

Lake Forest Road Assisted Living Traffic Review

Baxter, MN

BAXTE 188582 | December 18, 2025

Baxter City Council Acceptance Date:



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Lake Forest Road Assisted Living Traffic Review

Prepared for the City of Baxter.

1 Introduction

This traffic review report provides the findings related to the review of the proposed assisted living development along Lake Forest Road in the City of Baxter, MN. The proposed site is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road on the west side of Trunk Highway (TH) 371, directly adjacent to The Lofts at Novotny apartments.

The primary focus of this development traffic review is to determine the potential impact of the proposed development on the existing roadway network and consider the need for additional roadway connections in the developing area around Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road. The review will consider the proposed development trip generation, the proposed access locations, and roadway connection considerations.

The proposed development is a 76-unit assisted living facility with one access on Lake Forest Road to enter or exit the site. **Figure 1** shows the site plan for the proposed assisted living facility; the full preliminary site plan is provided in **Appendix A**. Construction of the assisted living facility will begin in Fall 2026, with a plan to open for business in Fall 2027.

This review will build on the findings and recommendations of three previously completed traffic impact studies and one ongoing traffic impact study along Novotny Road, completed in August 2022, April 2024, and November 2025. The August 2022 study analyzed the impacts of a 64-unit apartment building (The Lofts at Novotny) in the northwest corner of the intersection of Edgewood Drive and Novotny Road. The April 2024 study analyzed the impacts of a 20-fuel pump gas station with a 10,000 square foot (SF) convenience store (Kwik Trip) in the southwest corner of the intersection of Edgewood Drive and Novotny Road. The November 2025 study analyzed the impacts of a proposed 49,700 SF VA Clinic on the south side of Novotny Road directly west of the Kwik Trip site, across Novotny Road from the proposed assisted living facility. The Lofts at Novotny opened on April 1, 2024, and the Kwik Trip opened on October 30, 2025. The VA Clinic is expected to open in Fall 2027.

The three previous studies determined that The Lofts at Novotny, Kwik Trip, and VA Clinic will not have significant impacts on the surrounding roadways, and no roadway/intersection improvements are needed to accommodate the additional traffic created by the developments. As part of The Lofts at Novotny construction, Novotny Road was extended approximately 680 feet west of Edgewood Drive in 2023 as a 3-lane roadway with a two-way center left turn lane (TWLTL) and a shared use trail. As part of the VA Clinic project, Novotny Road will be extended to the Lake Forest Road intersection, a 650-foot portion of Lake Forest Road will be constructed south of Novotny Road, and a mini-roundabout will be constructed at the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road. Both the Novotny Road extension and Lake Forest Road will be

