



DRAFT

# City of Rice Lake Comprehensive Plan

May 2020

**Submitted by:**

Bolton & Menk, Inc.  
4960 Miller Trunk  
Highway Address  
Suite 350  
Duluth, MN 55811  
P: 218-729-5939



Real People. Real Solutions.

# Introduction

A comprehensive plan is a long-range planning document intended to identify a community's vision, goals, and policies to guide future development and public investment. Simply put, a comprehensive plan describes the hopes, dreams and aspirations a community holds for itself. Through public input, a comprehensive plan identifies infrastructure needs, promotes the preservation of natural resources, and guides land use and transportation patterns.

The City of Rice Lake's Comprehensive Plan is the policy document providing a foundation for growth and development. It provides an overview of Rice Lake's historical context, demographics, existing and future land use, economic climate, public utilities, transportation, natural resources and parks and trails. The Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives and policies to guide land use development, redevelopment, and preservation of all lands and waters within the City. It also proposes a plan to implement these policies through the 2040 timeframe.

But the comprehensive plan is more than just a document. The process provided an opportunity to engage the public in local decisions and to allow people with different perspectives to articulate the sort of community they would like to live in and leave behind. Together, the City and its residents came together to create a plan for ***"Preserving Our Future."***

## Purpose of the Plan

Minnesota Statutes, Section 462.351 describes legislative goals for city and township planning:

- Guide future development of land.
- Prepare for anticipated change.
- Ensure a safer, more pleasant and economic environment.
- Preserve forest, timberland, wetlands and other open lands.
- Enable other public and private agencies to plan their activities in harmony with the plan.
- Assist in developing lands more wisely to serve citizens more effectively.

A comprehensive plan creates a framework to make sound decisions that positively affect the City of Rice Lake and provide guidance for the community to reach its' long-term goals.

## Using the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides the foundation for the City's zoning, subdivision and other land use regulations. The Plan also provides the basis for the City's fiscal decisions, such as infrastructure improvements, purchase or disposal of City property, or economic development. Simply put, the Comprehensive Plan is a practical working guide for the Planning Commission and City Council in making everyday decisions. These decisions may fall into two categories:

- Developing and implementing regulatory controls, and financial tools and programs. These include the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, capital improvement plans, transportation plans, and investments in parks and trails . In each of these cases, the Planning Commission and City Council evaluates the control, tool or program to ensure it is implementing the goals and policies established by the Comprehensive Plan.

- Project proposals by private citizens, builders/developers, and other public agencies. The Planning Commission and City Council evaluate the proposed project in view of its conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

## Process

Beginning in September 2019, the City of Rice Lake worked with Bolton and Menk, Inc. to complete the Comprehensive Plan. Descriptive data about the City were gathered through a variety of sources, including:

- A community survey was available online from September 2019 thru \_\_\_\_\_. Questions in the survey asked basic demographic data of the respondent, community assets and weaknesses, visions for the future, and investment priorities. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ responses were collected. The responses helped form the goals and objectives of the Plan. A summary of the Community Survey response is provided in Appendix A.
- A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was formed to inform the overall comprehensive process and guide policy goals and recommendations. The group was comprised of key community leaders from public, private, and government spheres. The committee met once at the beginning of the comprehensive planning process and reviewed the draft plan prior to submittal to the City Council.
- Information from previous plans has been incorporated into this plan where appropriate.

The City used a variety of resources to gather public input on the Plan, including:

- The City held \_\_\_\_\_ “pop-up” meetings to raise awareness about this project and to discuss different elements of the plan.
- A public open house was held \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss the draft comprehensive plan.
- A project website provided regular updates and links to the plan as it was developed.
- Regular updates on the plan were provided to the Planning Commission as part of its regular meeting schedule.
- The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the plan on \_\_\_\_\_.
- The City Council formerly reviewed and adopted the final plan on \_\_\_\_\_.

## A Vision for Rice Lake

The City of Rice Lake established the following vision statement:

City of Rice Lake, with its recreational amenities and rich rural character, strives to provide a well-balanced, secure, and enjoyable living environment for citizens of all ages. As a friendly, quiet, family oriented community, the citizens of the City appreciate and respect the needs of their neighbors. Families will raise their children in safety, peace and quiet, away from the congestion and noise of the city. The City will work together with its residents to sustain moderate commercial, residential and recreational growth, while making sure not to alter the

existing character of the City. Proactive decision-making, and the provision of services on the part of the City will maintain the existing quality of life.

## Goals

The planning process identified a set of overarching goals to expand on the vision statement and to guide the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Guide Land and Manage Growth**

An important role of the Comprehensive Plan is to appropriately guide the use of land and manage the timing by which it is developed. This important challenge is met with careful decisions about land uses, including the location and amount of specific land uses necessary to meet the need and demand for new housing of all types, provide increased areas of commercial, industrial and job growth, and to meet park and recreation facility needs. The timing of development is based on the location and characteristics of growth and on the logical and practical use and extension of municipal services and infrastructure.

### **Protect Natural Resources**

The City of Rice Lake has a diversity of natural resources within the community. Rice Lake is committed to preserving these resources as they are integral parts of the community and provide food, as well as animal and fish habitat. Access to these resources connects residents to nature, encourages active and healthy lifestyles, and promotes community interaction.

### **Allow a variety of land uses and residential densities while maintaining the City's existing rural character.**

Rice Lake has diverse land uses emphasizing its rural nature and natural landscape, including wooded areas, large lot rural residential housing, open spaces, and more intense uses where municipal sewer and water are available. The mix of land uses in different parts of the City changes with the geography, and is preserved and maintained by sound, intentional land use policies.

### **Provide economic opportunities for residents and businesses.**

Economic opportunities in the City continue to evolve. The City will seek solutions to create economic opportunities for employment and to provide needed services for Rice Lake residents.

## Background and Community History

Rice Lake was founded as a township in 1870 and was one of the first to be established in the St. Louis County area.

During his travels through northern Minnesota in 1680, Father Louis Hennepin observed the Sioux and Dakota Indians enjoying the land around Wild Rice Lake in present-day Rice Lake. These two groups had forced the Hidatsa Indian Tribe from the region earlier. By 1750, the Sioux were driven from the land by the Ojibwa, who were in turn forced by white settlers to live on reservation lands in 1854 by the Treaty of La Pointe. Shortly after, the area was opened for settlement by newcomers. The town of Valley Field was platted on the northeast side of Wild Rice Lake, but due to hardships during 1857 and 1858, was never developed.

A small number of settlers were attracted to Rice Lake Township in the late 1800's as a result of the National Homestead Act of 1862. Under this act, an individual could gain title to a piece of land

simply by living on it for five years and making improvements to the land. By 1900, when the first record of the population was taken, there were 231 inhabitants. Ten years later, that number had more than doubled to 580 and by 1930 had reached 916. During this period the assessed valuation of the township also increased rapidly. It rose from \$62,254 in 1873 to \$331,597 in 1919.

During the early days of the township, lumbering and farming were the main occupations. Then, in 1918, a forest fire in the Arnold area severely reduced the lumbering business. Since 1930 the townspeople have depended heavily on Duluth for employment, with a large percentage of the work force employed in the City. Over the years, Rice Lake has slowly grown into a thriving community.

Not only did the population and the monetary value grow during these three decades but also along with it the service provided by the township expanded. The Town Board, which was formed back in the late 1800's, began to take a more active role. The Rice Lake dam was built in 1907 for power storage and has been in continuous use since. The Rice Lake Volunteer Fire Department was formed in 1948, and land for a town park was acquired from St. Louis County in 1947.

During the 1960's and 1970's, Rice Lake Township continued to expand the level of services it provided for residents. In 1960, Rice Lake Township adopted a zoning ordinance, and the Planning and Zoning Commission was established. The Township actually adopted the ordinance before St. Louis County, and was the only township locally to administer zoning authority. The Town Park was established in 1963 with the development of 12 acres of the 20-acre site. In 1965 the Public Works department was created, and the first public water lines were built. They now serve the city along East Calvary Road and portions of Arnold, Howard Gnesen, West Tischer, and Martin roads. The original Town Hall, now the Rice Lake City Hall, was constructed in 1976 at the intersection of Howard Gnesen and West Beyer roads. Adjacent to the north of City Hall, is the Recycling Drop Off Center. In 1992 the Uniform Building Code was adopted, which led to the addition of a building official. In 1998 and 2007, a Comprehensive Plan was adopted.

In August 2015, an administrative law judge ruled in favor of the incorporation petition filed by Rice Lake Township, making the City of Rice Lake Minnesota's 853<sup>rd</sup> city. Since its incorporation, Rice Lake has taken all powers and authority provided to a city under Minnesota statutes.

## Regional Setting

The City of Rice Lake is located in southern St. Louis County north of the City of Duluth in the Arrowhead Region of northeastern Minnesota. Once generally rural in nature, Rice Lake is now a transition area between the Duluth metropolitan area and rural St. Louis County.



# Demographics and Data Analysis

## Population

### Historical Data

Historical demographic data is based on 2010 Census Data. Because the census was completed prior to incorporation, data for Rice Lake Township is used.

According to the 2010 Census, Rice Lake had a population of 4,095 people, with 1,611 households, and 68 businesses in a land area of 32.3 square miles and 1.1 square miles of water. The Minnesota State Demographer estimates the 2017 population for the newly incorporated City at 4,139 people and 1,774 housing units.

Table 1 identifies historic population and household characteristics in the city.

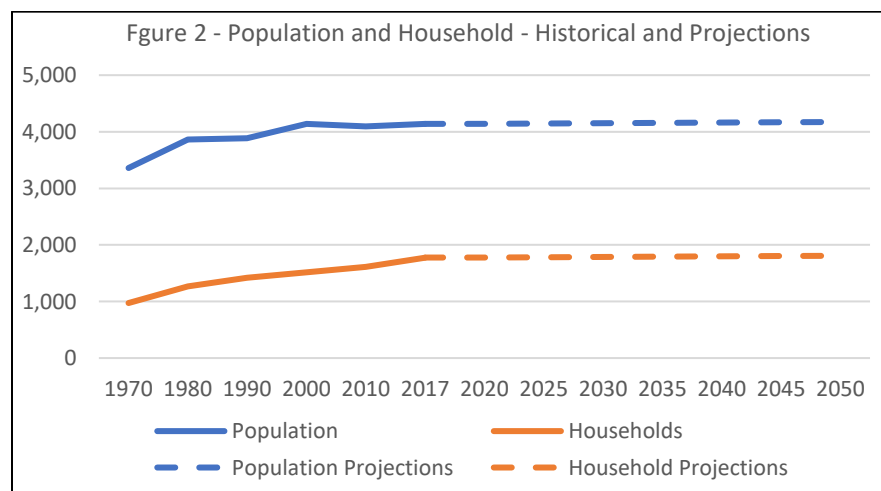
Table 1 - Historical Population and Households of City of Rice Lake						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018
Population	3,359	3,861	3,883	4,139	4,095	4,142
Households	973	1,265	1,418	1,518	1,611	1,749

Source: State Demographer

### Projections

Projections for future levels of populations and households may be developed based on past growth patterns. Table 2 identifies population and household projects based on growth patterns from 1970 to 2017.

Table 2 - Rice Lake Population and Household Projections							
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Population	4,142	4,147	4,152	4,157	4,162	4,167	4,172
Households	1,777	1,782	1,787	1,792	1,797	1,802	1,808



Source: State Demographer



## Other Population Characteristics

### Age

Figure 3 shows the population of Rice Lake in 2010 separated by sex and age units. The largest age groups within Rice Lake are persons in the range of 40 to 44 years old. This age group accounts for 11.2% of the entire population. The population of Rice Lake is slightly older than the average for St. Louis County; the median age for Rice Lake is 43.6 years old while the County median is 41 years old. Table 3 displays median age for Rice Lake, St. Louis County, the State on Minnesota and other neighboring communities.

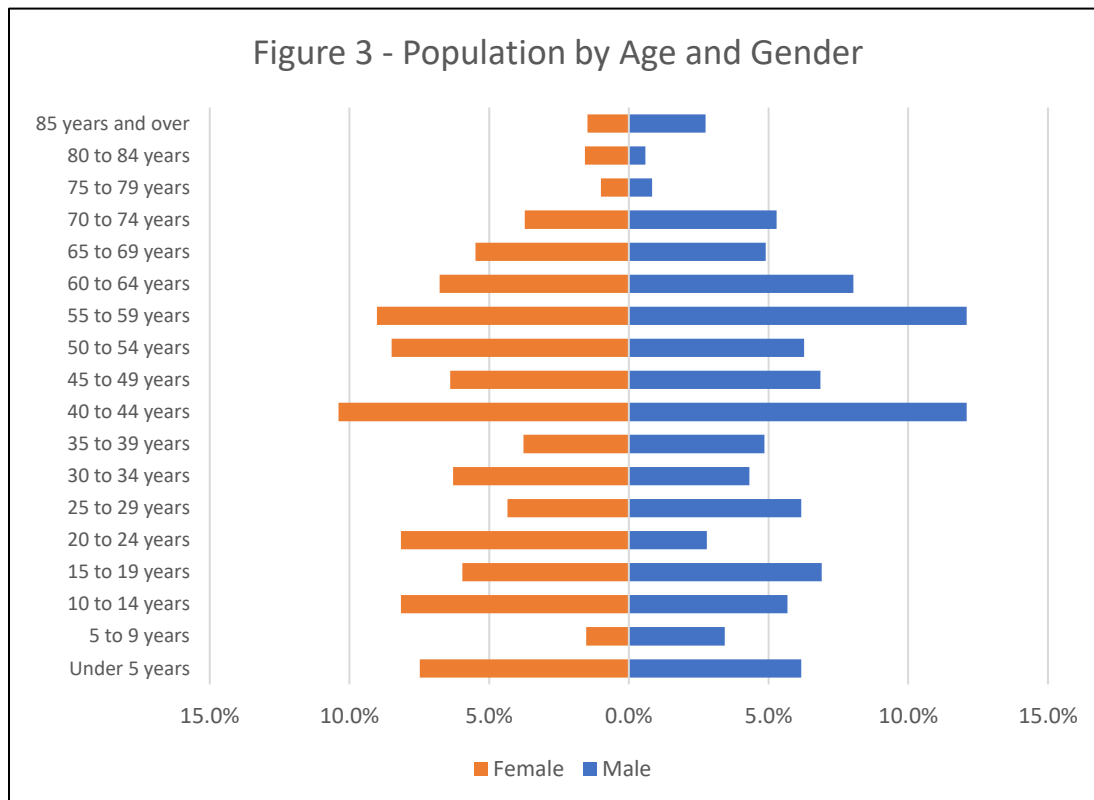


Table 3 – Median Age	
City of Rice Lake	43.6
State of Minnesota	37.9
St. Louis County	41.0
Duluth	33.8
Hermantown	41.0

Source: American Community Survey, 2017

### Household Size and Quantity

As shown in Table 4, there were approximately 1,774 households in the City of Rice Lake in 2017. While the population of Rice Lake has plateaued since the growth in the 1990's, the amount of housing still grew by 356 units since the year 1990. However, there has been a decrease in the



number of persons per household, which is a trend both regionally and statewide. Table 4 shows the average number of persons per household and the quantity of households.

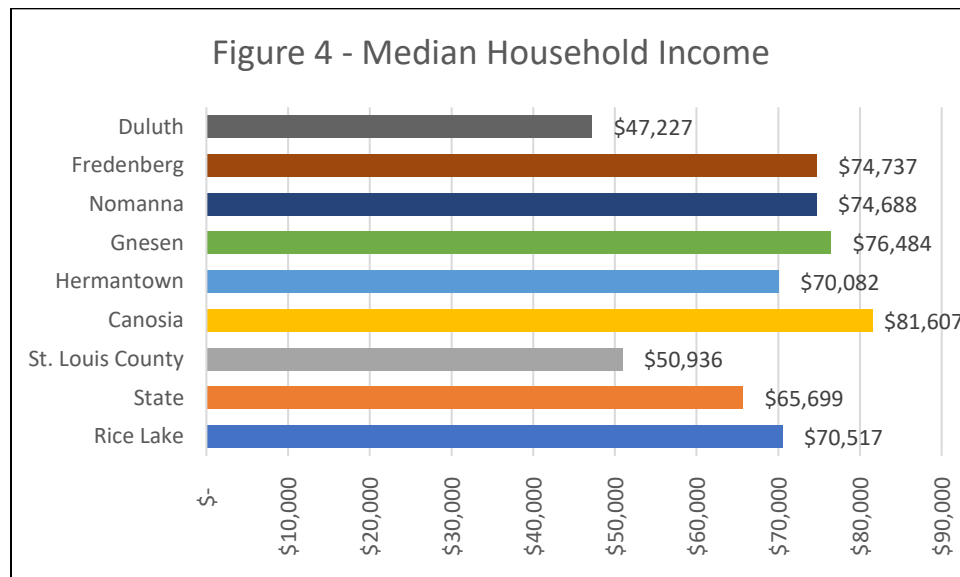
Table 4 - Household Size and Quantity				
	1990	2000	2010	2017
Quantity of Households	1,418	1,518	1,689	1,774
Persons Per Household	2.74	2.73	2.54	2.33

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, American Community Survey, 2017

According to the American Community Survey, 1,712 (96.5%) of Rice Lake's housing units were occupied. Of these, 89.5% were owner occupied.

