

**[FINAL VERSION FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL AND EXECUTION]**

STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

**JOINT RESOLUTION FOR  
ORDERLY ANNEXATION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION  
OF THE CITY OF NORTHFIELD AND NORTHFIELD  
TOWNSHIP DESIGNATING CERTAIN AREAS  
IN NEED OF ORDERLY ANNEXATION  
PURSUANT TO MINNESOTA STATUTES § 414.0325

NORTHFIELD CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2025-033  
NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION 2025-0312

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield (hereinafter the “City”) and the Township of Northfield (hereinafter the “Township”) deem it necessary and appropriate that they work together to develop and implement a process for the orderly and controlled growth of the City and Township; and

WHEREAS, the City and Township agree that municipal government most efficiently provides governmental services in areas which are developed for residential, commercial, industrial, and governmental purposes, and that Township government most efficiently provides governmental services in areas used or developed for agricultural, open space and rural residential purposes; and

WHEREAS, the City and Township agree that orderly urban development using municipal services in a responsible, controlled and environmentally sound manner is in the best interests of the entire community; and

WHEREAS, the City and Township agree that orderly annexation of the areas designated herein is one way to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the entire community by providing for the logical development of the community and the extension of municipal services as urban development occurs; and

WHEREAS, the City and Township have agreed to work cooperatively to accomplish the orderly annexation of the areas designated herein as legally described in Exhibits 1-2; and

WHEREAS, for ease of reference, the areas designated for orderly annexation herein and legally described in Exhibits 1-2 are shown on the map attached hereto as Exhibit 3 and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, the City and Township agree that orderly annexation of the areas designated for orderly annexation herein is in the best interest of the property owners and would benefit the public health, safety, and welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, for the areas designated herein, the City and Township desire to accomplish the orderly annexation of said areas in a mutually acceptable and beneficial manner pursuant to the terms and conditions herein without the need for a hearing before the Office of Administrative Hearings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Northfield and the Town Board of Supervisors of Northfield Township, as follows:

1. Designation of Orderly Annexation Areas. The City and the Township hereby designate the following two areas as currently, or which may become at some point in the future, in need of orderly annexation pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 414.0325:

a. “Orderly Annexation Area I”. “Orderly Annexation Area I”, hereinafter referred to as “Area I”, is legally defined in Exhibit 1 attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. For ease of reference, Area I is shown on the map attached hereto as Exhibit 3. The City and the Township agree that properties within Area I face development pressures for urban, non-farm development or may face such pressure during the term of this Joint Resolution, and that a mutually beneficial process for the orderly annexation of such properties by the City and provision of municipal services to such properties by the City in accordance with the desires of property owners within Area I during the term of this Joint Resolution is in the best interest of said property owners and the broader community.

b. “Orderly Annexation Area II”. “Orderly Annexation Area II”, hereinafter referred to as “Area II”, is legally defined in Exhibit 2 attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. For ease of reference, Area II is shown on the map attached hereto as Exhibit 3. The City and the Township agree that lands within Area II face much less immediate development pressures for urban, non-farm development than properties within Area I, and that the preservation of the rural and agricultural character and farming uses of such properties within Area II, until such time as they are likely to develop with urban or suburban development beyond the term of this Joint Resolution is mutually beneficial to the City and the Township and is in the best interest of the property owners within Area II and the broader community. No portion of Area II may be annexed by the City so long as this Agreement remains in effect except as provided in Section 4 below.

2. Definitions. For purposes of this Joint Resolution, the terms defined in this section have the meanings given them:

a. “Effective Date” means the latest date of approval of this Joint Resolution by either the Northfield City Council or the Northfield Town Board of Supervisors.

b. “MDH” means the Minnesota Department of Health.

c. “MPCA” means the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

d. “OAA” collectively refers to Areas I and II as defined in Section 1 above.

3. Terms and Conditions Specific to Area I. In addition to the other terms of this Joint Resolution that are not specific to Area II, the following terms and conditions apply to Area I:

a. Acreage of Area I. The Township and City agree that the above-mentioned Area I legally described on Exhibit 1 and designated as currently, or which may become in the future, in need of orderly annexation herein is approximately 1,286 acres.

b. Conditions and Triggering Events for Annexations. Any land within Area I (see Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 3) may be annexed by the City, in accordance with Section 3.c below, under any of the following circumstances:

i. The City receives a petition for annexation from 100% of the property owners of an individual parcel of land within Area I;

ii. The property is owned by the City, or the state or federal governments;

iii. The area is completely surrounded by the City;

iv. The City or property owner(s) is ordered by the MPCA or the MDH to provide sewer or water service to a portion of the Township for the protection of the public health and safety and/or because of immediate environmental concerns, or;

v. The property satisfies the requirements for annexation by ordinance set forth in Minnesota Statutes, Section 414.033, as the same may be amended, renumbered or replaced by any successor statute; or

vi. The City and Township otherwise jointly agree in writing.

c. No Hearing Required. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 414.0325, the Township and City agree upon the occurrence of an event triggering annexation as provided in Section 3.b above for any land located within Area I, the City shall provide written notice of such occurrence to the Township, and upon receipt of a resolution of the City (referred to as the “Annexation Resolution”) describing such area along with a copy of this Joint Resolution, the Office of Administrative Hearings or its successor agency, may review and comment thereon, but shall, within 30 days of receipt of the Annexation Resolution and a copy of this Joint Resolution, order the annexation of the area designated in the Annexation Resolution in accordance with the terms

and conditions of this Joint Resolution. The City shall include in its Annexation Resolution the City's estimates of the population and number of households of the area to be annexed. The Township and City agree that no alteration of the stated boundaries as described in the Annexation Resolution is appropriate, that no consideration by the Office of Administrative Hearings, or its successor agency, is necessary, and that all terms and conditions for annexation of properties within Area I as legally described on Exhibit 2 hereto are provided for in this Joint Resolution. Provided that the requisite terms and conditions have been met as contained in this Joint Resolution, the Township shall not object to an annexation initiated by the City filing an Annexation Resolution with the Office of Administrative Hearings, or its successor agency. As of the effective date of this Joint Resolution, there is no election requirement in the law to effect or accomplish an annexation. No such election shall be required or apply to any annexation provided herein either now or during any period during which this Joint Resolution is in effect.

4. Terms and Conditions Specific to Area II. In addition to the other terms of this Joint Resolution that are not specific to Area I, the following terms and conditions apply to Area II:

- a. Acreage of Area II. The Township and City agree that the above-mentioned Area II legally described on Exhibit 2 and designated as that which may become in the future in need of orderly annexation herein is approximately 858 acres.
- b. Non-Annexation of Area II. So long as this Agreement remains in effect, no portion of Area II may be annexed by the City unless the MPCA or the MDH orders the City or the property owner(s) to provide sewer or water service to a portion of Area II within 12 months for the protection of the public health and safety and/or because of immediate environmental concerns, unless otherwise agreed by the City and Township in writing. Any such annexations triggered by an order of MPCA or MDH that occur pursuant to this Section 4.b shall be completed pursuant to the procedure provided in Section 3.c above, and the provisions of that Section are fully incorporated herein by reference.

5. Terms and Conditions Specific to Areas I and II.

- a. Land Use and Subdivision Controls. The City and Township agree that Rice County's land use and subdivision regulations that exist on the effective date of this Agreement are sufficiently protective of the rural and agricultural character and farming uses of such properties within Areas I and II prior to such time as they are likely to develop with urban or suburban development beyond the term of this Joint Resolution. The City and Township further agree that Rice County shall continue to administer its land use and subdivision controls within Areas I and II during the term of this Joint Resolution; provided, however, that the City shall have the right to initiate renegotiation of this Section 5 and/or terminate this Agreement as provided in subparagraph b below.

- b. City Right to Initiate Renegotiation. The City shall have the right, pursuant to the procedure defined in subparagraph c below, to initiate renegotiation of the provisions of this Section 5 upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- i.Rice County amends its land use or subdivision regulations applicable to its Urban Reserve or Agricultural zoning districts in a manner that allows residential development to occur on lots less than 35 acres in size, or non-residential development to occur on lots less than 2.5 acres in size in Area I or Area II;
- ii.Rice County amends its land use regulations in a manner that broadens, expands or allows for the intensification of the permitted, conditional or otherwise allowed uses in its Urban Reserve or Agricultural zoning districts that exist as of the effective date of this Joint Resolution;
- iii.Rice County approves an amendment to its official zoning map that has the effect rezoning property located in Areas I or II and the County's Urban Reserve zoning district to be included in any other zoning district; or
- iv.Rice County approves an amendment to its official zoning map that has the effect rezoning property located in Areas I or II and the County's Agricultural zoning district to be included in any other zoning district that is not the Urban Reserve district.

[For reference, see Rice County Comprehensive Plan and Rice County Zoning Ordinances Chapter 508 Zoning Districts, Zoning Map and Uses, Chapter 509 "A" Agricultural District and Chapter 510 "UR" Urban Reserve District, Chapter 523 Subdivision Regulations, and Official Zoning Map in effect as of the Effective Date, attached hereto as Exhibit 4.]

c. Procedure to Initiate Renegotiation. Upon the occurrence of any of the events listed in subparagraph b above, the City may, at any time within one year after the date on which the action is passed or approved by Rice County, initiate renegotiation of this Section 5 by providing written notice of such initiation to the Township. Thereafter, representatives of the City and Township shall meet with all reasonable diligence and frequency and in good faith to negotiate alternative procedures to ensure the protection of the rural and agricultural character and farming uses of properties within Areas I and II prior to such time as they are likely to develop with urban, non-farm development beyond the term of this Joint Resolution. In the event such negotiations do not result in agreement on amendments to this Section 5 that are satisfactory to the City within 60 days after the date on which the City's written notice is received, the City shall have the right to immediately terminate this Joint Resolution by passing a resolution of its City Council and providing a copy of such resolution to the Township and filing such resolution with the Office of Administrative Hearings or its successor agency.

d. Provision of Services. After annexation of land located within Areas I or II, the City shall be responsible for providing municipal governmental services to the annexed area. Sanitary sewer or water services, in the City's discretion, shall be provided to an area annexed with existing or proposed residential development within two (2) years after the effective date of the annexation. Sewer or water services, in the City's discretion, shall be provided to an area annexed with existing or proposed commercial, industrial, governmental or institutional development within three (3) years after the effective date of annexation. In the event that the City extends trunk sewer and/or water lines across a portion of the OAA remaining in the Township in order to serve an area annexed by the City, the individual properties remaining in

the Township that abut the City trunk sewer and/or water line extended shall not be charged any trunk sewer or water line charges, fees or assessments by the City for the trunk sewer and/or water line abutting said properties until said properties are annexed by the City and are platted and developed.

For purposes of this Section, the City will be deemed to have met the obligation to provide sanitary sewer or water service to an annexed area if within the timeframes specified herein following an annexation of an area, the City awards a contract to a contractor to construct a sewer or water service project making municipal sanitary sewer or water service available to an area annexed under the terms of this Joint Resolution.

Every Annexation Resolution adopted under Paragraphs 3.c and 4.b above of this Joint Resolution resulting in the annexation of land located within Areas I or II shall be treated separately for purposes of compliance with this Section 5.d.

In the event that the City annexes land in accordance with a triggering event contained in this Joint Resolution and said land is identified in the City's comprehensive plan for open space or park preservation, the requirements contained in this Section 5.d do not apply to said annexation because the intent is that said areas would remain as open space or park land and would not need City sewer or water service.

e. Annual Acreage Limitation. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Agreement, the City shall not annex more than a total of one hundred (100) acres in any calendar year during the term of this Agreement, unless the City and Township agree otherwise in writing, except that annexations of City-owned land, or annexations pursuant to an order by the MPCA or the MDH to provide sewer or water service to a portion of the Township shall not count toward the 100 acre limit. Further, the City shall not annex more than a total of three hundred (300) acres within any single five-(calendar) year rolling period while this Agreement is in effect, except that annexations of City-owned land, or annexations pursuant to an order by the MPCA or the MDH to provide sewer or water service to a portion of the Township shall not count toward the 300 acre limit.

f. Solar Field Development. In Area I and Area II, if a landowner develops a commercial solar field on his or her property, said property may not be annexed but shall stay in the Township for at least the term of this Agreement, provided that the Township shall consult with and coordinate with the City in good faith regarding the siting of any such solar development to avoid conflicts with planned development, including but not limited to road extensions and housing developments.

g. Township Maintenance of Services. Except for Hall Avenue, the Township agrees that it will be responsible for normal and regular maintenance of all Township roads, streets, bridges, drainage facilities and other public rights-of-way that it is currently maintaining within the designated OAA prior to annexation thereof. Maintenance of Township infrastructure within the designated OAA by the Township shall be consistent with other standard maintenance practices employed by the Township elsewhere in the Township. For Hall Avenue, see section (7.) below.

h. Electric Utility Service Notice. For each annexation that occurs under this Agreement, the electric utility service notice as required by Minnesota Statutes Section 414.0325, Subd. 1a, will be satisfied.

i. Special assessments or fees. The City agrees not to levy any special assessments upon real property so long as it remains in the Township or impose development fees on owners of such real property remaining in the Township, unless agreed to in writing by the Township. Nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the City's authority to impose or collect special assessments for public improvements benefitting any such real property following its annexation into the City, whether such public improvements were constructed before or after the annexation of the property; nor shall anything herein be construed as limiting the City's authority to charge and collect development fees as authorized by law upon any such property following its annexation into the City.

6. Tax Reimbursement. To compensate the Township for the permanent loss of taxable property from Township tax rolls, the City and Township agree that upon any annexation of the property in Area I, as described in Exhibit A, the City will pay the township a total of one-time lump sum payment in an amount equal to \$750 per acre annexed at the time of such annexation. If any portion of Area II shall be annexed pursuant to Section 4 hereof, the City shall pay to the Township \$750 per acre annexed at the time of such annexation.

7. Hall Avenue Road Maintenance. Following the Effective Date of this Joint Resolution, the City shall assume the following road maintenance responsibilities regarding Hall Avenue as described below, south from Superior Drive to County Road 81 and north from Superior Drive to Highway 19. Note that within this section, Superior Drive is defined as the location at which pavement begins, at the point near to where Hall Avenue and Superior Drive intersect.

Hall Ave south from Superior Drive to County Road 81.

In recognition of the urban traffic that Hall Avenue now bears and will bear prior to its annexation or acquisition by the City and the assumption of full maintenance responsibilities by the City, the City desires to financially assist the Township to defray the cost of maintenance for the non-paved portions of Hall Avenue between Superior Drive and Rice County #81. The Township will be responsible for completing road maintenance, including but not limited to rock and dust control, and will invoice the City for 50% of the expense for said maintenance. The Township shall determine the appropriate quantities and provide proof of costs in the actual amount. The Township shall provide a budget estimate to the City on or before April 1st of each year for that year.

The Township shall maintain the bridges and culverts located in the roadway of Hall Avenue from Superior Drive to County Highway #81 until such time it is determined by the appropriate authority and verified by the Northfield City Engineer that a bridge or culvert is in need of replacement. If the replacement of a bridge or culvert is necessary, the City of Northfield shall be responsible for the cost of installing said bridge or culvert. The purpose of this section is to

recognize that the Northfield Town Board will continue to maintain and improve this section of roadway, however, at the time a significant investment is necessary in a bridge or culvert structure, the City can utilize this opportunity to install a structure that will meet the intended use of the roadway in the City's transportation system.

Hall Ave (including Spring Creek Road) north from Superior Drive to Highway 19.

The City is responsible for all costs and maintenance and upkeep of Hall Avenue/ Spring Creek Road from Superior Drive to Highway 19. The City may contract with the Township for grading and plowing services on the section of unpaved road.

Sections of Spring Creek Road/Hall Avenue from Hwy. 19 to Co Road 81/110st Street that currently exist as a 10-ton road shall remain so and be maintained as a 10-ton road for the benefit of farm implement traffic. Any full reconstructions of those sections of 10-ton roadway shall be constructed to a 10-ton standard. Any revisions to the road, including bike and pedestrian traffic and installation of a round-a-bout shall be made to safely accommodate farm implement traffic.

8. The City and Township to Adopt and Enforce Regulations. The City and Township agree to enact, adopt, and strictly enforce all such resolutions, ordinances, or regulations, as may be or shall be necessary to give full effect to the stipulations contained in this Joint Resolution.

9. Binding Agreement; No Annexation Outside the OAA. This Resolution is a binding contract, enforceable under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 414.0325, subdivision 6, as the same may be amended from time to time, as well as other applicable authorities. The parties agree that the City will not initiate any annexations outside the OAA while this agreement is in effect. Notwithstanding the forgoing, the City may initiate an annexation under Chapter 414 if the City is ordered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency or the Department of Health to provide sewer or water service to a portion of the Township for the protection of the public health and safety and/or because of environmental concerns. Further, the City will not file any petitions for a contested case annexation within the OAA or the remainder of the Township outside the OAA during the term of this Joint Resolution, provided that the Township does not seek to incorporate during the term of this Joint Resolution.

10. Line Roads. For any Township roads that become the boundary line for the City and Township as a result of an annexation, the City shall assume responsibility for all costs and road maintenance and improvement once the City has paved said roads. As long as the road or a portion thereof remains unpaved, the township will be responsible for completing road maintenance, including but not limited to rock and dust control, and will invoice the City for 100% of the expense for said maintenance and improvement and dust control. The Township shall determine the appropriate quantities and provide proof of costs in the actual amount. The Township shall provide a budget estimate to the City on or before April 1st of each year for that year.

Spring Creek Road/Hall Avenue from Hwy. 19 to Co Road 81/110st Street shall remain and be maintained as a 10-ton road for the benefit of farm implement traffic. Any revisions to the road, including bike and pedestrian traffic and installation of a round-a-bout shall be made to safely accommodate farm implement traffic.

11. Term and Termination. This Joint Resolution shall be in full force and effect for a term beginning on the Effective Date and terminating on December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2041. The purpose of this time frame is to remain consistent with the 20-year agreement which commenced January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. Nothing herein shall preclude earlier termination by the City pursuant to Paragraph 5.c above, by mutual written joint resolution of the City and Township, or should the remaining unincorporated areas of the Township merge with the City.

12. Legal Description and Mapping. The Township and City agree that in the event there are errors, omissions or any other problems with the legal descriptions provided in Exhibits 1-2 or mapping provided in Exhibit 3, in the judgment of the Office of Administrative Hearings, the City and Township agree to make such corrections and file any additional documentation, including a new exhibit(s) making the corrections requested or required by the Office of Administrative Hearings as necessary to make effective the annexation of said areas in accordance with the terms of this Joint Resolution.

13. Attorney Fees and Meeting Costs. The City shall reimburse the Township in an amount equal to 50 percent of the attorney fees and meeting costs actually incurred by the Township in connection with the negotiation and development of this Agreement such amount to be reimbursed not to exceed \$6,500 under any circumstances, within 30 days after the date on which the latest signature of the parties is affixed to this Agreement, provided that the Township first provide to the City documentation of such attorney fees and meeting costs incurred sufficient to allow the parties to calculate the amount of the required reimbursement payment.

14. Governing Law. The Township and City agree that this Joint Resolution is made pursuant to and shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota.

15. Entire Agreement. The terms, covenants, conditions and provisions of this Joint Resolution shall constitute the entire agreement between the parties hereto superseding all prior agreements and negotiations. This Joint Resolution shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the respective successors and assigns of the Township and City.

16. Headings and Captions. The Township and City agree that the headings and captions contained in this Joint Resolution are for convenience only and are not intended to alter any of the provisions of this Joint Resolution.