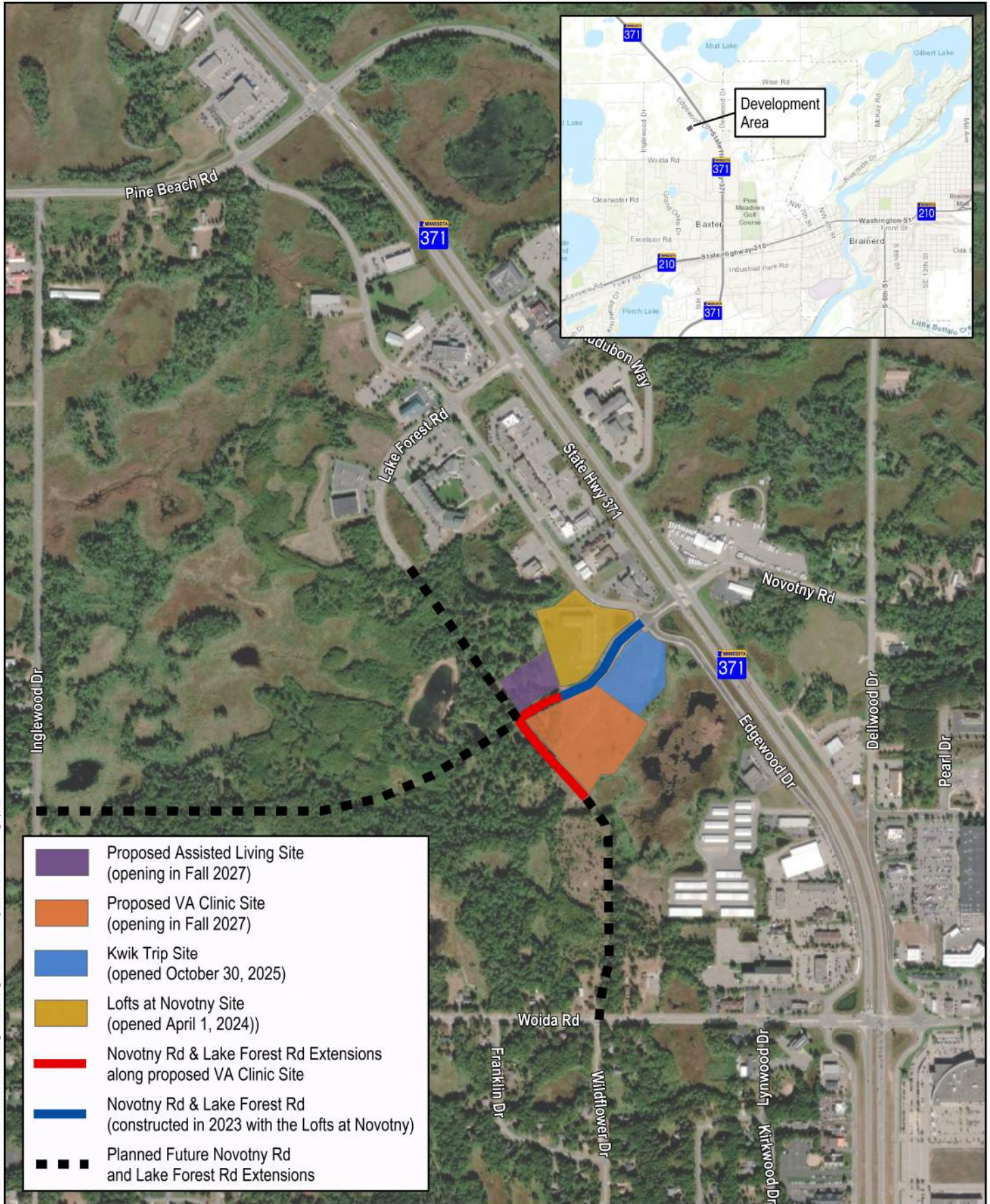
constructed as 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL and a shared use trail to match the existing section of Novotny Road.

Long-term, Novotny Road is planned to be further extended to the west to connect to Inglewood Drive. Lake Forest Road is planned to be extended south to connect to Woida Road and to the north to connect with an existing portion of Lake Forest Road. The Baxter VA Clinic Traffic Impact study, which was completed in November 2025, provided recommendations for when certain roadway connections should be completed to maintain adequate traffic flow in and out of the area as it develops. Those recommendations will be reviewed as part of this study to determine if any roadway connections should be completed with the Novotny Road Assisted Living development.

Figure 2 shows the project location, including The Lofts at Novotny, Kwik Trip gas station, proposed VA Clinic, and proposed assisted living sites as well as the planned Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road extensions.

Figure 1 – Proposed Assisted Living Site Plan





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Project: BAXTE 188582
Print Date: 11/24/2025

Map by: jdanibas
Projection: Crow Wing Co. Coords.
Source: ESRI

PROJECT LOCATION
Novotny Road Assisted Living Traffic Review
Baxter, MN

Figure
2

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey map and is not intended to be used as one. This map is a compilation of records, information, and data gathered from various sources listed on this map and is to be used for reference purposes only. SEH does not warrant that the Geographic Information System (GIS) Data used to prepare this map are error free, and SEH does not represent that the GIS Data can be used for navigational, tracking, or any other purpose requiring exacting measurement of distance or direction or precision in the depiction of geographic features. The user of this map acknowledges that SEH shall not be liable for any damages which arise out of the user's access or use of data provided.