### Household Income

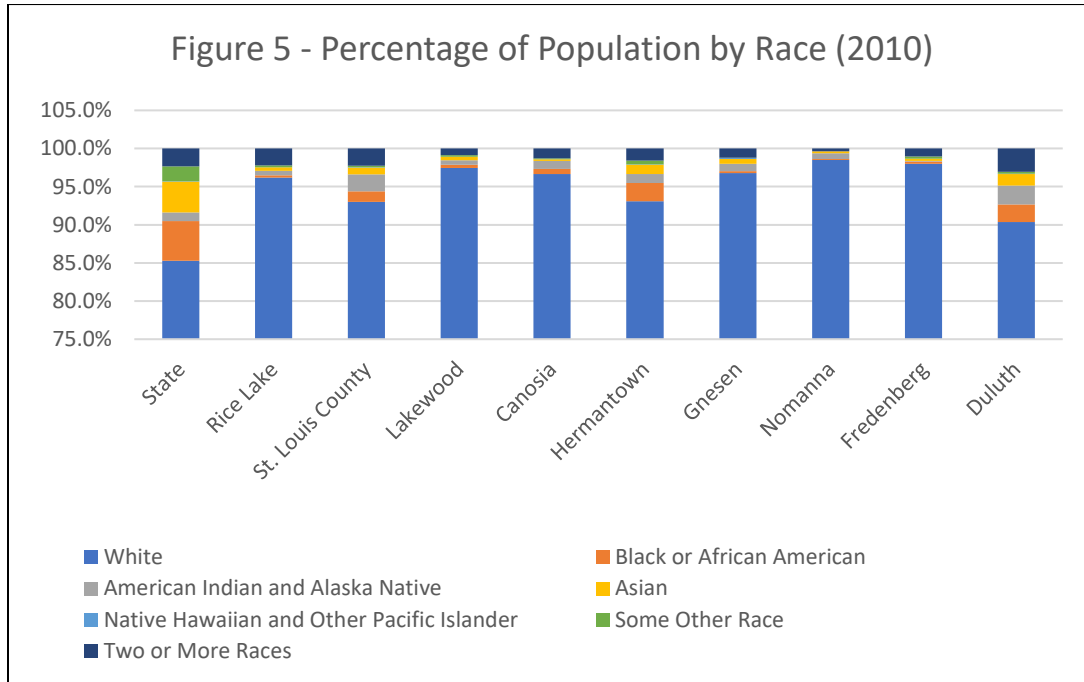
Median household income in Rice Lake was estimated to be \$70,517 in 2017 significantly higher than the median for St. Louis County (\$50,396). However, St. Louis County had a higher per capita income than the City of Rice Lake with \$35,121 and \$29,197, respectively. This indicates that the City of Rice Lake has a larger household size than the County. The City of Rice Lake has a comparable median household income when compared to surrounding jurisdictions and a higher median household income than the county as a whole.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017

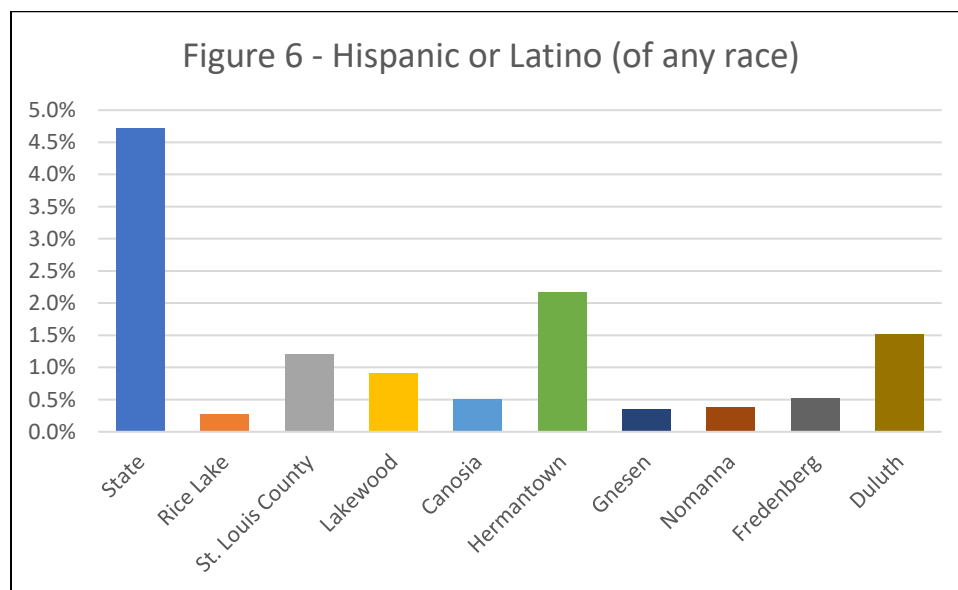
## Race and Ethnicity

Figure 5 below illustrates the estimated racial composition of Rice Lake and other neighboring communities. About 96% of Rice Lake residents identified as “White”. Rice Lake is somewhat less diverse than St. Louis County and far less diverse than the State of Minnesota.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017

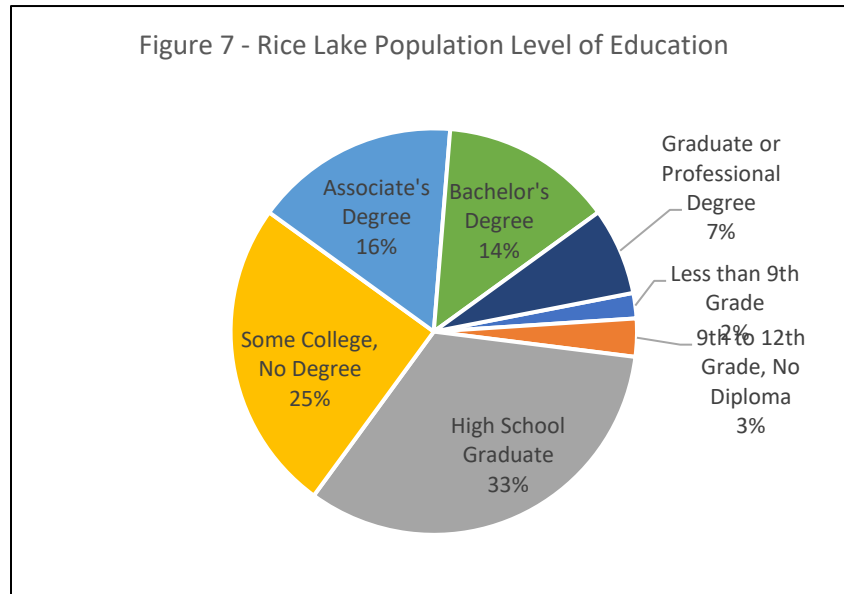
The 2017 census reports race and ethnicity (i.e. Hispanic origins) separately; respondents may select any race and any ethnicity, meaning race and ethnicity are not mutually exclusive. Figure 6 below shows the percentage of the population that identified as Hispanic or Latino in Rice Lake and surrounding communities.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017

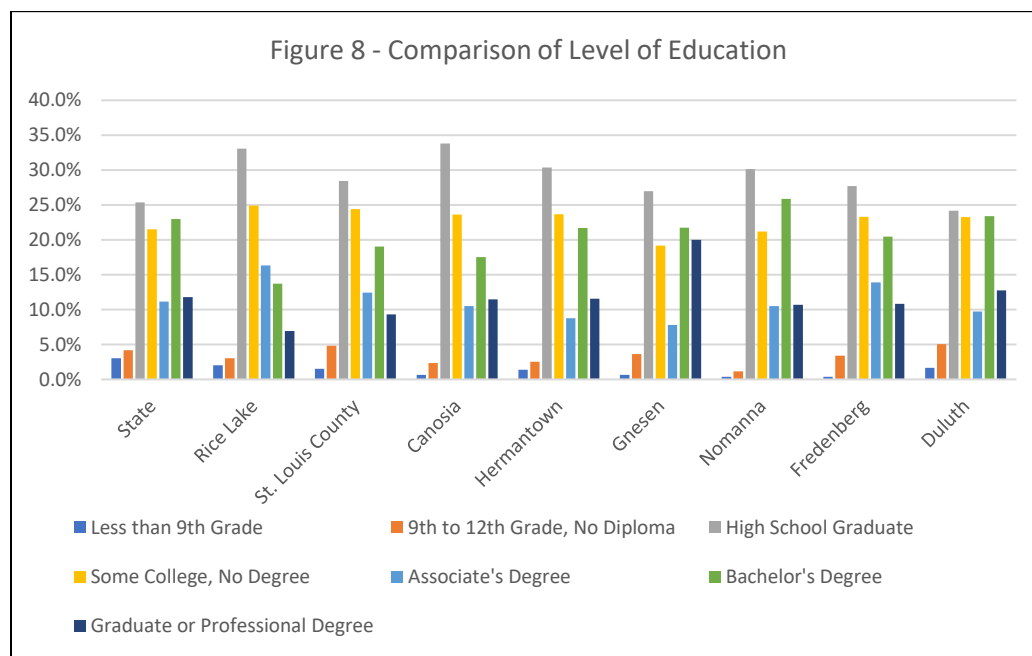
## Education

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, 33% of the city's population age 25 or older has graduated from high school, while approximately 25% have some college, but no degree. Only 5% of residents age 25 or older had less than a high school education.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017

The following graph compares the Rice Lake population's level of educational to surrounding communities using 2017 estimates. While Rice Lake has a very low percentage of people who have not received a high school diploma, there is also a low percentage of people who have received advanced degrees.



Source: US Census 2010, ACS 2017

# Land Use

## Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the City of Rice Lake is to provide a well-balanced mix of residential, business, recreational, agricultural and forestry uses to serve the future needs of the community and to maintain its rural character and its status as a desirable place to live. Goals and objectives specific to Land Use are listed below:

**Goal:** Preserve the rural, wooded and residential character of Rice Lake through zoning regulations, ordinances, and site design standards.

**Objectives:**

- Conduct development in a manner that is sensitive to the impact upon natural features and to environmental constraints, including but not limited to surface water, wetlands, slopes, woodlands, vegetation, drainage ways, shorelands, and flood plain areas.
- Explore programs and development concepts that encourage creative methods to preserve rural character and natural resources.
- Achieve compatible relationships between different types of land uses by utilizing design standards, appropriate buffers, land use transitions and high-quality design.
- Manage development to preserve existing, established neighborhoods.

**Goal:** Manage land use and extension of urban services for orderly development.

**Objectives:**

- Require that land proposed for development is served or will be able to be served with adequate infrastructure, including sewage treatment systems, streets, and storm water management systems.
- Require all new development be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan

**Goal:** Ensure a variety of lot sizes to create affordable development opportunities to best meet the needs of residents and businesses in Rice Lake.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage greater density where appropriate to preserve natural features and areas.
- Ensure suitable land is available for potential commercial and industrial employment and business opportunities.
- Encourage an equitable distribution of schools, health care services, grocery stores and other resources necessary to sustain personal well-being and enhance the quality of the community.
- Encourage multiple family housing developments in areas with municipal sewer and water services to provide housing for all income levels.

---

**Goal:** Ensure agricultural uses are part of the community as a viable long-term land use.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage a variety of agricultural operations, including small-scale metropolitan orientated agriculture, value-added production, and small scale agricultural-related commercial uses.
- Review current development regulations to allow compatible secondary uses such as low density residential, commercial recreation, and agriculture-related commercial in areas where agriculture is the predominant use.
- Encourage the preservation of family farms.
- Focus on preserving agricultural and residential farming

**Goal:** Encourage a variety of options for development and redevelopment of commercial and residential properties.

**Objectives:**

- Provide a variety of land use classifications in the city.
- Prevent the potential of disrupting the existing single family residential zoning districts and spot zoning by establishing zoning districts that can accommodate Multi-Unit Residential buildings, Mixed Uses and Public uses.
- Develop ordinances to allow for a variety of residential and commercial needs, including mixed-use options, that are consistent with the overall goals of the city.

**Goal:** Ensure new development is located, designed, and built to avoid environmental impacts and other hazards.

**Objectives:**

- Manage development to avoid and protect environmentally sensitive or hazardous features.
- Maintain areas with hydric soils and wet conditions to minimize flood hazards and provide nutrient and sediment filtration as well as open space.

**Goal:** Consider purchase of properties in tax forfeiture for public purposes.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage conservation of tax forfeiture properties that provide valuable ecosystems.

## Existing Land Use

The most prominent land use in Rice Lake is single family residential, followed by parks and open space and agriculture land uses. However, wetlands comprise nearly 23% of the land area in Rice Lake. Table L-1 details existing land use in both gross acres and net acres (gross acres less wetlands).

Table L-1 – Existing Land Use Characteristics <sup>1</sup>				
Land Use	Gross Acres	Percent of Total	Net Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural	3,723	18%	2,571	16%
Commercial	525	2%	388	2%
Industrial and Utility	560	3%	389	2%
Institutional	364	2%	291	2%
Park and Open Space	4,610	22%	3,358	21%
Residential, 1-family	10,558	50%	8,858	56%
Residential, 2-3 units	27	0.1%	18	0.1%
Residential, 4+ units	5	0.02%	5	0.03%
Water	619	3%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,992</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,878</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Acreages and classifications are based on parcel data from St. Louis County. Existing road right-of-way is not included in the acreages.

Figure L-1 shows the existing land uses in the City, and Figure L-2 identifies the wetlands and floodplains in the City.



Figure L-1 – Existing Land Use

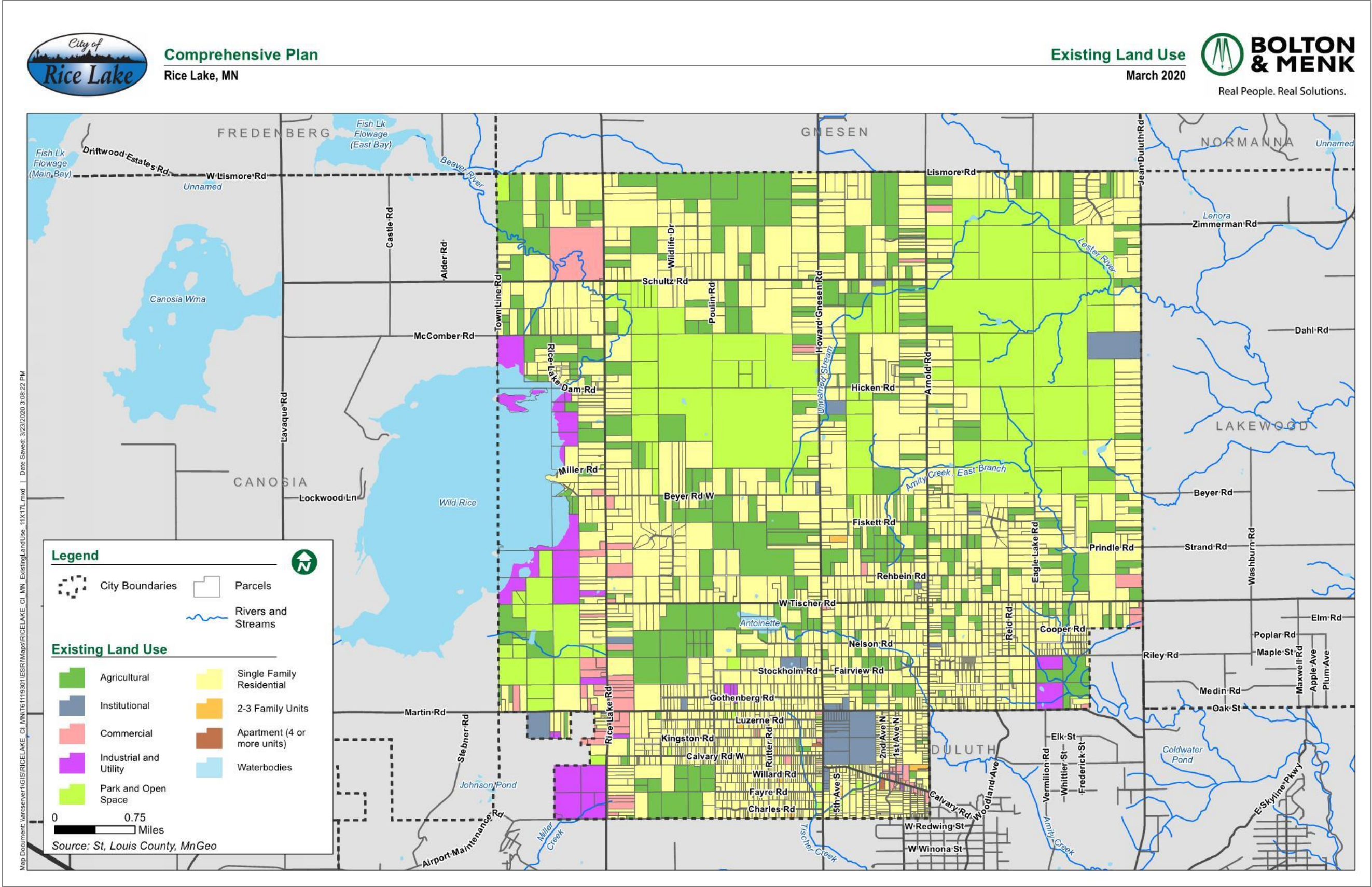
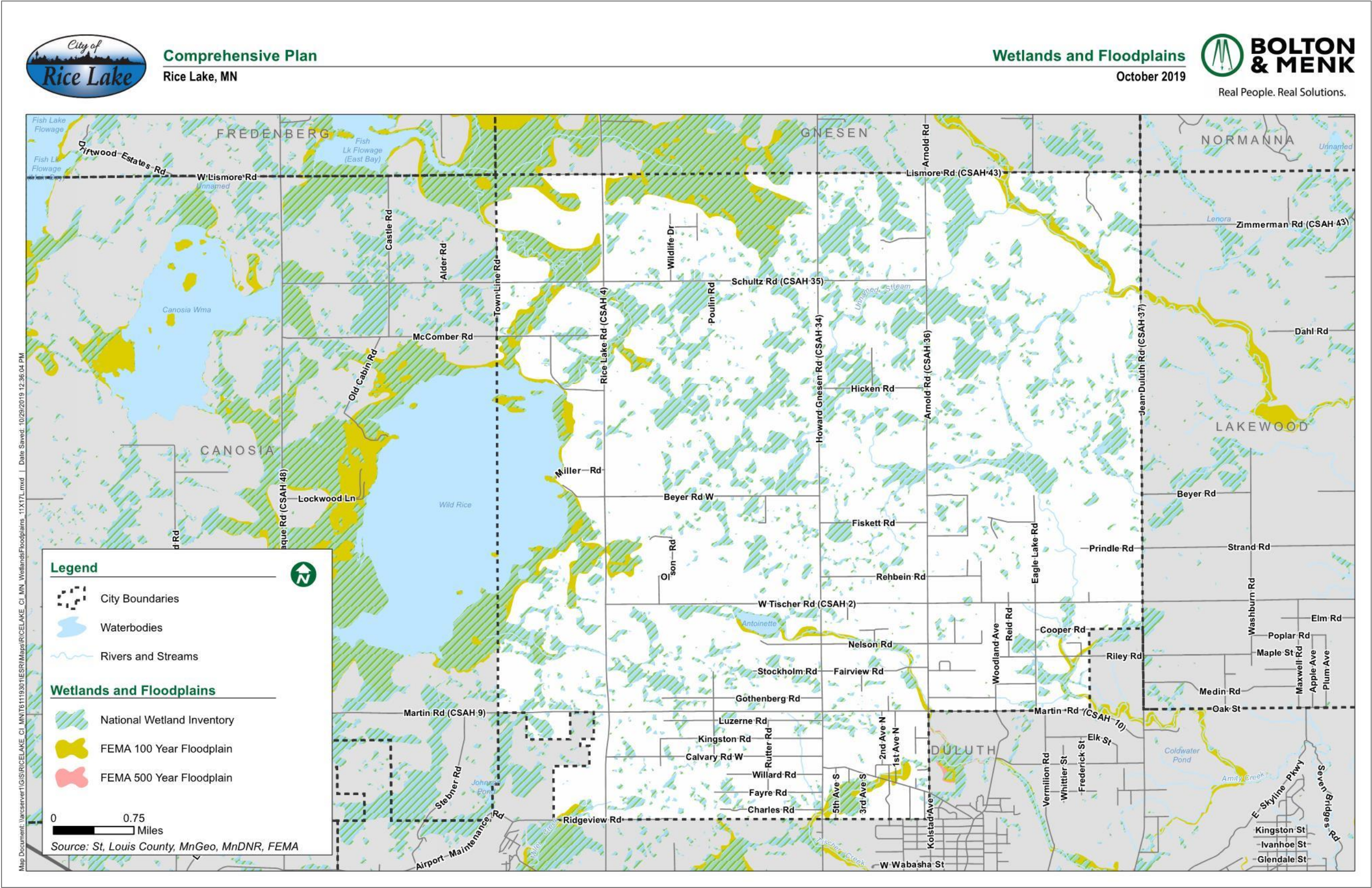




Figure L-2 – Wetlands and Floodplains





## Growth Management

Growth management is a tool used to purposefully guide community development towards desired patterns of growth, including location, density and type of development. The purpose of growth management is not necessarily to deter growth, but to ensure appropriate public services are available to serve new development, including utilities and transportation. These tools are also intended to ensure the protection of natural resources, including wetlands, lakes and agricultural land, maintain open space, and minimize the fiscal impact on the community.

Growth management is one of the guiding principles of the Rice Lake Comprehensive Plan. The locations of each specific land use classification is determined through consideration of the following:

- Existing public infrastructure, including transportation and utilities;
- Location and protection of natural resources, especially wetlands, lakes, shorelands and floodplain;
- Population projections;
- Needs of the current population; and
- Existing development patterns.

The future land uses classifications and patterns identified in the following section reflect projected development needs and plans for orderly growth within the City. This allows the City to plan for and to make infrastructure improvements as needed to meet these growth projections.

## Future Land Use

Land use planning in the City of Rice Lake guides the appropriate amount of land for real estate development, economic growth, and open space that is needed in the future and maintains compatible land use in all locations. The future land use map brings all of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan to express what the community wants to have happen.