17. Severability. In the event that any provision of this Joint Resolution is determined and adjudged to be unconstitutional, invalid, illegal or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions of this Joint Resolution shall remain in full force and effect, and the parties hereto shall negotiate in good faith and agree to such amendments or modifications of or to this Joint Resolution or other appropriate actions as shall, to the maximum

extent practicable in light of such determination, implement and give effect to the intentions of the parties hereto.

18. Disputes and Remedies. The City and Township agree as follows:

- a. Negotiation. When a disagreement over interpretation of any provision of this Joint Resolution shall arise, the respective City and the Township will direct staff members as they deem appropriate to meet at least one time at a mutually convenient time and place to attempt to resolve the dispute through negotiation.
- b. Arbitration. When the parties to this Joint Resolution are unable to resolve disputes, claims or counterclaims, or are unable to negotiate an interpretation of any provision of this Joint Resolution, the parties may mutually agree in writing to seek relief by submitting their respective grievances to binding arbitration.
- c. Adjudication. When the parties to this Joint Resolution are unable to resolve disputes, claims or counterclaims, are unable to negotiate an interpretation of any provision of this Joint Resolution or are unable to agree to submit their respective grievances to binding arbitration, either party may seek relief through initiation of an action in a court of competent jurisdiction. In addition to the remedies provided for in this Joint Resolution and any other available remedies at law or equity, in the case of a violation, default or breach of any provision of this Joint Resolution, the non-violating, non-defaulting, or non-breaching party may bring an action for specific performance to compel the performance of this Joint Resolution in accordance with its terms.

19. Notice. Any notices required under the provisions of this Joint Resolution shall be in writing and sufficiently given if delivered in person or sent by U.S. mail, postage prepaid, as follows:

If to the City:

Ben Martig (or successor)  
City Administrator  
Northfield City Offices  
801 Washington St  
Northfield, MN 55057

If to the Township:

Tom Tanghe (or successor)  
Township Clerk  
Northfield Town Hall  
10865 Ibson Avenue  
Northfield, MN 55057

20. Effective Date. This Joint Resolution shall be effective on the date that the last party hereto signs and dates said document.

21. Filing. The Township and City agree that upon adoption and execution of this Joint Resolution, the City shall file the same with the Office of Administrative Hearings Municipal Boundary Adjustments Office and pay the required filing fee.

*[Signature page to follow]*

Passed, adopted, and approved by the Town Board of Supervisors of Northfield Township, Rice County, Minnesota, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2025.

PENDING VERIFICATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

By: Brian Peterson  
Brian Peterson, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Tom Tanghe  
Tom Tanghe, Township Clerk

Passed, adopted, and approved by the City Council of the City of Northfield, Rice and Dakota Counties, Minnesota, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2025.

CITY OF NORTHFIELD

By: Erica Zweifel  
Erica Zweifel, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: Lynette Peterson  
Lynette Peterson, City Clerk

**[FINAL VERSION FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL AND EXECUTION]**

**EXHIBIT 1**  
**Legal Description of Orderly Annexation Area I**

Orderly Annexation Area I in the attached Joint Resolution is legally described as follows:

**(Section 5, Township 111, Range 19)**

That part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying southerly of the southeasterly line of Outlot B and northeasterly of the northeasterly line of Outlot A, all in ROSEWOOD 1<sup>ST</sup> ADDITION, according to the recorded plat thereof, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying northeasterly of the northeasterly line of Outlot B, ROSEWOOD 1<sup>ST</sup> ADDITION, according to the recorded plat thereof, Rice County, Minnesota, and lying easterly of a line drawn perpendicular to the north line of said Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter from the northeast corner of said Outlot B.

AND

The west 1048.60 feet of the West Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, EXCEPT that part lying within ROSEWOOD 1<sup>ST</sup> ADDITION, according to the recorded plat thereof, all in Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the West 5/8 of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying northerly of the centerline of County State Aid Highway No. 28, EXCEPT that part thereof described as follows:

Part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Southeast Quarter; thence northerly, along the west line of said Southeast Quarter (for purposes of this description bearings are assumed and based on said west line being North 0.00'00"), a distance of 695.13 feet; thence North 90.00'00" East, 713.95 feet to a point in the center line of County State Aid Highway 28; thence South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 356.32 feet to the point of beginning of the parcel to be herein described; thence continue South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 324.30 feet; thence North 6.08'33" East, 601.00 feet; thence North 83.51'27" West, 287.00 feet; thence South 6.08'33" West, 450.00 feet to said point of beginning.

AND

That part of the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying southerly of the centerline of County State Aid Highway No. 28, and lying westerly of the southerly extension of the westerly line of a parcel of land described as follows:

Part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Southeast Quarter; thence northerly, along the west line of said Southeast Quarter (for purposes of this description bearings are assumed and based on said west line being North 0.00'00"), a distance of 695.13 feet; thence North 90.00'00" East, 713.95 feet to a point in the center line of County State Aid Highway 28; thence South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 356.32 feet to the point of beginning of the parcel to be herein described; thence continue South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 324.30 feet; thence North 6.08'33" East, 601.00 feet; thence North 83.51'27" West, 287.00 feet; thence South 6.08'33" West, 450.00 feet to said point of beginning.

AND

The South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, EXCEPT that part lying northwesterly of the centerline of the creek running through the northwesterly corner of said South Half of the Southwest Quarter.

AND

The Northeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, EXCEPT those parts lying within ROSEWOOD 1<sup>ST</sup> ADDITION and SPRING CREEK SECOND ADDITION, according to the recorded plats thereof, all in Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the South Half of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying southerly of the southerly right-of-way line of County State Aid Highway No. 28, and lying southeasterly of the centerline of the creek running through the westerly portion of said South Half of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter.

**(Section 7, Township 111, Range 19)**

The west 75.00 feet of the North Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 7, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, lying south of the westerly extension of the north line of Outlot A, BLUFF VIEW, according to the recorded plat thereof, all in Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 7, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The Southeast Quarter of Section 7, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, EXCEP that part lying within FARGAZE MEADOWS, according to the recorded plat thereof, all in Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The North 390 feet of the East 225 feet of the Northeast Quarter of Section 7, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5th Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**(Section 8, Township 111, Range 19)**

The Southwest Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The Northwest Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM the following described parcels of land:

That part of the south 100 acres of the Northwest Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5th Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota described as follows:

Commencing at the northwest corner of said Northwest Quarter; thence on an assumed bearing of South 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds West along the west line of said Northwest Quarter, a distance of 1178.54 feet; thence South 89 degrees 54 minutes 50 seconds East, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 326.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds West, parallel with said west line, a distance of 163.23 feet to the point of beginning of the parcel of land to be described; thence continuing South 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds West, parallel with said west line, a distance of 135.15 feet; thence South 89 degrees 54 minutes 50 seconds East, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 134.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds West, parallel with said west line, a distance of 443.95 feet; thence North 89 degrees 54 minutes 50 seconds West, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 460.00 feet to said west line; thence South 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds West along said west line, a distance of 50.00 feet; thence South 89 degrees 54 minutes 50 seconds East, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 1275.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 05 minutes 10 seconds East, parallel with said west line, a distance of

629.10 feet; thence North 89 degrees 54 minutes 50 seconds West, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 949.00 feet to the point of beginning.

AND

That part of the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 8, Township 111, Range 19, Rice County, Minnesota described as follows: Commencing at the northwest corner of said NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ; thence S00.05'10"W, along the west line of said NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , a distance of 1476.92 feet to the point of beginning of the land to be described; thence S89.54'50"E, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 460.00 feet; thence S00.05'10"W, parallel to said west line, a distance of 443.95 feet; thence N89.54'50"W, perpendicular to said west line, a distance of 460.00 feet to the west line of said NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ; thence N00.05'10"E, along the west line of said NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , a distance of 443.95 feet to the point of beginning.

AND

The west 1070.00 feet of the Southeast Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The west 1070.00 feet of the Northeast Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**(Section 31, Township 112, Range 19)**

The Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 31, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**(Section 32, Township 112, Range 19)**

The west 1035 feet of the West Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The west 1035 feet of the West Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The Northwest Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The North Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The east 9 1/2 acres of the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**[FINAL VERSION FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL AND EXECUTION]**

**EXHIBIT 2**  
**Legal Description of Orderly Annexation Area II**

Orderly Annexation Area II in the attached Joint Resolution is legally described as follows:

**(Section 5, Township 111, Range 19)**

The East 3/8 of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the West Half of the Northeast Quarter lying east of the west 1048.60 feet thereof, of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The East Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Southeast Quarter; thence northerly, along the west line of said Southeast Quarter (for purposes of this description bearings are assumed and based on said west line being North 0.00'00"), a distance of 695.13 feet; thence North 90.00'00" East, 713.95 feet to a point in the center line of County State Aid Highway 28; thence South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 356.32 feet to the point of beginning of the parcel to be herein described; thence continue South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 324.30 feet; thence North 6.08'33" East, 601.00 feet; thence North 83.51'27" West, 287.00 feet; thence South 6.08'33" West, 450.00 feet to said point of beginning.

AND

That part of the West 5/8 of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying southerly of the centerline of County State Aid Highway No. 28, and lying easterly of the southerly extension of the westerly line of a parcel of land described as follows:

Part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 5, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Southeast Quarter; thence northerly, along the west line of said Southeast Quarter (for purposes of this description bearings are assumed and based on said west line being North 0.00'00"), a distance of 695.13 feet; thence North 90.00'00" East,

713.95 feet to a point in the center line of County State Aid Highway 28; thence South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 356.32 feet to the point of beginning of the parcel to be herein described; thence continue South 56.06'27" East, along said center line, 324.30 feet; thence North 6.08'33" East, 601.00 feet; thence North 83.51'27" West, 287.00 feet; thence South 6.08'33" West, 450.00 feet to said point of beginning.

**(Section 8, Township 111, Range 19)**

The Southeast Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying east of the west 1070.00 feet thereof.

AND

The Northeast Quarter of Section 8, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota, lying east of the west 1070.00 feet thereof.

**(Section 17, Township 111, Range 19)**

The North Half of the Northwest Quarter and the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 17, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**(Section 18, Township 111, Range 19)**

The North Half of the Northwest Quarter and the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, Township 111 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**(Section 32, Township 112, Range 19)**

That part of the West Half of the Southeast Quarter lying east of the west 1035 feet thereof, of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

That part of the West Half of the Northeast Quarter lying east of the west 1035 feet thereof, of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

The East Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

AND

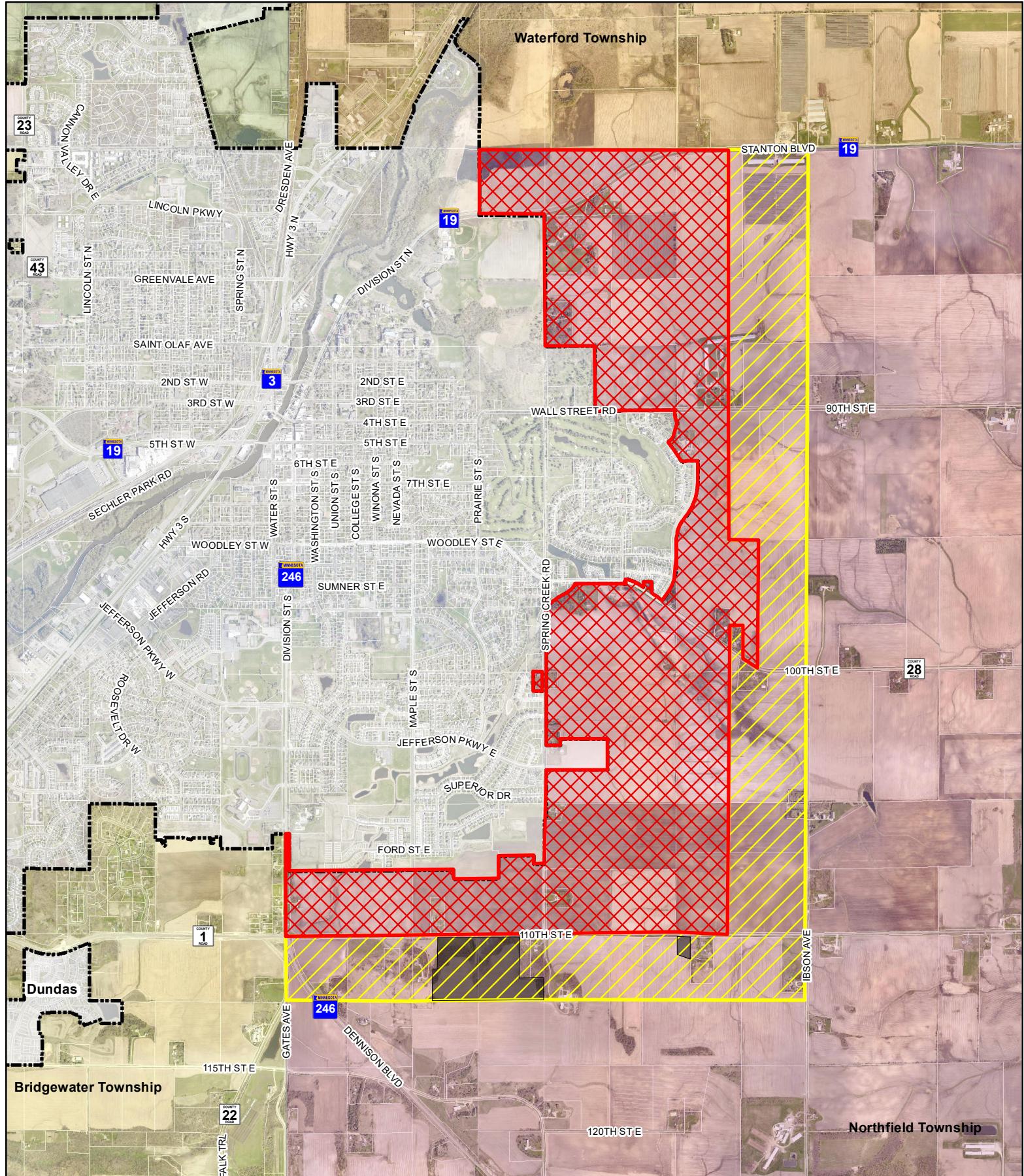
The East Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 32, Township 112 North, Range 19 West of the 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Rice County, Minnesota.

**[FINAL VERSION FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL AND EXECUTION]**

**EXHIBIT 3**  
**Boundary Map**

The following is a municipal boundary map as referenced in the attached Joint Resolution, showing the current City of Northfield and its relation to Orderly Annexation Areas I and II, which are legally described in Exhibits 1-2:

[See attached]



**Northfield Township OAA  
Exemptions  
Northfield Township Proposal**

- Orderly Annexation Area I
- Orderly Annexation Area II
- Exemption
- City Limits

**[FINAL VERSION FOR BOARD  
APPROVAL AND EXECUTION]**

**EXHIBIT 4**  
**Rice County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances**

The following is the Rice County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances in place at on the date of agreement approval.

[See attached]



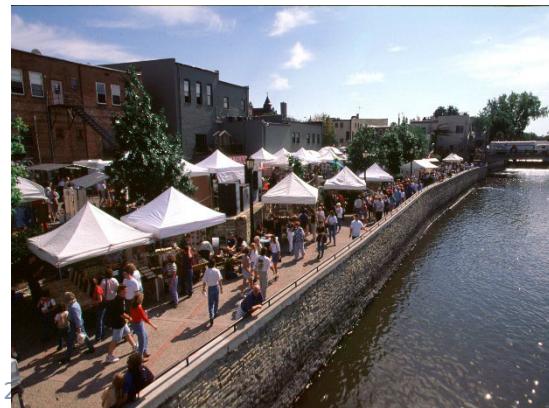
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# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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2040

*Adopted October 12, 2021*



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## Acknowledgments

### Rice County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee:

**Jim Purfeerst, District 1 County Commissioner**

**Galen Malecha, District 2 County Commissioner**

**Dave Miller, District 3 County Commissioner**

**Steve Underdahl, District 4 County Commissioner**

**Jeff Docken, District 5 County Commissioner**

**Preston Bauer, Planning Commission Chair**

**Jill Ellingson, Planning Commissioner**

**Michael Streiff III, Planning Commissioner**

**Charlie Peters, Planning Commissioner**

**John McCarthy, Planning Commissioner**

**Steve Bauer, Former District 4 County Commissioner**

**Jake Gillen, Former District 1 County Commissioner**

**Joe Horejsi, Former Planning Commissioner**

**Tom Sammon, Former Planning Commissioner**

**Aramis Wells, Former Planning Commissioner**

# 1.0 Introduction

Rice County is located in a transitional area between south-central and southeastern Minnesota, approximately 50 miles south of Minneapolis – St. Paul metropolitan area. The location has contributed to diverse land uses and development patterns. The County is predominately rural in nature with a total land area of roughly 496 square miles or 329,914 acres. Much of that land is used for the production of agricultural crops, in particular corn and soybeans, as well as livestock operations. The County's cities are home to industry and education. Faribault has been known for woolen products, its garden and nursery industry and

**"The board has the power and authority to prepare and adopt by ordinance, a comprehensive plan or plans when adopted by ordinance must be the basis for official controls adopted under the provisions and sections 394.21 to 394.37"**

**-MN Statute (Section 394.23)**

Minnesota State Academies. Northfield is known for its two liberal arts colleges, St. Olaf College and Carleton College, and the Defeat of Jesse James.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The goals and values of Rice County and provides the legal basis for updating Rice County ordinances. The first being the update of the Zoning Ordinance. It is understood that no plan can anticipate all the changes that will occur in that time frame so The Plan will need to be reviewed and amended from time to time. Action items will need review every one to two years to ensure implementation of the plan is on course.

## 1.2 Vision Statement

A vision statement provides strategic direction and describes what residents want the county to achieve in the future. A vision statement is a county's road map, indicating both what the county wants to become and guiding transformational initiatives by setting a defined direction for the county's growth. Vision statements undergo minimal revisions, unlike operational goals which may be updated from year-to-year. Vision statements also serve as the foundation for a broader strategic plan; motivate current and future residents by clearly categorizing the county's goals; and focus efforts and facilitate the creation of core competencies by directing the county to only focus on strategic opportunities that advance the county's vision.



The 2040 Vision is a long-range, big picture portrayal of our desired future. The vision was developed during multiple work sessions with the Steering Committee. Below is our 2040 Vision:

**“As Rice County grows and evolves into the future, we will support and encourage orderly growth and a diverse economy that will continue to create jobs and a high quality of life for our citizens. We will aspire to maintain the small town feel of our cities and preserve our agricultural heritage.”**

### 1.3 Fundamental Inventory Guide – Background Information

The Plan has been prepared in two documents, The Plan and the Fundamental Inventory Guide (FIG). The purpose of having separate documents is to maintain a more user-friendly, compact and interactive document. The FIG is an integral component of the Comprehensive Planning process. It provides extensive background information and data used in the development of The Plan. The following components are contained in the FIG: Agriculture, Community Facilities & Public Services, Demographics, History, Land Use, Natural Resources and Transportation. It is designed so that information and statistics can be updated more frequently than The Plan. The FIG can be found in Appendix A of this Plan and Online access to the FIG is available on the county website at: <http://www.co.rice.mn.us/482/Fundamental-Inventory-Guide-2040>. The FIG will be updated as new and additional information becomes available.

### 1.4 Planning Process

The process to prepare the 2040 Plan involved an ongoing exchange of information, analysis, and response between public officials, citizens, and County staff. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was comprised of Rice County Commissioners and members of the Planning Commission. Preparation of this Plan was organized into five phases:

***Phase 1: Initiation*** – This phase involved the formation of the steering committee, initial meetings of the steering committee to provide background information on existing plan and development of a public participation plan.

***Phase 2: Data Collection & Analysis*** – This phase involved collection and analysis of data related to Rice County. Staff analyzed growth trends, community changes, and future projections. The FIG was updated and reorganized into an interactive document. Another objective of this stage was to increase public awareness and education. Various methods were used at this stage to improve awareness, including press releases, Rice County website,

newsletter and factsheets. Presentations were made to community and local groups. This step also involved the creation and distribution of a citizen survey.

