

APPENDIX “A”

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY VISIONING

Public Participation & Community Visioning

The City Council appointed a Task Force composed of Robbinsdale residents and business men and women, whose purpose was to oversee the Comprehensive Plan process, provide insight and guidance, and ensure that the Planning Staff understood the residents' needs.

The success of the Comprehensive Plan depends on adequate public participation. Public participation increases awareness about the City, increases the knowledge of issues, and increases the effectiveness of the Plan by assuring that the Comprehensive Plan is in touch with the needs and desires of the people of Robbinsdale. The City of Robbinsdale held meetings with the public and the Task Force throughout the duration of the Plan process.

The public process started out with a Visioning Session. The Robbinsdale Visioning Session was held on June 4, 1998 at 6:30 P.M. in the Public Safety building. Approximately 70 residents, businesspersons, landowners, and interested people attended and participated in the Visioning session. The purpose of the Visioning Session was to hear and share in peoples concerns, hopes and dreams for the future of Robbinsdale. The Visioning meeting left behind positive and negative comments regarding the progress of the City. The Visioning Session

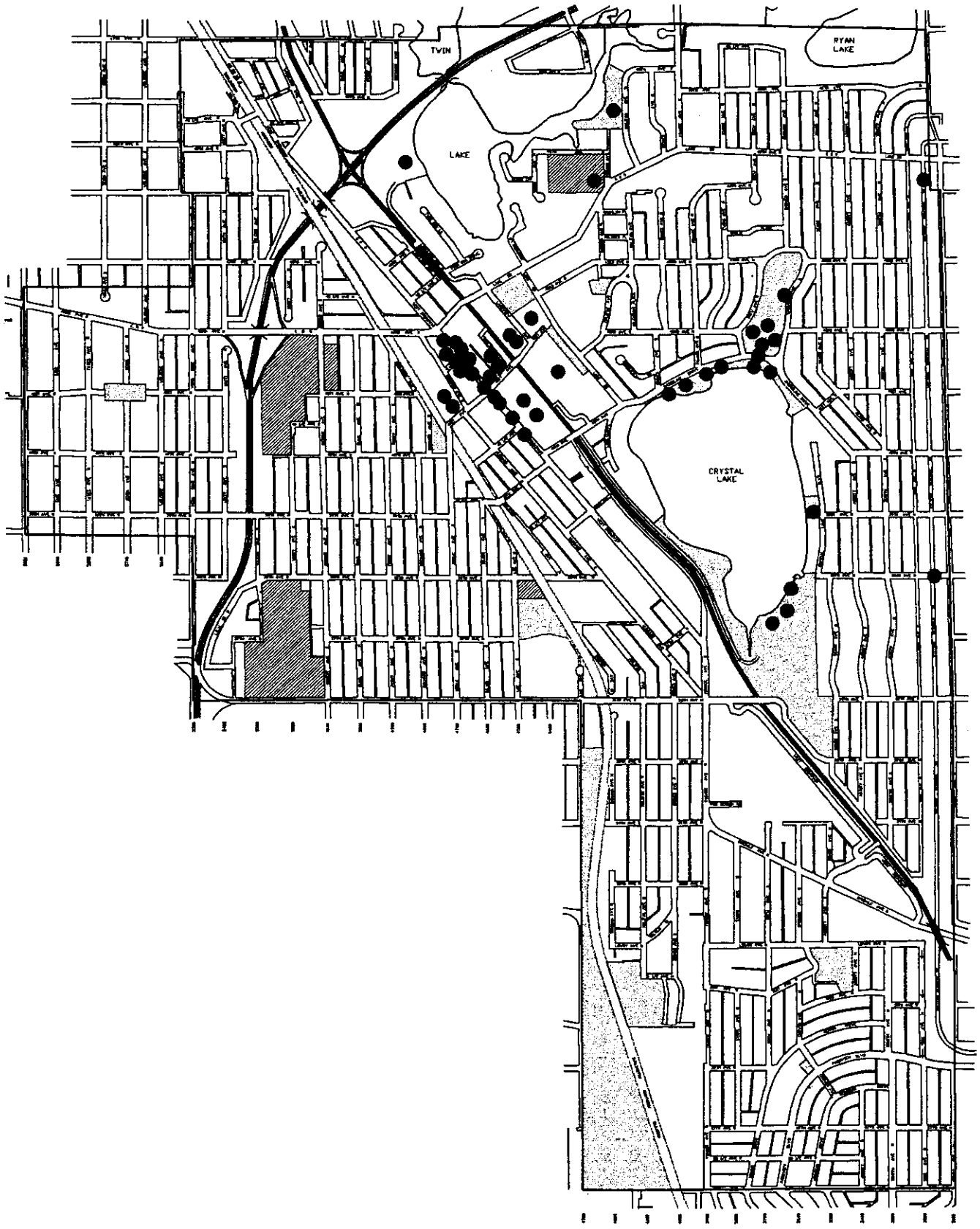
Opening Exercise – “Favorite Place”