2 Existing Conditions

The proposed development includes a proposed access driveway on Lake Forest Road; this portion of Lake Forest Road currently does not exist. Novotny Road will be extended as part of the Baxter VA Clinic project. The section of Lake Forest Road north of Novotny Road will need to be constructed as part of the assisted living development. Lake Forest Road should be extended to the northern side of the site as a 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL and a shared use trail to match the other roadways extension in the area. The trail should be located on the east side of the Lake Forest Road.

Novotny Road is currently an east-west local roadway which extends from approximately 680 feet west of Edgewood Drive to Dellwood Drive on the east side of TH 371. As was mentioned previously, Novotny Road is planned to be extended further west to Inglewood Drive as development in the area continues. Novotny Road is a two-lane roadway east of Edgewood Drive but was extended west of Edgewood Drive as a 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL in 2023 as part of the construction of The Lofts at Novotny. West of TH 371, Novotny Road primarily provides access between TH 371 and Edgewood Drive, but as the roadway extends further west it will provide access to commercial and residential development. At TH 371, Novotny Road is a $\frac{3}{4}$ access intersection with Novotny Road through movements and left turns onto TH 371 prohibited. The posted speed limit on Novotny Road is 30 mph.

The existing section of Lake Forest Road extends from TH 371 to approximately 1,250 feet west of Edgewood Drive, curving to be north-south. Long-term, Lake Forest Road will be extended to the south to connect to Novotny Road and Woida Road, providing access to commercial and residential development. The posted speed limit on Lake Forest Road is 30 mph.

2.1 Vehicle Volumes

No traffic data was collected as part of this review. However, based on trip generation estimates from the three previously completed traffic impact studies, Novotny Road is expected to serve approximately **5,760** trips per day west of Edgewood Drive with The Lofts at Novotny, Kwik Trip, and VA Clinic developments. Traffic volumes along Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road are expected to continue to grow as development continues in the area.

3 Proposed Development

The proposed assisted living facility will include 76-units and will be located on a 4-acre parcel on the northeast corner of the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Drive, located directly west of The Lofts at Novotny and across Novotny Road from the proposed Baxter VA Clinic. The site will have a single access, located on Lake Forest Road.

3.1 Trip Generation

The Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 12th edition, was used to estimate the total number of trips generated by the proposed assisted living development during the AM and PM peak hours as well as daily trips. ITE Land Use Code 254 – Assisted Living was used for the trip generation estimates. **Table 1** summarizes the AM peak hour, PM peak hour, and daily trip generation estimates for the proposed assisted living facility.

Table 1 – Assisted Living Trip Generation

Land Use	Size	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
			Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit	Total
Assisted Living	76 units	314	8	6	14	7	11	18

3.2 Trip Distribution

Trips for the proposed assisted living facility would be expected to have a similar distribution to those used in the previous Novotny Road traffic impact studies, which were based on existing counts and nearby traffic generators. The assumed trip distribution is:

- 50% to/from the south on TH 371
- 20% to/from the north on TH 371
- 5% to/from the west on Pine Beach Road
- 5% to/from the east on Wise Road
- 5% to/from the west on Woida Road
- 5% to/from the east on Woida Road

All traffic would enter and exit the site using the single access point on Lake Forest Road.

3.3 Assessment of Traffic Impact

Based on the estimated trips for the proposed assisted living facility, approximately 315 vehicles per day are expected to enter and exit the site, in addition, less than 20 total vehicles are expected to enter and exit the site during any hour of the day. The assumed trip distribution would spread trips to the existing roadways beyond Novotny Road, and the volumes are expected to be served at the surrounding intersections with little impact.

Therefore, no traffic operations analysis was performed as part of this development review.

