities as required in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 462.~~

5. ~~Local government administration and service buildings.~~

63. Essential services in accordance with Section 4.05.

74. Conservation subdivisions and planned unit developments in accordance with Section 7.19.

85. Keeping, boarding, breeding, feeding, sheltering or training of horses, where the density does not exceed one (1) horse per two and one-half (2½) acres.

96. Bed and breakfast establishments, as a principal or accessory use.

107. Superette or convenience grocery stores.

118. Self-service gasoline stations.

129. Automobile service stations in accordance with Section 7.23.

1310. Automobile sales in accordance with Section 7.22.

1411. Drive-in businesses in accordance with Section 7.21.

1512. Restaurants.

1613. Hotels and motels.

1714. Retail and Rental stores.

1815. General Service and Repair businesses.

1916. Financial Institutions.

2017. Offices for Professional Services.

2118. Recreational vehicle sales and service.

22. Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.

23. Light manufacturing, provided the use does not require special waste water treatment facilities, does not generate or use hazardous materials, and is consistent with the purpose of the Rural Transit Center District.

2419. Commercial wireless telecommunication services, including towers and antennae, provided that towers and antennae do not exceed one hundred ninety-nine (199) feet.

D. Prohibited Uses.

Any uses posing a real or potential hazard or threat to public health, safety or welfare, and uses not specified as permitted or conditional uses shall be prohibited.

Goal 3: To elaborate and refine the ***dimensional and performance standards*** applied to various uses within the RTC District, based on the compatibility of different land uses, physical characteristics of the land, and the ability to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure.

Strategies:

- The Township Planning Commission will review all of the dimensional and performance standards (e.g. lot sizes, setbacks, height limits, etc.) currently applied within the RTC District to determine if they remain appropriate and consistent with the goals and strategies set forth in this Plan;
- The Township Board of Supervisors shall commission a Preliminary Engineering Review to determine not only the most practicable and feasible means of wastewater treatment, but also to determine the minimal dimensional parameters (i.e. parcel size, soil types, etc.) necessary to facilitate the construction and operation of such systems;
- Based upon their analyses, the Township Planning Commission will recommend appropriate changes to existing dimensional and performance standards and the adoption of any additional dimensional standards that may be appropriate and consistent with the goals and strategies set forth in this Plan;
- In particular, the Township Planning Commission should consider recommending the adoption or elaboration of specific standards for:
 - higher density residential uses that incorporate conservation subdivision or planned unit development concepts;
 - commercial and public parking sites;
 - design, location, lighting and size for all fencing, landscaping, roadways, signs and utilities;
 - design, location and methods for containing or controlling surface water runoff;
 - design, location and methods for grading, filling or other landscape alterations required to facilitate development;
 - maximum size limits (square footage) for specific classes or types of commercial buildings;
 - maximum limits for noise generated by commercial uses; and
 - establishment of a “development fee” to be imposed on new developments at the time building or land use permits are applied for (this fee will be utilized to support the planning, design and construction of necessary infrastructure such as

combined wastewater treatment facilities, street lighting, traffic signage, etc.).

- The Township Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission will take action to amend and/or revise the current Township Land Use Regulations to effectuate changes to dimensional and performance standards identified through the preceding strategies.

Goal 4: To *define and delineate specific areas* within the RTC District that are most suited for specific types of growth and development, based on the physical characteristics of the land, and the ability to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure.

Strategies:

- The Township Planning Commission will review all available geologic, hydrologic, soils and topographic information available for the RTC District and identify specific areas with suitable characteristics for various types of development or use;
- The Planning Commission will review all available geologic, hydrologic, soils and topographic information available for the RTC District and identify specific areas with unsuitable characteristics for various types of development or use;
- Based upon the results of the preceding strategies, The Planning Commission will delineate specific areas within the RTC District that may be “reserved” for specific purposes or uses that will benefit the growth and development of the RTC District as a whole. Such delineation should include areas best suited for the construction and operation of strategic infrastructure, such as community wastewater treatment facilities, stormwater retention basins, roadways, and utilities; and
- The Township Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission will take action to amend and/or revise the current Township Land Use Regulations to “reserve” or set-aside areas within the RTC District that are best suited for specific uses that provide a benefit to the entire RTC District and /or surrounding community.