The initial exercise asked participants to identify their favorite “public” place in Robbinsdale. The following is a tabulation of the responses written on **individual cards**. A map identifying the favorite places follows.

My Most Favorite Place in Robbinsdale is...	Because...
Downtown	Quaint, clean and well groomed
Downtown	Picturesque and well landscaped
North Memorial Hospital	Opens up the availability to those who need medical and trauma care. Giving back to the community
Crystal Lake Area especially Hollingsworth Park	It is peaceful and natural and the homes around it are pleasant
West Broadway between 40 th and 42 nd	Small commercial establishments. I can walk to the bank, bakery, etc., from my house
Sanborn Park	Great active space
Downtown	Gives us a sense of community
West Broadway between 42 nd and Citizen's Bank	The streetscape makes it look nice and at the holidays it look nice with the lights. It has a small town feel.
Sanborn Park/Crystal Lake and the road that curves around it	For me, it's a central heart of Robbinsdale and it exudes a small town feeling. You can always meet a neighbor and friend there.

Lakeview Terrace	Quiet and the wildlife present there
Robbinsdale Shopping Center	Easy shopping
Sanborn Park	Beautiful open area wit lots of opportunities and activities – ball parks, walking path, play area, tennis courts, fishing dock.
Crystal Lake and Sanborn Park	Beautiful, children and families can play, bike trails, conducive to community activities.
Lakeview Drive and Victory Parkway	I love the charming, well kept houses
Humphrey Park	Quiet, wildlife, lake, and solitude
Mainstreet	Streetscape makes it look like a nice comfortable small town
Mainstreet	Tends to give a sense of small town community
Twin Lakes	Its close and well taken care of
The Wirth Parkway	The tranquil feeling one gets while slowly driving down its scenic wooded roads
All of West Broadway	The new streetscape, the mural and clock area, all the benches along the bus routes.
The Parkway, Streetscape, Clock Square, and the Mural	Just because...
Fire/Police Station	Its close, for problem solving
Fire/Police Station	Gathering Place – Community memories
Theodore Wirth Parkway	The walkways are nice informal place to walk and meet people.
Downtown	Hub of the City – meeting/gathering place
Mainstreet	Clean
Eagles Nest Lounge	Good food – friendly staff
Mainstreet	Usually looks very nice and clean
Was the Muni	Nice place to meet people
Mainstreet	It's new, neat and clean. Looks nice lit up at night
Shoreline Drive	<i>(no comment)</i>
City Hall	I like to know what is going on in the community
Coast to Coast	<i>(no comment)</i>
Fire and Police Department	We need them
Fire and Police Building	Because I helped design it
Hackenmueller Meats	We need a great meatmarket
Between 41 1/2 and 42 nd on Mainstreet	Great people, great service and product
Crystal Lake – especially the north end	The walk and view is beautiful, especially spring, summer, fall – but winter too – the waterfowl
West Broadway	The improvements – pleasing to the eye creating a calming effect.
West Broadway	The new streetscape, Athens Café, Roma Coffee
West Broadway	Streetscape
West Broadway	Streetscape improvements
Crystal Lake	The lake is so neat