4 Access Review

The City of Baxter's 2015 Comprehensive Plan provides access management guidelines for providing adequate access while maintaining traffic flow and safety along roadways. The access spacing guidelines depend on the type of roadway and type of access as well as other factors such as roadway speed, traffic volume, sight distance, etc.

The Lake Forest Road extension is classified as future local roadways in the City's Comprehensive Plan, which means that commercial driveway spacing should be at least 100 feet depending on speed, volume, and sight distance based on the City's access management guidelines. In addition, the access should be at least 260 feet from the proposed mini roundabout at the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road to provide adequate sight distance to see vehicles exiting the roundabout.

The assisted living site plan shows a single access point, located on Lake Forest Road, which is shown in **Figure 1**. The access is located approximately 225 feet north of Novotny Road, which meets the 100-foot spacing guideline from intersections and other access points but does not meet the 260-foot spacing from the mini-roundabout for sight distance. However, the driveway is located as far from the roundabout as possible given the building layout within the site and moving the driveway would require significant changes to the site layout. In addition, there are wetlands and a stormwater pond on the west side of Lake Forest Road across from the assisted living site, so no driveway will be added on the west side of roadway in this area in the future. Based on those considerations, the proposed driveway locations are acceptable.

5 Trail Connections

Along with extending Lake Forest Road, trails in the area should be connected with the assisted living development. As was mentioned previously, Lake Forest Road should be extended to the northern side of the site as a 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL and a shared use trail on the east side. In addition, a trail connection should be added on the south side of the site to connect to the planned trail on the north side of Novotny Road. The trails on the east side of Lake Forest Road and north side of Novotny Road will then connect to trail crossings and trail connections on all four quadrants of the mini roundabout at the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road.

6 Roadway Connection Review

The 2025 Baxter VA Clinic Traffic Impact Study provided a recommended timeline for future Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road extensions as development in the area continues to provide acceptable traffic flow and circulation in the area. The Novotny Road extension to Inglewood Drive and the Lake Forest Road extension to Woida Road will both provide additional route choice for vehicles entering and exiting the area and reduce reliance on Edgewood Drive, which is a frontage Road to TH 371 with many intersections that are spaced closely to TH 371.