### Description of Land Use Classifications

The Land Use Plan places every parcel of land in the City into a classification. Future land use classifications and zoning districts are not one in the same. Land use classifications reflect the desired future development pattern in a given area. Zoning districts, on the other hand, more specifically define and regulate what kinds of uses are allowed on specific parcels and outline design and development requirements and guidelines.

The Comprehensive Plan encompasses four broad categories of land use to guide the growth and redevelopment of Rice Lake. Residential land uses provide areas for people to live. Non-residential land uses represent the locations dedicated to the sale of goods and services to the community, and to centers of employment for community and the region. Public land uses encompass government facilities, public parks, public schools, cemeteries, and public-owned and managed natural areas. The challenge of land use planning is to address the unique set of needs presented by each land use and connecting the land uses in a sustainable manner with the character and qualities desired for Rice Lake.

The following land use classifications function within the City of Rice Lake:

## Residential

Residential land use classifications cover those areas intended primarily for residential uses, from single family to multifamily. The Residential classifications encompass 73% of the developable area in the City. The Zoning Ordinance may allow some non-residential uses within this classification, based on locational criteria and relationship to the primary residential use while preserving our rural character.

### **Rural Residential**

The Rural Residential land use classification is intended to accommodate a wide range of activities compatible with a rural environment. Expected uses include detached single family homes on large lots (4.5 acre or more), as well as accessory agricultural uses. This classification covers 34% of the developable land area.

### **Low Density Residential**

The Low Density Residential land use classification is intended to accommodate a wide range of residential activities on large lots. Expected uses include detached single family homes, as well as attached single family homes in 2- to 4-unit buildings. The Low Density Residential classification covers approximately 35% of the developable land area, and is primarily located north of Gothenberg Road, south of Beyer Road, and east of Rice Lake Road.

### **Medium Density Residential**

The Medium Density Residential land use classification is intended to be used in those areas of the City with significant existing residential development on smaller lots (1 acre), and in areas where municipal sewer and water are available. The land use is expected to promote a high-quality residential living environment where non-residential uses are restricted. Permitted uses include detached single family dwellings and duplexes. This land use includes almost 3% of the net land area and is primarily located on the south side of the City.

### **High Density Residential**

The High Density Residential land use is intended to be used specific areas of the City in close proximity to principal arterials and collector roads, and in areas where municipal sewer and water are available. The land use can provide a buffer between commercial areas and lower density residential areas. The High Density Residential land use is expected to promote a high-quality residential living environment where non-residential uses are restricted. Permitted uses may include a variety of detached and attached dwellings. Multifamily buildings with 5-24 units may be allowed when served by public utilities. This land use includes 1% of the net land area and is primarily located ¼ mile east of Rice Lake Road between Gothenberg Road and Ridgeview Road.

## Non-Residential

The Non-Residential land use classifications accommodate the delivery of goods and services and the employment centers in the City. These land uses generally include retail, offices, service uses, as well as both light and heavy industrial areas. Within the Non-Residential classification, the Mixed Use classification is intended to accommodate the development of small-scaled neighborhoods with both residential and non-residential uses. The Non-Residential classifications includes 7% of the developable land area.

## **Commercial**

The Commercial land use classification occupies 3% of the net land area and is intended to provide for varied commercial development outside the shoreland area which will promote the efficient delivery of goods and services while assuring the integrity of surrounding land uses. Most planned commercial sites are in the western half of the City along the Rice Lake Road corridor. The classification also includes existing commercial areas along East Calvary Road.

## **Industrial**

The Industrial land use classification is intended to encourage the development of industry in the City of Rice Lake in appropriate locations. While industrial development is important to the economic well-being of the City, it also has the potential to for environmental and social impacts. The Industrial classification encompasses approximately 2% of the City's developable land area and is located in the southwest corner of the City along Martin Road.

## **Mixed Use**

The Mixed-Use classification is intended to provide neighborhood-scaled, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use centers and corridors with a range of residential, retail, service, and office uses that are compatible with adjacent development. New commercial, retail, and residential activity will be encouraged in order to develop and redevelop areas while maintaining the existing character of the City.

Land uses in the Mixed Use classification will be small-lot, single-family residential uses, public and private institutions, civic buildings, and parks and recreation uses. Townhomes and multi-family units will be allowed as an incentive for providing community value through protection of natural resources and provision of life-cycle housing. Additional land uses include commercial, office, retail, and parks and recreation. In order to support the potential higher density and intensity, the mixed use area must be served by public sewer and water. While exact proportions of uses will be dependent on development, it is anticipated the Mixed Use classification will have roughly 40% residential uses and 60% commercial/office/retail uses. Development within the Mixed-Use classification may be vertical (multiple story building with both residential and non-residential uses) and horizontal (a mix of residential and non-residential uses on lots within the classification). There is no existing corresponding zoning district for the Mixed Use classification. The Zoning Code will be updated to create a corresponding district and performance criteria for mixed uses. These new districts may designate specific areas for vertical and horizontal mixed-use development.

## **Public and Open Space**

The Public and Open Space classifications include lands that are unlikely to be developed because of public ownership, environmental issues, or the current land use. These classifications encompass approximately 20% of the City.

## **Public/Semi-Public**

This Public/Semi-Public classification includes governmental facilities, educational facilities, and lands owned by the City, St. Louis County, and other state and federal agencies for public use, as well as cemeteries.

## **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation classification is applied to areas generally owned by the City and operated as part of the City parks system. The current classification includes less than 1% of the net land area.

## Conservation

The Conservation classification provides protection for areas with valuable natural resources. These are portions of the community that are particularly environmentally sensitive and include large, contiguous wetland areas. These areas are generally owned and managed by the State of Minnesota and encompass approximately 19% of the net land area.

## Open Water

This classification includes permanently flooded open water, rivers, and streams not including wetlands or periodically flooded areas. Approximately 3% of the total land area in the City is Open Water.

## Future Land Use Characteristics

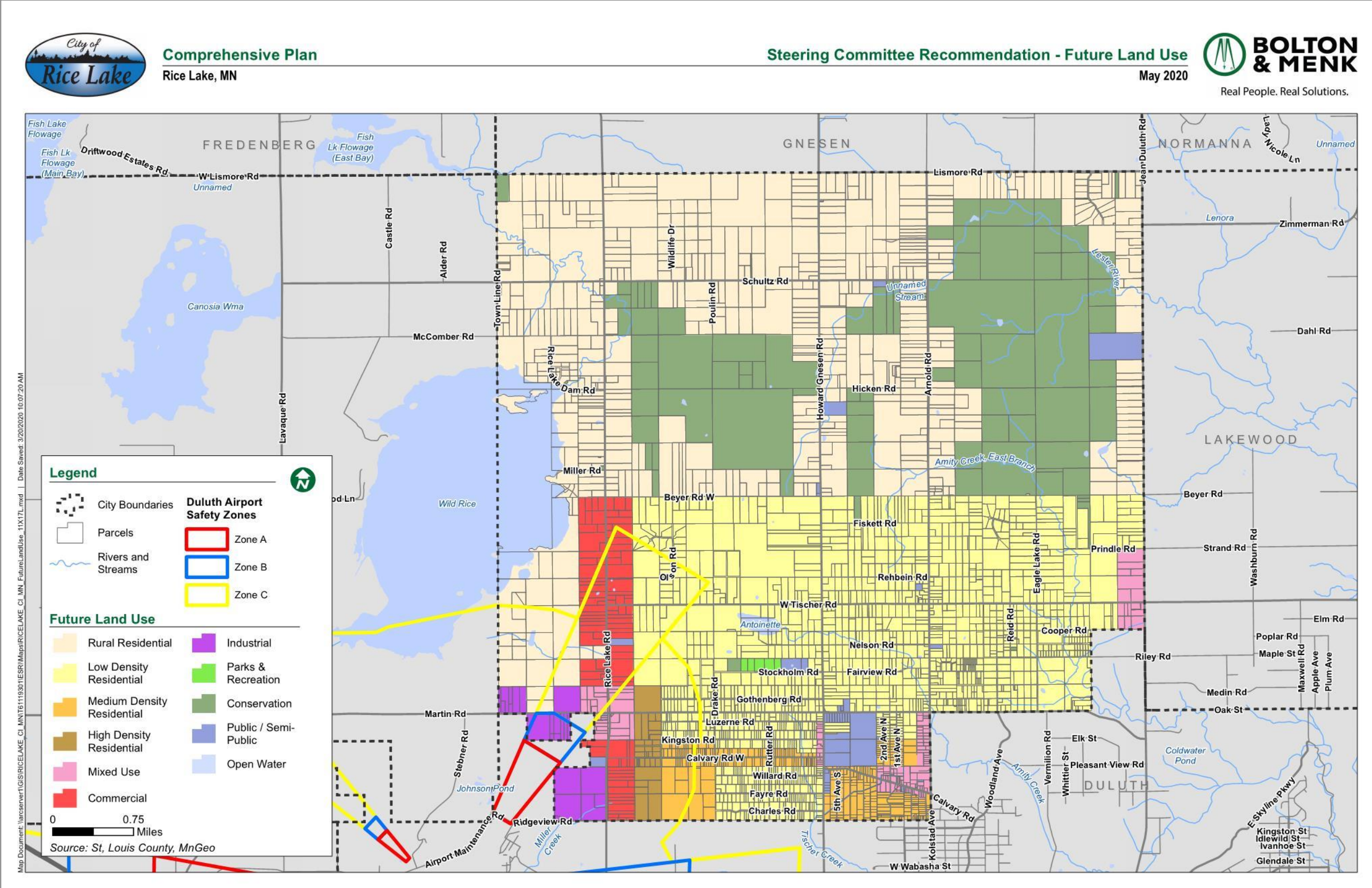
Table L-2 lists the area for each future land use classification in gross acres and as a percent of the total. The table also identifies net acres, or developable acres, for each classification. Net acres is gross area less wetlands.

Table L-2 –Future Land Use Characteristics				
Land Use	Gross Acres	Percent of Total	Net Acres	Percent of Total
Residential Classifications				
Rural Residential	7,657	36%	5,482	34%
Low Density Residential	6,297	30%	5,502	34%
Medium Density Residential	627	3%	530	3%
High Density Residential	201	1%	173	1%
Non-Residential Classifications				
Commercial	670	3%	522	3%
Industrial	308	1%	253	2%
Mixed Use	396	2%	359	2%
Public and Open Space Classifications				
Public/Semi Public	314	1%	270	2%
Parks & Recreation	29	0.1%	19	0.1%
Conservation	4,103	19%	2,985	19%
Open Water	619	3%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,219</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,904</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure L-3, Future Land Use, shows the guided land for all property in the City of Rice Lake.



Figure L-3 – Future Land Use



# Transportation

## Introduction

The purpose of the Transportation Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide guidance to the City of Rice Lake, as well as existing and future landowners in preparing for future growth and development. As such, whether an existing roadway is proposed for upgrading or a land use change is proposed on a property, this plan provides the framework for decisions regarding the nature of roadway infrastructure improvements necessary to achieve safety, adequate access, mobility, and performance of the existing and future roadway system. The primary goal of this plan is to establish local policies, standards, and guidelines to guide major transportation investments and policy decisions.

Transportation is a critical element in Comprehensive Plans. Modes of transportation are needed for the movement of goods and people, which keeps a community vibrant and economically sound. Transportation can also be source of concerns however, specifically in the form of traffic safety, dust, noise, and access.

## Goals and Objective

Overall, this plan is intended to provide safe, efficient transportation opportunities throughout the community. The plan recommends the City of Rice Lake work with St. Louis County, Arrowhead Transit, and other regional agencies to address the recommendations put forward in this plan. Specific goals include:

**Goal:** As new development or redevelopment occurs, provide an integrated, internally-connected, efficient street system.

### **Objectives:**

- Discourage the creation of permanently long streets with only a single access point (i.e., dead-end streets, looping streets and elongated cul-de-sacs).
- Encourage design and land uses that support a range of transportation choices
- Guide future development to roadways capable of accommodating resulting traffic.
- Develop roadways and street systems with consideration for safety, speeds, congestion, impact and noise.

**Goal:** Ensure Rice Lake's system of local roadways is well coordinated with MN DOT and St. Louis County roadway system.

### **Objectives:**

- Continue to develop a capital improvement program to ensure adequate funding for priority roadway concerns.
- Cooperate with County and State jurisdictions to keep through-traffic on arterials at minimum disruption of local circulation and residents.



**Goal:** Encourage the development of a multi-modal transportation system.

**Objectives:**

- Use roadway design to establish bike and pedestrian friendly streets and compliment recreational trails.
- Provide pedestrians and other non-motorized vehicles links to existing state and regional trail systems.

**Goal:** Support the development of regional and local transit options.

**Objectives:**

- Support efforts to provide additional transit opportunities, both public and private, in Rice Lake.

**Goal:** Preserve the safety of regional air traffic.

**Objectives:**

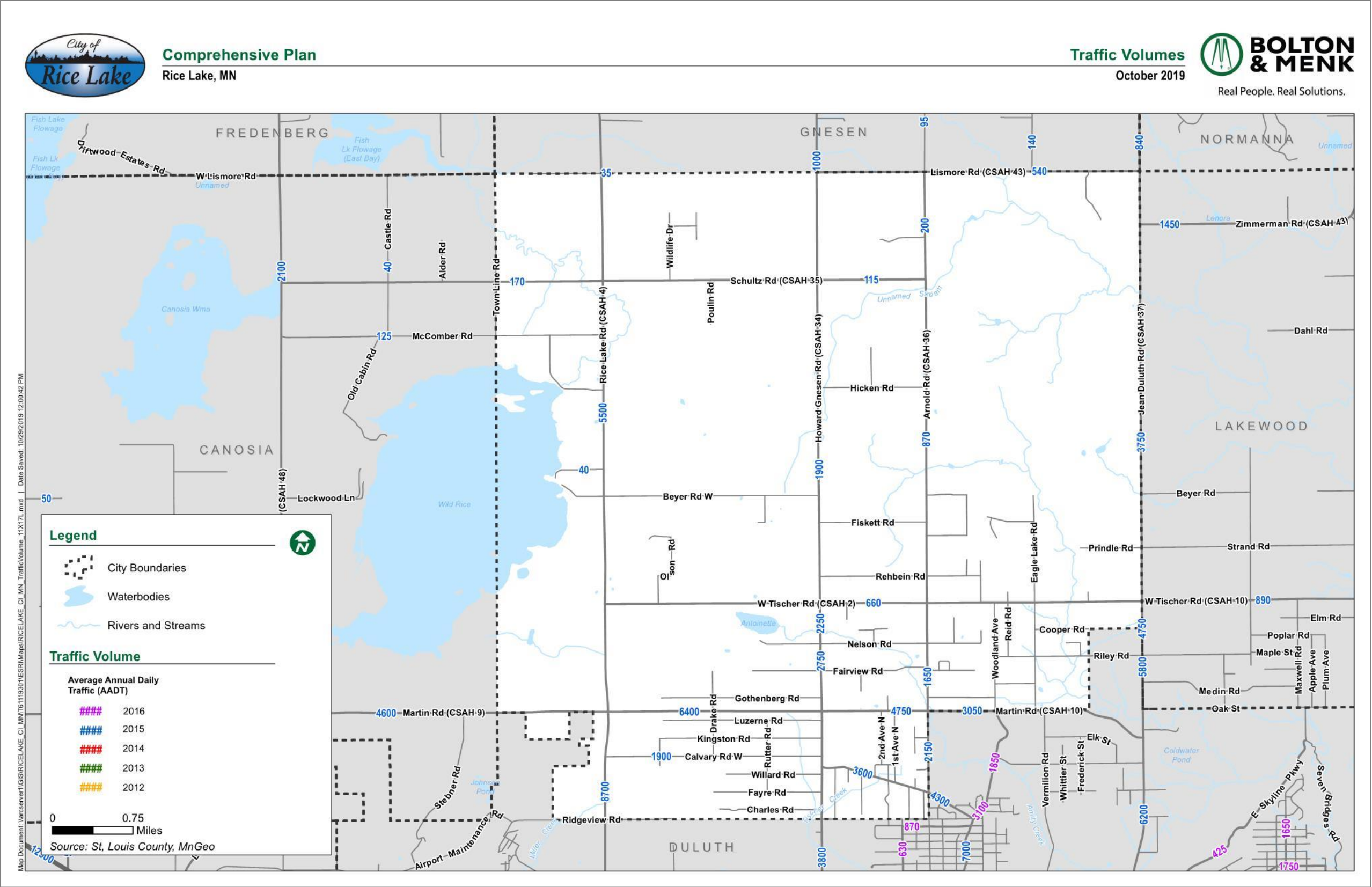
- Coordinate with the Duluth Airport Authority to protect the Duluth International Airport from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- Continue to participate on the Joint Airport Zoning Board.
- Participate in the Duluth Airport Authority's Master Planning Process.
- Address Federal and State safety standards when planning the design of any object related to or affecting navigable airspace.

## Roadway System

### Current Conditions

The most basic characteristic of a given roadway is the volume of traffic that it carries. Existing traffic volumes on roadways within Rice Lake are presented below. This is the most current MnDOT data for traffic on these roads.

Figure T-1 – Traffic Volumes



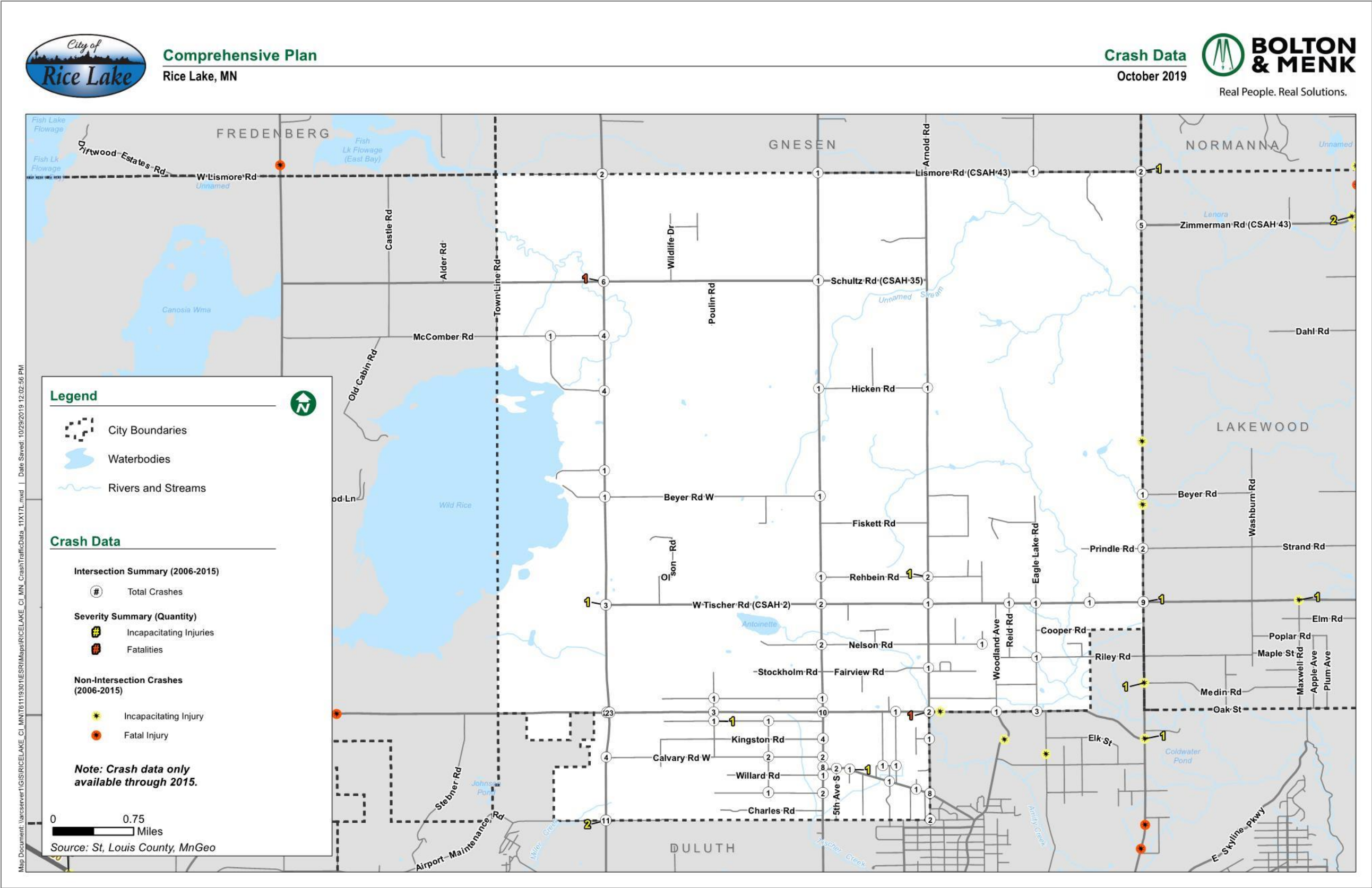
Roadway safety is a central focus in all transportation planning efforts. To assist in the evaluation of crashes, MnDOT maintains a database of crash records from around the state of Minnesota. These records identify the location, severity, and circumstances associated with each crash. This dataset was reviewed to identify the number, location and severity of crashes

Rural intersections are often the location of safety issues for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Intersections with the highest crash rates are:

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| • Rice Lake Road and Schultz Rd (CSAH 35) | 6 Crashes (1 fatality)        |
| • Ridgeview Road and Rice Lake Road       | 11 Crashes (2 incapacitating) |
| • Rice Lake Road and Martin Road          | 23 Crashes                    |
| • Howard Gnesen Road and Martin Road      | 10 Crashes                    |
| • Jean Duluth Road and West Tischer Road  | 9 Crashes (1 incapacitating)  |
| • Martin Rd and Arnold Road               | 2 Crashes (1 fatality)        |

A high crash rate and or fatal or incapacitating injuries suggest unsafe road conditions. Rice Lake should work with St. Louis County to examine intersection safety control alternatives, including traffic control lights, dedicated turn lanes, the installation of roundabouts, or other safety alternatives, at high-traffic-volume and/or high-crash-rate intersections.