Downtown	Makes me feel at home, like I'm in a small town
Sunset Park	Its serene, well named for the spectacular sunsets, great to watch small children play, see our feathered friends bask on the shore
Crystal Lake and adjacent parks	The open space and recreation facilities are a positive part of the community
Crystal Lake	Driving around the south end
Downtown	It brings back a "small town" atmosphere to Robbinsdale
Downtown	The businesses, although we need a grocery store badly
Twin Lake	Memories from childhood
Robbinsdale Farm and Garden	Variety – lots of different things to buy and I enjoy visiting the pets
Phoenix City and Broadway Pizza	Great Food, friendly owners – the "who's who" – where everyone knows your name
Phoenix City	Good food and service – can get right in. Plenty of parking – only place in town to eat lunch.
Sanborn Park	Lovely trees, nice connection to Crystal Lake, nice sense of enclosure, good scale.
Sanborn Park and Victory Memorial Parkway	Clean, pleasant place to spend time
Sanborn Park	Multi-use, scenic, gathering place for lots of age groups for a number of events
Terrace Park	Multi-purpose place – lake and ball parks



FAVORITE PLACES
City of Robbinsdale



NOT TO SCALE

Follow-up Exercise – “Least Favorite Place”

This exercise asked participants to identify their least favorite “public” place in Robbinsdale. The following is a tabulation of the responses written on individual cards. A map identifying the favorite places follows.

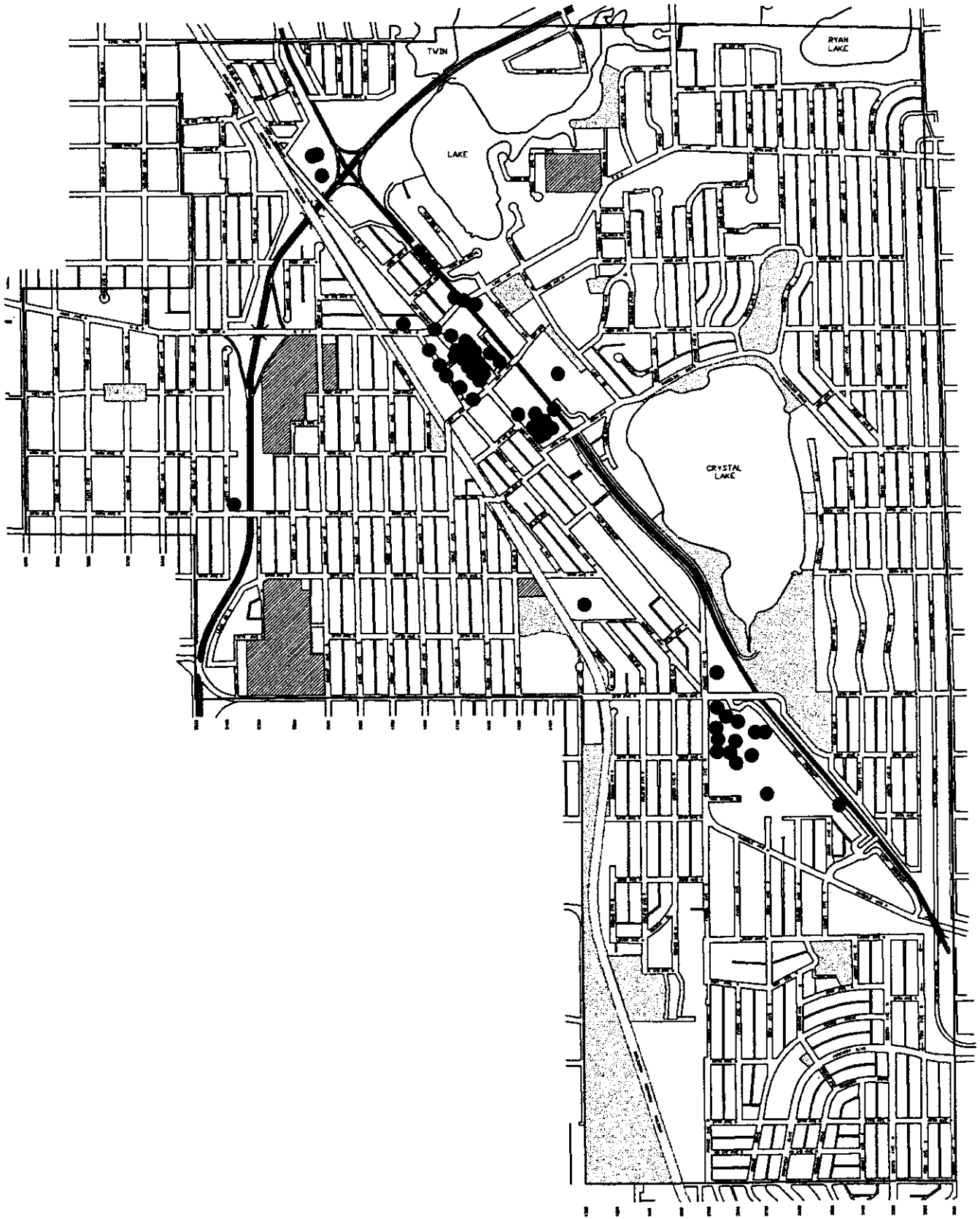
My Least Favorite Place in Robbinsdale is...	Because...
Terrace Mall	Various reasons – Vandalism to cars
Hubbard Avenue	It is part of the downtown area and really has nothing going on and really could look nice if it has some neat businesses and “streetscape”
Hwy 81 and 42 nd Avenue	It divides the community, is dangerous to cross, and limits accessibility between residence and businesses for elders, handicapped and young.
Intersection of 42 nd Ave. and hwy. 81	Extremely difficult to cross. Especially with children or for the physically challenged (elderly or handicapped) – tends to keep us from crossing over into downtown from the east. Too many cars going too fast and going through the lights (yellow/red). Separates Robbinsdale into 2 distinct districts.
Robin Center	The brown and orange awnings need to be replaced; the parking lot needs updating, and get rid of those giant concrete abutments. Incorporate landscaping to make it prettier with flagstone, shrubs, bushes, and perennials.
Terrace Mall	Failing businesses
Terrace Mall	Failing retail with wrong focus out of the gate
Terrace Mall	Getting “run down.” Too many vacancies. Dirty
Hubbard Avenue behind West Broadway	Looks abandoned
Legion and it’s parking lot	Not aesthetically pleasing
County Road 81 – west side between McDonald’s and 41 st	Eyesore – “seems like a lot of trouble hanging out there for hours”
County Road 81	It feels like I-694
Terrace Mall	Deterioration
Graiser Park	Nobody takes care of it – its not loved – abandoned
Rainbow/Terrace Theater	Area needs cleanup
Rainbow Foods area	<i>(No reason given)</i>
Terrace Theatre	<i>(No reason given)</i>
36 th and France Area	<i>(No reason given)</i>
Pawn Shop – ATA	Location
Pawn America	Various reasons
Pawn Shop	Detriment to the City – Degrading
36 th and France	Many people Loitering – High Crime areas
Winsor Court Apts.	Many people Loitering – High Crime areas
Wards Terrace	Buildings in Area deteriorating