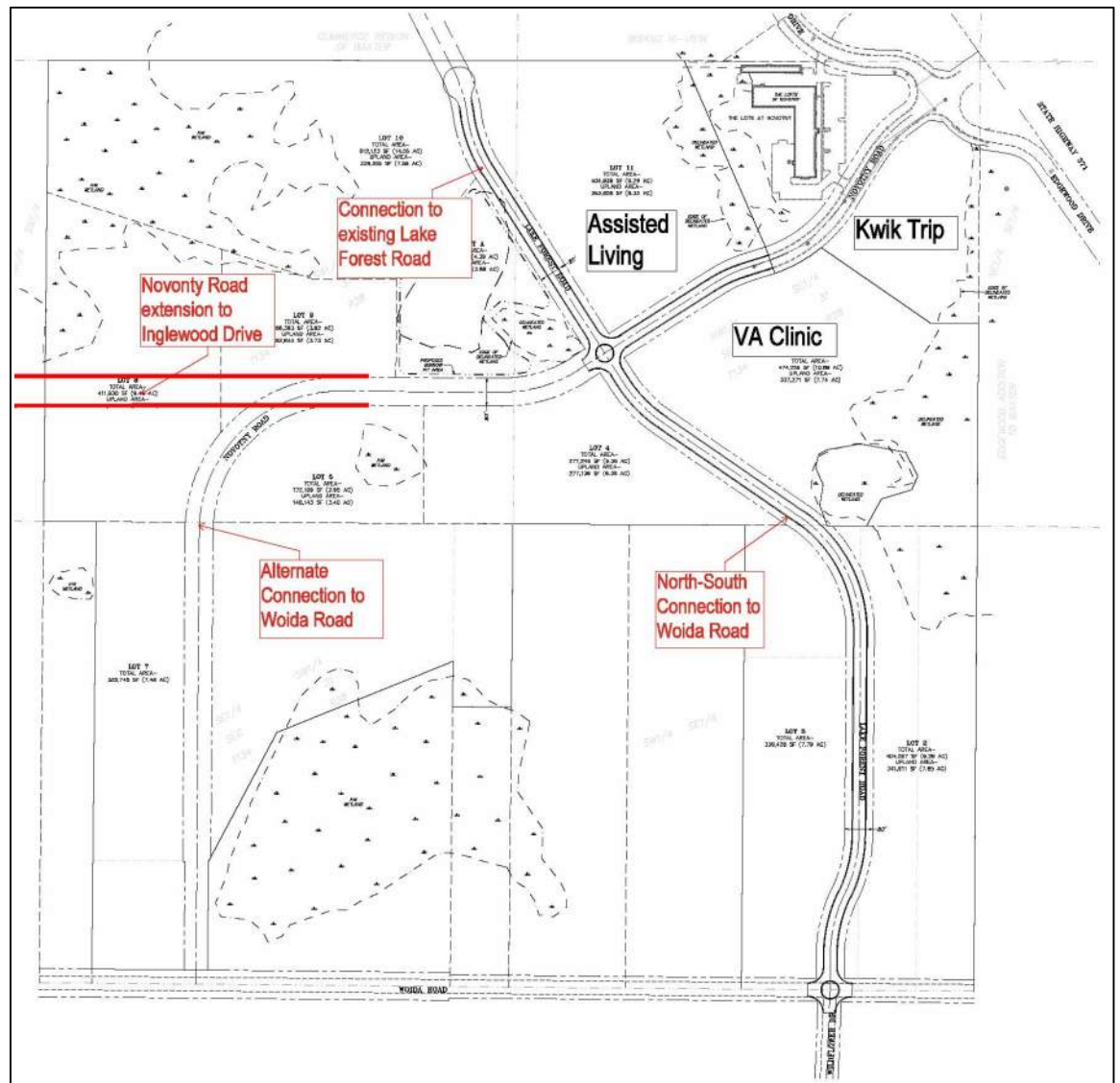
Figure 3 shows the long-term roadway connection plans for the development area on the west side of TH 371 between Woida Road and Lake Forest Road.

Based on the recommendations from the 2025 Baxter VA Clinic Traffic Impact Study, roadways should continue to be extended along the frontage of each developed parcel at a minimum to continue to expand the roadway network, which means extending Lake Forest Road approximately 290 feet north of Novotny Road.

The 2025 study also recommended requiring the north-south connection to Woida Road when development continues north of Novotny Road or west of Lake Forest Road on Novotny Road, regardless of whether it is needed to provide acceptable traffic operations. Despite low traffic demands expected to be generated by the assisted living facility, the combination of the four recently completed and proposed development are expected to generate over 6,000 trips per day, therefore, it is important to provide a second access for the development area so that all traffic does not need to rely on Novotny Road and Edgewood Drive. This second access to the area will provide a significant safety benefit to the area by providing a second access point for emergency vehicles, improving response times and providing a secondary route should one of the accesses be blocked in an emergency.

The extensions of Lake Forest Road north and south of Novotny Road should be constructed as 3-lane roadways with a center left turn lane and a shared use trail on the east side, to match the Novotny Road extension.

Figure 3 – Long-Term Roadway Connection Plan



The connection to the existing Lake Forest Road is not required as part of the assisted living project. The 2025 Baxter VA Clinic Traffic Impact Study recommended that the connection to the existing portion of Lake Forest Road be constructed when development continues further north beyond Novotny Road, where access to Lake Forest Road will be required. Therefore, when the next development north of the assisted living site is constructed, that connection should be completed.

The extension of Novotny Road to Inglewood Drive will be dependent on the timeline and land use for development west of Lake Forest Road and will be determined by future traffic studies for this development area.