**Phase 3: Plan Preparation** – This phase constituted actual plan formation. It involved regular work sessions with the Steering Committee and meetings with city and township officials.

**Phase 4: Plan Review & Adoption** – This phase involved steering committee, local units of government and citizen review of the newly drafted Rice County Comprehensive Plan.

**Phase 5: Plan Implementation** – Following the adoption of the Rice County Comprehensive Plan staff will initiate implementation of the plan, focusing attention on updating all relevant land ordinances to be consistent with the new comprehensive plan.



## 1.5 Community Engagement

County residents were able to participate throughout the planning process in a variety of ways, including community forums, citizen survey, Steering Committee work sessions and public informational meetings.

## Community Forums

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan update began with public outreach that included three community forums. Community members gathered in three different locations and were informed about the comprehensive planning process and participated in a series of small group discussions. A total of 99 attendees responded to four questions asked at each meeting.



Citizen Participation at community forum in Northfield.

Top themes from the forums are summarized in “Comprehensive Plan Public Forum Summary” that is included in Appendix B.

## Citizen Survey

A citizen survey was also prepared to aid in developing The Plan goals and objectives. The survey was a way of soliciting public input on specific topics and issues. A press release was issued and contained a link to the online survey. Letters to each of the 14 township officials were also distributed. In addition, a paper copy of the survey was included within the County's Newsletter that is dispersed to all mailing addresses in Rice County. In total, 1,326 residents and landowners in Rice County responded to the survey. The results are summarized in the report titled “Rice County Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary” that is included in Appendix C.

## Steering Committee Work Sessions

Steering Committee work sessions were regularly held prior to Planning Commission meetings and/or during County Board of Commissioners Committee of Whole work sessions. County staff facilitated discussions on Plan elements to the Steering Committee. Meetings were open to the public.

## Meetings with Cities, Townships and Other Interested Community Groups.

Rice County staff conducted numerous meetings throughout all phases of the plan process with staff from the various cities in Rice County, various townships and other interested community groups. These meetings were valuable in getting input on various components of The Plan.

## 2.0 Economic Development

### 2.1 Introduction

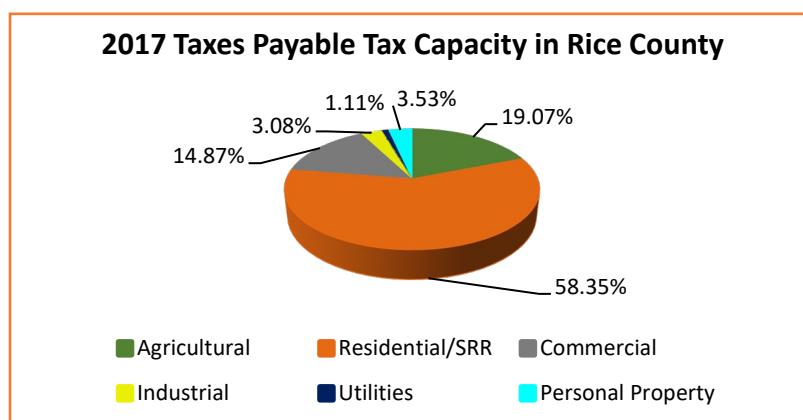
Economic activity is the lifeblood of any community: providing jobs, creating wealth, and generating tax revenue. A diverse economic base lowers the risk of economic difficulty by distributing the effects of industry specific cycles across a broader range of industries.



The underlying premise of this chapter is the concept that economic development, community development and workforce development are inter-dependent, mutually supportive and essential for sustainable economic vitality.

One of the key issues for the County is to retain and provide expansion opportunities for our existing businesses. Critical to facilitating successful business retention and growth is building strong relationships with the business community. The following focuses on economic indicators of the local business community and illustrates the importance of employment and tax base for our community.

Maintaining a healthy tax base is an important function of government and as the pie chart below shows, almost 60% of the County tax base comes from Residential and Seasonal Recreational Property (SRP). With the large difference in tax capacity percentages, steps must be



taken to maintain a healthy balance to ensure an acceptable residential tax rate. Rice County may need to consider analyzing and developing an optimum goal for maintaining a healthy

balance in the tax base. It is evident an increase in the commercial/industrial development is necessary in Rice County.

In 2002, the commercial/industrial tax base in Rice County was approximately 16% of the tax capacity but this has increased to roughly 18% in 2017.

**“Participants at the community forums stated that the following are ways to take advantage of what we have to enhance the County in the next 20 years: promote businesses off I-35, invest in technology, and keep things local through market research and partnerships.”**

Economic development also focuses on those business sectors that provide high quality employment opportunities in the community, bring wealth to the region, and strengthen the tax base of the county. Businesses depend upon a skilled, productive workforce in order to compete successfully. Workforce development enables workers to engage successfully in the changing economy and enables companies to be productive and competitive in a dynamic economic environment.

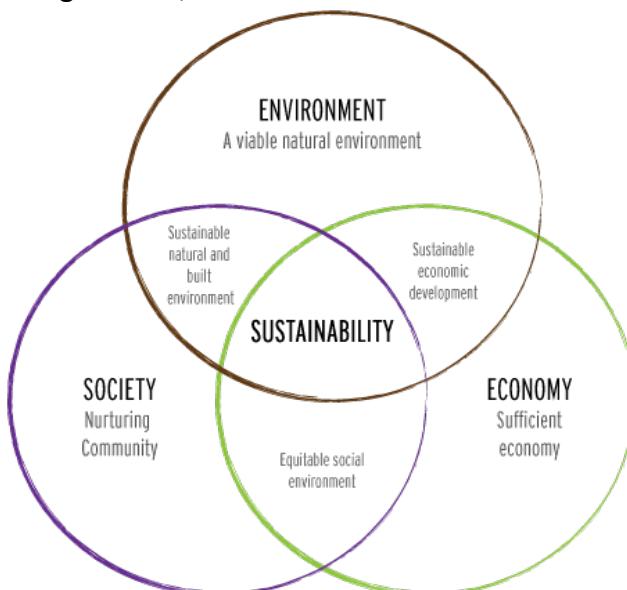
Job growth in Rice County from 2010 to 2016 shows 2,032 new jobs. The largest employing sector within the County is manufacturing, totaling 17.8% of the jobs. The next two largest employing sectors include educational services and health care/social assistance, which accounts for 29.3% of jobs within the County (DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages).

Economic development programs have just recently been utilized at the county level to encourage expanding businesses or new business development. The Cities of Faribault, Northfield and Lonsdale have established programs as well.

According to the US Census Bureau, Rice County’s per capita income from 2014-2018 was \$29,767. This is lower than the Minnesota average of \$36,245. The lower incomes are concerning. The median household income for the same time period was \$65,758 (US Census Bureau, 2018), in which there was more than one wage earner per household.

Community development focuses on the infrastructure — transportation, telecommunications, workforce housing, utility services — necessary to support competitive businesses and the recreational, cultural and quality of life amenities essential to attracting a broad spectrum of skilled, creative, and productive people.

Over fifty percent of Rice County residents work outside of the County, with the highest number commuting, in order, to Hennepin, Dakota, Steele, Ramsey, and Scott Counties. That being said, just over 9,400 people commute to Rice County for work. Most coming from Dakota County, followed by Steele,



Goodhue, Hennepin, and Le Sueur (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The County shall seek to expand the opportunities for residents to work closer to where they live. This will require promoting a mix of high quality housing opportunities for households with varying incomes. For more information on Rice County's education, labor and employment demographics, see the Demographics-Education and Demographics-Labor & Employment documents in the FIG section.

Rice County has a number of assets that can assist in working to build and strengthen a sustainable regional economy. Interstate 35 runs through the center of the County north to south providing easy access throughout the County. The County is also situated between two large metropolitan areas, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Rochester. This provides close proximity to healthcare, shopping, entertainment and other

Important amenities. Rice County is rich in cultural history and natural landscapes. Lastly, the County maintains its rural character and agricultural heritage which sets it apart from the nearby metropolitan areas.

This section can serve as a model for Rice County, bringing together county resources - community development, economic development and workforce development — to support a healthy, dynamic, sustainable economy.

## 2.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on Rice County's Economic Development plan. The goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve the overarching goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance. Because Agriculture plays such a large role in Rice County's economy, goals have been created to specifically focus on Agricultural Economics, as well as, broader Economic Development within the County.

### 2.2.1 Business and Industry Economics

#### ***Goal 1. Maintain and strengthen economic diversity.***

**Strategy 1.** Support the establishment and maintenance of housing, transportation, communication, and utility systems which support and foster quality development.

**Action Item 1:** Coordinate the provision of supportive infrastructure in concurrence with new development.

**Action Item 2:** Evaluate new development impacts on existing infrastructure and services to ensure adequate availability of development ready land.

**Action Item 3:** Establish partnerships to address and solve transportation and workforce housing needs.

**Action Item 4:** Encourage the development of infrastructure and state of the art telecommunication technology to promote telecommuting and E-business.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage increasing the number of small to mid-size firms within the region by fostering local entrepreneurship and business ownership.

**Action Item 1:** Partner with other agencies and institutions to identify programs and services to assist in the creation of new small and mid-sized businesses.

**Action Item 2:** Strengthen programs which provide business development, information, and technical assistance.

**Strategy 3.** Promote and foster historical, ecological and agricultural tourism as a suitable and appropriate form of economic development.

**Action Item 1:** Coordinate tourism efforts with other public, non-profit and private organizations.

**Action Item 2:** Promote a variety of year-round attractions to encourage tourism.

**Action Item 3:** Educate the public on the economic benefits of historic and natural resource preservation.

**Action Item 4:** Encourage the development of tourism-related businesses.

## ***Goal 2: Build and retain a highly skilled, adaptable workforce.***

**Strategy 1.** Cooperate with local educational institutions to coordinate training/skill requirements to meet the needs of local employers.

**Action Item 1:** Work to reduce barriers to obtaining necessary or upgraded job skills.

**Action Item 2:** Promote access to resources and tools for education, training, and supportive services through a variety of means and media.

**Strategy 2.** Collaborate with business, educational institutions, community organizations, and government to provide information to local businesses.

**Action Item 1:** Provide information on work skills development and available employment opportunities through print, electronic, and telecommunications media.

**Action Item 2:** Create a collaborative recruitment strategy among business, non-profits, and government.

**Action Item 3:** Encourage business, labor, education, and government partnerships to solve work force development problems.

**Strategy 3.** Promote and encourage quality of life and healthy living environment for employers and employees.

**Employers**  
**Are you looking to close the skills gap and increase productivity?**

Give us a call and set up an appointment to meet with one of our consultants. We can assist you with pinpointing your specific training needs and provide you with recommended solutions for those needs.

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**Photo:** ad for South Central College, Center for Business & Industry.

**Action Item 1:** Through public and private partnerships, improve and increase workforce housing options.

**Action Item 2:** Improve transportation connections between residential communities and work sites by pursuing opportunities for alternative modes of transportation such as transit bus service, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and amenities.

**Action Item 3:** Provide open space and recreational opportunities as an amenity to attract new businesses and their employees.



**Photo:** Downtown Faribault. Taken from [faribaultmainstreet.org](http://faribaultmainstreet.org).

### ***Goal 3. Retain and expand existing local businesses.***

**Strategy 1.** Encourage access to economic incentives for quality job creation and/or tax base enhancement.

**Action Item 1:** Explore an economic development marketing and incentives program targeting strategic business clusters.

**Action Item 2:** Engage with State, Regional and local economic development organizations and agencies to sustain and expand current economic activities and be prepared for future economic trends.

**Action Item 3:** Continue to collaborate and partner with municipalities and townships, to promote employment opportunities and expand the tax base in Rice County.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage existing neighborhood employers to grow “in place,” keeping jobs close to where people live.

**Action Item 1:** Develop industry clusters by encouraging the retention, expansion, and recruitment of industries that already have a presence in the County.

**Action Item 2:** Encourage Cities to work with property owners and interested developers to address unique development challenges including the maintenance, revitalization and redevelopment of existing buildings.

**Strategy 3.** Support downtown revitalization and neighborhood business development in the cities.

**Action Item 6:** Promote economic development along the Interstate 35 corridor.

## 2.2.2 Agriculture Economics

### ***Goal 1. Sustain a diverse economic mix for the County by promoting and strengthening agriculture and complementary businesses.***

**Strategy 1.** Maintain a strong and productive agricultural economy while promoting the purchase and sale of locally produced products.

**Action Item 1:** The County, in cooperation with the cities, will actively promote buying locally, farmer's markets, events and agricultural tourism opportunities.

**Action Item 2:** Attract agricultural related industries to support diversification and use of raw materials from area farms.

**Strategy 2.** Expand rural business opportunities and enhance rural quality of life.

**Action Item 1:** Work with agencies such as the US Department of Agriculture and other state and local agencies to help fund agricultural resources projects.

**Action Item 2:** Identify strategies that promote agriculture and agricultural support businesses in the County, which may include but not be limited to vineyards, community gardens, agri-tourism, et al.

**Action Item 3:** Revise the County's regulations and ordinances to address the evolving technological and operational characteristics of farm operations.

### ***Goal 2. Expand awareness of local agriculture opportunities and agriculture related businesses within the County.***



Photo: "A Day on the Farm" at the Wegner Dairy Farm.

Taken by Audrey Kletscher Helbling

**Strategy 1.** Coordinate with local agencies, groups, and clubs to create programs, initiatives, and marketing to promote agriculture within the County.

**Action Item 1:** Develop a program to educate the public and the farming community on agricultural issues and opportunities.

**Action Item 2:** Establish a leader and mentorship program to encourage youth involvement in agriculture.

**Action Item 3:** Develop a marketing/awareness campaign focused on local food and agricultural programs.

**Action Item 4:** Create outreach programs to engage youth and adults with little or no agricultural experience.

## 3.0 Land Use

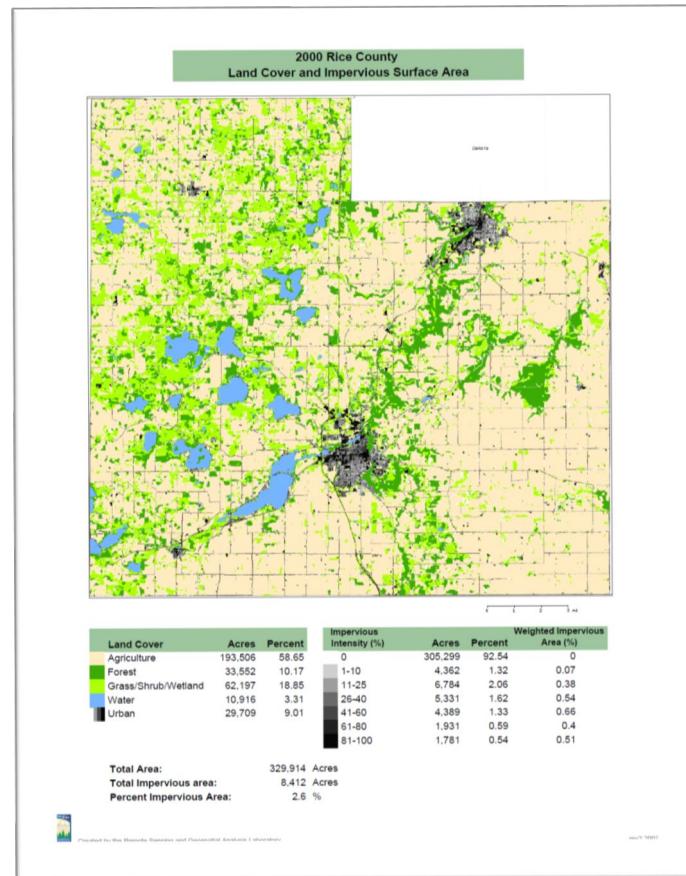
### 3.1 Introduction

The use of land and the pattern of development affect everything from the location and expansion of roads and central utilities to the state of agriculture, the provision of emergency services, the protection of natural resources, and the intangible qualities that constitute “rural character.” That is why Land Use is an imperative element in a Comprehensive Plan (The Plan).

The Land Use section of The Plan is intended to provide the framework that will guide County policies, priorities and investments. This section will help guide the County’s actions in the areas of sustainable growth, economic development, active lifestyles, transportation, and agricultural and natural resource protection.

Rice County is located in a transitional area of Minnesota between south-central and southeastern Minnesota. The location has contributed to diverse land uses and development patterns.

The County is predominately rural in nature with a total land area of roughly 496 square miles (329,914 acres). In 2000, approximately 59% was comprised of agricultural land; 19% grass, shrub, or wetland; 10% forested; 9% urban; and the remaining 3% was water. For more information on Rice County’s land use, see the Land Map and Land Cover documents in the FIG.



### 3.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on the land use topics identified through the planning process. Goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve a goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. Many of the goals for 2040 are the same or similar to those of the 2002 plan, but have been updated to address progress toward the goals and improved understanding of the relationship between land use and natural resources. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance.

**Action Item 1:** Develop strategies to increase employment growth through more intense and efficient use of existing infrastructure.

**Action Item 2:** Support local innovative businesses and economic activities.

**Action Item 3:** Promote downtowns as a place for innovative and emerging business to expand or relocate.

#### **Goal 4. Attract new businesses to Rice County.**

**Strategy 1.** Make available vacant, development-ready land for commercial and industrial use.

**Action Item 1:** Promote well-designed and efficient development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized industrial and commercial lands.

**Action Item 2:** Support redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized industrial and commercial lands rather than designing additional lands for these purposes.

**Action Item 3:** Monitor and update buildable lands inventory to ensure adequate short and long-term supplies of buildable commerce land.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage businesses that are environmentally and economically sustainable.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage programs that promote sustainable business practices (e.g., recycling, green building or other sustainable design features, the use of green or alternative energy, commute trip reduction programs and utilizing by-products of other Rice County businesses).

Citizen Survey respondents felt that agricultural, commercial and retail, and technology related businesses are very important based on the needs of Rice County residents

**Action Item 2:** Educate businesses on opportunities to buy local.

**Strategy 3.** Maximize efforts to attract and recruit industries that are best suited for Rice County's assets and opportunities.

**Action Item 1:** Actively encourage businesses that provide family-wage jobs to start-up, expand, or locate in Rice County.

**Action Item 2:** Develop a branding/marketing effort to promote Rice County as a place to live and do business.

**Action Item 3:** Institute appropriate land use regulations to accommodate a contemporary mix of economic activities and development.

**Action Item 4:** Promote Rice County's cultural, historic, recreational, educational, and environmental assets and amenities.

**Action Item 5:** Update zoning and subdivision regulations to accommodate for a variety of potential industries.



**Photo:** Taken from Lonsdale.govoffice.com

### 3.2.1 Growth and Development

#### ***Goal 1. Support and encourage orderly growth and development.***

**Strategy 1.** Support land use planning, which encourages orderly growth and sustainable development and redevelopment.

**Action Item 1:** Coordinate infrastructure expansion with development; and encourage development where the infrastructure is adequate to serve that growth.

**Action Item 2:** Support the provision of joint services among jurisdictions.

**Action Item 3:** Remain apprised of expected future urban growth areas.



**Photo:** Faribault Energy Park, Faribault. Taken by County Staff.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage a diverse economic mix for Rice County by promoting existing assets and identifying new opportunities.

**Action Item 1:** Create commercial/industrial zones to promote employment and generate tax base in Rice County.

**Action Item 2:** Identify appropriate areas for commercial and industrial developments, including along the I-35 corridor.