Lyons Park	Not kept up
ATA Temporary	Clientele harass people on West Broadway
Pawn America/All Temps	Brings trouble
Pawn shop	Brings bad element to area
Stretch between Sawhorse and the gas station	It does not feel inviting, it looks rundown, and the access from the street is poor.
And many other targeting specific businesses listed above...	

Definition Exercise – “What is Robbinsdale All About?”

The following questions were asked of the participants: Why do you choose to live in Robbinsdale? What characteristics make Robbinsdale “Robbinsdale?” The following responses were recorded on a **flip chart** from those offering responses:

- Small Town Atmosphere
- High Quality Schools
- Low Crime
- Responsive Police Department
- Low Car Traffic
- Affordable Quality Housing
- Beautiful Parks
- Access to Chain of Lakes
- Access to Downtown
- Short Commute
- Downtown Robbinsdale
- Good Mix of Ages
- Physically Have a Downtown
- North Memorial Medical Center
- Rich Historical Tradition Less
- Less Transient Population
- Mature Trees – Landscape
- Pride of Home Ownership
- Great Park and Recreation System
- Family Oriented
- Mix of Businesses
- Senior Housing
- Many Lakes – Recreation
- High Citizen Involvement
- Active Seniors Group with City Support
- Strong Institutions
- Great Garbage Collection
- Great City Services
- Grew Up Here – “Home Town”



LEAST FAVORITE PLACES

City of Robbinsdale



NOT TO SCALE

- Rockford Road Library
- Streetscape
- Art Gallery
- Seasonal Banners – Design Features
- Caring City Officials
- Robbinsdale City Band

Visioning Exercise – “What Should a Future Robbinsdale Be?”

In the Visioning Exercise the small groups were asked to identify, both individually and as a group, what characteristics comprise a vision for the future community of Robbinsdale? Each small group discussed their visions, arrived at five conclusions and presented their characteristics at the “Vision Wall” on half sheets of paper. Once on the wall, the characteristics were placed into groups of common characteristics. These groupings are listed below with a list of characteristics taken verbatim from the “Vision Wall.”