Figure T-2 – Crash Data



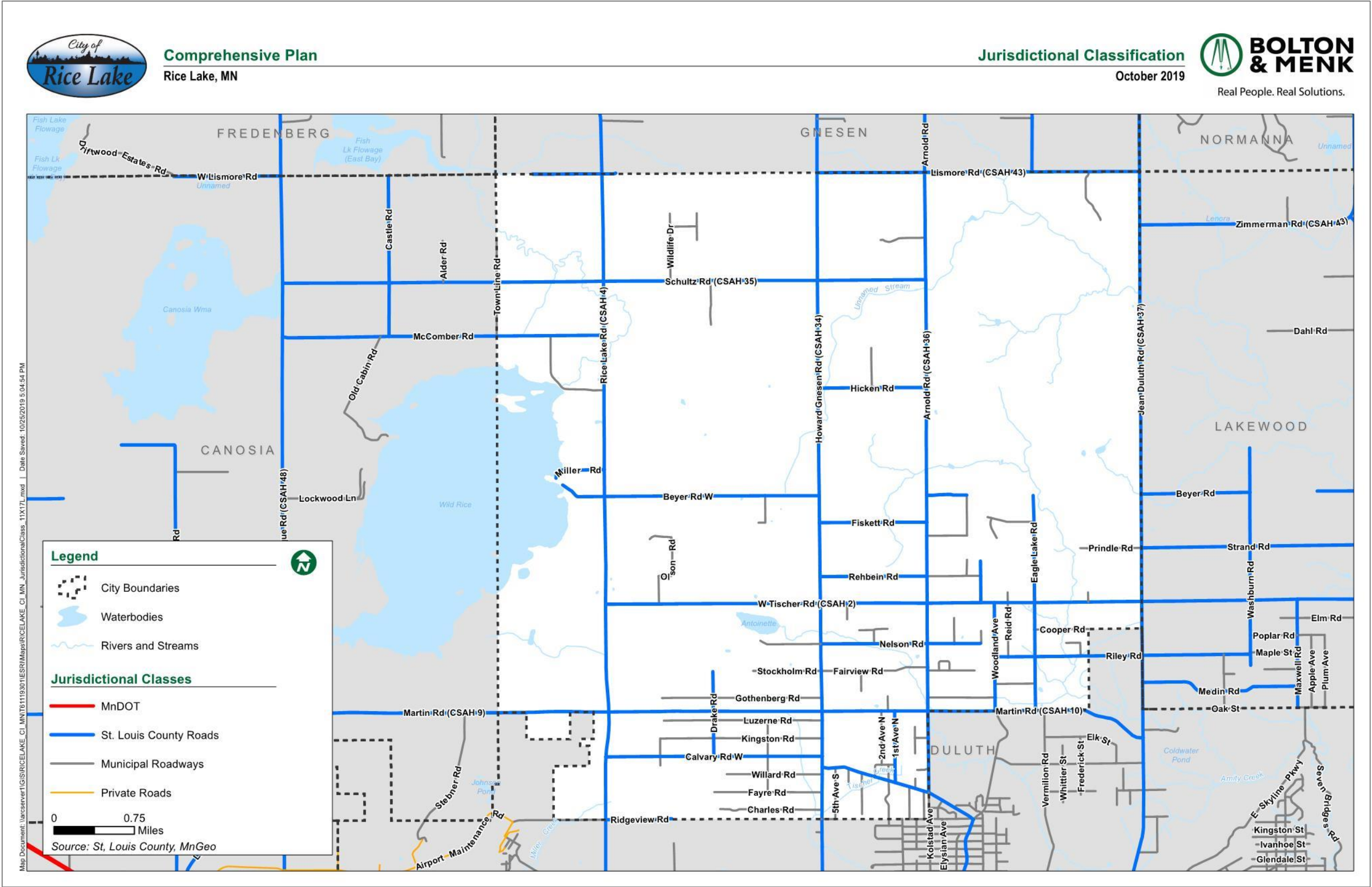


---

## Jurisdictional Classification

Roadways are classified based on which level of government owns and has jurisdiction over them. Roadways are either under the jurisdiction of MnDOT, St. Louis County, or the City of Rice Lake. MnDOT maintains no roads within the City of Rice Lake. The Existing Roadway Jurisdiction map depicts the roadway jurisdictional classification on the following page. Roadway jurisdiction directly relates to functional classification of roadways. Generally, roadways with higher mobility functions (such as arterials) should fall under the jurisdiction of a regional level of government. Recognizing that these roadways serve greater areas resulting in longer trips and higher volumes, jurisdiction of Principal Arterial and Minor Arterial roadways should fall under the jurisdiction of the state and county, respectively. Similarly, roadways with more emphasis on local circulation and access (such as collectors) should fall under the jurisdiction of the local government unit. These roadways serve more localized areas and result in shorter trip lengths and lower volumes.

Figure T-3 – Jurisdictional Classification



## Functional Classification

The functional classification system is a roadway network that distributes traffic from neighborhood streets to collector roadways, then to minor arterials, and ultimately the Metropolitan Highway System. Roads are categorized based on the degree to which they provide access to adjacent land uses and lower level roadways versus providing higher-speed mobility for “through” traffic. Functional classification is a cornerstone of transportation planning. Within this approach, roads are located and designed to perform their designated function.

The current roadway functional classification for Rice Lake is shown in the Functional Classification map. The Rice Lake roadway system presently consists of the following roadway classifications:

- Minor arterial
- Major collector
- Minor collector
- Local street

### Minor Arterials

Roadways of this classification typically link urban areas and rural Principal Arterials to larger towns and other major traffic generators capable of attracting trips over similarly long distances. Minor arterials service medium-length trips, and their emphasis is on mobility as opposed to access in urban areas. They connect with principal arterials, other minor arterials, and collector streets. Connections to local streets should be avoided if possible. Minor arterials are responsible for accommodating thru-trips, as well as trips beginning or ending outside the Rice Lake area. Minor arterial roadways are typically spaced approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile in developed areas and approximately 1 to 2 miles in developing areas.

### Major Collectors

Roadways of this classification typically link neighborhoods together within a city or they link neighborhoods to business concentrations. A balance between mobility and access is desired. Major collector street connections are predominately to minor arterials, but they can be connected to any of the other four roadway functional classes. Local access to major collectors should be provided via public streets and individual property access should be avoided. Generally, major collector streets are predominantly responsible for providing circulation within a city. Major collectors are typically spaced approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile in developed areas and approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile in developing areas.

### Minor Collectors

Roadways of this classification typically include city streets and rural township roadways, which facilitate the collection of local traffic and convey it to major collectors and minor arterials. Minor collector streets serve short trips at relatively low speeds. Their emphasis is focused on access rather than mobility. Minor collectors are responsible for providing connections between neighborhoods and the major collector/minor arterial roadways. These roadways should be designed to discourage short-cut trips through the neighborhood by creating jogs or other traffic slowing measures, in the roadway.



## Local Streets

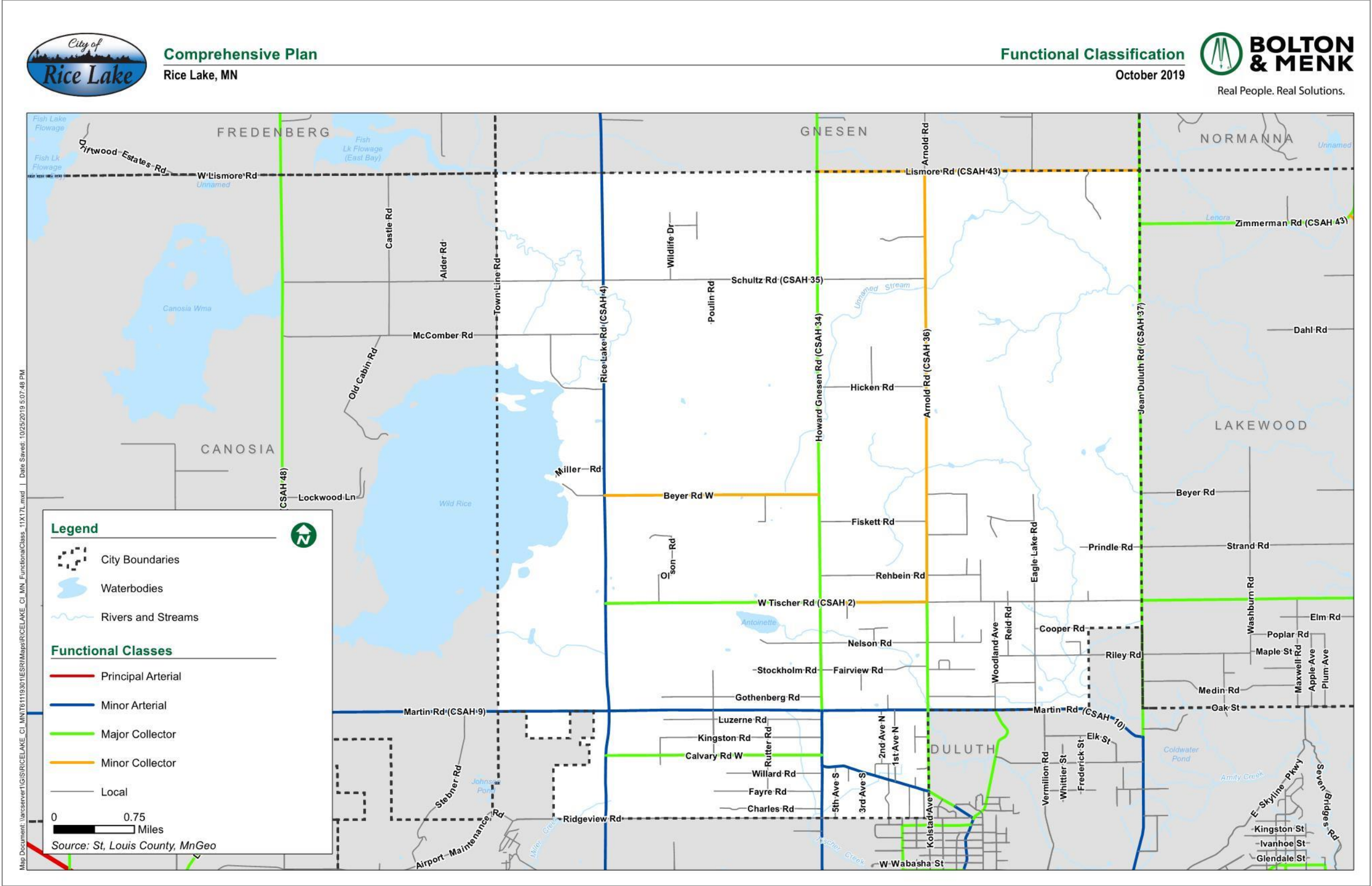
Roadways of this classification are those streets not classified as an arterial or collector. Similar to minor collector streets, local streets typically include neighborhood city streets which provide direct access to individual residences and businesses and convey traffic to minor collectors, major collectors, and minor arterials. As with minor collectors, local streets serve short trips at relatively low speeds and their emphasis is increasingly focused on access rather than mobility. Accordingly, local streets do not include through traffic movements. As with many communities, many of the roadways within the City of Rice Lake are classified as local streets.

Transportation planning involves standards for the functional street types in Rice Lake. These standards, shown in the table below, provide guidance on the design and operation of each street.

Table T-1 – Standards for Functional Street Types			
	Arterial	Collector	Local
Location	At neighborhood edges	On edges or within neighborhoods	Within neighborhoods
Property access to street	Limited	Spaced access	Direct access
Traffic control	Signals & stop signs where warranted	Signals & stop signs where warranted	Traffic control/calming where warranted
On-street parking	Not permitted	Restricted by width	Restricted by width
Land use connections	Inter-city	Connects neighborhoods	Connects blocks
System connections	To arterials	To arterials/collectors	To collectors/locals
Service performed	Long trips	Within city – links to rural county	Short trips within city
Traffic volume (trips/day)	3,000-10,000	500-3,000	< 500

At times, it may be necessary to reconsider how a roadway's function has changed or could better serve a community. A re-designation of a roadway's functional classification is under the authority of the agency which owns the given road. Based on roadway analysis completed for 2040, this plan makes no recommendations for changes to the existing functional classification. Rice Lake should continue to regularly review city roads for reclassification of roads in the future.

Figure T-4 – Functional Classification



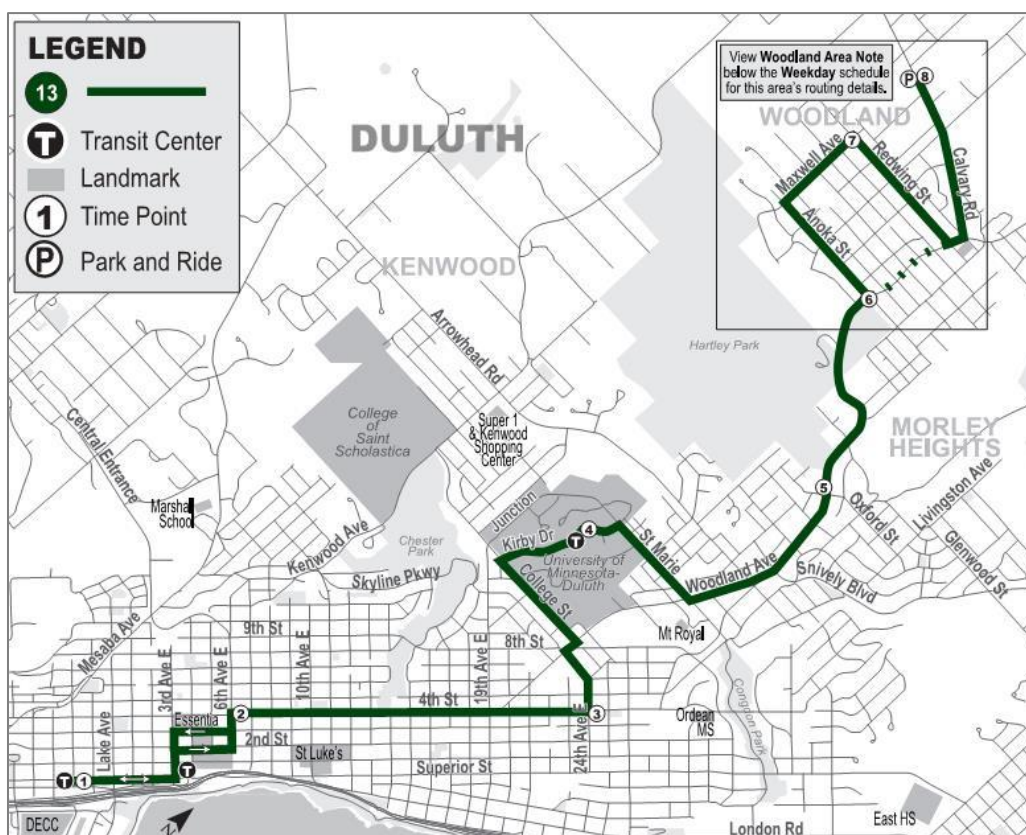
## Non-Motorized Transportation

While the City of Rice Lake is rural in nature, many areas create a demand for bicycle and pedestrian activity. This demand is spurred by existing and planned trail infrastructure and the land use characteristics, especially during the summer months.

When road improvement projects are considered, the city review the surrounding land use context to understand existing bicycle and pedestrian needs. In some cases, pedestrian and bicycle facilities may need to be considered in project development to support local community needs and to create a safe environment for bicyclists and pedestrians. The city will continue to work with local and regional partners to determine these needs.

## Transit

The Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) operates the Woodland Park and Ride, located on the south side of East Calvary Road between Raymond Avenue and Chicago Avenue in Rice Lake. DTA Route 13 is a fixed route service from the park and ride, through the University of Minnesota, to downtown Duluth. Route 13 operates approximately every 30 minutes from 4:30 am to 11:00 pm on weekdays, and hourly from approximately 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on weekends.



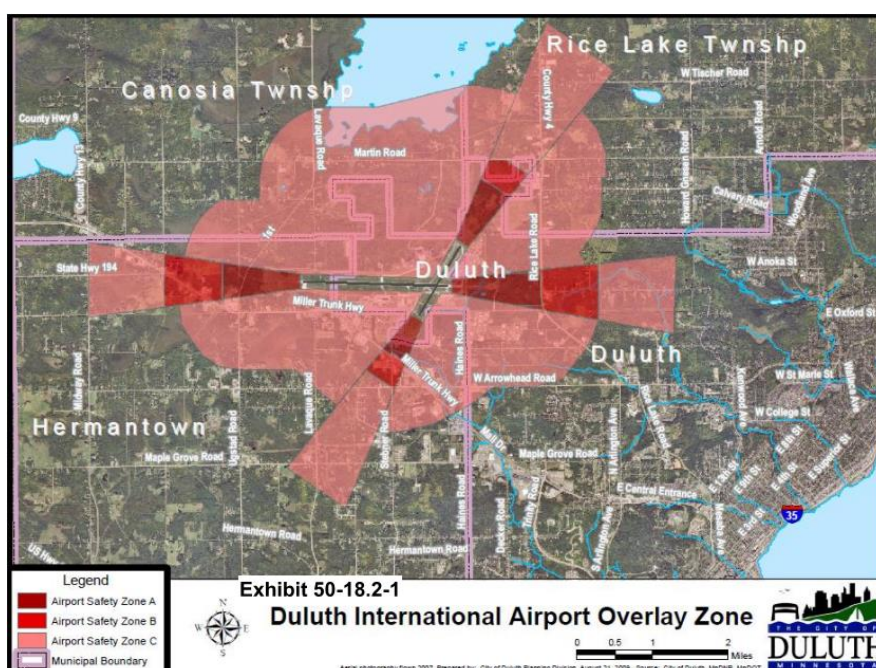
Source: Duluth Transit Authority

Dial-A-Ride services are available to city residents via Arrowhead Transit. Pick-ups are available at Rice Lake City Hall twice a month. Route parameters within Hermantown are east of Ugstad Road and north of Morris Thomas Road



## Aviation

The Duluth International Airport (DLH) provides services for commercial, general aviation, and military use. While not within the City limits, the airport is located directly adjacent to the southwest corner of the City. Because of its proximity, the City is impacted by the Airport Safety Zone Boundaries set forth by Minnesota Department of Transportation Aeronautics to protect against hazards to air navigation and to limit population and building density in the runway approach areas to protect life and property in case of an accident. These controls include controlling the height of structures adjacent to the Airport. In addition, any person(s) proposing a structure 200 feet or more above ground level located within the City shall notify and obtain the approval of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the MnDOT. Any proposed construction or alteration must include notification to the FAA should such activity contain a potential hazard to air navigation or electronic interference. These requirements are defined by federal regulations code CRF – Part 77.