**Action Item 3:** Promote agriculture and associated businesses.

**Action Item 4:** Identify and reserve areas with sand, gravel and aggregate deposits for extraction.

**Strategy 3.** Identify additional areas for mixed-use development and further support urban growth.

**Action Item 1:** Continue to evaluate and implement urban growth zones where municipal infrastructure is likely to extend.

**Action Item 2:** Continue to have zoning districts for the unincorporated villages to allow for mixed-use development encouraging the development of municipal type water and sewer services.

**Strategy 4.** Promote the opportunity to lead active and healthy lifestyles through the coordinated development of infrastructure or supporting programs that promote active lifestyles.

**Action Item 1:** Develop connections between existing communities, parks and other destinations to promote safe and active options.

**Action Item 2:** Create land use regulations to improve proximity to nutritious foods and encourage local wholesome food-related businesses and activities.

**Strategy 5.** Support and further develop land use patterns that encourage alternative modes of transportation.

“Over 92% of Rice County residents that participated in the citizen survey either agreed or strongly agreed that local food production is important to the future of Rice County.”

**Action Item 1:** Identify and map concentrations of compact residential and employment development that has potential to be served by transit.

**Action Item 2:** Identify existing land uses and travel corridors in the county that could be transformed into transit-friendly corridors.

**Action Item 3:** Encourage local planning for mixed land use areas in or adjacent to transit corridors.

**Action Item 4:** Continue to expand existing partnerships and look for new opportunities to collaborate on providing alternative modes of transportation.

### 3.2.2 Agriculture and Natural Resources

“86% of citizen survey respondents either agree or strongly agree that preserving existing agricultural land should be a planning priority for Rice County.”

#### ***Goal 2: Preserve Agricultural Land and Natural Resources.***

**Strategy 1.** Minimize conflicts between agricultural, residential, and other uses.

**Action Item 1:** Adopt land use regulations that control density and development in agricultural and open spaces, to protect and preserve agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Action Item 2:** Develop management methods for accommodating diverse types of agricultural activity.

**Action Item 3:** Allow and encourage complementary commercial or industrial uses.

**Action Item 4:** Protect and promote agriculture by preserving large tracts of land by encouraging clustering of rural residential development through use of transfer of development rights.

**Action Item 5:** Promote higher density housing development in cities and unincorporated villages that can provide municipal or municipal type water and sewer services rather than in the agricultural districts.



Grazing cows in rural Rice County. Taken by County staff.

**Strategy 2.** Preserve, protect, and improve the surface and underground waters including, but not limited to, rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater, and aquifer recharge areas.

“Citizen Survey respondents felt that river/stream (85%) and lakes (82%) are natural resources that need the most attention in order to improve or maintain the quality of life in Rice County.”

**Action Item 1:** Encourage development to comply with wellhead protection zones.

**Action Item 2:** Develop and employ land use regulations and other techniques for natural resource protection, including transfer of development rights or density, and best management practices.

**Action Item 3:** Recognize the relationship between land use and water quality, and continue to support

water quality improvements through land use plans and regulations.

**Action Item 4:** Encourage shore land protection and restoration methods such as vegetative buffers.

**Action Item 5:** Continue to address wastewater treatment and water quality through watershed plans, funding opportunities and various collaborations and partnerships.

**Strategy 3.** In working through land development, the potential for air, water, and land contamination will be considered and minimized throughout the entire process.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage conservation design to preserve natural and scenic values.

**Action Item 2:** Support and implement state and federal regulations that pertain to environmental review.

**Action Item 3:** Define, by GIS overlay, and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and other open space by allowing only compatible land uses and development.

**Action Item 4:** Recognize that soil conditions may limit development potential.

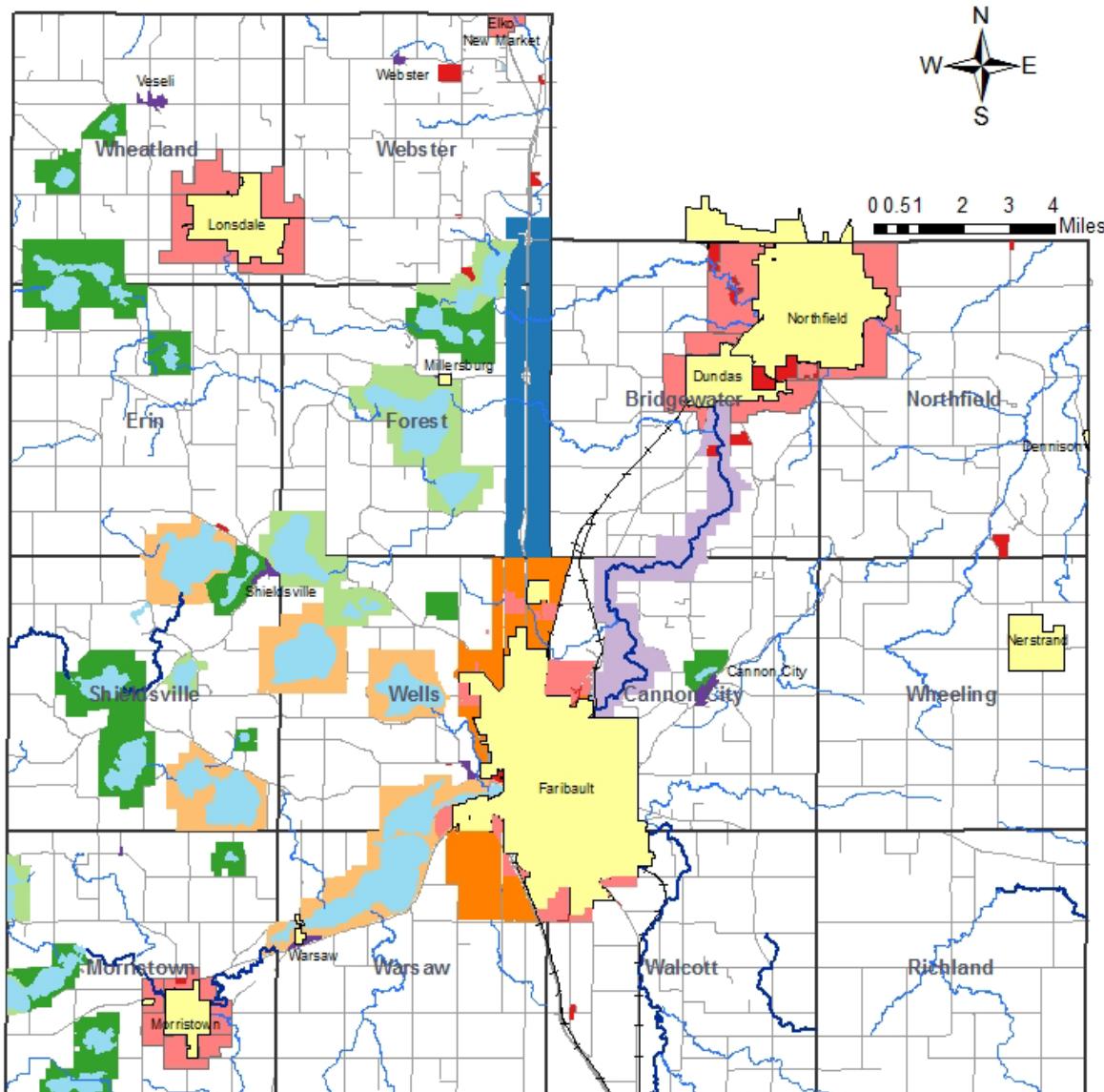
**Action Item 5:** Coordinate with Local, State and Federal agencies and organizations to encourage landowners and tenants to implement and maintain good soil erosion and healthy soil practices.



**Photo:** Cannon River Wilderness Area, Bridgewater Township. Taken by County staff.

### 3.3 Future Land Use Map

## Rice County 2040 Future Land Use Preliminary Draft



Roads	General Development Shoreland	Urban Expansion
Rivers	Commercial/Industrial	Urban Expansion- Industrial
Streams	Limited Industrial	Village Mixed-Use
Railroads	Natural Environment Shoreland	Wild and Scenic River
Lakes	Recreational Development Shoreland	Cities (Not under County Planning Authority)
Shoreland Area		Rice County Townships

GIS by Rice County  
January 24, 2020

Map features are representations of original data sources and do not replace or modify land surveys, deeds, or other legal instruments defining land ownership or use.

## Land Use Map Legend Descriptions:

**General Development Shoreland** – Shoreland around lakes that are classified as General Development. These lakes are categorized as large, deep lakes or lakes of varying sizes and depths with high levels and mixes of existing development. These lakes are extensively used for recreation and are heavily developed around the shore.

**Commercial/Industrial** – Areas adjacent Interstate 35 that promote employment and generate tax base in Rice County.

**Limited Industrial** – Commercial/industrial land use to promote employment and generate tax base in Rice County.

**Natural Environment Shoreland** – Shoreland around lakes that are classified as Natural Environment. These lakes are categorized as small, often shallow lakes with limited capacities for assimilating the impacts of development and recreational use. They often have adjacent lands with substantial constraints for development such as high water tables, exposed bedrock, and soils unsuitable for septic systems.

**Recreational Development Shoreland** – Shoreland around lakes that are classified as Recreational Development. These lakes are categorized as medium-sized lakes of varying depths and shapes with a variety of landform, soil, and groundwater situations on the lands around them. They often are characterized by moderate levels of recreational use and existing development.

**Rural Residential** – An area that recognizes exiting low-density residential development in already-developed areas. Most of these areas are located in agricultural areas or on the outskirts of unincorporated villages.

**Urban Expansion** – An area around the municipal boundary of an incorporated City/Village that is reserved for future residential and business growth.

**Urban Expansion -Industrial** – An area reserved in the urban expansion zone for the growth of industrial business.

**Village Mixed-Use** – Existing unincorporated villages that are compatible for new development and a pedestrian-friendly environment.

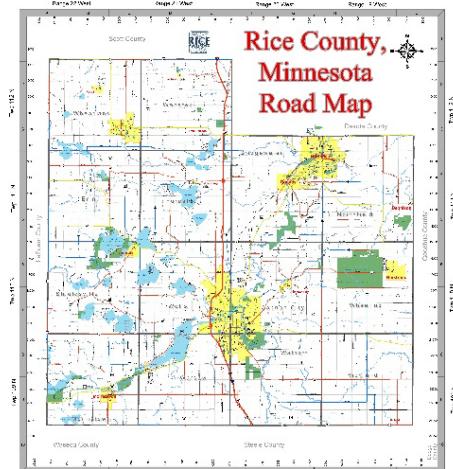
**Wild and Scenic River** – This district protects and preserves the scenic, recreational, natural and historical values of the Cannon River in Rice County by ensuring that development within this river corridor is consistent with the Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Statewide Standards.

# 4.0 Transportation

## 4.1 Introduction

The transportation system in Rice County is the backbone for commerce and assists in establishing development patterns. The system is comprised of roadways, railroads, airports, waterways, transit, technology and trails for pedestrians and non-motorized bikeways. The transportation system is a critical element in the quality of life for county residents. Transportation systems, both highway and multi-modal, must safely, efficiently and effectively allow citizens to travel to work, recreate and conduct their personal lives. Transportation systems must further provide for efficient movement of goods and services to markets to support the county's economic vitality.

Improvements to the transportation systems are necessary to keep up with the changing needs of the citizens and businesses of Rice County.



Rice County will continue to experience demands with limited resources to meet the transportation needs of the county. The significant investment that the county has made in the transportation system requires that this infrastructure be maintained and properly managed to protect these investments. Continued economic development and growth will also create demand for improvements of the existing roadway system such as turn lanes, bypass lanes, intersection improvements and traffic control changes. Other non-automobile modes for people and freight that maximize transportation system efficiency will also need to be explored. It will be important for collaborations and partnerships to be formed in order to carry out future projects and improvements. Financial plans with various funding options will need

to be developed for implementing the selected projects and strategies.

To be efficient and fair a transportation system must serve diverse demands. Rice County will not only see an increase in the aging population, but also an even more diverse population in the next 10-20 years. Therefore, Rice County as a whole will need to look for alternative forms of transportation utilizing a variety of multi-modal options. It will be critical for economics of various businesses in the county for their workforce to have

**How important is increasing alternative modes of transportation (such as bus, biking, walking, train etc.) to the future of Rice County?**



"78% (1,001) of respondents feel that increasing alternative modes of transportation is very or somewhat important to the future of Rice County."

access to multi-modal forms of transportation.

Not only do employment clusters need to have adequate transportation options for their work force, ensuring that essential services like grocery stores, medical facilities, schools or government buildings can be reached are important active living and livability considerations.

This transportation chapter is an abridged version of the County's full Transportation Plan which is a separate and much more detailed plan document. The 2025 Rice County Transportation Plan was adopted in 2006 and can be found in Appendix D. It is highly recommended that the full Transportation Plan be updated in the near future.

## 4.2 Goals, Strategies, and Action Items

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on Rice County's Transportation plan. The goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve the overarching goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance.

### 4.2.1 Transportation

#### ***Goal 1. Enhance and maintain a transportation system that supports economic development along with existing and future land uses.***

**Strategy 1.** Update the Rice County Transportation Plan to guide future transportation improvement decisions for the County.

**Action Item 1:** Identify and collaborate with local, regional and State transportation agencies, governmental units, businesses and county residents to gather input on existing and future concerns.

**Action Item 2:** Identify and address emerging deficiencies in capacity, access, mobility, safety, transit, trail and multi-modal needs.

**Action Item 3:** Coordinate and work with cities and townships to develop long term land use and transportation plans to develop cost effective and efficient transportation systems.

**Strategy 2.** Improve and expand identified transportation corridors.

**Action Item 1:** Develop priorities, financing scenarios and funding options for improving and expanding identified transportation corridors.



*Photo: A section of Rice County Road 76. Photo taken from: SouthernMinn.com*

**Action Item 2:** Develop partnerships, collaborate and cost-share with local and state transportation agencies on traffic studies, planning and programming of future improvements.

**Action Item 3:** Identify preliminary needs for planning, design, right of way, access control and construction of transportation corridors.

**Action Item 4:** Consider multi-modal air/rail corridors that may be utilized for economic transport.

***Goal 2. Preserve and improve the transportation infrastructure in Rice County to maximize safety and efficiency.***

**Strategy 1.** Develop preservation strategies and policies to maintain the existing transportation system to ensure safe and efficient travel.

**Action Item 1:** Review and update access management and cost participation policies.

**Action Item 2:** Analyze crash data to identify potential needs while updating and utilizing adopted safety plans.

**Action Item 3:** Identify and negotiate maintenance agreements that provide more efficient delivery of services.

**Action Item 4:** Identify reconstruction and replacement projects as part of the annual Transportation Improvement Plan.

**Strategy 2.** Evaluate existing conditions and identify future needs in an effective way to maximize and protect existing investment.

**Action Item 1:** Evaluate and prioritize system wide needs, develop funding and collaboration opportunities.

**Action Item 2:** Strategically apply for funding to offset county investment needed for the transportation system.

**Action Item 3:** Build a local coalition of support for planning and funding partnerships by encouraging cities, business owners and community groups to be active participants in seeking funding at local, state, and federal levels.

***Goal 3. Develop multi-modal and integrated transportation components to enhance options for a diverse population.***

**Strategy 1.** Support the continued efforts of the County and Cities working together to support transit opportunities.

**Action Item 1:** Evaluate the option of the Park-and-Ride facilities for carpool commuters within the county.

**Action Item 2:** Increase current transit options/routes within and outside the cities of Rice County.

**Action Item 3:** Advocate for long-term investment in transit infrastructure.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage usage of the transit systems.

**Action Item 1:** Prioritize transit service and bike/walk infrastructure improvements in populated areas with low vehicle ownership and low access to needed services.

**Action Item 2:** Connect major employers with needed work forces through a variety of multi-modal programs.

**Action Item 3:** Encourage increased advertising and education of alternative transportation options and local transit providers.

**Strategy 3.** Support and incorporate active living principles in transportation plans and identified projects.

**Action Item 1:** Continue working with surrounding counties to establish long range trails that could be used for recreation and transportation.

**Action Item 2:** Work with Cities and Townships to implement safe and appropriate trail crossings and access to the roadway system.

**Action Item 3:** Identify and promote safe pedestrian crossings to promote walkable communities.

**Action Item 4:** Support and assist Cities with their Safe Routes to School Plans.



*Photo: Two bikers ride along the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail. Photo taken from: Faribault, MN Tourism*

## 5.0 Housing and Livable Communities Design

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### 5.1 Introduction

A critical component to a healthy and vibrant community is a diverse and balanced housing supply in good physical condition that includes a variety of price levels, housing types, and sizes. A mix of housing tenures, types, and rent and sales prices provides residents with a range of choices so that they can continue living in their community as their housing needs change through their lifetimes. The affordability of housing is especially important for all

According to AARP, “A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and offers supportive community features and services.”

residents because it provides a stable foundation on which to build one’s life. Affordable housing can also improve health outcomes by freeing up family resources for nutritious food, transportation, and health care expenditures. A diverse housing supply can also better adapt to future environmental, social, and economic changes than one that is largely based on just one of these types. A full range of housing options also enables communities to address the housing needs of

employers and a diverse workforce. These qualities define a livable community.

Housing in Rice County has been presented in a housing study that was finalized in August 2018, titled “Comprehensive Housing Study: Rice County and Identified Sub-Markets.” The complete study can be reviewed in Appendix E. The report identifies current and future needs, recommends a housing mix, and the suggested amount and types of housing that could be developed to meet the needs of Rice County for the next five, ten and fifteen years. Major housing issues identified in the County by the study were high cost of housing (third most expensive area for housing in Minnesota, ranked behind Rochester and the Twin Cities) and a gap in ownership by minority residents versus white residents (98 percent of households in Rice County are owned by whites compared to the State in which 75 percent of whites own homes). The data also shows a lack of senior housing and affordable rental housing units. Opportunities for encouraging construction of missing housing options are discussed in the Recommendation section of the report. For more information on Rice County’s housing in addition to the study, see the Household Characteristics and Housing documents in the FIG.

### 5.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on Rice County’s Housing and Livable Communities Design. The goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve the overarching goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance.

## 5.2.1 Housing

### ***Goal 1. Create a diverse range of housing types for all income levels.***

**Strategy 1.** Partner with local communities to develop and manage housing choices for seniors, low- and moderate-income families, and minorities.

**Action Item 1:** Incorporate services into denser areas that support affordable housing.

**Action Item 2:** Encourage the availability of an adequate supply of land and infrastructure for multi-family housing developments.

**Action Item 3:** Allow accessory dwelling units in single-family houses or on single-family lots in certain districts that are subject to specific development, design, and occupancy standards.

**Action Item 4:** Encourage the development of mixed income housing units.

**Strategy 2.** Work with other organizations to coordinate funding for additional affordable housing units.

**Action Item 1:** Use tax increment financing to support housing projects that serve a mix of incomes and housing types.

**Action Item 2:** Encourage private-public partnerships to aid in the development of affordable housing.

**Strategy 3.** Promote mixed-use development near infrastructure that integrates rental housing.

**Action Item 1:** Support the provision of rental assistance programs for low-income residents.

**Action Item 2:** Encourage the cities to use inclusionary zoning and developer incentives to integrate affordable rental units into market rate developments.

**Action Item 3:** Support the provision of programs that provide affordable financing options to owners of rental housing to maintain, improve and upgrade the existing supply of rental housing in the county.

58% of citizen survey respondents felt that single-family housing is very important in rural areas.

### ***Goal 2: Make available adequate housing for all life stages to ensure diverse communities.***

**Strategy 1.** Encourage affordable senior housing to allow residents to age in their own communities instead of needing to relocate to get the care they need.

**Action Item 1:** Work with cities to locate senior housing in or adjacent to basic amenities and transit hubs.

**Action Item 2:** Promote a range of housing types for seniors; e.g., adult family homes, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, and independent living communities.