Goal 5: To *define and delineate specific sequencing* for growth and development within the RTC District, in order to avoid and/or minimize conflicts between uses, ensure that adequate and appropriate infrastructure is available, ensure that uncoordinated or poorly planned growth does not preempt future development options, and avoid unnecessary expenditure and/or utilization of public resources.

Strategies:

- Based upon analyses conducted pursuant to the preceding goals and strategies, control and/or restrict the subdivision of lands for residential uses and small-scale commercial uses within areas identified as best suited for large-scale commercial development or essential infrastructure for a period not to exceed five (5) years from the date of adoption of specific regulations for the RTC District;
- Require that ALL commercial uses connect to and utilize any public or privately operated wastewater treatment facilities constructed to service the RTC District and abandon the use of any ISTS facilities that were previously operated;

- Require all new subdivisions to deposit an appropriate escrow payment upon applying for a preliminary plat review/approval, in order to ensure the Township will have adequate funds to fully review such applications; and
- Require all new commercial developments to deposit an appropriate escrow payment upon applying for a conditional use permit, in order to ensure the Township will have adequate funds to fully review such applications and that there are adequate funds for requiring connection to any combined wastewater treatment facilities.

Goal 6: To *provide for adequate and appropriate infrastructure* to support the future growth and development of the RTC District.

Strategies:

- All public roads entering the RTC District from the rights-of way of Chisago County Roads 17, 30 and 78 must be controlled, maintained and owned by the Township;
- All service roads providing immediate access to commercial and residential developments within the RTC District will be shared roadways to be maintained, operated and owned on a cooperative basis;
- The Township shall restrict the location and number of service roads, driveways and entrances to the minimum necessary to serve the needs of the RTC District;
- All parking and outside storage areas serving commercial uses must be appropriately integrated, located and sized;
- All surface water drainage must be appropriately integrated, located and sized so as to retain runoff within the RTC District, with controlled discharge to Chisago County Ditch 5 as approved by the Ditch Authority;
- All utilities serving the RTC District must use commonly located and maintained easements;
- The highest priority must be given to the construction and operation of a common privately or publicly-owned wastewater treatment system to serve the entire RTC District;
- If necessary, Lent Township will investigate and pursue the establishment of a Subordinate Service District to provide a common publicly-owned wastewater treatment system if necessary;
- If necessary, Lent Township may consider the use the power of eminent domain to secure lands necessary for the construction and operation of appropriate infrastructure to serve the entire RTC District;
- Individually owned and operated water supply systems will be allowed provided that ALL water supply systems comply with appropriate Federal, State and local regulations and can be utilized for fire suppression;
- When and where public surface water drainage, wastewater treatment and/or water

supply systems are available for use within the RTC District, ALL commercial and residential uses must be required to connect to such systems and cease operation of their individually owned systems.

Goal 7: To *coordinate the future growth and development* of the RTC District with other Local, State and Federal entities, in order to ensure that the RTC District is fully integrated into the cultural, economic and social needs of the region.

Strategies:

- The Lent Township Board of Supervisors will solicit the participation of Chisago County and neighboring communities in the preparation and adoption of this Plan;
- Wherever feasible and practicable, the Lent Township Board of Supervisors will consider the needs of the “greater community” in the adoption and implementation of this Plan;
- The Lent Township Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission will review and, if necessary, amend this Development Plan within 5-years of its official adoption and every 5-years thereafter.
- The Lent Township Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission will reasonably ensure that this Plan is integrated with the Lent Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Goal 8: To *maintain and protect public health and safety* within the RTC District by providing for adequate and appropriate emergency, fire protection and law enforcement services.

