

City of Rockville, Minnesota

Granite - Heart of the City



City of Rockville Comprehensive Plan

Draft July 31, 2025



Acknowledgments

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	2
2024 Rockville City Council	2
2025 Rockville City Council	2
Rockville Planning Commission.....	2
Rockville City Staff.....	2
Project Consultants	2
Introduction.....	1
1.1 History	1
1.2 Vision.....	2
1.3 Mission	2
1.4 Planning Process.....	2
1.5 Engagement.....	2
1.6 Population	8
1.7 Households.....	9
1.8 Age.....	9
1.9 Race and Ethnicity	10
1.10 Education.....	11
1.11 Jobs.....	11
1.12 Wealth and Income	1
1.13 Natural Resources	1
2.0 Land Use.....	6
2.1 Land Use Versus Zoning	6
2.2 Current Land Use.....	7
2.3 Opportunities and Issues.....	8
2.4 Goals and Policies.....	10
2.5 Future Land Use	10
2.6 Zoning.....	12
3.0 Parks, Trails, and Open Space	15
3.1 Existing Conditions	15
3.2 Opportunities and Issues.....	15
3.3 Goals and Policies.....	16
4.0 Housing	18
4.1 Existing Conditions	18
4.2 Opportunities and Issues.....	19
4.3 Goals and Policies.....	20
5.0 Economic Development	22
5.1 Existing Conditions	22
5.2 Opportunities and Issues.....	22
5.3 Goals and Policies.....	24
6.0 Facilities and Infrastructure	26
6.1 Public Facilities	26

6.2 Public Utilities..... 26

6.3 Goals and Policies..... 34

7.0 Transportation 36

7.1 Existing Conditions 36

7.2 Goals and Policies..... 44

8.0 Implementation 47

8.1 Land Use Goals 48

8.2 Parks, Trails, and Open Space 49

8.3 Housing Goals..... 49

8.4 Economic Development 50

8.5 Infrastructure Goals 51

8.6 Transportation Goals..... 52

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Chapter 1: Introduction



Introduction

The City of Rockville is a small community in central Minnesota, seven miles west of St. Cloud and seventy miles northwest of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The city adopted its last comprehensive plan in 2004, which has informed its decisions over the past twenty years. Over the past two decades, the city's population and average number of people per household have decreased, but the number of homes has increased. This 2025 Comprehensive Plan includes an inventory of current conditions, goals, policies, and implementation.

1.1 History

The City of Rockville was established in June 2002 when the cities of Pleasant Lake and Rockville and Rockville Township merged into one municipality. However, research and artifacts document the area's history dating back to the 1700s. The Stearns County History Museum and two books, "Rockville – Do You Remember?" by Mary Ann Hermanutz and "The History of Stearns County" by William B. Mitchell, feature some of the area's history. Artifacts indicate that the Dakota had settlements near Rausch Lake, Knaus Lake, and Grand Lake, and trails connecting these settlements. In the mid-1800s, the Ojibwe were introduced to the area.

Fur traders were some of the first non-natives to reside in the area, drawn to the natural resources of prairie, woods, and water. More settlers (French, English, and Swiss) followed in the 1850s, depending on land resources and native food sources, including deer, ducks, geese, wolves, and bears. In 1856, a village site was surveyed, platted, and named the Village of Rockville by H. C. Waite and D. H. Spicer. The area was named after the tremendous amount of granite deposits and outcroppings. Rockville Township was formed in 1860 when it split from Maine Prairie Township. Agriculture has been integral to the community's heritage since its settlement. The open prairie and rich soils made the area perfect for hay fields and robust cattle herds. This prompted the development of a significant dairy industry.

By 1887, passenger trains ran through present-day downtown Rockville from St. Paul to Willmar. The Cargill Company built a large grain elevator next to the train depot. This increased rail infrastructure and facilitated the growth of the granite industry in Rockville. In 1889, Henry Alexander and his business partners leased 40 acres of land southeast of the Mill Pond in Rockville and formed the "Rockville Alexander Company." The granite in the Rockville area is light pink and grey, boasting large crystals, which is highly desirable. By 1898, the granite company relocated to a site adjacent to Elm Street, where it remained until 1920, when the operation relocated to Cold Spring. The City of Rockville was incorporated in July 1903 as a city.

After working and traveling for years as an assistant foreman for Matthew Breen Granite in St. Cloud, John Clark purchased 12 acres of land east of Pine Street in 1907. This land yielded a successful quarry operation and allowed Clark to construct a hotel for workers. Growing steadily as a granite and agricultural community in the 1960s, some agricultural lands were subdivided for residential uses, spurring growth into the 21st century.