Vision Wall

High Density Senior Housing

- More townhomes for the elders so they can stay in Robbinsdale
- Quality senior housing that doesn’t compete with affordable single-family homes

Balanced Mix of Lifecycle Housing

- Maintain Housing Stock
- Diverse Housing Stock
- Maintain Current Population Density
- Continued or Increased Scattered Site Redevelopment
- Affordable Housing and Services for all Ages
- Provide Life-Cycle Housing
- Quality Affordable Housing

Business Promotion

- More Support of Existing Businesses
- Work with Business People

Business Retention

- More businesses Like West Broadway
- Shops on Broadway as a Destination
- Continue to Update and Develop Downtown
- Downtown as a Destination

Pedestrian Scale Downtown

- Active Downtown
- Better Judgement
- Fix Up Older Buildings on Broadway
- Avoid Generic Mall Look
- Good Full Service Restaurants
- 2020 is Too Late

Great School Systems

- State of the Art Schools
- Schools are Important
- Improve Schools
- Continue to Support Schools

Safe Community

- Low Crime Rate
- Safety
- Safe
- Safe Environment/Strong Public Safety
- Maintain Strong Neighborhoods
- Low Crime
- More Presence and Enforcement by Police
- Walking Bridge @ Hwy 81 and 41st/42nd Street
- Safe Neighborhoods

Upgrade and Improve Park and Trail Systems

- Improve Parks
- Added Park System Amenities West of Hwy 81
- Swimming Beach and Family Area at Crystal Lake
- Expand and Conserve Park System
- Maintain Parks and Increase Bike and Walking Trails

Maintain and Improve Infrastructure

- No Hard Water
- Manage Deterioration

Streetscape Improvements

- More Streetscape Work to tie Broadway to Hwy 81
- Continuing maintenance and Upgrading of Streetscape

Community Diversity

- Respect and Awareness of Diverse Population
- Inclusive Diversity
- Diversity of People, Age and Housing

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

- Bus Hub but only with Increased Security
- Improved Accessibility – Bike, Walking, and Trolley
- Less Residential Stop Signs
- Turn Hwy 81 into a Parkway

Good Thorough Planning

- Connection of North Memorial Medical Center with Terrace Mall

Address Teen Issues

- More Teen Activities

Great Image

- Architectural Richness
- Small Town Feel
- Keep Small Town Atmosphere

Qualities Exercise – “What qualities will be the most important in realizing our collective vision for Robbinsdale?”

The objective of the qualities exercise was to determine the importance of the qualities that were identified. The qualities identified at the visioning exercise were added to a list of qualities assembled from previous discussions with Staff. Each group was asked to agree upon a ranking for each characteristic on the chart. Once a group had agreed on the ranking, one member from the group placed a dot on each characteristic in the box that correlates with the group ranking. The following chart summarizes the rankings of each group.

The number of dots varies between each quality because some groups did not vote on a quality or placed more than one dot on a quality.

The Visioning exercises and public participation helped create the “20/20 Vision Statement”. The statement is what Robbinsdale is hoped to become in the year 2020 by its residents.

ROBBINSDALE 20/20 VISION STATEMENT

When people look at Robbinsdale in 2020 they will see a place that is different than it once was but is still very familiar. It is a safe place. It is a clean place. It is a place that knows what it is and what it is not. Robbinsdale is a place that reflects the past yet embraces the future.

The charm of its neighborhoods is still very evident. Residential neighborhoods are friendly places filled with pride that is evident in the well-kept housing, street corridors, and parks. People are comfortable to stop and meet others along its tree-lined streets. Housing respects the past and integrates the new in a manner that is pleasing. It is a livable place for all that join its tradition.

Another source of community pride is the downtown, which has continued to evolve without losing touch of its rich history. People describe the downtown as functioning like a much larger downtown but with a small town feel. Accessibility and convenience are key elements even with the improvements that have occurred. West Broadway continues to be the spine of downtown providing support to an integrated network of cross streets. Downtown Robbinsdale is a hub for activity with mix of interdependent uses including housing, restaurants, offices, retail and service commercial and public facilities. Multi-modal transportation facilities bring people and a new respect to this pedestrian scale downtown.