Strategies:

- Cooperate and coordinate with the Stacy-Lent Fire Department to ensure that adequate and appropriate fire protection services are provided to the Rural Transit Center District;
- Cooperate and coordinate with the Chisago County Sheriff’s Department to ensure that adequate and appropriate law enforcement services are provided to the Rural Transit Center District;
- Cooperate and coordinate with Lakes Region Emergency Services to ensure that adequate and appropriate emergency services are provided to the Rural Transit Center District;
- Cooperate and coordinate with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Chisago County Highway Department to ensure that adequate and appropriate traffic management and safety procedures are provided to the Rural Transit Center District;

Section 5: Implementation

As explained in Section 1 of this document, the ultimate expression of any community Plan is through the adoption, administration and enforcement of appropriate procedures and regulations to effectuate the Plan. The implementation of a Plan should be directed by a specific vision and appropriate strategies.

A. Vision Statement

Lent Township shall have a Rural Transit Center District that offers the citizens of the Township and neighboring communities an appropriate and fully integrated pattern of land uses, which will provide our community with the amenities and services necessary to maintain and support a rural community, within the larger context of our proximity to a major metropolitan area.

B. Implementation Strategies

Strategy 1: The Lent Township Planning Commission shall conduct a public hearing, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 462.355, to present and review this Development Plan;

Strategy 2: Upon completion of the public hearing, the Planning Commission shall prepare “Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations” to be submitted to the Lent Township Board of Supervisors;

Strategy 3: After considering the “Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations” of the Planning Commission, the Lent Township Board of Supervisors shall take appropriate action to adopt this Development Plan;

Strategy 4: Upon adoption of this Development Plan, the Lent Township Board of Supervisors shall take appropriate actions to implement those strategies set forth within the Development Plan that do not require the adoption or enactment of specific ordinances and/or regulations;

Strategy 5: Upon adoption of this Development Plan, the Lent Township Board of Supervisors shall instruct the Planning Commission to prepare appropriate ordinances and/or regulations to fully implement this Development Plan;

Strategy 6: The Lent Township Planning Commission shall conduct a public hearing, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 462.357, to present and review the draft ordinances and/or regulations intended to implement this Development Plan;

Strategy 7: Upon completion of the public hearing, the Planning Commission shall prepare “Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations” to be submitted to the Lent Township Board of Supervisors;

Strategy 8: After considering the “Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations” of the Planning Commission, the Lent Township Board of Supervisors shall take appropriate action to adopt and enforce the ordinances and/or regulations intended to implement this Development Plan;

Strategy 9: The Lent Township Board of Supervisors shall instruct the Planning Commission to monitor the growth, development and future needs of the RTC District

and to recommend to the Board of Supervisors those actions that may be necessary to amend or revise this Development Plan and the ordinances and/or regulations intended to implement this Development Plan;

Strategy 10: The Lent Township Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission shall maintain liaison activities with Chisago County, neighboring municipalities, and our State and Federal Legislative representatives in order to fully implement this Development Plan and coordinate such implementation with other Local, State and Federal programs.

Section 6: Appendices

Appendix A: Comprehensive Plan

The **Lent Township Comprehensive Plan** was officially adopted on August 16, 2005. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan sets forth the following specific criteria for future growth and development within Lent Township:

SECTION 6. GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE REGULATION

VISION

Lent Township citizens enjoy a safe and healthy environment that is sustained by a rational integration of diverse land uses, orderly growth and the preservation and protection of unique cultural and natural resources.

MISSION STATEMENT

Lent Township governance shall control the use and development of lands within the township in order to provide and maintain a viable rural/exurban community environment for all its citizens.

Growth Management

Goal:

Establish a comprehensive growth management strategy for Lent Township that promotes orderly and balanced growth of residential, commercial and industrial development, while maintaining agricultural uses and the township's rural/exurban character.

Strategies:

- 1. Recognize and respond proactively to internal and external growth pressures, and potential land use conflicts;*
- 2. Promote an integrated approach to community growth, land use, transportation expansion and resource protection, through the application of appropriate administrative review for adequate public services and infrastructure, compatibility of land use with natural features, and economic viability of land use;*
- 3. Define the character of, and identify those areas where growth will be expected, allowing or limiting that growth according to the availability of resources and services;*
- 4. Recognize the importance of transportation gateways to the township; and*
- 5. Identify and preserve those areas with significant cultural, historic, natural resource and/or scenic value.*

Land Use Regulation

Goal:

Provide official controls that recognize and respond to the benefits, hazards and compatibility of present and future land use, strive for the most harmonious and efficient balance, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Lent Township.