**Strategy 2.** Promote the development of affordable workforce housing for newly hired workers (e.g. teachers, nurses, city/county employees, etc.).

Citizen survey respondents felt that single-family (69%), affordable (61%) and senior complexes (61%) are very important types of housing in urban areas.

on assistance programs.

**Action Item 2:** Encourage equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for people with disabilities, people of color, low-income households, diverse household types, and older adults.

**Strategy 4.** Support housing that addresses the needs of people with physical or developmental disabilities, or mental illness.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage the development of specialized programs to provide rental assistance to persons with disabilities.

**Action Item 2:** Support development of physically-accessible housing to allow for a diverse supply of affordable, accessible housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities, especially near basic amenity areas and provide services and transit.

### ***Goal 3. Encourage maintenance and improvements of existing housing stock.***

**Strategy 1.** Support the provision of homeowner rehabilitation and improvement programs that assist low and moderate income residents with the financial means to maintain and improve the quality of their homes.

**Action Item 1:** Partner with non-profit housing providers to rehabilitate existing housing for low and moderate income homeowners.

**Action Item 2:** Advocate grant and loan programs that provide residents with the ability to make energy and weatherization improvements to their properties in order to make their homes more energy efficient.



Source: rhondahowlett.blogspot.com

**Action Item 3:** Support educational programs that provide residents with information on how to rehabilitate, improve and upgrade their homes.

**Strategy 2.** Support local city and township redevelopment efforts.

**Action Item 1:** Support local efforts to retrofit existing homes with accessibility improvements.

**Action Item 2:** Support tax incentives policies that encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing in the county.

***Goal 4. Advocate for housing near basic amenities and features necessary for a high-quality of life and to maintain a healthy life style.***

**Strategy 1.** Support land use patterns that efficiently connect housing, jobs, retail centers and civic uses.

**Action Item 1:** Collaborate with cities to put housing in transit corridors and near greenway/recreation corridors and basic amenities.



Source: AARP

**Action Item 2:** Encourage compact, mixed-use, multi-modal development that will increase travel options within existing urbanized areas, employment centers, and along transit nodes and corridors.

**Action Item 3:** Encourage the cities to have complete, walkable neighborhoods that provide proximity to daily goods and services in order to decrease automobile dependence, and enhance livability and build community cohesion.

**Strategy 2.** Support the development of housing that is in close proximity to healthy foods and recreational opportunities.

**Action Item 1:** Build and encourage partnerships that work to expand residential access to healthy food.

**Action Item 2:** Provide convenient and accessible recreational open space.

**Action Item 3:** Improve year-round access to both public and private recreational facilities.

## 6.0 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space



*Photo: A Rice County Park sign.  
Taken by County Staff.*

### 6.1 Introduction

Parks and open areas are essential spaces that are shared by everyone within a community, this statement also runs true for Rice County. There are currently 13 parks within the Rice County park system totaling over 1,100 acres. These parks don't only provide a way for residents to achieve a healthy lifestyle by being active, but also by utilizing the benefits of being out in nature. Many of the parks within Rice County offer amenities that visitors can use such as: picnic areas with a shelter, fishing dock, restrooms, hiking trails and playground equipment. Rice County has a handful of open space land as well. Some of those areas include: Rossez Wildlife Area, areas along the Cannon River, conservation lands, Farmed lands, and Forest land. The County also has Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and State Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) that are open for public use. Visitors are

What types of Development/growth would you like to see in the County?

**1,300 Rice  
County Residents  
responded**

**77.91% (998 responses)  
agreed that parks and  
nature preserves were  
important for development**

**Was voted the most  
important category  
out of the 13  
options provided**

encouraged to observe and learn while protecting the natural features, plants, and animals.

Over the years, there have been Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plans set into place. In 1992, Rice County adopted the first Rice County Park System Plan, which contained policies for existing park infrastructure, and implementation strategies to support the goals of the parks. The framework of the 1992 parks plan not only helped with the direction the county needed to take with parks and open space, but as well as where to go for the future. In 2012, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan was updated with even more expansive implementation strategies. The 2012 Parks Plan is located in Appendix G.



*Photo: Bicyclists on the Mills Town State Trail. Taken by SouthernMinn.com*

## 6.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items



*Photo: Webster Township Park. Taken by County Staff*

and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance.

### 6.2.1 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

#### ***Goal 1. Utilize All Available Resources to Further Enhance the Quality of the Rice County Park System.***

**Strategy 1.** Update the 2012 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

**Action Item 1:** Work with local municipalities, agencies, and residents to construct a new and revised Parks Plan that suits all party's needs.

**Action Item 2:** Set a timeline for the completion of each section of the Parks Plan.

**Action Item 3:** The County will use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the development of updating the Parks Plan.

**Strategy 2.** Create/update Master Plans for each County Park.

**Action Item 1:** Use GIS to construct descriptive maps for these master plans.

**Strategy 3.** Identify and implement funding resources for maintenance and improvement of the County park system.

**Action Item 1:** Work with inter-county municipalities to secure funding from sources such as grants.

**Strategy 4.** Promote active communication between the County, local municipalities, and residents.

**Action Item 1:** Increase the frequency of public meetings and surveys for residents to have the ability to voice their opinions/concerns in regards to County parks, trails, and open spaces.

#### **2016 RICE COUNTY SURVEY COMMENTS**

“As cities continue to grow, I would like to see more green space around the cities themselves, in which community gardens, parks, and trails could all exist. Similar to green ring around London to stop the sprawl and encourage multifamily dwellings to conserve space, resources, and energy.”

“Maintenance and expansion of the City of Faribault trails are important. Connecting all the towns and cities of Rice County via bike trails and parks, including camping and privacy areas, would be a big boost to the desirability of Rice County as the next great place to live.”

“We need more bike/walking trails, particularly in rural areas. We desperately need to encourage recreation for health and tourism.”

**Action Item 2:** Improve and update the parks section of the County website.

**Action Item 3:** Collaborate with cities, townships, and school districts to promote community use of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces.

## ***Goal 2. Protect, Enhance, and Maintain County Parks and Open Areas.***

**Strategy 1.** Identify areas where future parks, recreation, and open areas could be placed.

**Action Item 1:** Utilize GIS to analyze features for potential uses and future County parks.

**Action Item 2:** Work on providing parks, facilities, and programs to underserved areas.

**Strategy 2.** Continue keeping county parks and trails clean and accessible for residents.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage the development of a volunteer program to help with maintaining and improving the overall quality of the County's natural spaces.

**Action Item 2:** Implement excellent maintenance service in the park system.

**Action Item 3:** Develop a plan to eliminate physical barriers in all park areas to meet the recreational needs of all residents.

**Action Item 4:** Address ADA accessibility across the park and trail system and incorporate changes (where needed) when there are park improvement projects.

**Strategy 3.** Ensure safety throughout the park system.

**Action Item 1:** Make park and trail map guides easily available for Rice County residents and visitors.

**Action Item 2:** Increase and improve wayfinding's throughout County parks.

**Action Item 3:** Continue working with the Rice County Sheriff's Office to decrease negative activity going on in parks, open spaces, and trails.

## ***Goal 3. Encourage a Healthy and Active Lifestyle by Promoting the Use of Parks and Trails.***

**Strategy 1.** Collaborate with surrounding counties and municipalities to develop potential multi-county trails/parks.

**Action Item 1:** Continue advocating for the expansion of the Sakatah State Trail and the Mills Town Trail.



*Photo: Cannon River Wilderness Area. Taken by County Staff*

**Action Item 2:** Explore the option of implementing an Adopt-a-Trail program within the County Park System.



*Photo: Picnic Shelter at King Mill Park. Taken by County Staff.*

**Strategy 2.** Support the development of programs that encourage active living.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage community involvement with the park and trail system. Ex. Park clean-ups, fundraisers for park equipment.

***Goal 4. Conserve and Protect Natural Resources that are Present in the County Park System.***

**Strategy 1.** Park design shall protect and improve the functions of the natural

environment and strike a balance between public use and preservation.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage the establishment of a planting program in parks and open space areas where trees and vegetation are lacking.

**Action Item 2:** Support native landscaping and maintenance in County parks, if applicable, to maintain the natural environment.

**Action Item 3:** Advocate for the maintenance and development of natural corridors to foster ecosystems continuity and connections to parks and open spaces.



**Strategy 2.** Encourage the creation, adoption, and usage of Natural Resource Management plans to manage and preserve natural resources within Rice County parks.



**Strategy 3.** Provide recycling opportunities and facilities at public parks and points along the trail.

*Photo: Various parks and wilderness areas in Rice County. Taken by County Staff.*

# 7.0 Sustainability

## 7.1 Introduction

Sustainability focuses on meeting the current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The concept of sustainability is composed of three pillars: economic, environmental and social. Sustainability encourages decisions be framed in terms of environmental, social and human impact for the long-term, rather than on short-term gains.



**Photo:** Kayakers in the Cannon River. Taken by County Staff

Rice County's abundant natural resources contribute to the overall quality of life for all of its residents and visitors. These resources provide many benefits to the County such as economic opportunities, recreational activity options and biological diversity. Sustaining and enhancing these resources will contribute to not only the County's vibrant economy but will also provide enjoyment for generations to come. While there are areas within Rice County that are attractive for future development it is important that it does not intrude on prosperous agricultural land, protected and preserved natural land and in areas that could cause potential environmental concerns.

The county is already taking steps toward becoming a more sustainable place for residents and visitors to be. For example, Rice County has over 24 completed solar gardens within its boundaries and has quite a few more in the process of being constructed. Rice County also has options for residents at the County solid waste facility to dispose of household hazardous waste, which can be harmful to the environment if not disposed of properly, and as well as a composting site where County residents can dispose of yard waste.

There are also a few cities within Rice County that developed (or are in the process of developing) and are implementing various sustainability practices and plans. For example, the City of Northfield adopted their Climate Action Plan in November of 2019. Their plan's goal is to

## **RICE COUNTY SURVEY COMMENTS**

“It would be great to continue and expand attention on renewable energy, clean water, and good agricultural practices for residents and visitors.”

“Protecting surface and groundwater is the most important issue for the future of Rice County. Beyond that, the historic preservation and rural nature of the county attracted us to move here in retirement.”

“Protecting and enhancing our natural environment, and developing jobs/businesses that are environmentally sustainable are my priorities.”

“Carefully planned sustainable development that protects natural resources is most important to me”

address storm water run-off.

go 100% carbon-free by 2040 by decreasing greenhouse gas emissions through mitigation strategies and as well as becoming more resilient to prepare for a changing climate. The City of Faribault started the process of a city-wide Climate Action Plan in the summer of 2020 with the hopes of having it completed and approved for adoption by early 2021.

Looking ahead to 2040, Rice County is looking at ways to become more sustainably friendly in support with the communities within the County. Some options the County’s looking into is preservation and enhancement of natural lands and systems, exploring and expanding energy efficient methods and renewable energy resources, and encouraging the reduction of waste, recycling, reuse, and composting.

### **7.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items**

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on Rice County’s Sustainability plans. The goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve the overarching goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. It should be noted that goals, strategies, and action items are in no particular order of importance.

#### **7.2.1 Sustainability**

##### ***Goal 1. Enhance, Protect, and Restore Natural Lands and Systems.***

**Strategy 1.** Encourage County farmers and agricultural land owners to participate in The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP).

**Strategy 2.** Protect and manage streams, watersheds, and floodplains.

**Action Item 1:** Promote education about the values of watersheds, rain gardens, and low-impact development to



**Photo:** Raingarden kit. Taken by the Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District.

**Action Item 2:** Minimize the potential for air, waters and land contamination and pollution that could result from the development process.

**Action Item 3:** Encourage landowners in the shoreland areas to develop and maintain native vegetative buffers.

**Strategy 3.** Encourage collaboration between the county and cities to expand urban & county parks and street tree programs.

**Strategy 4.** Encourage farmers to utilize cover crops programs such as Rice County's Soil and Water Conservation Districts Cover Crop Incentive Program.

**Strategy 5.** Work with County landowners and local entities to increase land enrolled in programs like the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (MN CREP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).



*Photo: Solar panels within a solar garden in Rice County. Taken by County Staff*

***Goal 2: Advocate and Expand the Use of and Energy Efficient Methods and Renewable Energy Resources.***

**Strategy 1.** Encourage cities within Rice County to participate/continue to participate in the Minnesota Green Steps Cities program.

**Action Item 1.** Partner with local communities and organizations to create a Sustainability Plan that aligns with Rice County's Future goals.

**Strategy 2.** Evaluate Rice County owned land that is suitable for renewable energy sources as solar

gardens and wind turbines.

**Strategy 3.** Collaborate with local municipalities to offer incentives for businesses to incorporate environmentally friendly and sustainable business models and practices.

**Action Item 1:** Work with MinnPACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) and commercial property owners to invest in energy efficiency upgrades.

**Action Item 2:** Advocate for the implementation of green building and energy conservation.

**Strategy 4.** Encourage Rice County residents to reduce their carbon footprint.

**Action Item 1:** Work with local entities to increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations.

**Action Item 2:** Assist homeowners with researching and obtaining grants for the weatherization of their homes.

***Goal 3. Encourage Waste Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, and Composting.***

**Strategy 1.** Increase accessibility of composting and organics recycling.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage the use of programs like Northfield Curbside Compost.

**Action Item 2:** Promote residential backyard composting throughout the county.

**Strategy 2.** Collaborate with local entities to host educational engagements pertaining to waste reduction, reducing and managing food waste, and composting and recycling practices.

**Action Item 1:** Advocate for events going on in Rice County to be zero waste.

**Strategy 3.** Encourage businesses around the County to switch over to more sustainable and biodegradable products.

**Strategy 4.** Promote and advocate for funding of food rescue programs.



*Photo: Northfield Curbside Compost logo.*

## 8.0 Implementation Plan

# 2040 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Strategies, and Action Items

## Economic Development

Business and Industry Economics:	
<b>Goal 1: Maintain and strengthen economic diversity.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Support the establishment and maintenance of housing, transportation, communication, and utility systems which support and foster quality development.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Coordinate the provision of supportive infrastructure in concurrence with new development.  <b>Action Item 2:</b> Evaluate new development impacts on existing infrastructure and service to ensure adequate availability of development ready land.  <b>Action Item 3:</b> Establish partnerships to address and solve transportation and workforce housing needs.  <b>Action Item 4:</b> Encourage the development of infrastructure and state of the art telecommunication technology to promote telecommuting and E-business.
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage increasing the number of small to mid-size firms within the region by fostering local entrepreneurship and business ownership.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Partner with other agencies and institutions to identify programs and services to assist in the creation of new small and mid-sized businesses.  <b>Action Item 2:</b> Strengthen programs which provide business development, information, and technical assistance.
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Promote and foster historical, ecological and agricultural tourism as a suitable and appropriate form of economic development.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Coordinate tourism efforts with other public, non-profit and private organizations.  <b>Action Item 2:</b> Promote a variety of year-round attraction to encourage tourism.  <b>Action Item 3:</b> Educate the public on the economic benefits of historic and natural resource preservation.  <b>Action Item 4:</b> Encourage the development of tourism-related businesses.

## Goal 2: Build and retain a highly skilled, adaptable workforce.

<b>Strategy 1.</b> Cooperate with local education institutions to coordinate training/skill requirements to meet the needs of local employers.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Work to reduce barriers to obtaining necessary or upgraded job skills.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Promote access to resources and tools for education, training, and supportive services through a variety of means and media.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Collaborate with business, educational institutions, community organizations, and government to provide information to local businesses.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Provide information on work skills development and available employment opportunities through print, electronic, and telecommunications media.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Create a collaborative recruitment strategy among business, non-profits, and government.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Encourage business, labor, education, and government partnerships to solve work force development problems.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Promote and encourage quality of life and healthy living environment for employers and employees.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Through public and private partnerships, improve and increase workforce housing options.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Improve transportation connections between residential communities and work sites by pursuing opportunities for alternative modes of transportation such as transit bus service, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and amenities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Provide open space and recreational opportunities as an amenity to attract new businesses and their employees.</p>

## Goal 3: Retain and expand existing local businesses.

<b>Strategy 1.</b> Encourage access to economic incentives for quality job creation and/or tax base enhancement.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Explore an economic development marketing and incentives program targeting strategic business clusters.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Engage with State, Regional and local economic development organizations and agencies to sustain and expand current economic activities and be prepared for future economic trends.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Continue to collaborate and partner with municipalities and townships, to promote employment opportunities and expand the tax base in Rice County.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage existing neighborhood employers to grow "in	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Development industry clusters by encouraging the retention, expansion, and recruitment of industries that already have a presence in the County.</p>

place," keeping jobs close to where people live.	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage Cities to work with property owners and interested developers to address unique development challenges including the maintenance, revitalization redevelopment of existing buildings.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Support downtown revitalization and neighborhood business development in the cities.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Develop strategies to increase employment growth through more intense and efficient use of existing infrastructure.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Support local innovative businesses and economic activities.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Promote downtowns as a place for innovative and emerging business to expand or relocate.</p>
<b>Goal 4: Attract new businesses to Rice County.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Make available vacant, development-ready land for commercial and industrial use.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Promote well-designed and efficient development and redevelopment of vacant underutilized industrial and commercial lands.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Support redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized industrial and commercial lands rather than designing additional lands for these purposes.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Monitor and update buildable lands inventory to ensure adequate short and long-term supplies of buildable commerce land.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage businesses that are environmentally and economically sustainable.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Encourage programs that promote sustainable business practices (e.g., recycling, green building or other sustainable design features, the use of green or alternative energy, commute trip reduction programs and utilizing by-products of other Rice County businesses).</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Maximize efforts to attract and recruit industries that are best suited for Rice County's assets and opportunities.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Maximize efforts to attract and recruit industries that are best suited for Rice County's assets and opportunities.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Actively encourage businesses that provide family-wage jobs to start-up, expand, or locate in Rice County.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> The County shall assure economic development that promotes other community qualities, such as livability and environmental quality that are necessary for a sustainable economic future.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Develop a branding/marketing efforts to promote Rice County as a place to live and do business.</p>
	<p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Institute appropriate land use regulations to accommodate a contemporary mix of economic activities and development.</p>

	<p><b>Action Item 5:</b> Promote Rice County's cultural, historic, recreational, education, and environmental assets and amenities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 6:</b> Update zoning and subdivision regulations to accommodate for a variety of potential industries.</p> <p><b>Action Item 7:</b> Promote economic development along the Interstate 35 corridor.</p>
<h2>Agricultural Economics: Economic Development</h2> <p><b>Goal 1: Sustain a diverse economic mix for the County by promoting and strengthening agricultural and complementary businesses.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Maintain a strong and productive agricultural economy while promoting the purchase and sale of locally produced products.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> The County, in cooperation with the cities, will actively promote buying locally, farmer's markets, events and agricultural tourism opportunities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Attract agricultural related industries to support diversification and use of raw materials from area farms.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Expand rural business opportunities and enhance rural quality of life.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Work with agencies such as the US Department of Agriculture and other state and local agencies to help fund agricultural resources projects.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Identify strategies that promote agriculture and agricultural support businesses in the County, which may include but not be limited to vineyards, community gardens, agritourism, et al.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Revise the County's regulations and ordinances to address the evolving technological and operational characteristics of farm operations.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2: Expand awareness of local agriculture opportunities and agriculture related businesses within the County.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Expand awareness of local agriculture opportunities and agriculture related businesses within the County.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Develop a program to educate the public and the farming community on agricultural issues and opportunities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Establish a leader and mentorship program to encourage youth involvement in agriculture.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Develop a marketing/awareness campaign focused on local food and agricultural programs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Create outreach programs to engage youth and adults with little or no agricultural experience.</p>