1.2 Vision

A community tackling today's challenges while retaining its natural and agricultural history.

1.3 Mission

The city's mission is to support its current farmers and build its tax base by planning for new businesses that provide residents with jobs, goods, services, and recreation.

1.4 Planning Process

The planning process is divided into three parts to determine what is and what can be done to set the direction for land use in the community for the future:

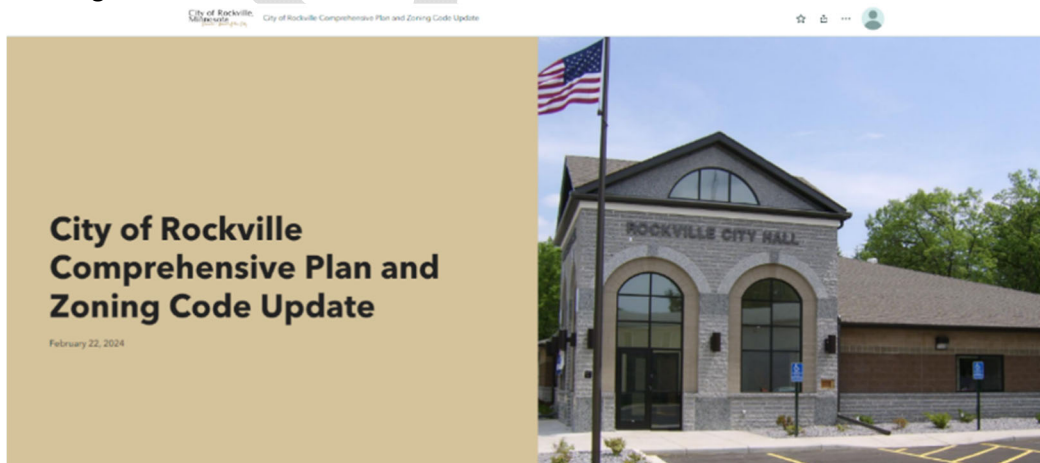
1. Based on previous development patterns, existing land use is the current way land is used in Rockville. This is the basis for all plans because it's simply what is already present. Any decisions to drive new development or scale back a use come from understanding the impacts of existing land use.
2. Future land use is the desired outcome for what types of growth and development we want, where we want it, and how intense we want that to be. This comes from an understanding of the existing land use and builds upon it, going a step further by asking common-sense questions about what areas need to be preserved in their current state and where a change can improve the quality of life in our communities.
3. Zoning is the classification of land based on how it is used and the best potential uses based on our future land use planning. By dividing areas into zones, development becomes more organized as the types and intensity of uses become similar, creating a sense of place.

1.5 Engagement

The planning process included engagement with the public and community stakeholders. The engagement goals were to ensure that the process was inclusive and transparent and that all issues, concerns, and aspirations were consistently collected, understood, and considered. The following means were used to communicate with and engage the public about the Comprehensive Plan.

Website

We created a project website that the city added to its home page, encouraging residents, townships, and other stakeholders to link the site to their social media and promote it through their communications. The website included general project information, a survey, and public meeting details. It was updated at critical points in the project, such as posting meeting materials after public meetings.



Social Media

The city does not have an active social media presence, but several local community pages promoted the project and engagement opportunities on their page.

Print Materials

A project fact sheet with general information about the project, the process, and how to get involved was created. The fact sheet was turned into a poster with a QR code link to the project website, which was put up in the City office. Table tents were made to inform patrons of Rockville’s restaurants about the project. A comment card was created and made available for people to handwrite comments for public meetings. All materials included the project URL and a QR code that directed people to the website for more information.