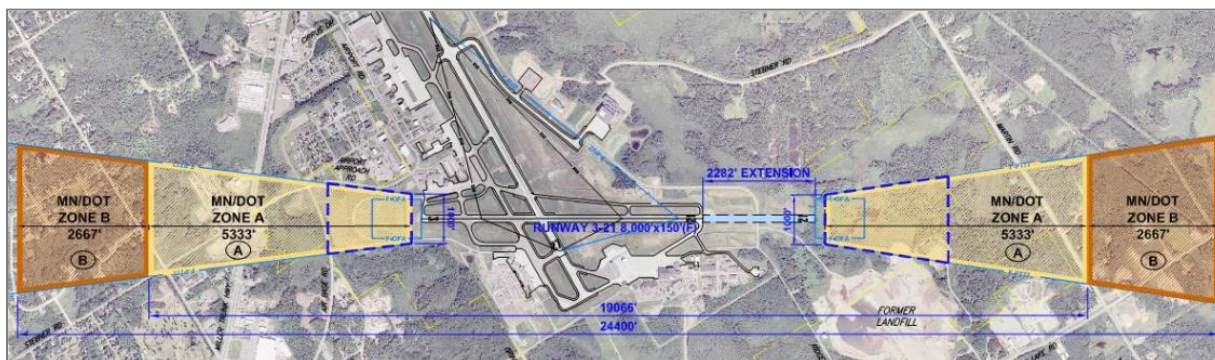


Source: City of Duluth

The Duluth International Airport Joint Zoning Board administers the special zoning regulations within the hazard area surrounding the Duluth International Airport. The Joint Airport Zoning Board consists of representatives from adjoining cities and townships, including two representatives from Rice Lake.

The Duluth Airport Authority is in the process of preparing a Master Plan (Vision 2040) to help the airport meet community needs through 2040. A key focus area of this master plan will be the existing north-south Runway 3/21. Runway 3/21 currently serves as a crosswind runway, providing another option for pilots when winds do not favor Runway 9/27. Runway 3/21 is also used when Runway 9/27 is unavailable due to construction or other conditions. Currently, general aviation aircraft and commercial airlines use Runway 3/21 when conditions warrant. The 148th Fighter Wing does not use Runway 3/21 as the existing infrastructure does not meet their requirements.

A 2015 study reviewed several options for the expansion of Runway 3/21. The preferred option (Option E) includes an extension to obtain a future 8,000' runway length.



*Source: Duluth Airport Authority, 2015 Duluth International Airport Master Plan Update*

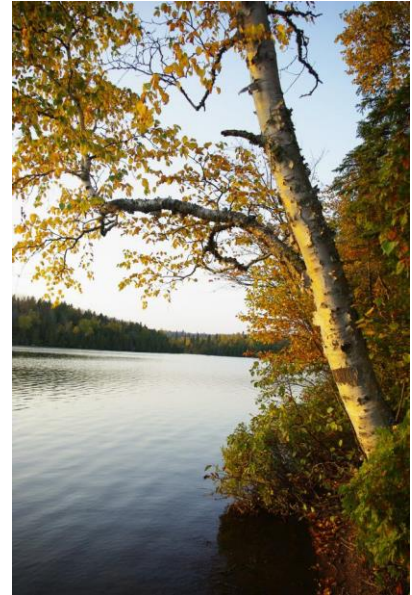
Expansion of this runway will have a direct impact on the City of Rice Lake. This expansion will expand the Airport Safety Zone boundaries in Rice Lake. This may impact potential land uses.

The Vision 2040 Master Plan will evaluate if Runway 3/21 adequately meets the needs of existing and future users. If it does not adequately meet the needs, alternatives for improvement will be evaluated. Many factors will contribute to the evaluation of the runway in the Master Plan. Some of these factors include: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) design standards, user needs, environmental considerations, infrastructure constraints, financial feasibility, community goals and input and stakeholder input.

# Natural Resources

The natural environment is among Rice Lake's most important assets because it provides recreational and economic opportunities as well as habitat for fish and wildlife. Protection and enhancement of natural resources can directly benefit people through protection of drinking water sources and supporting industries such as agricultural, forestry and tourism. Quality of life is also better, which is attractive to potential residents and increases land values. The challenge for the community is to adopt and implement regulations and programs that accommodate land uses while conserving the quality of the natural environment. Consideration should be given to:

- Removal and prevention of the spread of both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species
- Encouraging the protection and enhancement of native plant habitats
- Elimination and reduction in pollution that impacts groundwater and is carried by rainwater and snowmelt runoff into streams and lakes



## Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the City of Rice Lake is to protect and enhance natural resources such as lakes, forests, and wildlife.

**Goal:** Design future development to limit encroachment into wetlands and other sensitive natural areas.

### **Objective:**

- Identify and preserve sensitive natural habitat areas and corridors.
- For all zoning and subdivision applications (including beyond shoreland areas), ensure that grading and site plans will preserve as many natural features as possible.
- Direct residential development toward areas with soils suitable for septic installation as permitted in the subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) ordinance.
- Ensure development density is appropriate for existing soil characteristics.

**Goal:** Ensure high water quality of surface water and groundwater to assist in providing an adequate supply, presently and in the future.

### **Objective:**

- Protect water quality by implementing policies or education initiatives to reduce runoff and pollution by nutrients, bacteria, and chemicals.
- Educate residents and visitors about aquatic invasive species prevention.

- Protect shorelines with naturally vegetated buffers that reduce erosion in addition to protecting water quality.
- 

**Goal:** Ensure healthy forests to benefit the community through their providing improved air and water quality.

**Objective:**

- Prevent the spread of invasive insects such as Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth and invasive plants such as Common Buckthorn and Garlic Mustard.
- Encourage sustainable timber harvest practices.
- Actively manage forests using native herbaceous plant seeding, controlled burns, tree seedling planting and protection, and other tools.

## The Landscape

Sculpted by glacial activity that occurred over 10,000 years ago, the topography of the area ranges from gently rolling to some steep areas with greater than 12% slope. There is a difference of approximately 300 feet between topographic extremes. The land is highest in the mid-north, middle, and southwest. The highest point in the City (1,470 feet above sea level) is located to the west of the intersection of Rehbein and Arnold Roads.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service developed an Ecological Classification System for Minnesota. These classifications are used to describe areas of land with uniform ecological features. The City of Rice Lake lies within the North Shore Highlands Subsection of the Northern Superior Uplands Section within the Laurentian Mixed Forest Province (see Figure NR-1). This ecological subsection is characterized by bedrock outcroppings, lakes, and typically shallow deposits of coarse, loamy soils. Aspen-birch forests dominate the area with minor amounts of white and red pine, mixed hardwood-pine, and conifer bogs and swamps. Jack pine forests are present along dry ridges and bedrock outcroppings. Along Lake Superior, forests are dominated by sugar maple with some white pine, yellow birch, and white cedar.



Figure NR-1 – North Shore Highlands Subsection



*Source: Minnesota DNR*

The area is one of the most important migratory corridors for birds in the entire Midwest. Songbirds, raptors (hawks, eagles, and falcons), and other birds travel along the North Shore as they migrate in fall and spring. Nearby Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory is a popular location for locals, tourists, and scientists to observe the fall migration of raptors as they move from summer breeding grounds to wintering destinations.

## Soils

Detailed soil data is a useful tool for evaluating proposed land use developments. Typical soil depth is shallow, and bedrock outcroppings are common. Most of the soils are composed of either terminal or ground moraines. Terminal moraines, formed when glaciers remain stationary for long periods of time, consist of gravel mixed with finer materials deposited in irregular depths. Ground moraines are formed by the deposits of moving glaciers and consist of a thin cover of sand, gravel and boulders over a bedrock base. Three basic soil types are found in Rice Lake. The first type is found primarily in the northern half of the town and around Rice Lake Reservoir and consists of numerous peat bogs. Peat bogs are decomposing accumulations of aquatic vegetation and are found in low-lying areas with poor drainage. The thickness of these deposits may range from 18 inches to several feet. The other two soil types are silt loam and fine sandy loam. Both were formed by glacial moraines, and consist of sand, gravel, and coarser rock materials.

One feature of soil, which is important in the planning process, is its ability to support on-site wastewater treatment systems (e.g. septic systems). All of Rice Lake's soil types possess severe limitations for on-site wastewater treatment due to slow permeability and the possibility of seasonally high-water tables. As a result, the on-site wastewater treatment systems in the City require special design or maintenance. These soil restraints do not totally restrict future development in these areas but must be seriously considered as an important element in land use control.



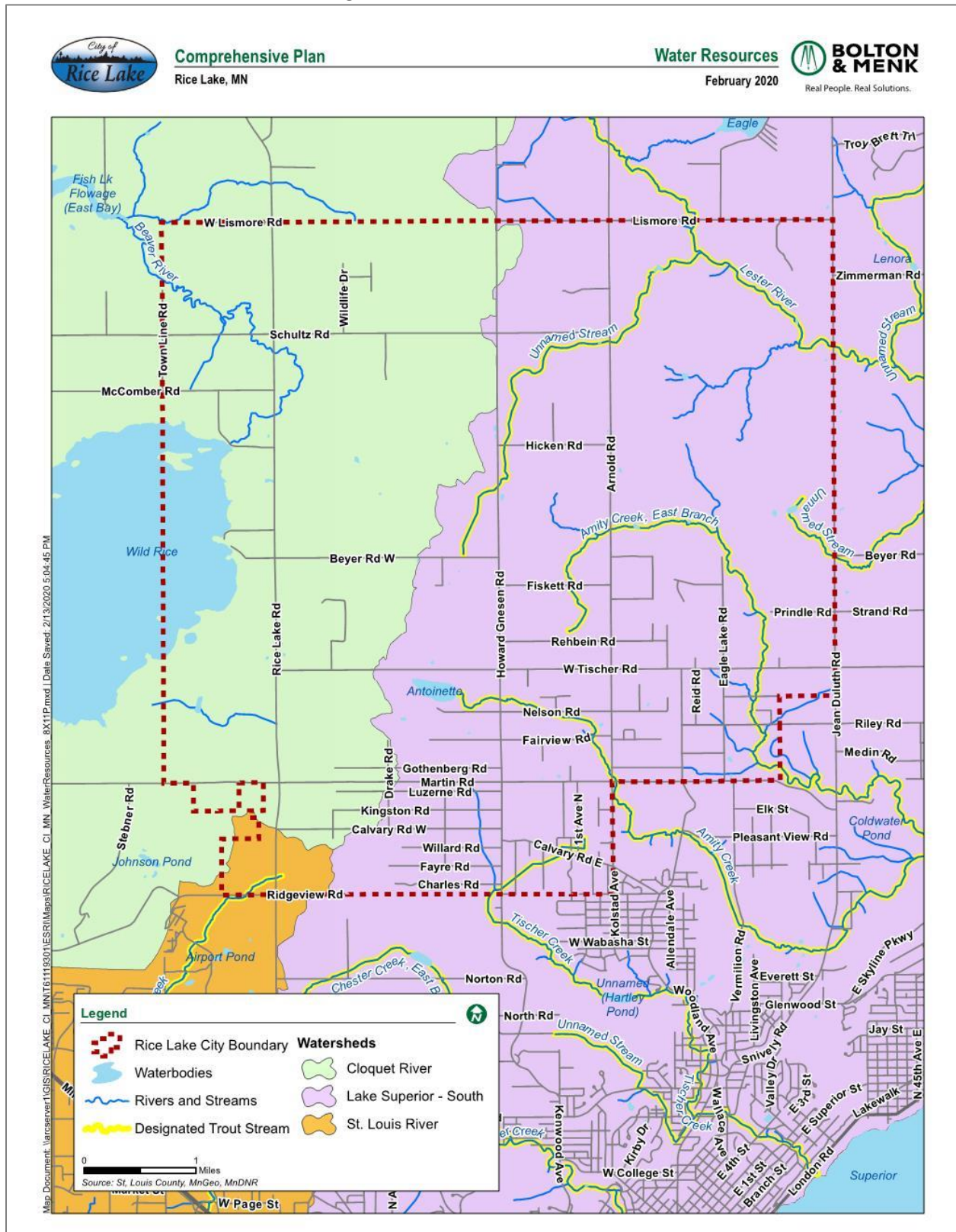
## Surface Water

Lakes, ponds, wetlands, streams and other water features are important resources for any community and deserve a high degree of attention. This is especially true in Rice Lake, as the headwaters of multiple waterways are located within the community. Wild Rice Lake Reservoir and Antoinette Lake provide additional water resources; ideally, these natural waterways should be the backbone of a community's storm drainage and open space system and be allowed to remain in their natural state. Wetlands should also be preserved because they serve the important function of storing or retaining snowmelt or run-off during wet periods, reducing the risk of flooding by slowly releasing water as stream capacity allows.

The eastern half of Rice Lake lies within the Lake Superior – South Watershed. Tischer Creek, Amity Creek, the East Branch of Amity Creek, and Lester River drain the eastern half of the town and flow through the City of Duluth into Lake Superior. The Beaver River and two small creeks drain the western portion of the township, eventually flowing into the Cloquet River. Miller Creek drains a very small portion in the southwest corner of the community and eventually flows into the St. Louis River. Because of these watershed connections, protecting water quality within Rice Lake benefits not only the City's residents but other people as well.



Figure NR-3 – Watershed Districts



# Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

The City of Rice Lake prides itself on providing a healthy variety of recreational amenities and rural opportunities for its residents and visitors. A key component of the vision for the community and park system is to maintain the character and feel of the community, provide sustained moderate growth, and meet the needs of a changing population, all while maintaining the existing quality of life. Currently, the City is home to several open and natural space lands that provide both active and passive recreational opportunities and amenities. In addition to the facilities offered within the City of Rice Lake, several regionally significant recreational facilities in close proximity of the City draw visitors from around the state and reinforce the recreational offerings of the city.

This section summarizes survey results related to the City's parks and trails compiled as part of the comprehensive planning process, identify and summarize recreational facilities and the amenities offered at each location, and provide recommendations and funding opportunities for the growth of the parks and trails system in Rice Lake.

## Goals and Objectives

The City of Rice Lake has established goals and objectives specific to the Parks and Trails element.

**Goal:** Provide accessible recreational opportunities to accommodate people with varying abilities and the various age groups represented in the community.

**Objectives:**

- Provide a variety of activities and experiences that can be enjoyed by and with people of multiple ages and abilities.
- Allow people of multiple generations, abilities, and backgrounds to enjoy access to the park and trails system.

**Goal:** Retain all existing park lands for the use and enjoyment of residents.

**Objectives:**

- Retain existing park lands for recreational use.
- Maintain park facilities at a level consistent to the desires of the community
- Make improvements and expansions on existing park facilities based on future park planning efforts.
- Manage platting and development activity in close proximity to areas dedicated and improved for outdoor recreation.

**Goal:** Encourage the incorporation of outdoor recreational amenities into the design of new subdivisions and development sites, especially Planned Unit Developments.

**Objectives:**

- Review opportunities for nature/interpretive trails, lake access points, or unique viewpoints, where allowed, as part of new development.
- Require open space is available to newly developed neighborhoods.
- Encourage recreational opportunities are available to newly developed neighborhoods.

**Goal:** Continue the development of Non-Motorized Trail System within the city for the purposes of recreational enjoyment, connectivity, and safety.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to make off road trail connections for the overall safety of residents and users of the city's recreational amenities.
- Enhance the city's desirability and reputation as a community that provides excellent connectivity and recreational opportunities at a local and regional level.

**Goal:** Work in cooperation with local and adjoining governmental agencies and private recreational groups in providing parks, recreational facilities, trail connections and programming.

**Objectives:**

- Seek out new and maintain existing agreements with other local government agencies in the development and operation of park and recreation facilities in order to provide residents with otherwise unavailable opportunities.

**Goal:** Increase the public awareness of recreational opportunities that exist for residents.

**Objectives:**

- Develop materials (online and print) with information on the City's park system and recreational opportunities.

**Goal:** Celebrate and promote recreation within the city.

**Objectives:**

- Hold special events and activities within the city's park system aimed at encouraging public use and building community.
- Work with other local jurisdictions to encourage and promote bicycle or other trail uses in the region.

## Survey Results

There were four questions included in the community survey conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process that focused on recreational facilities and opportunities in the city. These questions and their responses are summarized as follows:

**Question 21: Please rank your priorities for the future growth in the City. Select the 3 most important to you.**

The top answer to this question was commercial/retail/service development with nearly 50% of respondents indicating a desire for these facilities. Second, was walking and/or biking trail development. Tied for third, with 30% or respondents was residential growth and park development.

**Question 22: What types of recreational programs or amenities would you like to see expanded or developed?**

The top 3 responses to this question were Walking/hiking trails, Parks, Hockey/ice skating rinks and ATV trails. Other responses in order of popularity included: Playground equipment, swimming pool, snowmobile trail, fitness classes, tennis courts, baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, and skatepark.

#### **Question 23: I would walk or bike more if:**

The top answer to this question was if there were more sidewalks or trails, followed in order by: easier access to trails/parks, there was a map of walk/bike routes, and there were more bike lanes.

#### **Question 24: What activities do you use a park for?**

The top answer to this question was family events, followed in order by: playground equipment, personal exercise, and sporting events.

## **Local Parks & Trails**

The following park and recreational facilities are located in the City of Rice Lake:

Figure P-1 identifies the locations of the various facilities discussed in this section, and Table P-1 at the end of this section summarizes the size of each facility and the amenities available at each location.

### **Town Park**

Town Park is centrally located in the City of Rice Lake city limits and offers users both active and passive recreational opportunities. Established in 1963, the park covers approximately 20 acres. Recreational offerings at the park include walking trails, ballfields and volleyball and basketball courts. Other amenities include a playground, fishing pond, picnic shelter and restroom.

### **Rice Lake Reservoir & Public Boat Access**

The Rice Lake Reservoir, sitting at the western city limits of Rice Lake, provides active and passive recreational opportunities for users throughout the year. Fishing and boating draw many visitors to the reservoir, and in the winter, ice fishing and snowmobiling are popular activities. Visitors to Rice Lake can access the reservoir from the Rice Lake Public Boat Access on the north side of the reservoir. The access includes a concrete boat ramp and dock. Parking is available for approximately 5 vehicles and trailers, and there is also a portable toilet on site. The boat access is administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

### **Homecroft Elementary School**

Homecroft Elementary School provides residents with another recreational opportunity within the city. Facilities at the school include a playground, athletic fields, basketball court, and four-square courts.