Strategies:

- 1. Establish appropriate official controls to minimize conflicts between different and/or incompatible land uses by establishing rational land use districts and development standards;*
- 2. Establish appropriate official controls to regulate land uses in order to preserve and maintain the character of our community, and protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Lent Township;*
- 3. Utilize official controls to encourage compatible land uses along bordering jurisdictions;*
- 4. Promote the elimination or conversion of nonconforming or incompatible land uses by using official controls and/or incentives that will compensate for remedial actions;*
- 5. Seek opportunities to communicate with the citizens of Lent Township in order to inform them of issues*

concerning community growth, land development and resource management.

SECTION 7. GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE STRATEGIES

Commercial and Industrial Development

Goal:

Allow for the orderly, efficient and appropriate growth of commercial and industrial development within the Township.

Strategies:

1. Encourage new commercial and industrial development that requires public sewer and water to locate within municipalities, in accordance with their comprehensive plans;
2. Encourage limited commercial and light industrial developments which do not need public sewer and water to locate in areas with adequate road service within Urban Growth areas or rural transit centers;
3. Allow for home occupations and limited rural businesses on homesteads in residential areas;
4. Clearly define and regulate the types of commercial and light industrial activities that may be allowed as an agricultural use;
5. Consider the County Road 30 corridor and the Interstate 35 & County Road 17 interchange as locations for appropriate commercial and light industrial uses;
6. Only allow commercial and light industrial uses where appropriate public services are available, and where potential conflicts between commercial/industrial and residential uses are minimized;
7. Define and delineate Commercial and Industrial Development areas on the official map that accompanies the Township's comprehensive land use plan.

SECTION 8. ESTABLISHMENT OF LAND USE DISTRICTS

Rural Transit Center District

Goal:

To provide appropriate and centralized support facilities and services immediately adjacent to the Interstate 35 / County Road 17 highway interchange.

Strategies:

1. Allow public parking and transit facilities as a permitted land use, provided appropriate on-site waste treatment and water supply systems are utilized and no more than fifty percent (50%) of the site is covered by an impervious surface;
2. Allow single-family residential uses as a permitted land use at a density not to exceed eight (8) residential lots per forty (40) acres;
3. Allow multi-family residential uses as a conditional land use not to exceed the single-family density and only under clearly defined conditions and performance standards;
4. Allow residential planned unit or cluster developments as a conditional land use not to exceed 125% of the single-family density (10 single-family residential units per 40 acres) and only under clearly defined conditions and performance standards that protect and preserve open space and natural resources;
5. Allow appropriate residential-related and transportation-related commercial uses as a conditional land use only under clearly defined conditions and performance standards;
6. All other land uses not directly related to residential or commercial use shall be regulated as a conditional land use under clearly defined conditions and with a clear definition of which specific land uses may be allowed;
7. Any land uses posing a real or potential hazard or threat to public health, safety or welfare shall be prohibited;
8. Require all residential and agricultural uses to utilize appropriate on-site waste treatment and water supply systems;
9. Require all commercial uses to utilize and share centralized on-site waste treatment and water supply systems.

Appendix B: Land Use Regulations

Section 5.08 of the Lent Township Zoning Ordinance establishes the following specific criteria and standards for the **Rural Transit Center (RTC) District**.

5.08 Rural Transit Center District

A. Purpose.

The Rural Transit Center District is intended to provide appropriate and centralized support facilities, and retail and service businesses adjacent to the Interstate 35 / County Road 17 highway interchange.