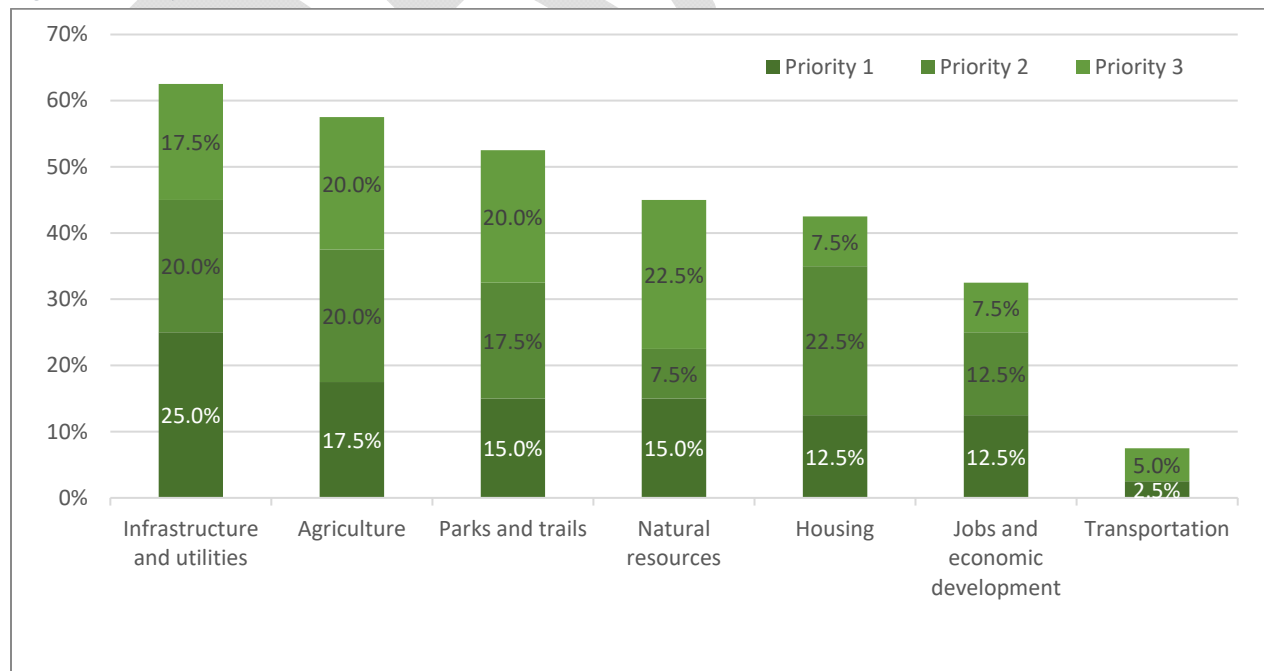
Articles

Several articles were written and sent to the Cold Spring Record to inform the community of the project's progress and encourage residents to provide public input.

Survey

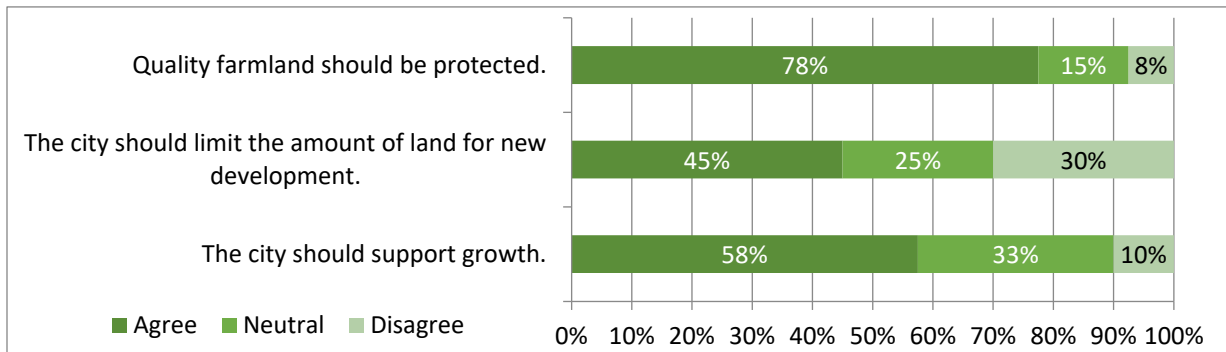
An online survey gathered public input on issues, opportunities, and priorities. The survey was promoted through social media, community newsletters, and QR codes on posters or print materials. During this first phase of engagement, 40 people took the survey. The following is an analysis of what we heard from survey respondents. Overall, responses pointed to public opposition to population growth but the need for business growth.