Once a cause of concern, Highway 81 is now better integrated into the community. This once divisive roadway is more pedestrian friendly connecting neighborhoods and adjacent communities. Traffic has calmed to acceptable levels and safe street crossings are more accessible and identifiable to pedestrians and vehicles.

Terrace Mall and North Memorial Medical Center fit with the surrounding neighborhood. Improvements in this area have allowed for better relationships and connections between land uses. Residents have embraced these changes understanding the importance of this area within the community.

Residents embrace the improved park and trail system. Connections to the system and to the surrounding area have been made. The quality of park facilities will have improved to keep pace with changing lifestyles. Water quality of the lakes will have increased making them a more enjoyable resource. Residents also embraced the continuance of its existing schools.

A second outcome of the Visioning Process was the creation of guiding principles which are the underlying policy that supports the 20/20 Vision Statement:

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An attractive and safe place to live – The community will continue to emphasize an attractive and safe environment that affords residents the opportunity to interact with their neighbors. Public and private gathering spaces located throughout the community will accommodate formal and informal gathering which help support a strong sense of community. People will feel comfortable enjoying the beautiful city streets at any time of the day or night.

A vibrant and prosperous downtown – Downtown Robbinsdale is a favorite place of many people who live in the community. The community prides itself on those qualities that make it an identifiable place to shop and do business. Continued public and private efforts should be made to secure it as the focal point of the community. Streetscape improvements should be continued to further define downtown and its relationship with the community.

Protect natural resources to promote a healthy environment – The residents of Robbinsdale are blessed with the unique resources offered by Crystal Lake, Twin Lake, and Ryan Lake. Their proximity within an urban setting subjects them to a number of external influences that potentially jeopardize their natural qualities. Robbinsdale must continue to recognize the importance of these features as they relate to community identity and ecological values, and find ways to ensure they remain significant features within the community without compromising their qualities.

A strong business community – To ensure a future downtown is successful, retaining and supporting existing businesses and attracting quality new businesses that compliment the existing businesses is key to its health. Stakeholders must join together with courage and conviction and be proactive to drive the design of redevelop areas of the downtown. A cohesive business community must set standards for business owners and those frequenting the downtown.

A balanced mix of quality lifecycle housing – Residents will have more opportunities to live in Robbinsdale as they pass through various life stages. Emphasis should be placed on continuing to provide and maintain quality affordable housing supply for young families and seniors that meet their needs and contributes positively to the community as a whole. Rehabilitation and redevelopment of viable homes should continue to be a preferred approach when possible to maintain neighborhood character.

An integrated park and trail system – Parks and trails are an important part of Robbinsdale when emphasizing the natural features of the landscape and connecting watersheds, neighborhoods, and people. The City should continue to improve the parks and trails to provide for the changing needs of the residents. Local and regional connections should continue to be made where possible to further expand recreational opportunities. Parks and trails have been a source of pride for residents and a continued City commitment will ensure they will remain as such well into the future.

Robbinsdale Comprehensive Plan

"What Should A Future Robbinsdale Be?"

Qualities of the Future Community A Community that has:	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Forget It
A Robbinsdale with a "sense of place"	•••••	••		
North Memorial Medical Center continuing expansion/growth	•••	•••••		
Bus transit hub in downtown	•	•••••	•	•••••
The need for Commuter Rail/LRT	•	•••••	•	
A City Center with a "sense of place"	•••••	•		
Compact mixed-use (housing, office, commercial) downtown redevelopment	•••	•••	•	
Terrace Mall as a mixed use development	•••	•••••	••	
The importance of scattered site redevelopment program to neighborhoods	•••	•••	•	
An emphasis on code enforcement of housing and nuisance issues	•••	•••		
Housing for Robbinsdale people as lifestyles change	•••••	•••	•	
An emphasis on housing maintenance	•••••	•		
A good parks and open space system	•••••	•••		
A balanced tax base	•••••	•••	•	
A good community image	•••••	•••		
Preservation of natural resources	•••••	•••		
Good schools	•••••	•••		
Cooperation/coordination of City and school operations	••	•••••	•	
Other: High Density Senior Housing	••	•••••	•••	
Other: Balance/mix of life-cycle housing	•••••	•	•	
Other: Great image	•••••	•••••		
Other: Pedestrian scale downtown	•••••	•••		
Other: Business retention	•••••	•••••		

Enhance the community's image – Robbinsdale has a unique character that can be found in the downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods. New building and rehabilitation projects must continue to recognize the character that exists in the built environment, natural landscape, the community's history, and its people to find a proper fit. Desirable features should be expanded and used to attract high quality development. This standard should also apply to all redevelopment areas in the community. The City Council at their June 16, 1998 meeting appointed the Comprehensive Task Force composed of Robbinsdale residents, whose was to oversee the Comprehensive Plan process, provide insight and guidance, and ensure that City Staff understood the residents' needs. Most importantly, the Task Force identified realistic and supportable policy, objectives, and goals.