### **Local Trails**

Local trail and sidewalk connectivity are limited within Rice Lake. A designated snowmobile trail runs through the city, but most of it is unusable during the summer due to extensive wetlands. Several roads have adequate shoulder width to accommodate safe walking or biking, but these roads are limited.

## **Regional Parks & Trails**

The following regionally significant recreational amenities are within close proximity to the City of Rice Lake.



## Regional Parks

### Lake Park Athletic Complex

Lake Park Athletic Complex, situated at the intersection of Riley Road and Jean Duluth Road, is approximately 100 acres in size. Built in 1972 on land donated by the University of Minnesota Duluth, the complex houses 5 soccer fields, and 6 baseball/softball fields, as well as a concession/picnic facility.

### Canosia State Wildlife Management Area

The Canosia State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) covers an area of nearly 2,500 acres and is made up of diverse deciduous/coniferous forest and wetland/bog complex with scattered upland openings, waterfowl impoundments and wild rice. Forested areas are actively managed by the DNR for wildlife, and waterfowl impoundments are managed for waterfowl, making it a popular area for trapping, hunting and hiking. Canosia WMA also offers extensive trail systems including cross country ski and snowmobile trails. Carry-in canoe access is available as well.

### Hartley Nature Center

Hartley Nature Center, situated southeast of Rice Lake, is a 660 acre recreational and educational facility that aims to inspire lifelong connections to nature through education, play and exploration. The facility includes playgrounds, and other recreational opportunities including bird watching, cross country skiing, hiking, snowshoeing and fishing. The center serves more than 30,000 visitors per year.

## Regional Trails

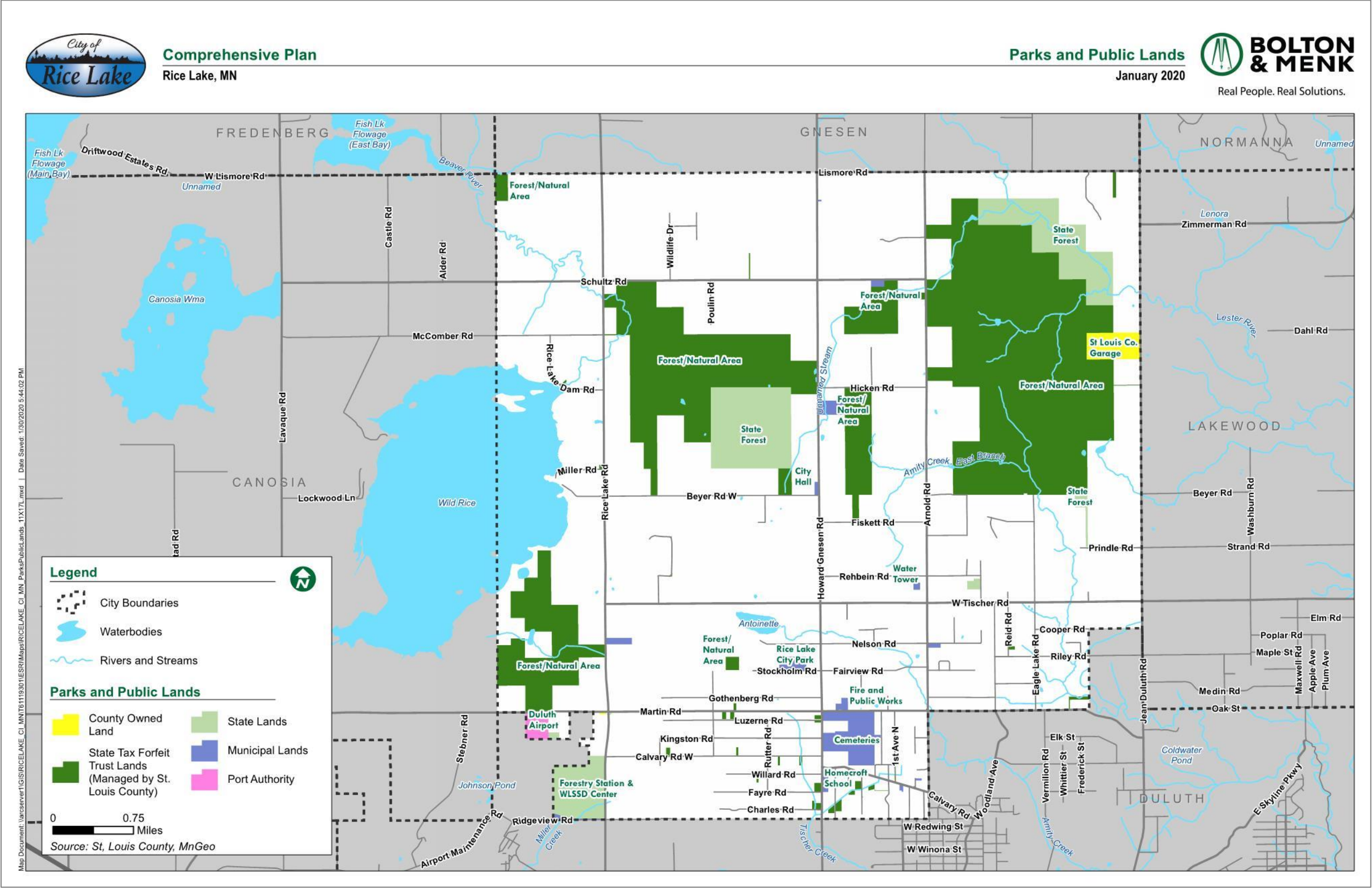
### C.J. Ramstad/North Shore State Trail

The C. J. Ramstad/North Shore State Trail is an approximately 150 mile long multipurpose trail that traverses St. Louis, Lake and Cook Counties of northeastern Minnesota. The trail winds its way through the forests behind the bluffs that overlook Lake Superior and provides access to some of the most beautiful and rugged scenery in Minnesota. Within the City of Rice Lake, the trail runs North-South just west of Jean Duluth Road and includes 2 formal campsites for trail users; Bald Eagle Camp, and White Pine Camp.

**Table P-1 – Park Amenities by Location**

	Park Size (Acres)	Walking/Hiking Trails	Picnic Facilities	Shelter/Building	Boat Launch	Restroom	Skating Rink	Playground	Ballfields	Courts	Boat/Fishing/Water	Mowed Open Space	Nature Preserve	Dog Park
<b>Parks</b>														
<b>Public Parks</b>														
Town Park	20	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		
Homecroft Elementary								X	X	X		X		
Rice Lake Public Boat Access	1				X	X					X		X	

Figure P-1 – Parks and Public Lands



## Recommendations & Funding Opportunities

### **Recommendation:**

To meet the stated goals and objectives, Rice Lake should consider undertaking a detailed recreation planning process. The process would identify facilities and amenities desired by the community, and overall needs, costs and benefits of their implementation. The plan would provide recommendations for types and locations of recreational facilities and give estimated costs and timelines for construction based on available funding sources. Maintenance costs and practices would also be identified through this process.

### **Funding Opportunities**

Potential funding opportunities for the development of the parks and trail system include the *Regional Transportation Advisory Council* administered by the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), the *Safe Routes to School* Program administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), or the *Active Living* grant administered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Additionally, funding to facilitate a trail planning effort are available through the *Safe Routes to School* program and the *Transportation Enhancements* program administered by ARDC.

# Utility Infrastructure

## Introduction

The purpose of the Utility Infrastructure Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan is to prepare for potential future growth and development. Public utilities that provide water resources and sanitation collection is an essential player in community life and future community development. As the population, industry and commercial services develop and communities needs increase, it is important to ensure that demand for these services does not exceed the supply.

Individual private separate utility systems for sewer and water have limited potential to support community growth and, with changing environmental regulations, can restrict land uses within the community. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide guidance on future land use patterns, with rates of development driving the demand on utility infrastructure expansion in the City of Rice Lake. A primary goal is to establish guidance for a sufficiently planned expansion of infrastructure to address and accommodate future community needs and regulatory compliance for decades of excellent service.

This chapter will analyze existing capacity and assess future needs of the water, sewer and storm drainage utilities. The primary goal of this plan is to establish local policies, standards, and guidelines to guide major utility investments and policy decisions. According to the recent community survey, most respondents currently rely on individual wells and septic systems; however, approximately 44% of respondents indicated an interest in public sewer and water service. As a result, a number of goals and policies have been developed for the successful managed growth of the community.

## Goals and Objective

Overall, this plan is intended to provide guidance on how future land use patterns and rates of development will affect the demand on utility infrastructure for City of Rice Lake. The plan recommends the City of Rice Lake work with Western Lake Superior Sanitary Sewer District (WLSSD) and St. Louis County to address the recommendations put forward in this plan. Specific goals include:

**Goal:** Determine areas of utility service extension for new development or redevelopment, providing an efficient utility system.

**Objectives:**

- Develop utility trunk service corridors to support planned future land use
- Encourage design and land uses that support an efficient system (size and location) for future reduced unit costs
- Develop trunk area fees for expansion areas to help provide funding assistance for servicing these areas
- Discourage the creation of neighborhood collection systems that rely on multiple individual sanitary grinder lift stations for conveying waste into the City's collection system



**Goal:** Ensure Rice Lake's utility system has the capacity and is coordinated with City of Duluth, WLSSD and St. Louis County systems.

**Objectives:**

- Communicate with coordinated agencies on forecasted need and budgeted for available capacities
- Develop a capital improvement program to ensure adequate funding for priority utility service concerns.

**Goal:** Where possible look at eliminating the number of lift stations within the system.

**Objectives:**

- Support efforts looking at more centralized collection systems to provide maximum service at reduced operational costs in Rice Lake.

**Goal:** Strive for a balanced water supply with adequate looping for systems supply redundancy

**Objectives:**

- Ensure the current system provides adequate redundancy if a segment of the system must be shut down for a period of time.
- Consider completing a 3.5-mile secondary loop from Martin road north on Rice Lake Road to Tischer road east to connection at Howard Gnesen road.

**Goal:** Provide adequate storage centralized for balanced pressure zones across the community

**Objectives:**

- Look at areas forecasted for growth and higher demands for the system and provide adequate service volume capacity.
- With the forecasted land use along Rice lake Road a second community storage basin within this corridor would help maintain necessary volume.

**Goal:** Minimize number of stormwater facilities within the community.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage maintaining localized drainage area flows to reduce infrastructure needs and system operational costs.
- Support efforts looking at more regional detention and treatment facilities where needed to provide maximum service area at reduced costs and maintenance.

## Current Conditions

Currently, public utilities, including water supply, sanitary sewer and storm sewer, are available to only a small portion of the southern area of the City of Rice Lake.

## Water Supply

The City of Rice Lake water utility system consists of infrastructure components that perform storage, treatment, distribution and fire supply functions. Drinking water is currently supplied by the City of Duluth for the City of Rice Lake water utility distribution system. The City of Duluth collects

and treats water from Lake Superior and provides water to the adjacent communities of Rice Lake, Hermantown and Proctor. The system will provide a long-term quality water supply for the community for the foreseeable future.

The City of Rice Lake is connected to the Duluth water system at two meter stations which are located in the City:

1. East Meter Station at East Calvary Road and Arnold Road and
2. South Meter Station at Rice Lake Road and Ridgeview Road.

As of February 2019, daily usage is approximately 66,700 gallons per day (gpd), with seasonal lows around 40,000 gpd and a peak of 71,600 gpd used during the summer (2,150,000 gallons used in September) daily average of 42,800 gpd for the year, with a total of 15,615,000 gallons consumed in 2019. Table 1 identifies historical, current and projected water usage.

Table 1 – Water Usage				
	2010	2019	2030	2040
Daily Average (February)		66,700 gpd		
Peak Daily Average		71,600 gpd	100,000 gpd	
Annual		15,615,000	20,000,000	

Over the past few years, the City has noticed a difference in the amount of metered water delivered by the City of Duluth (26,643,000 gallons) and accounted water consumed (15,615,000 gallons) by the City in resident billings and bulk water sales. This has resulted in increased losses in the water fund. The City is stepping up activities to identify where this water loss may be occurring. In 2019 the Chicago Avenue project replaced an aged watermain that was experiencing maintenance issues and loss of water.

The city completes maintenance on the system through efforts including flushing hydrants and exercise valves. The city experiences on average one watermain break a year, 5 in last 3 years. A leak detection test was completed in 2019 with no leaks located. The leak detection plan is to retest every 5 years or as needed if supported by water usage data.

The City of Rice Lake has one 200,000 gallon water tower storage basin located on Arnold Road south of Rehbein Road. This water tower was constructed in 1997 and a maintenance/refurbish project was completed in 2017. Water is distributed with 6" – 12" mainline pipes that are made of ductile iron (50%) and HDPE (50%).

The population of Rice Lake in 2018 was approximately 4,100. Some new development and redevelopment are expected to increase the population to approximately 4,162, and the number of households to 1,797 by 2040. Growth combined with extending watermain and services to existing properties will increase the amount of water supply required from the City utility system. Projected maximum daily water use of 100,000 gpd could be expected.

To reliably provide this increased water service demand, the following improvements should be considered by City Council:

- Watermain Loop and Extension Project: Connecting Rice Lake Road/Martin Road to Watermain located in W. Tischer Road and water tower. Creating north loop was part of 2020 Mn State Legislature Bonding Request.

- Rice Lake Road extension north of Martin Road.
- Martin Road east of Rice Lake Road to east of Howard Gnesen Road. Creating south loop.
- Stravanger Road south of Martin Road
- Howard Gnesen Road south of Martin Road
- Marther Road north of E Calvary Road to Jensen Road, east on Porter Road to Arnold Road south of Martin Road
- When reconstruct east-west roads west of Howard Gnesen Road and extensions to Rice Lake Road: Charles Road, Fayre Road, Willard Road, Kingston Road, Luzerne Road, Gothenberg Road
- Renovate or replacement of water system facilities as they age.
- As daily usage increases maintain reserve water storage capacity at twice the maximum daily usage (two day reserve).







## Sanitary Sewer Collection

The City of Rice Lake sanitary sewer system collects waste from individual residents and businesses located in the southern service area. The City of Rice Lake had eleven (11) wastewater pumping lift stations until recently. City wastewater pumping lift stations move the collected waste flows to the two Western Lake Superior Sanitary Sewer District (WLSSD) meter pumping stations, which convey the flows through interceptor lines to the main WLSSD wastewater treatment facility located in Duluth on the St. Louis River. Spring peak daily pumped volume is approximately 101,300 gallons per day (gpd), (3,040,000 gallons for March) daily average of 65,450 gpd for the year, with a total of 23,890,000 gallons pumped in 2019.

Two WLSSD meter stations are located in the City:

- West station is on Ridgeview Road west of Rice Lake Road (City LS #9, recently turned over to WLSSD)
- East station is on East Calvary Road and Mather Road (City LS #1 constructed in 2008).

Table 2 illustrates the current and projected population, households and employees by sewer versus unsewered. (Do we have data for these tables? If not, should they be deleted?)

Table 2 – Existing Sewer				
Year		Population	Households	Employment
2010	Sewered			
	Unsewered			
2019	Sewered			
	Unsewered			
2030	Sewered			
	Unsewered			
2040	Sewered			
	Unsewered			

Table 3 identifies current and projected wastewater flows.

Table 3 – Wastewater Flows				
	2010	2019	2030	2040
Daily Average				
Annual				

City facilities consist of:

- Stavenger Road north of Calvary Road W. Individual private resident E-One grinder stations provide service for residents.
- Rice Lake Road north of Calvary Road W. Individual private resident E-One grinder stations provide service for residents.
- Lift station #2 was constructed in 2008.

- Lift station #3 was constructed in 2008.
- Lift station #4 (5<sup>th</sup> Ave.) and #5 (4<sup>th</sup> Ave.) were removed with reconstruction of these street segments in 2016 and replaced with e-one private system.
- Lift station #6 and #7 were removed with reconstruction of Chicago Ave. in 2019
- Lift station #8 was constructed in [REDACTED] and refurbished in [REDACTED].
- Lift Station #9 located on Ridgeview road at WLSSD Materials Recovery Center was turned over to WLSSD for operation and maintenance
- Lift station #10 was constructed in 2008.
- Lift station #11 was constructed in [REDACTED] at City Public Works/Fire Department Building on Martin Road.

Sanitary sewer waste collection is with 8" – 12" main line pipes that are made of PVC. Maintenance of the Sewer system amounts to cleaning and televising on a rotational basis such that each segment is completed every 5 years. Lift station monitoring and maintenance occurs regularly via SCADA electronic monitoring of facility operations and visual inspection efforts for performance confirmation.

Rice Lake has started community education measures to keep the residents informed of some system management tips to prevent backups and blockages. Main items of concern within the system is clogging of pumps and reduced pump efficiencies from rags, roots, fats, oils and grease. To help reduce Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) concerns new city ordinances and inspections are under consideration.

To reduce system flows and maintenance costs, City of Rice Lake should consider the following recommendations:

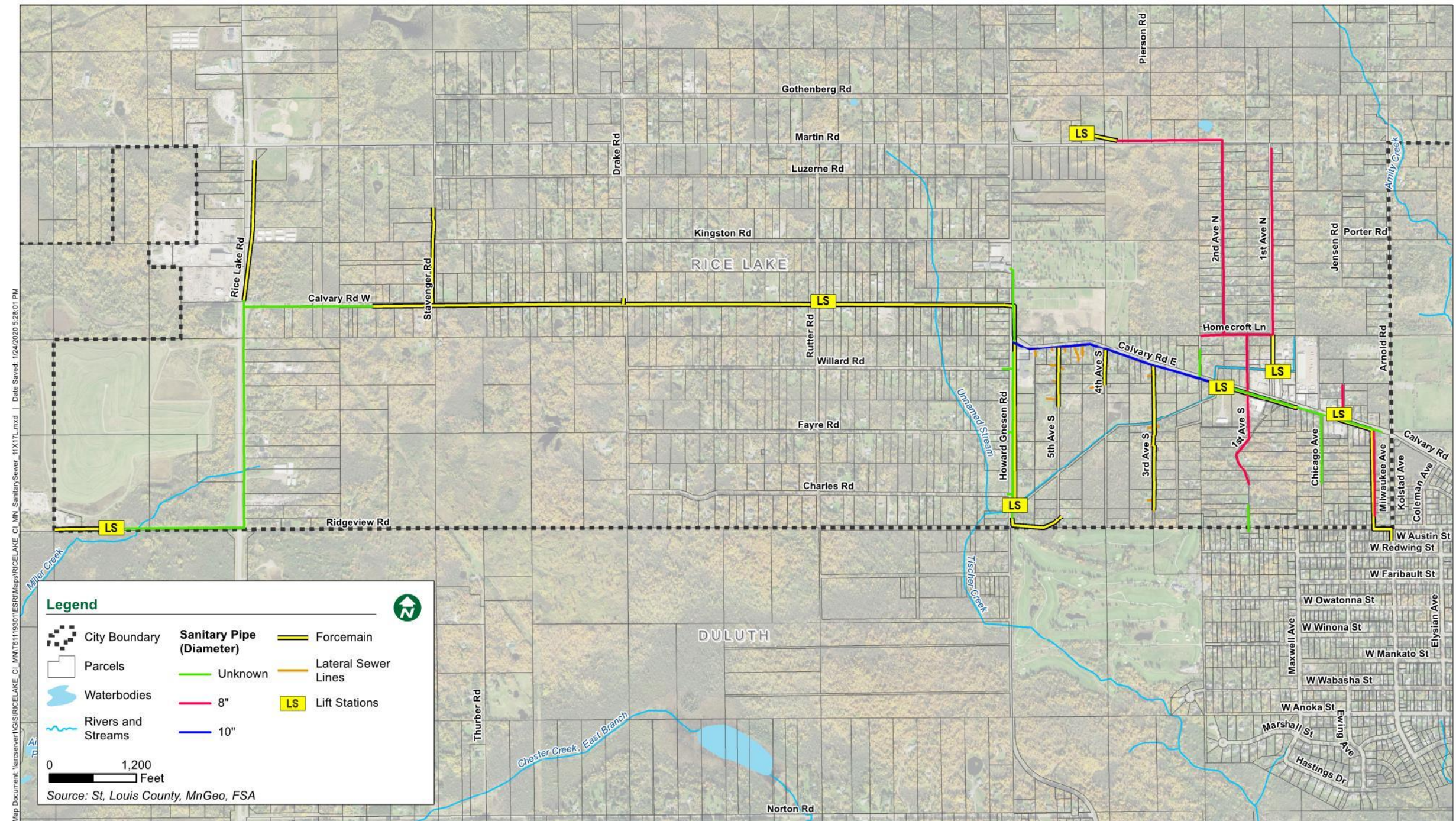
- Adopt community policies and ordinances describing allowable usage and discharges into the sanitary sewer system. Refer to WLSSD for guidance on allowable items.
- Aggressively pursue I&I discharge reductions. Develop a I&I plan to address storm related and groundwater discharges into the system. Inspect and disconnect illegal residential clean water drains.
- Inspect sewer structures, lines and service connections and make timely corrections when issues are identified.
- Require resident connection to city sanitary collection system when the cost to connect does not exceed 150% of the cost to install a new individual sewer treatment system (ISTS):
  - Residence expansion with new kitchen, bathrooms and/or bedrooms
  - When ISTS is failing
  - When ISTS is being replaced
  - When there is an immediate threat to health, safety and welfare from a failing ISTS
  - When a commercial/industrial property has a failing ISTS, unless connection is premature due to city plans or the need for a city project.