# Land Use

## Growth and Development:

### Goal 1: Support and Encourage Orderly Growth and Development.

<b>Strategy 1.</b> Support land use planning, which encourages orderly growth and sustainable development and redevelopment.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Coordinate infrastructure expansion with development; and encourage development where the infrastructure is adequate to serve that growth.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Support the provision of joint services among jurisdictions.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Remain apprised of expected future urban growth areas.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage a diverse economic mix for Rice County by promoting existing assets and identifying new opportunities.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Create commercial/industrial zones to promote employment and generate tax base in Rice County.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Identify appropriate areas for commercial and industrial developments, including along the I-35 corridor.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Promote agriculture and associated businesses.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Identify and reserve areas with sand, gravel and aggregate deposits for extraction.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Identify additional areas for mixed-use development and further support urban growth.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Continue to evaluate and implement urban growth zones where municipal infrastructure is likely to expand.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Continue to have zoning districts for the unincorporated villages to allow for mixed-use development encouraging the development of municipal type water and sewer services.</p>
<b>Strategy 4.</b> Promote the opportunity to lead active and healthy lifestyles through the coordinated development of infrastructure or supporting programs that promote active lifestyles.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Develop connections between existing communities, parks and other destinations to promote safe and active options.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Create land use regulations to improve proximity to nutritious foods and encourage local wholesome food-related businesses and activities.</p>

<b>Strategy 5.</b> Support and further develop land use patterns that encourage alternative modes of transportation.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Identify and map concentrations of compact residential and employment development that has potential to be served by transit.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Identify existing land uses and travel corridors in the county that could be transformed into transit-friendly corridors.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Encourage local planning for mixed land use areas in or adjacent to transit corridors.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Continue to expand existing partnerships and look for new opportunities to collaborate on providing alternative modes of transportation.</p>
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## Agriculture and Natural Resources:

### Goal 2: Preserve Agricultural Land and Natural Resources.

<b>Strategy 1.</b> Minimize conflicts between agricultural, residential, and other uses.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Adopt land use regulations that control density and development in agricultural and open spaces, to protect and preserve agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Develop management methods for accommodating diverse types of agricultural activity.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Allow and encourage complementary commercial or industrial uses.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Protect and promote agriculture by preserving large tracts of land by encouraging clustering of rural residential development through use of transfer of development rights.</p> <p><b>Action Item 5:</b> Promote higher density housing development in cities and unincorporated villages that can provide municipal or municipal type water and sewer services rather than in the agricultural districts.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Preserve, protect, and improve the surface and underground waters including, but not limited to, rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater, and aquifer recharge areas.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Encourage development to comply with wellhead protection zones.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Develop and employ land use regulations and other techniques for natural resource protection, including transfer of development rights or density, and best management practices.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Recognize the relationship between land use and water quality, and continue to support water quality improvements through land use plans and regulations.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Encourage shore land protection and restoration methods such as vegetative buffers.</p>

	<b>Action Item 5:</b> Promote higher density housing development in cities and unincorporated villages that can provide municipal or municipal type water and sewer services rather than in the agricultural districts.
<b>Strategy 3.</b> In working through land development, the potential for air, water, and land contamination will be considered and minimized throughout the entire process.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Encourage conservation design to preserve natural and scenic values.
	<b>Action Item 2:</b> Support and implement state and federal regulations that pertain to environmental review.
	<b>Action Item 3:</b> Define, by GIS overlay, and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and other open space by allowing only compatible land uses and development.
	<b>Action Item 4:</b> Recognize that soil conditions may limit development potential.
	<b>Action Item 5:</b> Coordinate with Local, State and Federal agencies and organizations to encourage landowners and tenants to implement and maintain good soil erosion healthy soil practices.

## Housing and Livable Communities Design

<b>Goals 1: Create a diverse range of housing types for all income levels.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Partner with local communities to develop and manage housing choices for seniors, low- and moderate-income families, and minorities.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Incorporate services into denser areas that support affordable housing.
	<b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage the availability of an adequate supply of land and infrastructure for multi-family housing developments.
	<b>Action Item 3:</b> Allow accessory dwelling units in single-family houses or single-family lots in certain districts that are subject to specific development, design, and occupancy standards.
	<b>Action Item 4:</b> Encourage the development of mixed income housing units.
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Work with other organizations to coordinate funding for additional affordable housing units.	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Use tax increment financing to support housing projects that serve a mix of incomes and housing types.
	<b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage private-public partnerships to aid in the development of affordable housing.
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Promote mixed-use development near	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Support the provision of rental assistance programs for low-income residents.

infrastructure that integrates rental housing.	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage the cities to use inclusionary zoning and developer incentives to integrate affordable rental units into market rate developments.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Support the provision of programs that provide affordable financing options to owners of rental housing to maintain, improve and upgrade the existing supply of rental housing in the county.</p>
<b>Goal 2: Make available adequate housing for all life stages to ensure diverse communities.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Encourage affordable senior housing to allow residents to age in their own communities instead of needing to relocate to get the care they need.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Work with cities to locate senior housing in or adjacent to basic amenities and transit hubs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Promote a range of housing types for seniors; e.g., adult family homes, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, and independent living communities.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Promote the development of affordable workforce housing for newly hired workers (e.g. teachers, nurses, city/county employees, etc.).	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Provide education on first time home buying and homeownership.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Look for opportunities to co-locate housing with other civic projects and/or employers.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Continue to promote homeownership and increase opportunities for minority families.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Support and collaborate with Rice County's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) on assistance programs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for people with disabilities, people of color, low-income households, diverse household types, and older adults.</p>
<b>Strategy 4.</b> Support housing that addresses the needs of people with physical or developmental disabilities, or mental illness.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Encourage the development of specialized programs to provide rental assistance to persons with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Support development of physically-accessible housing to allow for a diverse supply of affordable, accessible housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities, especially near basic amenity areas and provide services and transit.</p>
<b>Goal 3: Encourage maintenance and improvements of existing housing stock.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Support the provision of homeowner rehabilitation and	<b>Action Item 1:</b> Partner with non-profit housing providers to rehabilitate existing housing for low and moderate income homeowners.

<p>improvement programs that assist low and moderate income residents with the financial means to maintain and improve the quality of their homes.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Advocate grant and loan programs that provide residents with the ability to make energy and weatherization improvements to their properties in order to make their homes more energy efficient.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Support educational programs that provide residents with information on how to rehabilitate, improve and upgrade their homes.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Support local city and township redevelopment efforts.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Support local efforts to retrofit existing homes with accessibility improvements.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Support tax incentives policies that encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing in the county.</p>
<p><b>Goal 4: Advocate for housing near basic amenities and features necessary for a high-quality of life and to maintain a healthy life style.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Support land use patterns that efficiently connect housing, jobs, retail centers and civic uses.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Collaborate with cities to put housing in transit corridors and near greenway/recreation corridors and basic amenities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Encourage compact, mixed-use, multi-modal development that will increase travel options within existing urbanized areas, employment centers, and along transit nodes and corridors.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Encourage the cities to have complete, walkable neighborhoods that provide proximity to daily goods and services in order to decrease automobile dependence, and enhance livability and build community cohesion.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Support the development of housing that is in close proximity to healthy foods and recreational opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Build and encourage partnerships that work to expand residential access to healthy food.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Provide convenient and accessible recreational open space.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Improve year-round access to both public and private recreational facilities.</p>

## Transportation

<p><b>Goal 1: Enhance and maintain a Transportation system that supports economic development along with existing and future land uses.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Update the Rice County Transportation Plan to guide future</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Identify and collaborate with local, regional and State transportation agencies, governmental units, business and county residents to gather input on existing and future concerns.</p>

transportation improvement decisions for the County.	<p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Identify and address emerging deficiencies in capacity, access, mobility, safety, transit, trail and multi-modal needs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Coordinate and work with cities and townships to develop long term land use and transportation plans to develop cost effective and efficient transportation systems.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Improve and expand identified transportation corridors.	<p><b>Action Item 1.</b> Develop priorities, financing scenarios and funding options for improving and expanding identified transportation corridors.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2.</b> Develop partnerships, collaborate and cost-share with local and state transportation agencies on traffic studies, planning and programming of future improvements.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3.</b> Identify preliminary needs for planning, design, right of way, access control and construction of transportation corridors.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4.</b> Consider multi-modal air/rail corridors that may be utilized for economic transport.</p>
<b>Goal 2: Preserve and improve the transportation infrastructure in Rice county to maximize safety and efficiency.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Develop preservation strategies and policies to maintain the existing transportation system to ensure safe and efficient travel.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Review and update access management and cost participation polices.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Analyze crash data to identify potential needs while updating and utilizing adopted safety plans.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Identify and negotiate maintenance agreements that provide more efficient delivery and services.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Identify reconstruction and replacement projects as part of the annual Transportation Improvement Plan.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Evaluate existing conditions and identify future needs in an effective way to maximize and protect existing investment.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Evaluate and prioritize system wide needs, develop funding and collaboration opportunities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Strategically apply for funding to offset county investment needed for the transportation system.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Build a local coalition of support for planning and funding partnerships by encouraging cities, business owners and community groups to be active participants in seeking funding at local, state, and federal levels.</p>
<b>Goal 3: Develop multi-modal and integrated transportation components to enhance options for a diverse population.</b>	

<b>Strategy 1.</b> Support the continued efforts of the County and Cities working together to support transit opportunities.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Evaluate the option of the Park-and Ride facilities for carpool commuters within the county.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Increase current transit options/routes within and outside the cities of Rice County.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Advocate for long-term investment in transit infrastructure.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage usage of the transit systems.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Prioritize transit service and bike/walk infrastructure improvements in populated areas with low vehicle ownership and low access to needed services.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Connect major employers with needed work forces through a variety of multi-modal programs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Encourage increased advertising and education of alternative transportation options and local transit providers.</p>
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Support and incorporate active living principles in transportation plans and identified projects.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Continue working with surrounding counties to establish long range trails that could be used for recreation and transportation.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Work with Cities and Townships to implement safe and appropriate trails crossings and access to the roadway system.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Identify and promote safe pedestrian crossings to promote walkable communities.</p> <p><b>Action Item 4:</b> Support and assist Cities with their Safe Routes to School Plans.</p>

## Parks, Trails, Recreation & Open Space

<b>Goal 1:</b> Utilize all available resources to further enhance the quality of the Rice County Park System.	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Update the 2012 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.	<p><b>Action Item 1.</b> Work with local municipalities, agencies and residents to construct a new and revised Parks Plan that suits all party's needs.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2.</b> Set a timeline for the completion of each section of the Parks Plan.</p>

	<b>Action Item 3.</b> The County will use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the development of updating the Parks Plan.
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Create/update Master Plans for each County Park.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Use GIS to construct descriptive maps for these master plans.
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Identify and implement funding resources for maintenance and improvements of the County Park System.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Work with Inter-county municipalities to secure funding from sources such as grants.
<b>Strategy 4.</b> Promote active communication between the County, local municipalities, and residents.	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Increase the frequency of public meetings and surveys for residents to have the ability to voice their opinions/concerns in regards to County parks, trails, and open spaces.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Improve and update the parks section of the County website.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3.</b> Collaborate with cities, townships, and school districts to promote community use of parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces.</p>
<b>Goals 2: Protect, Enhance, and Maintain County Parks and Open Areas.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Identify areas where future parks, recreation, and open areas could be placed.	<p><b>Action Item 1.</b> Utilize GIS to analyze features for potential uses and future County parks.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2.</b> Work on providing parks, facilities, and programs to underserved areas.</p>
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Continue keeping County parks and trails clean and accessible for residents.	<p><b>Action Item 1.</b> Encourage the development of a volunteer program to help with maintaining and improving the overall quality of the County's natural spaces.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2.</b> Implement excellent maintenance service in the park system.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3.</b> Develop a plan to eliminate physical barriers in all park areas to meet the recreational needs of all residents.</p>

	<b>Action Item 4.</b> Address ADA accessibility across the park and trail system and incorporate changes (where needed) when there are park improvement projects.
<b>Strategy 3.</b> Ensure safety throughout the park system.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Have park and trail map guides easily available for Rice County residents and visitors.
	<b>Action Item 2.</b> Increase and improve wayfinding's throughout County parks.
	<b>Action Item 3.</b> Continue working with the Rice County Sheriff's Office to decrease negative activity going on in parks, open spaces, and trails.
<b>Goal 3. Encourage a Healthy and Active Lifestyle by Promoting the Use of Parks and Trails.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Collaborate with surrounding counties and municipalities to develop potential multi-county trails/parks.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Continue advocating for the expansion of the Sakatah State Trail and the Mills Town Trail.
	<b>Action Item 2.</b> Explore the option of implementing an Adopt-a-Trail program within the County park system.
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Support the development of programs that encourage active living.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Encourage community involvement with the park and trail system. Ex. Park clean-ups, fundraisers for park equipment.
<b>Goal 4: Conserve and Protect Natural Resources that are Present in the County Park System.</b>	
<b>Strategy 1.</b> Park design shall protect and improve the functions of the natural environment and strike a balance between public use and preservation.	<b>Action Item 1.</b> Encourage the establishment of a planting program in parks and open space areas where trees and vegetation are lacking.
	<b>Action Item 2.</b> Support native landscaping and maintenance in County parks, if applicable, to maintain the natural environment.
	<b>Action Item 3.</b> Advocate for the maintenance and development of natural corridors to foster ecosystems continuity and connections to parks and open spaces.
<b>Strategy 2.</b> Encourage the creation, adoption, and usage of Natural Resource Management plans to manage and preserve natural resources within Rice County parks.	

<p><b>Strategy 3.</b> Provide recycling opportunities and facilities at public parks and points along the trail.</p>	
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## Sustainability

<p><b>Goal 1: Enhance, Protect, and Restore Natural Lands and Systems.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Encourage County farmers and agricultural land owners to participate in The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP).</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Protect and manage streams, watersheds, and floodplains.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Promote education about the values of watershed, raingardens, and low-impact development to address storm water run-off.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Minimize the potential for air, water and land contamination and pollution that could result from the development process.</p> <p><b>Action Item 3:</b> Encourage landowners in the shoreland areas to develop and maintain native vegetative buffers.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 3.</b> Encourage collaboration between the county and cities to expand urban &amp; county parks and street tree programs.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 4.</b> Encourage farmers to utilize cover crops programs such as Rice County's Soil and Water Conservation Districts Cover Crop Incentive Program.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 5.</b> Work with County landowners and local municipalities to increase land enrolled in programs like the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement (MN CREP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).</p>	
<p><b>Goal 2: Advocate and Expand the Use of Energy Efficient Methods and Renewable Energy Resources.</b></p>	

<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Encourage cities within Rice County to participate/continue to participate in the Minnesota Green Steps Cities program.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Partner with local communities and organizations to create a Sustainability Plan that aligns with Rice County's future goals.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Evaluate Rice County owned land that is suitable for renewable energy sources as solar gardens and wind turbines.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 3.</b> Collaborate with local municipalities to offer incentives for businesses to incorporate environmentally friendly and sustainable business models and practices.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Work with MinnPACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) and commercial property owners to invest in energy efficiency upgrades.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Advocate for the implementation of green building and energy conservation.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 4.</b> Encourage Rice County residents to reduce their carbon footprint.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Work with local entities to increase the number of electric vehicle charging stations.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Assist homeowners with researching and obtaining grants for the weatherization of their homes.</p>
<p><b>Goal 3: Encourage Waste Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, and Composting.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.</b> Increase accessibility of composting and organics recycling.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Encourage the use of programs like Northfield Curbside Compost.</p> <p><b>Action Item 2:</b> Promote residential backyard composting throughout the county.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 2.</b> Work with local entities to host educational engagements pertaining to waste reduction, reducing and managing food waste, and composting and recycling practices.</p>	<p><b>Action Item 1:</b> Advocate for events going on in Rice County to be zero waste.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 3.</b> Encourage businesses around the County to switch over to more sustainable and biodegradable products.</p>	

<b>Strategy 4.</b> Promote and advocate for funding of food rescue.	

## Appendices

Appendix A: Fundamental Inventory Guide

Appendix B: Public Forum Summary

Appendix C: Community Survey & Results

Appendix D: 2025 Rice County Transportation Plan (May 9, 2006)

Appendix E: Comprehensive Housing Study

Appendix F: Le Sueur & Rice Active Living Profile

Appendix G: Rice County Parks, Recreation & Open Space 2011-2021



## **Chapter 508      Zoning Districts, Zoning Map and Uses**

### **508.01      Division into Districts**

The unincorporated areas of Rice County are hereby divided into the following zoning districts:

A	Agricultural District
UR	Urban Reserve District
RR	Rural Residential District
VMU	Village Mixed-Use District
HC	Highway Commercial District
RI	Rural Industrial District
URI	Urban Reserve Industrial District
GDS	General Development Shoreland Districts
RDS	Recreational Development Shoreland Districts
NES	Natural Environment Shoreland Districts
WS	Wild and Scenic River District

### **508.02      Consistency with Comprehensive Plan**

The zoning districts and uses in this Chapter and the delineation of zoning district boundaries on the zoning map are consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the Rice County Comprehensive Plan.

### **508.03      Zoning Map**

The location and boundaries of the districts established by this Ordinance are set forth on the Zoning Map, which is hereby incorporated as part of this Ordinance.

- A. Corrections and updates shall be recorded on such maps by the Planning Director within thirty (30) days after the official adoption of the zoning amendment by the Rice County Board.
- B. Deleted
- C. The Wild and Scenic River Districts are taken from the Cannon River Management Maps dated January 11, 1980 and produced as part of the Cannon River Management Study and final rule (Minn. Rules, Part 6105.1680) and these maps are hereby incorporated by reference.
- D. The official Zoning Map shall be signed by the Chair of the Board and a certified copy filed by the Auditor with the County Recorder.
- E. Any unauthorized change of a zoning boundary or designation by any person or persons shall be considered a violation of this Ordinance.

### **508.04      District Boundaries**

Where uncertainty exists as to the boundaries of districts as shown on the Official Zoning Map, the following rules shall apply:

- A. Boundaries indicated as approximately following the centerlines of streets, rivers, highways or alleys, shall be construed to follow such center lines.
- B. Boundaries indicated as approximately following platted lot lines shall be construed as following such lot lines.
- C. Boundaries indicated as approximately following established municipal limits and County borders shall be construed as following such lines.
- D. Boundaries indicated as following railroad lines shall be construed to be midway between the main tracks.
- E. Boundaries indicated as approximately following sections, half sections, quarter sections, eighth sections and government lots shall be construed to follow such lines.
- F. Where physical features, are at variance with those shown on the Official Zoning Map, or in other circumstances not covered by Subdivisions A through E above, the Zoning Administrator shall interpret the district boundary.

## **508.05 Permitted, Conditional and Interim Uses**

The following table establishes the uses in the zoning districts within Rice County. For the purposes of the table:

- A. **Permitted uses.** Uses specified with a “P” are permitted as of right in the district or districts where designated, provided that the use complies with all other applicable provisions of this Ordinance.
- B. **Conditional and Interim uses.** Uses specified with a “C” are allowed as a conditional use in the district or districts where designated. Uses specified with an “I” are allowed as an interim use in the district or districts where designated.
- C. **Prohibited uses.** Any use not listed as either “P” (permitted), “C” (conditional), or “I” (interim) in a particular district shall be prohibited in that district.
- D. **Specific development standards.** Any use where an “X” is indicated in the column headed by “Stds” must conform to specific development standards that are contained in Chapter 507. Specific development standards apply in addition to the general criteria for conditional and interim uses in §503.05, and all other applicable regulations.