7 Conclusion

The proposed 76-unit assisted living facility is located on the north side of Novotny Road, between Edgewood Drive and Lake Forest Road on the west side of Trunk Highway (TH) 371, directly adjacent to The Lofts at Novotny apartments. The site is expected to generate approximately 314 trips per day, with less than 20 trips during any hour of the day. Due to the low traffic demands expected to be generated by the site, the assisted living facility is not expected to significantly impact traffic operations in the area.

The site will have a single access location on Lake Forest Road so all traffic will enter and exit the site on Lake Forest Road. The proposed driveway location meets the 100-foot spacing guideline from intersections and other access points but does not meet the 260-foot spacing from the mini-roundabout for sight distance. However, the driveway is located as far from the roundabout as possible given the building layout within the site and moving the driveway would require significant changes to the site layout. In addition, there are wetlands and a stormwater pond on the west side of Lake Forest Road across from the assisted living site, so no driveway will be added on the west side of roadway in this area in the future. Based on those considerations, the proposed driveway locations are acceptable.

The 2025 Baxter VA Clinic Traffic Impact Study recommended extending each roadway in the area along the frontage of each developed parcel and that the north-south connection to Woida Road should be required when development continues north of Novotny Road or west of Lake Forest Road on Novotny Road, regardless of whether it is needed to provide acceptable traffic operations. As a result, Lake Forest Road should be extended approximately 290-feet north of Novotny Road and should be extended south to connect to Woida Road. Completion of that north-south connection would reduce reliance on Edgewood Road, relieve pressure on the intersection of Edgewood Drive and Woida Road, and provide additional route choice for vehicles entering and exiting the area. The additional access will provide a significant safety benefit to the area by providing a second access point for emergency vehicles, improving response times and providing a secondary route should one of the accesses be blocked in an emergency.

The extensions of Lake Forest Road north and south of Novotny Road should be constructed as 3-lane roadways with a center left turn lane and a shared use trail, to match the Novotny Road extension.

The connection to the existing Lake Forest Road is not required as part of the assisted living project but should be completed when development continues along Novotny Road north of the assisted living site. The extension of Novotny Road to Inglewood Drive will be dependent on the

timeline and land use for development west of Lake Forest Road and will be determined by future traffic studies for this development area.

7.1 Recommendation

Based on the high-level traffic review of the proposed assisted living facility along Novotny Road, the development is not expected to significantly impact the surrounding roadway network.

While the proposed access location does not meet the 260-foot spacing from the mini-roundabout at the intersection of Novotny Road and Lake Forest Road, the location is acceptable because it is located as far from the mini-roundabout without needing significant changes to the building layout on the site, the driveway is at least 100 feet from adjacent roadway accesses, and there are wetlands and a storm pond across Lake Forest Road that would prevent a future development access on the west side of the roadway.

Lake Forest Road needs to be extended approximately 290 feet north of Novotny Road as part of the assisted living development. Lake Forest Road should be constructed as a 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL and a shared use trail to match the existing Novotny Road cross-section. The shared use trail should be on the east side of Lake Forest Road. In addition, a trail connection should be added on the south side of the site to connect to the planned trail on the north side of Novotny Road.

Prior to completion of the assisted living facility, Lake Forest Road is required to be extended south to connect Novotny Road to Woida Road. Despite low traffic demands expected to be generated by the assisted living facility, the combination of the four recently completed and proposed development are expected to generate over 6,000 trips per day, therefore, it is important to provide a second access for the development area so that all traffic does not need to rely on Novotny Road and Edgewood Drive. The additional access will provide a significant safety benefit to the area by providing a second access point for emergency vehicles, improving response times and providing a secondary route should one of the accesses be blocked in an emergency. This section of Lake Forest Road should be constructed as a 3-lane roadway with a TWLTL and a shared use trail to match the existing Novotny Road cross-section.

Appendix A

Assisted Living Site Plan

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Sustainable buildings, sound infrastructure, safe transportation systems, clean water, renewable energy, and a balanced environment. Building a Better World for All of Us communicates a company-wide commitment to act in the best interests of our clients and the world around us.

We're confident in our ability to balance these requirements.

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