B. Permitted Uses.

1. *Single family dwellings and accessory structures subject to the following provisions:*
 - f. *Dwellings sites shall not exceed a maximum density of eight (8) residential lots per forty (40) acres.*
 - g. *Each parcel shall contain a minimum buildable area of one (1) acre.*
 - h. *The lot upon which the dwelling is located shall have frontage on a public road, or access approved as part of a conservation subdivision or planned unit development.*
 - i. *A dwelling located on a parcel meeting the conditions of Section 4.10 E. may be permitted access via a private road easement access strip which is a minimum two (2) rods in width.*
 - j. *Any parcel less than five (5) acres in size will be subject to the requirements of Section 7.19.*
2. *Public parking and transit facilities, provided:*
 - d. *The facility site is not less than two and one-half (2½) acres, nor more than ten (10) acres in size.*
 - e. *Adequate and appropriate on-site waste treatment, storm water management and water supply systems are utilized.*
 - f. *No more than fifty percent (50%) of the site is covered by impervious surfaces.*
3. *Local government administration and service buildings.*
4. *Agriculture uses, including farm structures which are accessory to agriculture uses.*
5. *Farm drainage systems, flood control and watershed structures and erosion control devices meeting all County, State and Soil Conservation Service minimum standards.*
6. *Temporary or seasonal roadside stands for sale of agricultural products raised on the premises upon which the stand is located, but not to exceed one stand per farm.*
7. *Greenhouse or nursery.*
8. *Forestry and sod farming.*
9. *Wildlife areas, forest preserves, public parks owned or operated by a government agency or nonprofit organization, and other open space uses.*
10. *Home occupations in accordance with Section 4.04.*
11. *Daycare and residential facilities as required in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 462.*

C. Conditional Uses.

1. *Two-family dwellings and accessory structures subject to the following provisions:*
 - f. *Dwellings sites shall not exceed a maximum density of eight (8) residential lots per forty (40) acres.*
 - g. *Each parcel shall contain a minimum buildable area of two (2) acres.*
 - h. *The lot upon which the dwelling is located shall have frontage on a public road, or access approved as part of a conservation subdivision or planned unit development.*
 - i. *A dwelling located on a parcel meeting the conditions of Section 4.10 E. may be permitted access via a private road easement access strip which is a minimum two (2) rods in width.*
 - j. *Any parcel less than five (5) acres in size will be subject to the requirements of Section 7.19.*
2. *Public parking and transit facilities larger than ten (10) acres in size, provided:*
 - c. *Adequate and appropriate on-site waste treatment, storm water management and water supply systems are utilized.*
 - d. *No more than thirty percent (30%) of the site is covered by impervious surfaces.*
3. *Essential services in accordance with Section 4.05.*
4. *Conservation subdivisions and planned unit developments in accordance with Section 7.19.*
5. *Keeping, boarding, breeding, feeding, sheltering or training of horses, where the density does not exceed one (1) horse per two and one-half (2½) acres.*
6. *Bed and breakfast establishments, as a principal or accessory use.*
7. *Superette or convenience grocery stores.*
8. *Self-service gasoline stations.*
9. *Automobile service stations in accordance with Section 7.23.*
10. *Automobile sales in accordance with Section 7.22.*
11. *Drive-in businesses in accordance with Section 7.21.*
12. *Restaurants.*
13. *Hotels and motels.*
14. *Retail and Rental stores.*
15. *General Service and Repair businesses.*
16. *Financial Institutions.*
17. *Offices for Professional Services.*
18. *Recreational vehicle sales and service.*

19. Commercial wireless telecommunication services, including towers and antennae, provided that towers and antennae do not exceed one hundred ninety-nine (199) feet.

D. Prohibited Uses.

Any uses posing a real or potential hazard or threat to public health, safety or welfare, and uses not specified as permitted or conditional uses shall be prohibited.

Section 7: Adoption and Date of Effect

This Development Plan for the Rural Transit Center District has been legally adopted by the Lent Township Board of Supervisors on February 19, 2008, following an official public hearing as required by Law. This Plan shall be in full force and effect as of the date of adoption by the Lent Township Board of Supervisors. A copy of this Plan has been placed on file with the Chisago County Recorder's Office and shall be made available to the general public at the office of the Lent Township Clerk and online at the Lent Township website: <http://www.lenttownship.net/>

Passed and approved this 19th day of February, 2008, by the Lent Township Board of Supervisors.

Gene Olson

Gene Olson, Chairman

ATTEST:

Roxanne Kahler

Roxanne Kahler, Township Clerk