**Table 508-1 Permitted, Conditional and Interim Uses**

### Notes:

Notes:  
P = Permitted use

C = Conditional use

I=Interim use

X = Standards apply, see specific use in Chapter 507 Specific Development Standards

Y = Standards apply; see Chapter 514 Highway Commercial District and Chapter 522 PUD Standards

\* = Use only allowed for those sites where the use legally existed on the date of adoption of this Ordinance

\*\* = only with existing permitted commercial use

\*\*\*= only locations that have had an existing permitted commercial use

<b>C. Commercial Recreation</b>		<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Std</b>
Campground, private		C	C			C	C						X
Flying field for radio-controlled aircraft						C							X
Go-cart track, miniature golf						C		C					X
Golf course, country club, driving range						C	C						X
Archery range, outdoor						C	C			C			
Gun range, outdoor						C							X
Gun or archery range, indoor						C			C				X
Hunting club, private						C							X
Organized motor sports: ATVs, trucks, tractors or motorcycle tracks or trails (not including auto or other vehicle racing, tracks or events)						C	C						X
Paint ball course						C	C						X
Riding and boarding stable						C	C			C			X
Ski slope, snowboarding, tubing or sledding hills; private						C	C						X
Soccer Club Area, Private						C							X
Water-oriented commercial recreation		C	C										X
<b>D. Civic, Educational, &amp; Institutional</b>		<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Std</b>
Day care center									P	C			X
Religious institution						C	C	C	C				X
Campground, public		C	C			C	C						X
Cemetery						C	C	C	C				
School, public or private						C		C					X
Public Recreational Areas		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
<b>E. Commercial &amp; Industrial</b>		<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Std</b>
Adult entertainment										P			X
Agricultural based therapeutic service uses						C							X
Art, photography, crafts galleries, studios									P				
Auto & recreational equipment & vehicles; sales & repair								C		C			X
Auto service station							C	C	C				X
Auto parts sales, indoor only							C		C				
Auto repair, auto body repair						C*	C	C					X
Bakery							P						
Barber or beauty shop							P						
Cabinet, carpentry shops						C	C	C**	C	C	C		
Cannabis or hemp production									I	I	I		X
Cannabis or hemp retail								I	I				X
Car wash, freestanding or accessory							C						X
Compost facility, private						I	I						X

Notes:

P = Permitted use

C = Conditional use

I=Interim use

X = Standards apply, see specific use in Chapter 507 Specific Development Standards

Y = Standards apply; see Chapter 514 Highway Commercial District and Chapter 522 PUD Standards

\* = Use only allowed for those sites where the use legally existed on the date of adoption of this Ordinance

\*\* = only with existing permitted commercial use

\*\*\*= only locations that have had an existing permitted commercial use

<b>E. Commercial &amp; Industrial, cont.</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Stds</b>
Construction material sales primarily within a building									C	C	C	C
Contractor's office					C	C		P	C	C	C	
Contractor's yard with outdoor storage					C	C		C		C	C	X
Convenience fuel and goods						C**		C	C			X
Corporate office headquarters									P	P		
Demolition Landfill					I	I						
Extraction or excavation of materials & minerals	I	I	I	I	I	I			I			X
Flea market or auction site, permanent					C	C		C				X
Indoor school bus storage					C					C		
Kennel, commercial	C				C	C						X
Laundries, laundromat, dry cleaning								C				
Limited Industrial, permitted									P	P		X
Limited Industrial, conditional									C	C		X
Limited manufacturing, including light assembly and packing								C	C	C		X
Liquefied Petroleum (Propane)					C							
Gas Distribution Services												
Lumber yards								C	P	P		
Medical, dental or other health care offices, clinics								P	C			
Motels, hotels								C	C			X
Offices, professional								P	P	P		
Printing & publishing								C	C	P		X
Railroad switching yards and repair spurs					P	P				P	P	
Recycling or composting facilities, landfills, soil reclamation, County, municipal or institutional					I*	I	I					X
Restaurants, cafes						C**		P	C			X
Retail sales, general								P	C			X
Salvage yard					C*							X
Septage Storage up to 50,000 gallons					C							X
Small appliance repair					C	C		P				
Temporary asphalt plant or highway construction yard and equipment placement					I	I	I	I	I	I		X
Truck (1-ton and heavier) and Heavy Equipment Sales and Repair							C***					
Truck Repair								C				
Truck stop								C*				X
Truck terminal & cartage facility								C	C	C		
Upholstering, furniture repair or restoration					C	C		P				

Notes:

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I=Interim use

X = Standards apply, see specific use in Chapter 507 Specific Development Standards

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Veterinary clinic	C	C	C	C	C	X						
Warehousing & Distribution, permitted			P	P	P	X						
Warehousing, conditional			C	C	C	X						
<b>F. Public Service &amp; Utility Uses</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Stds</b>
Essential public services without towers and transmission lines	P	P	P	C	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Essential public service towers and transmission lines	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	X
Government buildings	C	C	C		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Communications tower					C	C			C	C	C	X
Solar Energy Production					I	I				I		
Wind energy generation facilities and towers, rated for over 40 KW					C	C			C	C		X
Wind energy generation facilities and towers, rated for 40 KW or less	C	C	C		P	P	C	C	P	P		X
Temporary Meteorological test towers and equipment.	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	P		X
<b>G. Uses Accessory &amp; Temporary to Permitted Uses</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Stds</b>
Domestic pets up to 6 animals	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Home day care for up to 14 persons	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	P		X
Home occupation, permitted	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P		X
Home occupation, interim	I	I	I		I	I	I	I		I		X
Outdoor storage					C			C		P	P/C	X
Short-Term Rental, permitted	P	P	P		P	P	P	P				X
Short-Term Rental, interim	I	I	I		I	I	I	I				X
Other temporary uses – yard sales, sale of one personal vehicle	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Grant in-aid parking area and/or trailhead	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	
<b>H. Structures Accessory to Permitted Uses</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Stds</b>
Antennas, including satellite dishes	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X
Detached garages, storage sheds, outbuildings	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Farm drainage systems, flood control and watershed structures, erosion control structures	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Fuel storage, containerized or bulk for use on site and under 1000 gal.	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Outdoor recreation accessory to lodging (including water park, golf)									C	C		

Notes:

P = Permitted use

C = Conditional use

I=Interim use

X = Standards apply, see specific use in Chapter 507 Specific Development Standards

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Private airstrip	C	C
Private swimming pool, tennis court, recreational facilities accessory to a dwelling	P	P
Signs meeting standards in Chapter 505.	P	P

<b>H Structures Accessory to Permitted Uses cont.</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Std</b>
Seasonal roadside stands for sales of farm products primarily produced upon the premises					P	C				P		X
Solar equipment	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)	P	P	P		P	P	P	P				X
Water-oriented accessory structure	P	P										X
Other structures typically incidental and clearly subordinate to permitted use	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X
<b>I Mixed Uses</b>	<b>GDS</b>	<b>RDS</b>	<b>NES</b>	<b>WS</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>VMU</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>URI</b>	<b>Std</b>
Mixed Use Planned Unit Development(PUD) Overlay									C			Y

Notes:

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C = Conditional use

I=Interim use

X = Standards apply, see specific use in Chapter 507 Specific Development Standards

Y = Standards apply; see Chapter 514 Highway Commercial District and Chapter 522 PUD Standards

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## Chapter 509      "A" Agricultural District

### 509.01      Purpose

The purpose of the Agricultural District is preservation of agricultural and natural land to minimize conflicts between agricultural, residential and other non-agricultural uses. This district provides and maintains a diverse economic mix for Rice County by promoting agriculture, agricultural-associated businesses and complementary uses as guided by the Rice County Comprehensive Plan.

### 509.02      Permitted, Conditional, Interim and Accessory Uses, Agricultural District

- A. Permitted, conditional, interim and accessory uses of land are as specified in Table 508-1. All other uses shall be prohibited.
- B. Permitted, conditional and interim uses may be combined on a single parcel, provided that each use meets the dimensional standards of this Chapter and any specific standards in Chapter 507.
- C. Additional requirements, including standards for signs, parking, water supply, waste disposal and sewage treatment, are set forth in Chapters 505 and 506 of this Ordinance, as well as other applicable provisions of this Ordinance and other County ordinances.

### 509.03      Density Standards

- A. The base density permitted in the Agriculture District is one (1) dwelling unit per quarter-quarter section of land. All existing dwellings, including those on parcels of record, are counted towards calculation of the overall base density per quarter-quarter section. Rights that have been transferred from a quarter-quarter section shall be counted against the base density in the quarter-quarter section they have been transferred from.
- B. A second dwelling unit per quarter-quarter section may be permitted on lands that meet one of the requirements of Subsections 1 through 3:
  - 1. The quarter-quarter section must have a weighted average Crop Productivity Index (CPI) of seventy-two (72) or less as established by the National Cooperative Soil Survey as published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the US Department of Agriculture
    - a. A quarter-quarter section qualifying previously with a CER of 65 or less on December 31, 2023 and which currently has a CPI of greater than 72 shall be allowed to qualify under this provision until January 1, 2029, or
  - 2. The parcel to be developed must include at least 1.25 acres of forest land, as defined in this Ordinance. The dwelling need not be located in the forest land to qualify for this provision, or
  - 3. An abandoned farm homestead may be used as a building site for an additional dwelling, provided that there is physical evidence that there was once a dwelling on the site.
  - 4. An additional dwelling shall not be permitted in the following areas:
    - a. Areas classified as wetlands and peat areas or other areas of poor drainage.
    - b. Slopes of twelve percent (12%) or greater, unless accompanied by an engineer's report showing adequate footing, drainage and grading plans.
    - c. Locations that would require a new public dedicated street.
  - 5. All lots permitted under this subsection shall meet the dimensional standards of §509.05 and the standards of the Rice County Sewage and Wastewater Treatment Ordinance.
  - 6. Dwellings shall be sited to minimize intrusions into agricultural land and potential interference with agricultural operations.
- C. Once a given quarter-quarter section has been developed with a single dwelling unit and, where permitted, a second dwelling unit, no further residential development is permitted within that

quarter-quarter section, with the exception of accessory dwelling units, undeveloped parcels of record, or utilizing transferable development rights from another quarter-quarter section.

#### **509.04 Density Transfers**

Within the Agriculture District, density units may be transferred across quarter-quarter section boundaries and between parcels as specified in Chapter 520, Transfer of Development Rights and Chapter 521, Cluster Development Standards.

#### **509.05 Dimensional Standards**

- A. **Minimum lot area, residential lot:** 35 acres, or a minimum of 1 acre if the site qualifies under §509.03 B.
- B. **Minimum lot area, dwelling of record:** A parcel containing a dwelling of record may be reduced in size to 1.0 acres. The remainder of the parcel may only be used or developed in accordance with the density standards of §509.03.
- C. **Minimum lot area, all other uses:** 2.5 acres, or as specified by conditional or interim use permit.
- D. **Minimum lot width:** 100 feet
- E. **Minimum front yard setback:**

County road, State Highway	100 feet
Township, other road	70 feet
Front property line	70 feet
- F. **Minimum side yard setback:** 20 feet, with the exception of buildings containing livestock, which shall have a minimum setback of 100 feet.
- G. **Minimum rear yard setback:**
  1. Principal buildings: 70 feet
  2. Accessory buildings: 20 feet
  3. Livestock buildings: 100 feet
- H. **Maximum height:** 35 feet. Agricultural structures are exempt from height limitations.
- I. **Feedlot setback:** The minimum setback for new residences from existing feedlots shall be the same as the requirements established in the Rice County Feedlot Ordinance for setbacks of feedlots from existing residences.

## Chapter 510 "UR" Urban Reserve District

### 510.01 Purpose

The purpose of the Urban Reserve District is to implement urban growth zones where municipal infrastructure is likely to expand by reserving large tracts for future development. This district, based on the urban growth areas identified by the municipalities, supports and encourages orderly growth and development as guided by the Rice County Comprehensive Plan.

### 510.02 Permitted, Conditional, Interim and Accessory Uses, Urban Reserve District

- A. Permitted, conditional, interim and accessory uses of land are as specified in Table 508-1. All other uses shall be prohibited.
- B. Permitted, conditional and interim uses may be combined on a single parcel, provided that each use meets the dimensional standards of this Chapter and any specific standards in Chapter 507.
- C. Additional requirements, including standards for signs, parking, water supply, waste disposal and sewage treatment, are set forth in Chapters 505 and 506 of this Ordinance, as well as other applicable provisions of this Ordinance and other County ordinances.

### 510.03 Dimensional Standards

- A. **Minimum lot area, residential lot:** 35 acres
  1. A parcel with a dwelling existing as of the date of adoption of this Ordinance may be reduced in size to a lot of no less than 1.0 acres, provided that a conservation easement is recorded on the residual parcel prohibiting further development or subdivision. The terms of the conservation easement shall be those stated in §520.07 C., except that the easement may be terminated by Rice County at such time as the property is annexed by the adjacent municipality.
- B. **Minimum lot area, all other land uses:** 2.5 acres or as specified by conditional or interim use permit
- C. **Minimum lot width:** 100 feet
- D. **Minimum front yard setback:**

County road, State Highway	100 feet
Township or other road	70 feet
Front property line	70 feet
- E. **Minimum side yard setback:** 20 feet, with the exception of buildings containing livestock, which shall have a minimum setback of 100 feet.
- F. **Minimum rear yard setback:**
  1. Principal buildings: 70 feet
  2. Accessory buildings: 20 feet
  3. Livestock buildings: 100 feet
- G. **Maximum height:** 35 feet

## Chapter 523 Subdivision Regulations

### 523.01 Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to regulate the subdividing of land in Rice County lying outside the incorporated limits of a city, so that new subdivisions will be integrated with the development and protection objectives of Rice County as expressed in the Rice County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and contribute to an attractive, stable and wholesome environment, adequate public services and an integrated and safe street and highway system.

### 523.02 Land Suitability Requirement

No land shall be subdivided which is held unsuitable by the County for the proposed use because of any of the following conditions:

- A. Flooding
- B. Inadequate drainage
- C. Soil and rock formations with severe limitations for development
- D. Severe erosion potential
- E. Unfavorable topography
- F. Inadequate water supply or sewage disposal capabilities
- G. Any other feature likely to be harmful to the health, safety, or welfare of the future residents and or development of the proposed subdivision or of the community

### 523.03 Geographic Scope

The rules and regulations governing plats and subdivision of land contained in this Chapter shall apply to all lands lying outside the incorporated limits of a city in Rice County and other land as permitted by State Statutes.

### 523.04 Rice County Plat Review Committee

Some plats and subdivisions may occur outside of the geographic scope of this Chapter as stated in §523.03. Plats and subdivisions that lie outside the geographic scope of this Chapter shall be reviewed by the Rice County Plat Review Committee of which the County shall be a member. The township or incorporated city with primary review authority shall deliver a copy of the proposed plat or subdivision to the Plat Review Committee within five (5) days of receipt from the applicant. The Plat Review Committee shall review the plat or subdivision and deliver comments to the primary review authority within ten (10) days of receipt of the proposed plat or subdivision.

### 523.05 Exceptions to Scope

Except in the case of resubdivision, this Ordinance shall not apply to any lot or lots forming a part of a subdivision recorded in the office of the County Recorder prior to July 8, 1975, nor is it intended by this Ordinance to repeal, annul or in any way impair or interfere with existing provisions of other laws or ordinances except those specifically repealed by, or in conflict with this Ordinance, or with restrictive covenants running with the land. Where this Ordinance imposes a greater restriction upon the land than is imposed or required by such existing provisions of law, ordinance, contract or deed, the provisions of this Ordinance shall control.

**523.06 Subdivisions Processed as Plats**

All subdivisions that create two (2) or more lots or parcels that are two and one-half (2-1/2) acres or less in size shall be processed as a plat in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 505. The County Board may waive any or all of the provisions of this Section and may grant a "Waiver of Platting," however, conditions may be imposed upon the "Waiver of Platting".

**523.07 Subdivision Approval Required for Permits**

No permit for construction of buildings or sewage treatment systems shall be issued for lots created after enactment of this Ordinance unless the lots were approved as part of a formal subdivision.

**523.08 Subdivision Review Process**

The following process shall be followed in reviewing plats and subdivisions in Rice County:

- A. **Preliminary and final plat review required.** No real property within the jurisdiction of this Ordinance shall be subdivided and offered for sale or a plat recorded until a preliminary plat and a final plat of the proposed subdivision have been reviewed by the Planning Commission and the final plat has been approved by the County Board as set forth in the procedures provided herein. Plans of group developments for housing, commercial, industrial or other uses or for any combination of uses designed for rental purposes shall be presented in the same manner as other plats for the review of the Planning Commission and the approval of the County Board.
- B. **Pre-application meeting.** Prior to the preparation of a preliminary plat, the applicant shall meet with the Zoning Administrator, and other appropriate officials in order to be made fully aware of all applicable ordinances, regulations and plans in the area to be subdivided. The applicant is urged to avail himself of the advice and assistance of the Planning Commission and County staff at this point in order to save time and effort, and to facilitate the approval of the preliminary plat.
  1. **Sketch plan.** At the pre-application meeting or at subsequent informal meetings, the applicant shall submit a general sketch plan of the proposed subdivision and preliminary proposals for the provision of water supply and waste disposal. The sketch plan shall include:
    - a. A line drawing to accurate scale with the scale indicated on the plan;
    - b. Topography of the site;
    - c. General location and number of buildings;
    - d. General location of roads and access; and
    - e. The relationship of the proposed subdivision to existing community facilities that would serve it, and to neighboring subdivisions and developments.
- C. **Preliminary plat.** After the pre-application meeting, the applicant shall apply for a platting permit with the Zoning Administrator and shall file twelve (12) copies of a preliminary plat with the Zoning Administrator.
  1. **Data required.** The data required for preliminary plats is detailed in §523.09.
  2. **Reviewing bodies.** The Zoning Administrator shall refer an appropriate number of copies to the Planning Commission for their review and report. The plat shall be submitted to the Planning Commission at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting of the Planning Commission at which consideration of the plat is requested. Any proposed plat located within two (2) miles of a city shall also be submitted to the City and Town Board in which the proposed plat is located, the County Soil and Water Conservation District and the County Highway Engineer for review. Any comments regarding said plat shall be returned to the Zoning Administrator for review at the public hearing.
  3. **Public hearing.** Within forty-five (45) days after the plat has been submitted and after reports and certifications have been received as requested, the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on the preliminary plat after notice of the time and place thereof has been published once in the official newspaper at least ten (10) days before the day of the

hearing. Notice of the public hearing shall also be sent to the property owners within five hundred (500) feet of the property to be subdivided in incorporated areas and property owners within one-half (1/2) mile of the property to be subdivided in unincorporated areas. This shall constitute the public hearing on the plat as required by state law.

4. **Planning Commission review and report.** Within fifteen (15) days of the date of the close of the public hearing, the Planning Commission shall make its report to the County Board. The Planning Commission and the Zoning Administrator shall forward to the County Board a favorable, conditional or unfavorable report and said reports shall contain a statement of findings and recommendations.
5. **County Board review and report.** The Rice County Board shall act to approve or disapprove the preliminary plat within sixty (60) days after receiving the recommendations of the Planning Commission, unless a written extension is granted by the applicant. If the County Board disapproves the preliminary plat, the grounds for any such disapproval shall be set forth in the Minutes of the Board meeting and reported to the applicant within thirty (30) days after the meeting of the County Board.
6. **Planning Commission and County Board review standards.** In the case of all subdivisions, the Planning Commission and the County Board shall make the following findings:
  - a. That the proposed subdivision is not in conflict with adopted applicable general and specific plans of Rice County;
  - b. That the physical characteristics of the site, including but not limited to topography, vegetation, susceptibility to erosion and siltation, susceptibility to flooding, water storage, drainage and retention, are such that the site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development;
  - c. That the site is physically suitable for the proposed density of development;
  - d. That the design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are not likely to cause substantial environmental damage;
  - e. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements is not likely to cause serious public health problems;
  - f. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will not conflict with easements of record or with easement established by judgment of a court.
  - g. That the physical characteristics of the site will insure that each lot or parcel contains sufficient area outside of the floodway for fill placement for elevating structures, sewage systems and related activities.
  - h. In the Flood Plain District the proposal shall be evaluated in accordance with the standards established in Chapter 518 of this Ordinance.
- D. **Final plat approval required before rights vested.** The approval of a preliminary plat is an acceptance of the general layout as submitted, and indicates to the applicant that he may proceed toward a final plat in accordance with the terms of approval and provisions of the Ordinance. The applicant shall file the final plat with the County Recorder within six (6) months after approval of the final plat or the approval of the preliminary and final plat shall be null and void. During the intervening time between approval of the preliminary plat and the signing of the final plat, the applicant shall submit acceptable engineering plans for all required improvements.
- E. **Final plat.** The applicant shall file two (2) copies of the final plat with the Zoning Administrator prior to the Planning Commission meeting at which it will be considered. If this is not done within six (6) months, the preliminary plat will be considered void unless for good cause an extension is requested in writing by the applicant and granted by the Board.
  1. **Final plat requirements.** The following are requirements for final plat applications:
    - a. Data required in §523.09.