Combined with extending watermain to serve existing properties, extending the sanitary sewer system would maximize utilization of the properties served and keeping properties in compliance with regulatory requirements. Projected maximum daily flows of 100,000 gpd could be expected.

To reliably provide for increased service demand, the following improvements should be considered by City Council:

- Develop a master plan to service the area south of Gothenberg/Washington Road in the City
- Extending sanitary sewer service along with Watermain Extension Projects
- When reconstructing east-west roads west of Howard Gnesen Road and extensions to Rice Lake Road: Charles Road, Fayre Road, Willard Road, Kingston Road, Luzerne Road, Gothenberg Road
- Rice Lake Road extension north of Martin Road.
- Martin Road east of Rice Lake Road to east of Howard Gnesen Road. Creating south loop.
- Stravanger Road south of Martin Road
- Howard Gnesen Road south of Martin Road
- Marther Road north of E Calvary Road to Jensen Road, east on Porter Road to Arnold Road south of Martin Road
- Renovate or replacement of sanitary sewer system facilities as they age.







## Surface Water Management

All surface waters within the municipal boundaries of Rice Lake eventually flow into Lake Superior through three local water sheds:

- Lake Superior – South Watershed occupies the eastern 2/3rds of the City with waters feeding creeks running through east Duluth before flowing to Lake Superior.
- St. Louis River Watershed occupies a very small part of the south-west corner of the City south of Calvary Road and west of Stravenger Road with waters flowing to Miller Creek ending in the St. Louis River.
- Cloquet River Watershed occupies the western 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the city with waters flowing to Wild Rice Lake and Beaver River then to Fish Lake Flowage before ending up in the Cloquet River.

Rice Lake surface soils and geology was shaped primarily by several glacier ice sheets advancing from the Lake Superior Lobe during the last glaciation (Wisconsin). Leaving behind soils that are primarily ancient lake sediment in origin on flat slopes being poorly drained formed mainly with organic materials on glacial terrains over sandy loams. Soils main characteristics is higher clay and silt content, with low permeability (C/D Hydrologic Group).

Rice Lake contains a variety of wetlands formed in depressions left by the glaciers with many smaller creeks originating from these wetland areas. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has the following water bodies listed as impaired within the City of Rice lake:

- Wild Rice Reservoir – Mercury in Fish
- Lester River - Aquatic Life, Aquatic Recreation
- Amity Creek, East Branch – Aquatic Life
- Miller Creek - Aquatic Life, Aquatic Recreation

As development or land activities occur adjacent to or with runoff to the wetlands, creeks and lake water bodies, antidegradation protection steps need to be taken to reduce pollutants contributing to water quality degradation.

The main storm water components for the City consist of road and driveway culverts which convey storm surface waters along existing drainage patterns. With a few of the areas that have been developed stormwater facilities have been constructed to provide rate control and treatment prior to discharging from the site.

In 2019, the City added storm sewer as part of the intersection improvements at Ewing Avenue and W. Austin Avenue in the SE corner of the City. A storm collection system was also added on Chicago Avenue south of Calvary Road.

To protect and conserve its surface water resources, City of Rice Lake should consider the following recommendations:

- Develop a local surface water management plan (LSWMP)
- Work with the watershed agencies to adopt and implement community policies and ordinances for implementing a comprehensive surface water management plan
- Aggressively pursue pollution discharges.
- Where practical and feasible look at recreating regional surface water facilities to provide

---

water quality and rate controls for the areas proposed to be developed at higher densities and uses. This will maximize land utilization while reducing future maintenance costs.

(Insert Storm Water Collection System Exhibit)

DRAFT

DRAFT

# Economy and Employment

Economy and employment are a key part of any thriving community. Rice Lake's economy is an integral piece of the Duluth area regional economy. This economic connection will continue to be based on commuting and regional economic factors. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to report on local economic and employment issues and opportunities.

Economic development generally consists of those public and private efforts which promote and develop business enterprises within a community plus the housing development that serves commuters to Duluth and other areas. The City's regulatory climate can have an impact on the retention, expansion, and attraction of business. Zoning regulations can provide development standards which ensure that business development adds to the quality of neighborhoods and overall community life. Such standards can protect property values of homes and whole neighborhoods and can minimize undesirable off-site impacts from business activities. Such standards can also protect businesses from nuisance complaints and negative image situations. The Comprehensive Plan, along with zoning, to attract business provide standards which ensure land use compatibility within the community and as tools to attract business.

## Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** Support and expand the City's existing economic base.

**Objectives:**

- Work with existing businesses to remain or expand on their current sites or to relocate to more appropriate sites.
- Use the City's tools of zoning, capital improvement plans, and transportation plans to support development.
- Ensure that city processes and regulations related to land development, permits, and construction are easy to understand.

**Goal:** Provide adequate land and infrastructure to make locations within Rice Lake attractive to businesses.

**Objectives:**

- Ensure an adequate supply of land for business location and target new areas for businesses in the Land Use Plan.
- Plan for and expand public utilities and streets to the industrial park area when needed and when financially feasible.

## Current Conditions

### *Occupational and Professional Choices*

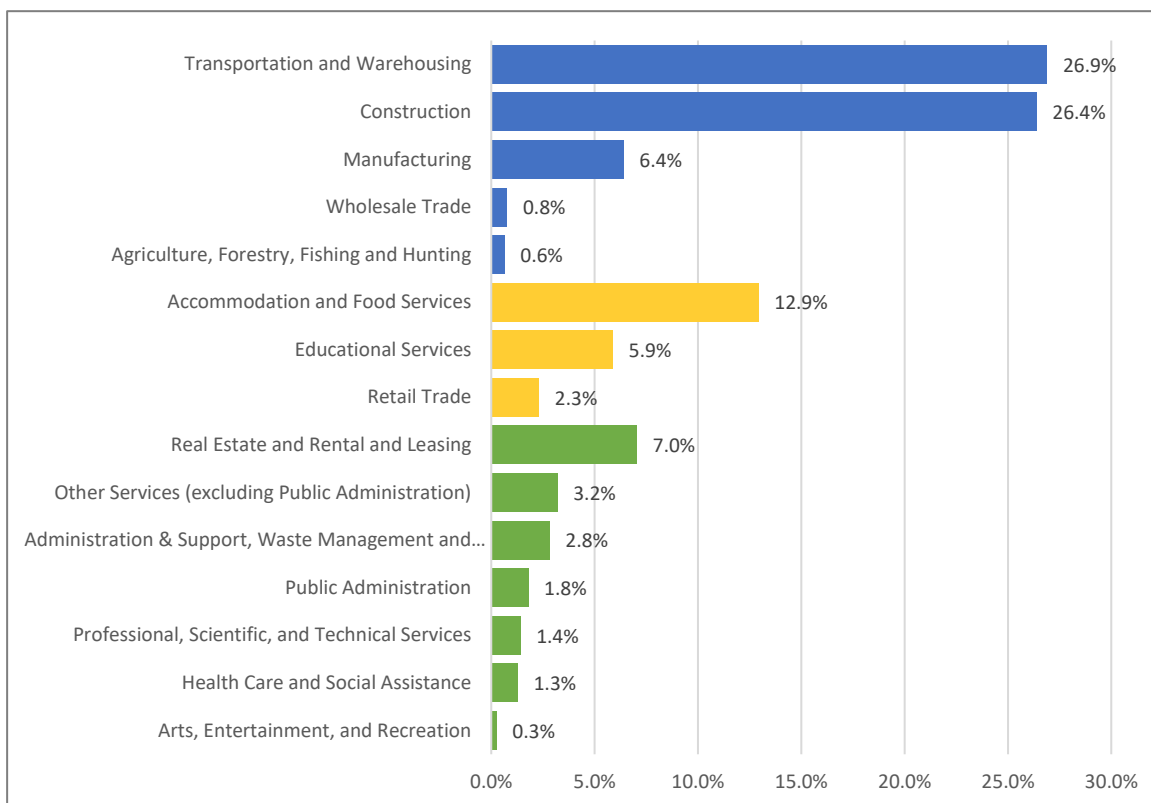
Occupation and professional choices can be described for both residents of Rice Lake, and those employed within the City. Figure E-2 illustrates occupations for the residents of Rice Lake. According to 2017 data, nearly 30% of employed residents worked in the Health Care/Social Assistance industry. Another 27.8% work in retail, education, and accommodation and food services.



More than 21% are employed in a variety of professional services, from public administration to real estate. Construction and manufacturing-type occupations account for 16.4% of the jobs. The remaining 2% are arts, entertainment, recreation, and information positions.

The second measure of choices is the types of industries located within Rice Lake. According to 2017 data, there were 781 employees working within the City. Figure E-1 illustrates the various industries in which these 781 employees work.

**Figure E-1 – Industries of Rice Lake Employers**



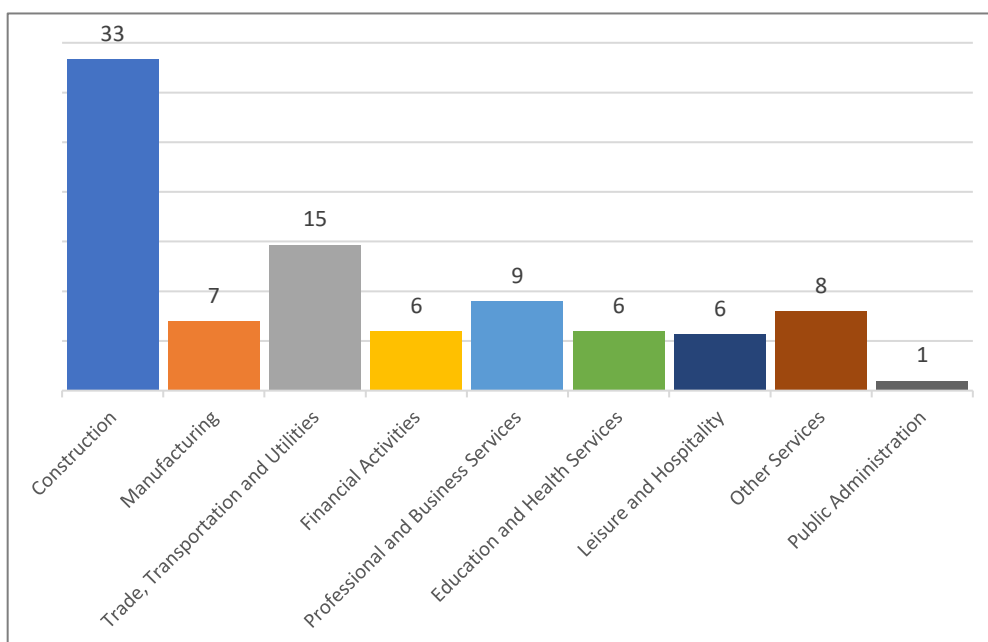
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2017).

More than 61% of the jobs in Rice Lake are within the transportation and warehousing, construction, manufacturing, wholesale, and agricultural industries. Approximately 21% of the jobs are in accommodations/food service, education, and retail. The remaining 17.8% are in professional services and arts.

### *Employment Establishments*

According the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), in 2017 there were approximately 78 employment establishments in the City of Rice Lake. The majority of these establishments were either construction or transportation and utilities. Figure E-2 shows the employment establishments by type.

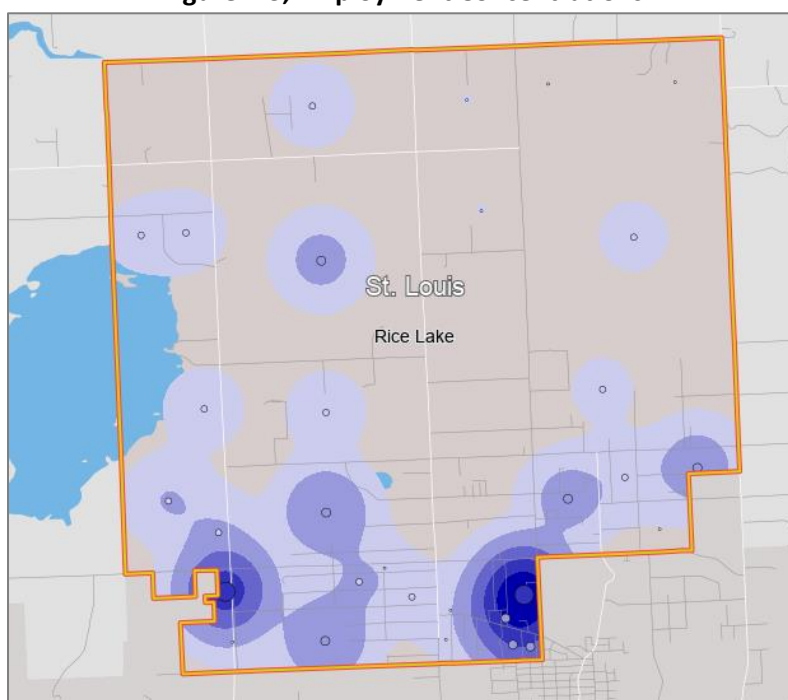
**Figure E-2 – Employment Establishments by Type**



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2017).*

The majority of these establishments are located in southern Rice Lake, along the major road corridors of Rice Lake Road and Arnold Road. Figure E-3 illustrates the employment concentrations.

**Figure E-3, Employment Concentrations**

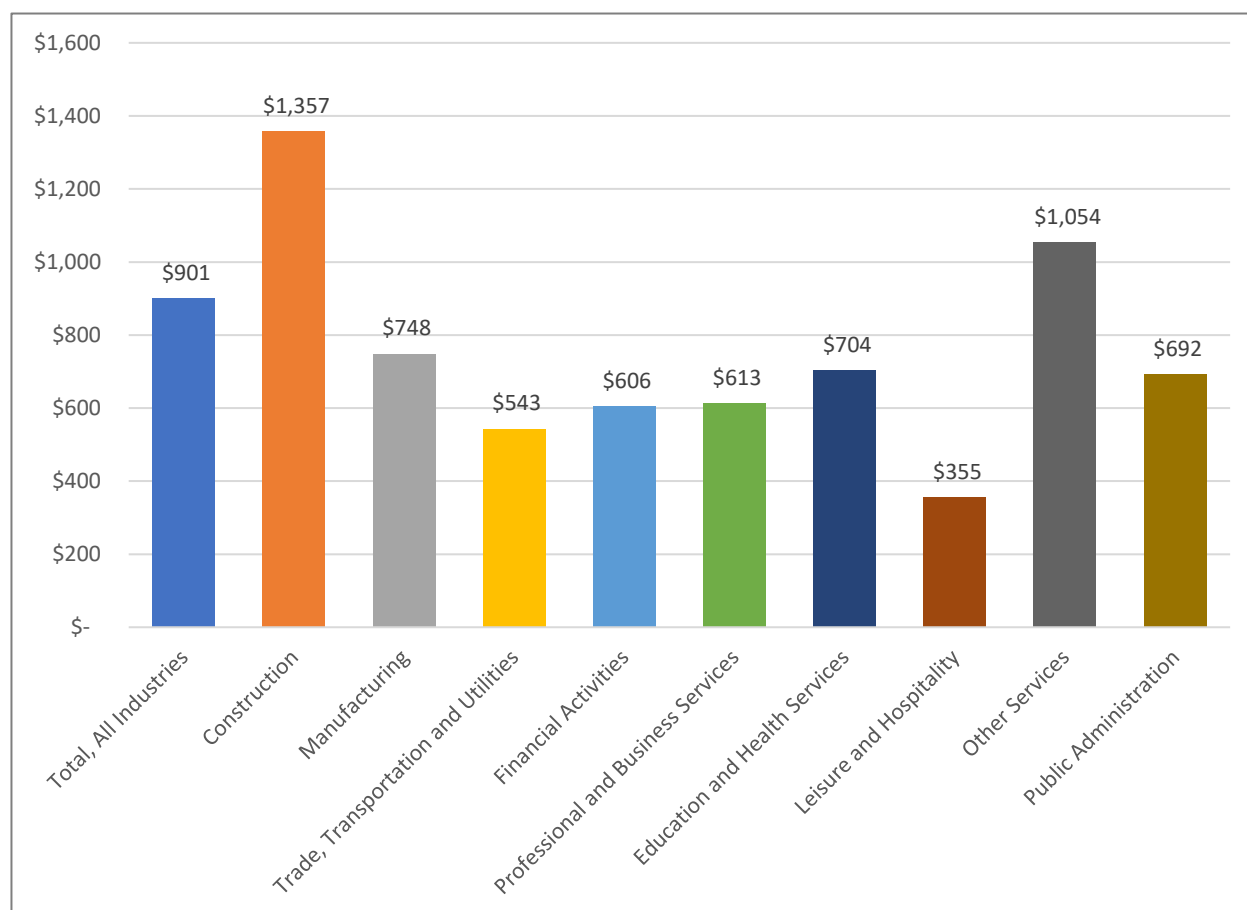


*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application*

## Income

Figure E-4 compares the average weekly wages by industry in Rice Lake.

**Figure E-4 – Average Weekly Wages**



Source: MN DEED Quarterly Census fo Employment and Wages

The average weekly wage is slightly lower in Rice Lake as compared to the State of Minnesota and St. Louis County; however, the median household income in the City of Rice Lake is slightly higher than the state and county.