Section 5: Visioning Business in Robbinsdale

The Robbinsdale Business Visioning was held on July 22, 1998 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room of the Robbinsdale Police/Fire Building. Despite "mass mailing notices" only 10 businesspersons, landowners and interested people attended and participate in the Business Visioning Session. The purpose of the Visioning Session was to hear and share in peoples concerns and hopes for the future of ding business in Robbinsdale.

Group Exercise: "What is good about being in business in Robbinsdale?"
The initial exercise asked participants to identify "good" reasons to be in business in Robbinsdale.

Streetscape improvements along West Broadway
Available off-street parking in the Downtown
Signs: regulated and are in good taste in commercial areas
Design guidelines in the downtown that call out for attractive awnings
The City is Planning for the future of Commercial areas

The promotion of infill projects in the downtown
Architecture Design Guidelines are being enforced in the Downtown District
Whiz Bang Days
New businesses starting up in the Downtown
Downtown is safe
Bikeways and sidewalks link to businesses and the downtown
Youth activities sponsored by the City's Park and Rec. Dept. such as the aggressive skate park gives a place to go instead of loitering in the Downtown and getting in to trouble
Businesses are easy to access
Inexpensive rents for those who lease commercial space
Local residents are loyal customers
Good business environment overall

Group Exercise: "What is bad about being in business in Robbinsdale?"

The second exercise asked participants to identify "bad" reasons to be in business in Robbinsdale.

No night time activity or events Downtown
Not enough foot traffic
Lighting in the Downtown does not come on early enough
Bad lighting at 36th and France
The City improve needs to and follow up on plans and issues
Some services (Planning) and process needs to improve
City does not maintain streetscape/planting along West Broadway
Internal communication and the response to questions from the public need improvement.
Possible alternative uses need to be considered for the future of the Lake Business Center

Group Exercise: “Where do we go from here?” The participants throughout the meeting made suggestions as to what should be done to better the Downtown and other business districts in the community. Consequently this exercise occurred concurrently with exercises #1 and #2.

- Establish a Master plan for Downtown
- Establish list of desired businesses the City would like to attract
- Businesses must create a stronger Chamber of Commerce
- Increase business involvement in Downtown
- Create Marketing program to promote Downtown
- Hold more events and activities in the Downtown
- Continue to promote infill projects and enforce design guidelines
- Consider building a parking ramp in Downtown
- Fix and adjust lighting along West Broadway so it’s all the same brightness
- Continue youth activities
- Continue to provide and improve pedestrian and bikeway links in the Downtown
- Ensure convenient parking for future development in the Downtown.
- Minimize loitering in Downtown
- Install better lighting at 36th and France
- Study traffic movements in the Downtown
- Create flow chart for City process and approval
- Study Lakeside Business Center and its redevelopment potential

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An attractive and safe place to do business – The community will continue to emphasize an attractive and safe business environment. Public and private gathering places throughout business districts such as urban parks and outdoor seating will help support a stronger sense of community and safety. A presence of the community police force and appropriate lighting will bring a comfortable feeling. Architectural design guidelines and continued streetscape improvements will define an image for Downtown, with an emphasis on pedestrian amenities and connections.

A vibrant and prosperous downtown - The community and its businesses take pride in rare qualities that attract and make Downtown a great place to shop and do business. Public and private efforts should be made to continue to secure Downtown’s future as a focal point for the community and the region. Downtown is encouraged to become a mixed use, compact environment that includes retail and service, government, public activities, and housing.

A strong business community – The City must continue to, retain and support existing businesses while attracting quality new businesses that complement the existing businesses. This principle is key to a healthy and strong business environment. The City must continue to work with the development community and existing to redevelop areas of the Downtown. Communication amongst all stakeholders involved must be honest and complete.