- b. All changes required in the report approving the preliminary plat.
- c. The applicant may be required to submit at this time an up-to-date certified abstract of title or registered property report.
- d. The final plat shall have incorporated all changes recommended by the County Engineer regarding roads, and the County Board as to conditions of approval of the preliminary plat, but in all other respects it shall conform to the preliminary plat as approved. It may constitute only that portion of the approved preliminary plat that the applicant proposed to record and develop at that time, provided that such a portion conforms to all requirements of this Ordinance.

2. **Review.** The Zoning Administrator shall refer an appropriate number of copies of the final plat to the County staff for its review and report. The report of these agencies and persons shall be submitted to the County Board within thirty (30) days of the date of submission of the plat and the County Board shall act on the final plat within sixty (60) days of submission of the final plat.

3. **Recordation of final plat required.** Upon approval of the final plat by the Rice County Board, the applicant shall record such final plat with the County Recorder, as provided for that office, within ninety (90) days after the approval. Otherwise the approval of the final plat shall be considered void. The applicant shall, within thirty (30) days of recording, furnish the Zoning Administrator with one copy of the recorded plat. In addition to providing the printed copy, the applicant shall also furnish the Zoning Administrator with one micro-fiche slide of the final plat.

### **523.09 Data for Preliminary and Final Plats**

Required data for preliminary and final plat applications are listed below:

- A. **Data for Preliminary Plat.** The applicant shall engage a qualified land planner, registered land surveyor or engineer to prepare a preliminary plat of the area to be subdivided. The preliminary plat shall contain:
  - 1. **Identification and Description**
    - a. Proposed name of subdivision, which shall not duplicate or be similar in pronunciation or spelling to the name of any plat heretofore recorded in the County and the name must have approval of the County Zoning Administrator.
    - b. Location by section, township, range, and by legal description.
    - c. Names and addresses of the record owner, any agent having control of the land, applicant, land surveyor, engineer, or designer of the plan.
    - d. Graphic scale not less than one (1) inch to one hundred (100) feet.
    - e. North arrow.
    - f. Key map of the surrounding area.
    - g. Date of preparation.
  - 2. **Existing Conditions**
    - a. Boundary line of proposed subdivision, clearly indicated to a reasonable degree of accuracy.
    - b. Existing zoning classifications for land within and abutting the subdivision.
    - c. A listing of the approximate acreage and dimensions of the lots.
    - d. Location, right-of-way width, names of existing or platted streets, or other public ways, parks, other public lands, permanent buildings and structures, easements, section and corporate lines within the plan and to a distance one hundred (100) feet beyond shall also be indicated.

- e. Boundary lines of adjoining unsubdivided or subdivided land, within one hundred (100) feet, identified by name and ownership, including all contiguous land owned or controlled by the applicant.
- f. Topographic data, including contour intervals of two (2) feet unless the grade is more than 15 percent, waterways, marshes, rock outcrops, power transmission poles and lines, and other significant features shall also be shown.
- g. A soils analysis and soil percolation tests of the subdivision using S.C.S. data and information may be required by the County Board if conditions warrant it.
- h. For all subdivisions in the Flood Plain, Flood Way and Flood Fringe boundaries, the regulatory flood plain elevation and the required elevation of all access roads shall be clearly labeled on all required subdivision drawings and platting documents.
- i. If a proposed subdivision requires the removal of the special Flood Hazard Area designation, full compliance with FEMA shall be established.

3. **Subdivision Design Features**

- a. Layout of proposed streets showing the right-of-way widths, centerline gradients, and typical cross sections if requested by the Zoning Administrator.
- b. Location and widths of proposed pedestrian ways.
- c. Layout, numbers and preliminary dimensions of lots and blocks.

4. **Other Information**

- a. Statement of the proposed use of lots stating type of residential buildings with the number of proposed dwelling units and type of business or industry, so as to reveal the effect of the development on traffic, fire hazards, and congestion of population.
- b. Provision for surface water and sanitary sewage disposal, drainage, and flood control.
- c. If any zoning changes are contemplated, the proposed zoning for the areas.
- d. Where the applicant owns property adjacent to that which is being proposed for the subdivision, the Planning Commission may require that the applicant submit a sketch plan of the remainder of the property so as to show the possible relationships between the proposed subdivision and the future subdivision. In any event, all subdivisions shall be shown to relate well with existing or potential adjacent subdivisions.
- e. A plan for soil erosion and sediment control both during construction and after development has been completed may be required by the County Board.
- f. For subdivisions in a VMU Extension area as regulated by Chapter 513, the applicant shall show the location of dedicated easements necessary for future connections to public utilities.
- g. Such other information as may be requested by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission.

B. **Data for Final Plat.** The plat shall be prepared by a land surveyor who is registered in the State of Minnesota and shall comply with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 505 and these regulations.

1. Surveying requirements of the final plat shall be under the regulation of the County Surveyor or a Registered Land Surveyor appointed by the County Board.
2. Execution by all owners of any interest in the land and any holders of a mortgage therein of the certificate required by Minnesota Statutes and which certificate shall include an accurate legal description of any area to be dedicated for public cause and shall include a dedication to the County of sufficient easements to accommodate utility services.

3. Special conditions and or restrictions pertaining to the approval of the final plat by the County Board shall be recorded as covenants. Recording of the special conditions or restrictions shall be the obligation of the developer.

C. **Certifications.** The following certifications shall be obtained by the applicant as part of final approval of the final plat:

1. For approval by signature of County officials concerned with the recording of the plat.

(1) No delinquent taxes and transfer entered this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

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(Name)

Rice County Auditor

(2) Checked and approved as in compliance with the Rice County Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

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Chairman

Rice County Planning Commission

Approved by Rice County Board of Commissioners this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

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Chairman of Rice County Board

Attest:

Rice County Auditor \_\_\_\_\_

#### **523.10 Subdivision Design Standards**

All subdivisions shall meet the design standards in Chapters 505, 506 and 507 of this Ordinance, and shall meet the following additional design standards:

- A. **General.** The layout of the subdivision shall harmonize with site conditions and surrounding conditions and land uses, and shall be in conformity with the development objectives of the County as expressed in the Rice County Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
- B. **Streets.** The design of streets shall meet the provisions of Chapter 505 and the Access Guidelines of Rice County, and the following additional provisions:

1. Half streets shall be prohibited.
2. Private streets shall be prohibited.
3. The street arrangements shall not be such as to cause hardship to owners of adjoining property in platting their own land and providing convenient access to it.

C. **Lot design.** Lot dimensions shall be such as to comply with the minimum lot areas specified for the type of use in the applicable zoning district. The following additional design standards shall be met:

1. **Side lot lines.** Side lines of lots shall be substantially at right angles to straight street lines or radial to curved street lines. Each lot shall abut a public street or highway.
2. **Drainage.** Lots shall be designed so as to provide drainage away from building locations.
3. **Lot Remnants.** All remnants of lots below minimum size left over after subdividing of a larger tract must be added to adjacent lots rather than allowed to remain as unusable parcels unless the owner can show plans for the future use of such remnants wherein they shall be platted as outlots (reserve lots).
4. **Land locked parcels.** As a general rule, the County shall not permit land locked parcels or parcels that are only served by private easements. However, the County may permit the following:
  - a. Land locked parcels in a multiple dwelling or commercial complex provided said parcel(s) have access to a public street by an easement over another parcel within the same multiple dwelling or commercial complex. Said land locked parcel is permitted in this instance only for the purpose of establishing separate taxable parcels within a complex.
  - b. Land locked parcels which are unbuildable (outlots) and reserved as permanent public open spaces such as ponding areas may be permitted. A scenic easement may be required by the County to insure that the property is preserved as open space.

D. **Natural features.** In the subdividing of any land, due regard shall be shown for all natural features, such as tree growth, wetlands, steep slopes, water courses, historic spots, or similar conditions, and plans adjusted to preserve those which will add attractiveness, safety and stability to the proposed development.

E. **Easements**

1. All easements shall be dedicated by appropriate language on the plat as required by Minnesota Statutes §505.02, Subdivision 2.
2. Utilities easements shall be provided for utilities where necessary.
3. Where a subdivision is traversed by a waterway, drainage way, channel or stream, there shall be provided a storm water easement or drainage right-of-way substantially within the lines of such water course, together which such further width or construction or both, as will be adequate for storm water runoff. The easement shall include not only the stream channel, but also adjoining areas that have been subject to flooding in years of heavy runoff.

F. **Parks, trailways and recreation areas**

1. **Designation on Preliminary Plat.** Where a proposed park, trailway, ponding or open space area, shown on or referenced the Rice County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, or Official Map, is located in the whole or in part in a subdivision, such area or areas shall be shown on the preliminary plat. Such area or areas shall also be dedicated to the County by the applicant if the County requests such dedication under the provisions of paragraphs below.
2. **Parkland dedication required.** Said dedicated land shall be in an amount determined to be reasonable by the County. Said land must be suitable and acceptable for said uses(s), as determined by the County.

- a. In lieu of the conveyance of dedicated land as provided above, the applicant may, at the option of the County, pay to the County, for use in acquisition and development of parks or ponding areas, a cash payment to the County. Such payment shall be based upon a formula established by resolution of the County Board.
- 3. **Land in excess of dedication requirement.** Where land proposed for public use exceeds the percentage normally required by the County and the applicant will not dedicate the additional amount, the County shall have six (6) months from the date of initial consideration to proceed and purchase said additional amount. Where a purchase is not initiated within said six (6) months, the plat shall be revised to permit another use and the processing of the plat shall continue.
- 4. **Condition of areas to be dedicated.** Areas to be dedicated for public park, trail or ponding shall be brought to a suitable condition by the applicant prior to acceptance by the County. All dead trees, trash, junk, unwanted structures or similar undesirable elements shall be removed by the owner at this expense.
- 5. **Title and survey requirements.** Lands so dedicated shall be accompanied by a certificate of survey or shall be designated as a lot or outlot on the plat as determined by the County. Such lands shall be free and clear of all liens and encumbrances including special assessments as evidenced by an up-to-date Abstract of Title or Registered Property Abstract to be submitted at developer's cost to the County for its examination. Such dedication shall be in the form and manner as prescribed by the County Attorney.

#### **523.11 Improvements Required**

Prior to the approval of a final plat, the applicant shall have agreed in the manner set forth below to install in conformity with construction plans approved by the County Engineer and in conformity with all applicable standards and ordinances, the following improvements on the site:

- A. **Monuments.** Monuments of a permanent character, as required by Minnesota Statutes §505.02, shall be placed at each corner or angle on the outside boundary of the subdivision; and pipes or steel rods shall be placed at corners, angle points and curve points on each lot.
- B. **Streets.** All streets shall be improved in accordance with the engineering specifications established by the County Engineer.
- C. **Water Supply.** Where a connection with a community water system is possible, the public water shall be used. In other instances, safe and palatable water shall be provided by a central distribution system serving the subdivision or by individual wells. In all cases, water shall be supplied in accordance with Environmental Health Services Division specifications.
- D. **Sanitary Sewer.** In all cases where trunk line sanitary sewer facilities are available, the applicant shall be required to install sanitary sewers and connect the same to such trunk line sewers. In other instances, sanitary sewage disposal shall be by a central system serving the subdivision or by individual systems. Provisions shall be made for future connections to any planned municipal utilities. In all cases, sewage disposal systems shall be provided in accordance with Environmental Health Services Division specifications.
- E. **Drainage.** A system that will adequately take care of the surface water runoff within the subdivision shall be provided. Storm sewers and culverts shall be installed where necessary in conjunction with the grading of streets. Cross drains shall be provided to accommodate all natural water flow and shall be of sufficient length to permit full-width roadways and required side slopes. Drainage ditches shall be sodded to prevent erosion. A proposed grading program may also be required.
- F. **Street Signs.** Street signs of standard design approved by the County Board shall be installed at each street intersection.

#### **523.12 Payment for Installation of Improvements**

Before a Final Plat is approved by the County Board, the Board may require the applicant to submit a performance bond or cash escrow agreement to assure the following:

**A. General.**

1. The applicant shall pay for the cost of all improvements required in the subdivision and the subdivision's share of the costs of any trunk facilities to be extended to the subdivision with the exception of individual wells and individual sewage disposal systems.
2. Guarantee completion of the required improvements within a two (2) year period.
3. Payment by the applicant for all costs incurred by the County for review and inspection. This would include preparation and review of plans and specifications by technical assistants and costs incurred by the County Attorney, as well as other costs of a similar nature. This payment would be in addition to the subdivision fee paid with the submission of the preliminary plat.
4. The County may elect to install any of the required improvements under the terms of a cash escrow agreement.
5. The performance bond or cash escrow agreement shall be equal to one and one-quarter (1 and 1/4) times the estimated cost of the requirement improvements.
6. If the required improvements are not complete within the two (2) year period, all amounts held under the escrow agreement or performance bond shall be turned over and delivered to the County and applied to the cost of the required improvements. Any balance remaining after such improvements have been made shall be returned to the applicant.
7. The applicant shall satisfy park dedication requirements by dedication of land or cash in lieu thereof.

**B. Construction plans.** Construction plans for the required improvements, conforming in all respects to the standards of Rice County and applicable ordinances, may be required to be prepared at the applicants expense by a licensed architect or professional engineer licensed to design the type of construction proposed and registered in the State of Minnesota and said plans shall contain his/her seal. Such plans together with the quantity of construction items, shall be submitted to the County Engineer for approval and for an estimate of total cost of the required improvements; upon approval they shall become a part of the approval. Two reproducible prints of the plan approved shall be provided to Rice County and filed by the County.

**523.13 Exceptions**

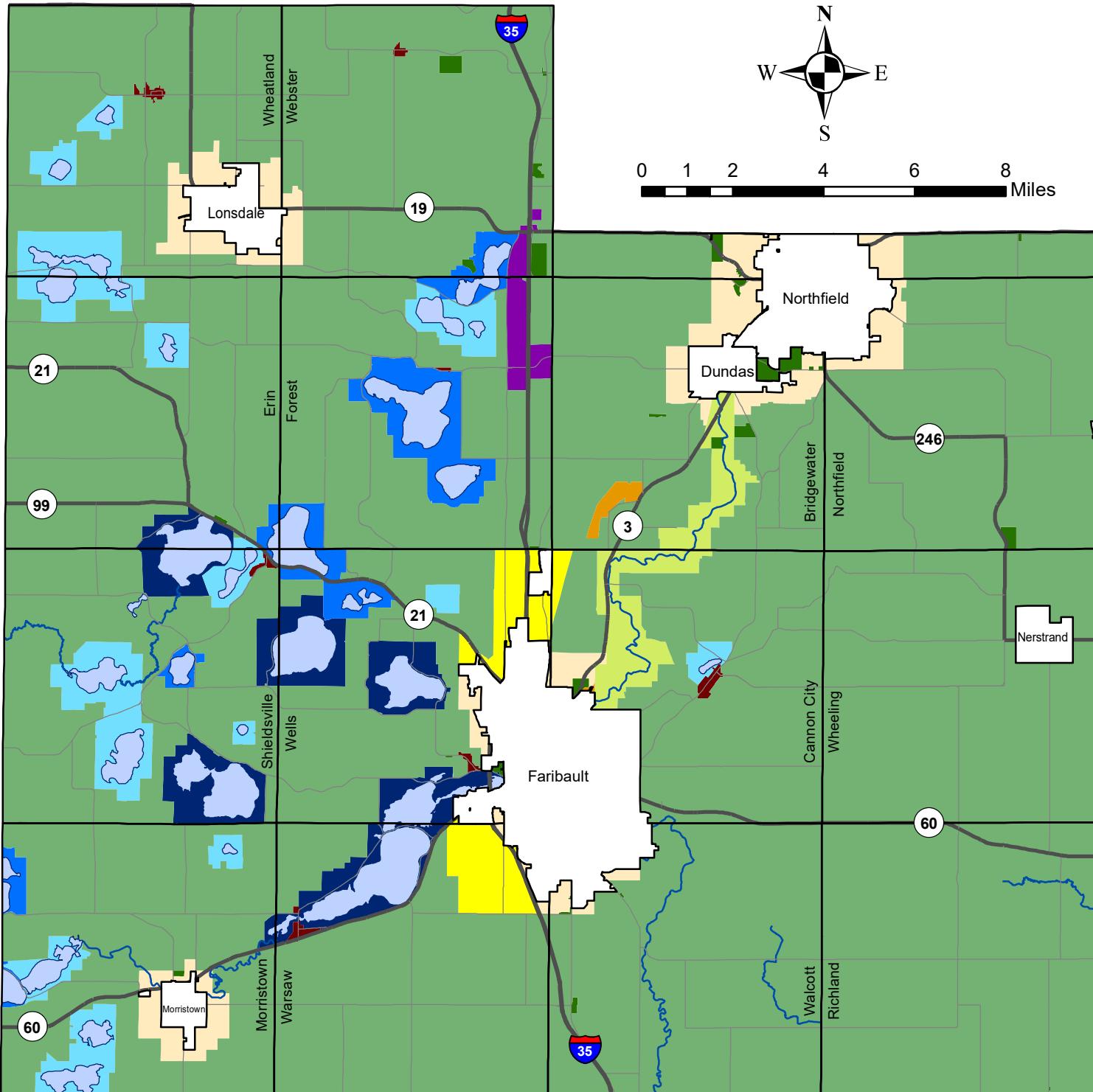
The County Board may, but is not required to, grant an exception to the provisions of this Chapter upon resolution only for the following reasons:

**A. Minor Subdivisions.** For small subdivisions of a minor nature in size or complexity, certain requirements of these regulations may be waived if the County Board, following recommendation by the Planning Commission, so determines, and following compliance with procedures as follows:

1. Simple Lot Split - When one parcel or lot of record is divided to result in two lots or parcels, the submission of topographic maps, soil tests and other data may be waived. Transfer of title or the process of subdividing shall be by filing of a final plat.
2. Waiver of Plat - Where no more than two lots are created and where both lots exceed five (5) acres in area, the County Board may waive the requirement for platting but may attach any conditions to the waiver to otherwise satisfy the requirements of this Ordinance.
3. Said five (5) acres may include adjacent public road right-of-way.



# Rice County Zoning Map



- General Development Shoreland
- Recreational Development Shoreland
- Natural Environment Shoreland
- Wild and Scenic River

- Urban Reserve
- Urban Reserve Industrial
- Agricultural
- Rural Residential

- Village Mixed-Use
- Highway Commercial
- Rural Industrial
- City

Amended November 26, 2024

GIS by Rice County

Map features are representations of original data sources and do not replace or modify land surveys, deeds, or other legal instruments defining land ownership or use.