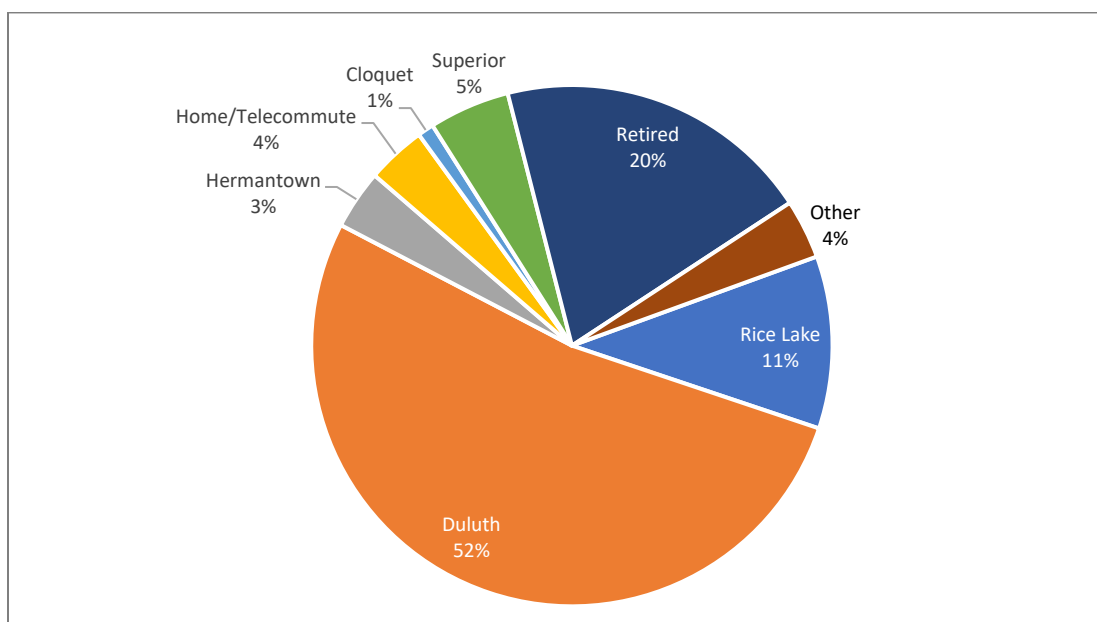
Table E-1 - Average Wage and Income Comparison		
	Average Weekly Wage	Median Household Income
Minnesota	\$1,137	\$65,699
St. Louis County	\$914	\$50,936
Rice Lake	\$901	\$70,517

Source: MN DEED Quarterly Census fo Employment and Wages

### Workers' Commutes

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, 86.3% of the Rice Lake residents 16 years and older and employed work within St. Louis County. Sixty-seven percent of workers travel 25 minutes or less to their place of employment. The American Community Survey data does not provide specific workplace locations, but respondents to the 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan survey answered a question about their work location. As shown in Figure E-5, 66% of the respondents indicated they worked in Rice Lake, Duluth, or Hermantown, which is consistent with the American Community Survey data. It is also interesting to note 20% of the respondents are retired.

**Figure E-5 – Workplace Location**



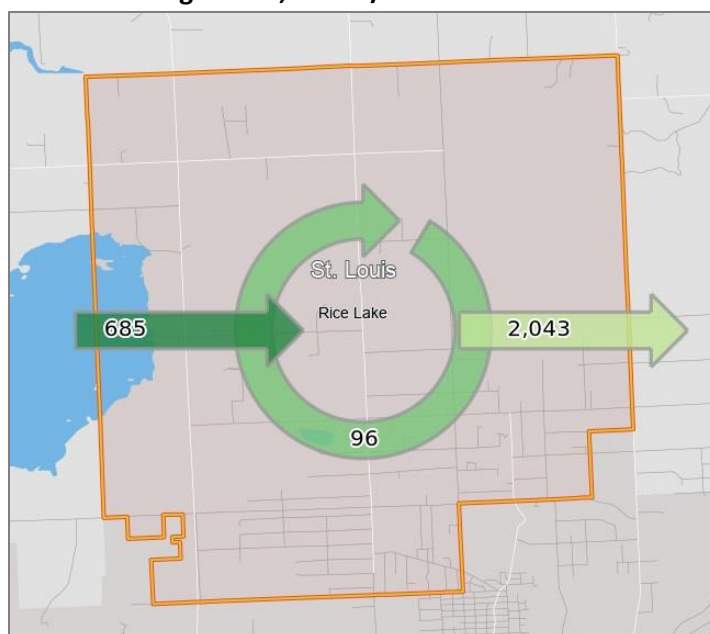
The American Community Survey also indicated 93% of people used a car, truck, or van to get to work. More than 88% drove alone. This result is similar to the Community Survey, in which 78% of respondents indicated they drove alone to work.

### Workforce Inflow/Outflow Trends

According to the US Census Bureau's On the Map data tool, in 2017 there were a total of 781 jobs in the City of Rice Lake, and 2,139 people living in Rice Lake were employed. Only 4.5% of the employed persons living in Rice Lake also worked in Rice Lake; 95.5% worked outside of Rice Lake. The remainder of the jobs in Rice Lake (685) were filled by people who lived outside of the City. Figure E-6 illustrates these inflow/outflow trends.



**Figure E-6, Inflow/Outflow Trends**



*Source: US Census OnTheMap Application*

## Regional Economy

Rice Lake is part of the Northeast Minnesota Planning Area, which consists of seven counties including Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis. According to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the northeast region has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than Minnesota, typically hovering at least 1.0 percent above the state rate. The current unemployment rate is 4.3. On the other hand, the region's labor market has tightened. One clear demonstration of this is the ratio of unemployed jobseekers per vacancy, which now stands at 0.7-to-1 in Northeast Minnesota.

Overall, DEED estimates the Northeast planning area is projected to grow 1.1 percent from 2016 to 2026, a gain of 1,725 new jobs. Health care practitioners and support, personal care, and service, building grounds cleaning and maintenance, community and social service, installation, maintenance and repair and food preparation and serving related occupations are expected to see the most new growth.

DEED's Occupational Employment Statistics program also shows that only around one-third of current jobs held in the region require post-secondary education to enter. The other two-thirds require no more than a high school diploma, and sometimes less.

# Implementation

The Comprehensive plan creates a vision for the City of Rice Lake and guides land use and infrastructure improvements so the City can meet the community's future needs. However, the vision can only be realized if the plan is used. Tools to implement the plan will vary in that some will be reactive such as zoning and subdivision ordinances that guide private developments and others will be proactive, such as the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for undertaking public improvement projects.

To achieve the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan, the City of Rice Lake has established regulations for zoning, subdivision of land, planned unit developments (PUD), shoreland and floodplain areas. All are administered through the City's Planning and Zoning Department.

## Official Controls

### Zoning

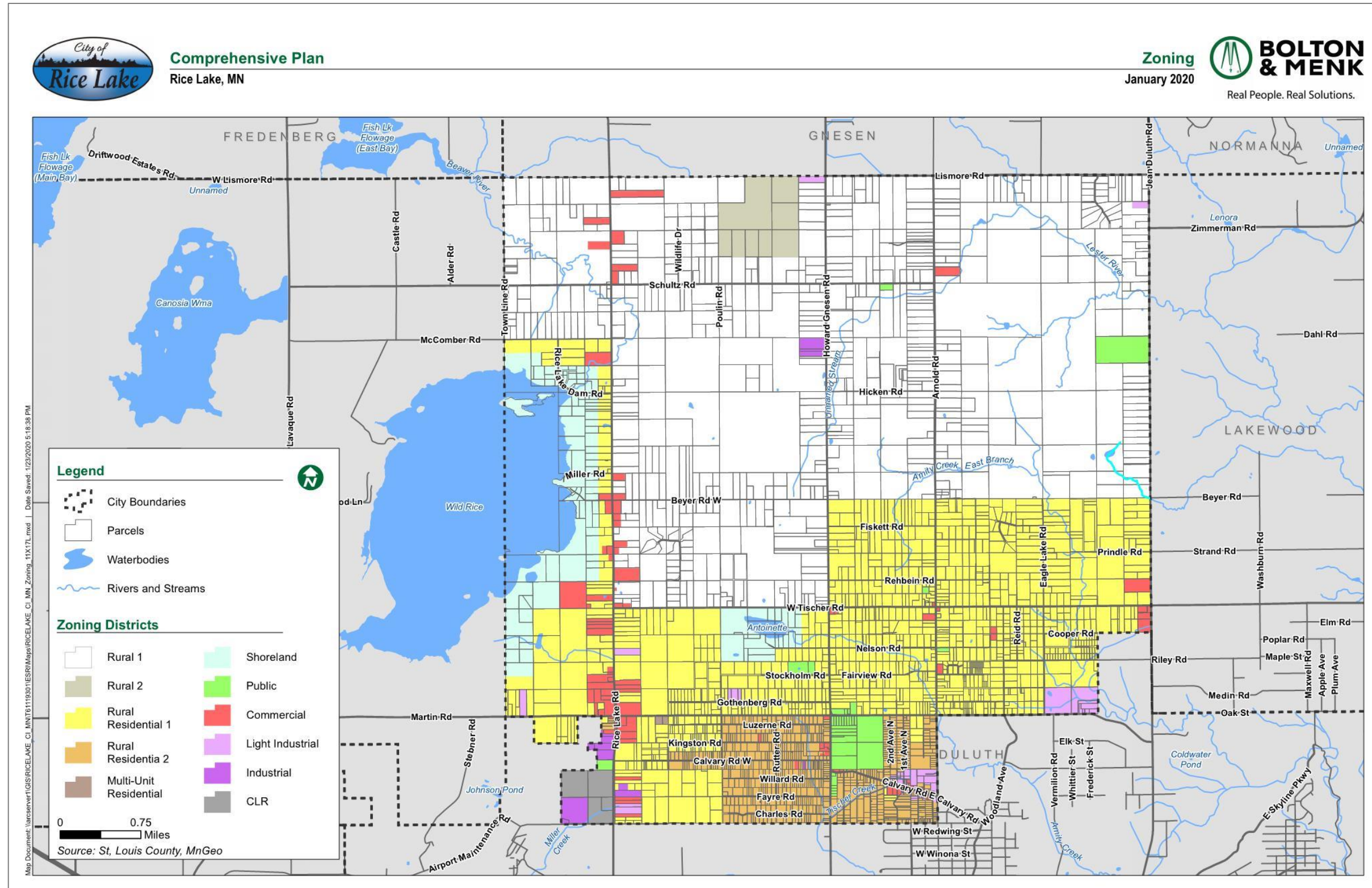
City zoning codes regulate land use to promote the health, safety, order, convenience, and general welfare of all citizens. They regulate location, size, use and height of buildings, the arrangement of buildings on lots, and the density of population within the City. The City's zoning districts effectively guide development in Rice Lake.

Table I-1 – Current Zoning Districts		
Abbreviation	District Name	Corresponding Land Use Designation
RURAL 1:	Rural 1	Rural Residential
RURAL 2	Rural 2	Rural Residential
RURAL RES 1	Rural Residential 1	Medium-High Residential
RURAL RES 2	Rural Residential 2	Mixed Residential
MULTI-UNIT RES	Multi-Unit Residential	High Density Residential
SHORELAND	Shoreland	<i>Overlay district in any designation</i>
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	Light Industrial	Industrial
INDUSTRIAL	Industrial	Industrial
PUBLIC	Public	Parks & Recreation
COMMERCIAL	Commercial	Commercial
PUD	Planned Unit Development	<i>Overlay district</i>
CLR	Closed Landfill Restricted	Commercial

The City of Rice Lake also allows Planned Unit Developments as an overlay to provide flexibility from zoning district standards for innovative developments meeting the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

Portions of the City of Rice Lake are within the Shoreland District and the Floodplain. These areas are overlay districts. They place additional restrictions on the area in addition to the underlying zoning district. The City's current Zoning Map is shown in Figure I-1.

Figure I-1 – Zoning Map



---

### *Subdivision of Land*

The Subdivision Ordinance regulates the subdivision and platting of land within the City providing for the orderly, economic and safe development of land and facilitating the adequate provision for transportation, water, sewage, storm drainage, electric utilities, streets, parks and other public services and facilities essential to any development. City controls to regulate subdivision of land include an application and approval process, including Planning Commission and City Council review. The subdivision of land promotes the public health, safety and general welfare of the people and helps achieve the vision of this comprehensive plan by providing for standards in the development of land.

### *Ordinance Amendments*

The City will evaluate land use controls and consider amendments to eliminate inconsistencies with the Comprehensive Plan, conform to State and Federal regulations, and support the overarching community goals identified through this plan update.

The Future Land Use Map generally guides developed land uses in the same fashion as they have been developed and exist. The Comprehensive Plan, however, establishes Mixed Use as a new Land Use Designation. The City should update the Zoning Ordinance to create a new Zoning District, as well as specific district standards for this designation.

The City may also want to review the current Zoning Map and Zoning District requirements for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. If there are discrepancies, or changes needed to meet the City's goals and objectives, an amendment to the official controls (Zoning and/or Subdivision ordinances) may be appropriate.

## *Funding Mechanisms*

The construction of public improvements require a funding source. There are a number of tools that can be used to plan for these improvements.

### *Capital Improvements Program*

Capital improvement projects are major projects that benefit the City, including the construction or reconstruction of roads, sewer, water and electric utilities, trails, and park and recreation facilities, as well the purchase of new or replacement equipment and buildings. A capital improvements program (CIP) is a budgeting plan which lists five years of needed capital improvements, their order of priority, and the means of financing. Projects included in a CIP are intended to meet the City's goals.

### *Grants*

Grants are an essential tool for local governments to fund projects that contribute to the community. A government grant is a financial award given by the federal, state or local government to an eligible grantee. Government grants are not expected to be repaid but are usually allocated for specific needs and may go through a competitive application process. The City can pursue grant application opportunities to help the City of Rice Lake implement its vision.



## Amending the Plan

To keep the Comprehensive Plan current, it will be necessary to make amendments from time to time. However, as the foundational document guiding development, most amendments should occur through a comprehensive effort to address changes to the community overtime. The Action Plan, described below, is a tool that can and should be amended more frequently.

### *Action Plan Worksheets*

Implementing the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan requires an action plan, and the coordination and investments of many stakeholders. The Action Plan tables present a concise summary of the goals along with specific action steps, organized by chapter. The table includes:

**Goal:** A restatement of the specific goal.

**Action Step:** Specific action items intended to help meet the goals.

**Timeline:** The timeline is divided into 4 categories: Short-Term, Mid-Term, Long-Term and Ongoing. The applied category indicates when the action item might begin and is advisory in nature.

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Land Use</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Preserve the rural, wooded character of Rice Lake through zoning regulations, ordinances, and site design standards	<i>Provide ongoing code enforcement in the City.</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
	<i>Identify programs and tools to facilitate preservation of open space and natural areas.</i>	<i>2021-2022</i>
	<i>Require site plans to provide a plan for noise and light control/buffers</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Manage land use and extension of urban services for orderly development.	<i>Require site plans to have an approved traffic pattern consistent with pedestrian and traffic safety and emergency services safety.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure a variety of lot sizes to create affordable development opportunities to best meet the needs of residents and businesses in Rice Lake.	<i>Develop a new Mixed Use district for consistency with Comprehensive Plan.</i>	
	<i>Update Zoning Requirements to eliminate minimum building square footage and other requirements that may limit housing affordability.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure agricultural uses are part of the community as a viable long-term land use.	<i>Develop Zoning regulations aimed at permitting agricultural uses.</i>	

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Land Use</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Encourage a variety of options for development and redevelopment of commercial and residential properties.	<i>Format Zoning Ordinance and Subdivisions Ordinance to allow for easy digital/online navigation and links.</i>	
	<i>Develop additional worksheet questions that require applicants to answer questions about practical difficulty and project alternatives.</i>	
	<i>Utilize vegetative screening and buffers to separate residential subdivisions from county collector and arterial roads and areas established or planned for commercial or industrial use.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure new development is located, designed and built to avoid environmental impacts other hazards.	<i>During the subdivision concept stage, confirm site suitability for septic system installation (if the development will not be connected to community sewer).</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Encourage preservation of historical structures and features.	<i>Develop a list of historical structures and features.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Consider purchase of properties in tax forfeiture for public purposes.	<i>Annually review County list of tax-forfeited properties.</i>	

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Transportation</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> As new development or redevelopment occurs, provide an integrated, internally-connected, efficient street system.	<i>Review Subdivision Ordinance requirements to ensure connectivity.</i>	
	<i>Require site plans to have an approved traffic pattern consistent with pedestrian and traffic safety and emergency services safety.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure Rice Lake's system of local roadways is well coordinated with MN DOT and St. Louis County roadway system.	<i>Participate in corridor studies and other transportation projects led by MnDOT and St. Louis County.</i>	
	<i>Participate in the Rice Lake Road Visioning Study.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Encourage the development of a multi-modal transportation system.	<i>When possible, include multimodal components in road projects.</i>	
	<i>Review need for sidewalk and trail development as part of new development.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Support the development of regional and local transit options, where needed and financially feasible.	<i>Work with regional transit agencies to establish service within the City.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Preserve the safety of regional air traffic.	<i>Coordinate with local airport authorities as needed to protect local airports from encroachment by incompatible land uses by limiting development within protective airport zones.</i>	

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Natural Resources</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Design future development to limit encroachment into wetlands and other sensitive natural areas.	<i>For all zoning and subdivision applications (including beyond shoreland areas), ensure grading and site plans will preserve as many natural features as possible.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure high water quality of surface water and groundwater to assist in providing an adequate supply presently and in the future.	<i>Incorporate groundwater protection zones into development analysis.</i>	
	<i>Direct residential development toward areas with soils which are suitable for septic installation as permitted in the subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) ordinance.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure healthy forests to benefit the community through their providing improved air and water quality.	<i>Develop a woodland preservation ordinance.</i>	

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Parks, Recreation and Open Space</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Provide accessible recreational opportunities to accommodate people with varying abilities and the various age groups represented in the community.	<i>Review capital improvements program for opportunities to upgrade existing facilities.</i>	
	<i>Develop a park and recreation advisory committee.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Retain all existing park lands for the use and enjoyment of residents.	<i>Review capital improvements program for opportunities to upgrade existing facilities.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Encourage the incorporation of outdoor recreational amenities into the design of new subdivisions and development sites, especially Planned Unit Developments.	<i>Develop a parkland dedication ordinance for new development.</i>	
	<i>Review need for sidewalk and trail development as part of new development.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Continue the development of Non-Motorized Trail System within the city for the purposes of recreational enjoyment, connectivity, and safety.	<i>When possible, include multimodal components in road projects.</i>	
	<i>Review need for sidewalk and trail development as part of new development.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Work in cooperation with local and adjoining governmental agencies and private recreational groups in providing parks, recreational facilities, trail connections and programming.	<i>Participate in park studies and other projects led by regional agencies</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Increase the public awareness of recreational opportunities that exist for residents.	<i>Conduct a community park and recreation survey.</i>	
	<i>Market City parks and programs through regular newsletters and announcements.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Celebrate and promote recreation within the city.	<i>Work with nearby communities to develop a marketing plan for the region.</i>	



GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Determine areas of utility service extension for new development or redevelopment, providing an efficient utility system.	<i>Complete sewer and water capacity study to determine ultimate service area.</i>	
	<i>Undergo a trunk fee study for sewer and water utilities.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Ensure Rice Lake's utility system has the capacity and is coordinated with City of Duluth, WLSSD and St. Louis County systems	<i>Complete sewer and water capacity study to determine ultimate service area.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Where possible look at eliminating the number of lift stations within the system.	<i>Review capital improvements program for opportunities to upgrade existing facilities.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Strive for a balanced water supply with adequate looping for systems supply redundancy	<i>Review all new development to ensure utilities are connected and looped as needed.</i>	
	<i>Identify gaps in the system.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Provide adequate storage centralized for balanced pressure zones across the community	<i>Plan for improvements in annual CIP.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Minimize number of stormwater facilities within the community.	<i>Review capital improvements program for opportunities to upgrade existing facilities.</i>	

GOAL	ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE
<b>Economy and Employment</b>		
<b>Goal:</b> Support and expand the City's existing economic base.	<i>Review zoning and other land development processes for simplification.</i>	
<b>Goal:</b> Provide adequate land and infrastructure to make locations within Rice Lake attractive to businesses.	<i>Identify and map land available for business development and redevelopment.</i>	