Figure 1: Priority Issues



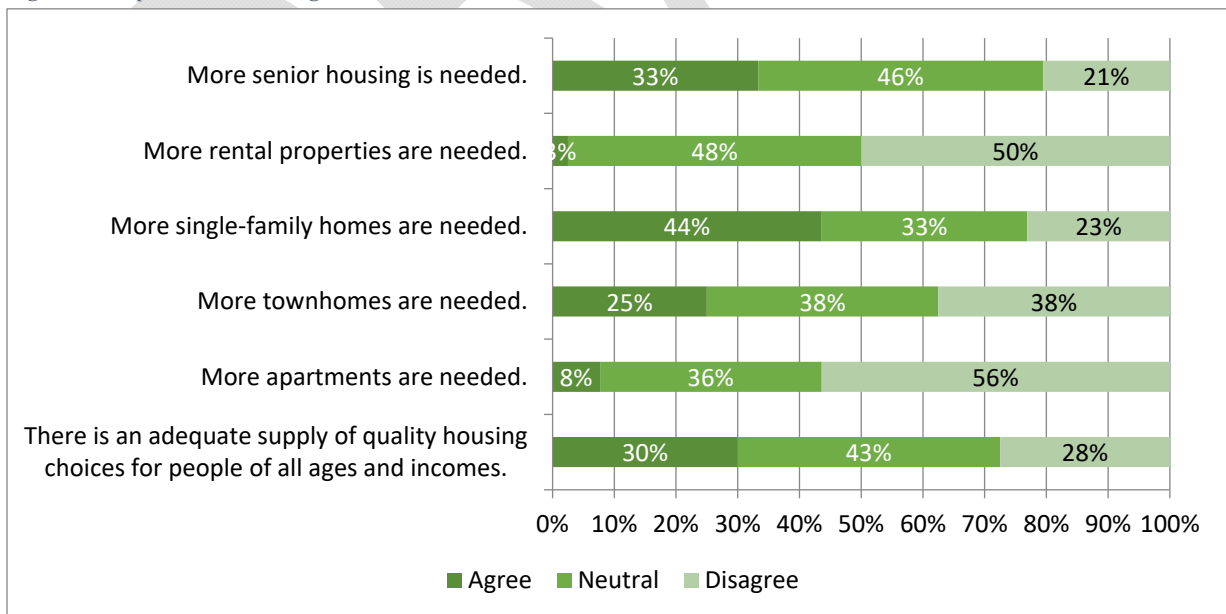
The survey respondents were asked to indicate the three most important issues they and their city are concerned about, as shown in Figure 1. These answers were ranked and averaged to produce a score indicating priority. In Rockville, the public's top concern is infrastructure and utilities, which indicates the public's concerns about rising taxes and service quality. The second highest priority was agriculture, which has helped hold the community together through the last century and a half. Despite the community's agricultural roots, the modern transitions away from family-owned and operated agricultural industries due to lack of profitability at the small scale have hit Rockville hard and raised public concerns.

Figure 2: Responses on Agriculture and Growth



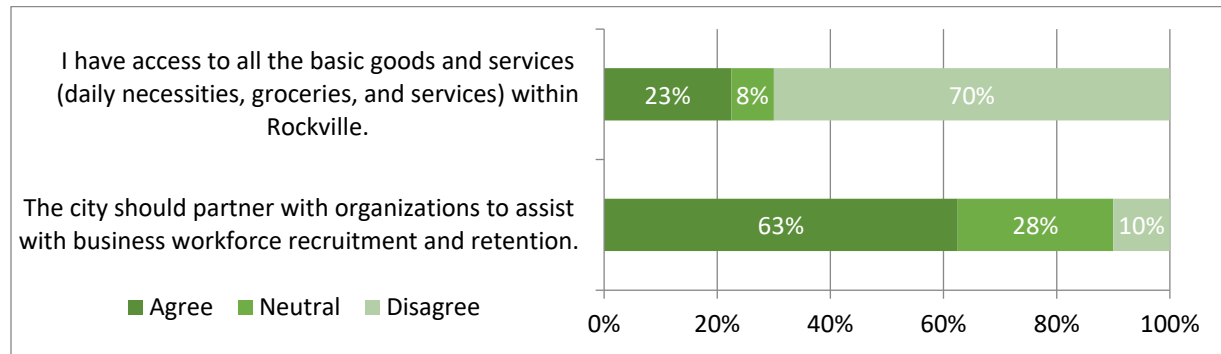
The public's concerns about agricultural shifts in the community were examined further regarding land use and whether the city should attempt to grow beyond its existing population and uses. A majority (77.5 percent) of the public agreed that the community needs to protect existing quality farmland. However, this only extends to protecting some areas from change, as 57.5 percent of residents support new growth, and 45 percent feel the city should limit the developed land, which may constrain future development in public opinion. These responses imply that the city needs to focus on growth that fits the character of its community and contributes to the sense of place cultivated.

Figure 3: Responses on Housing



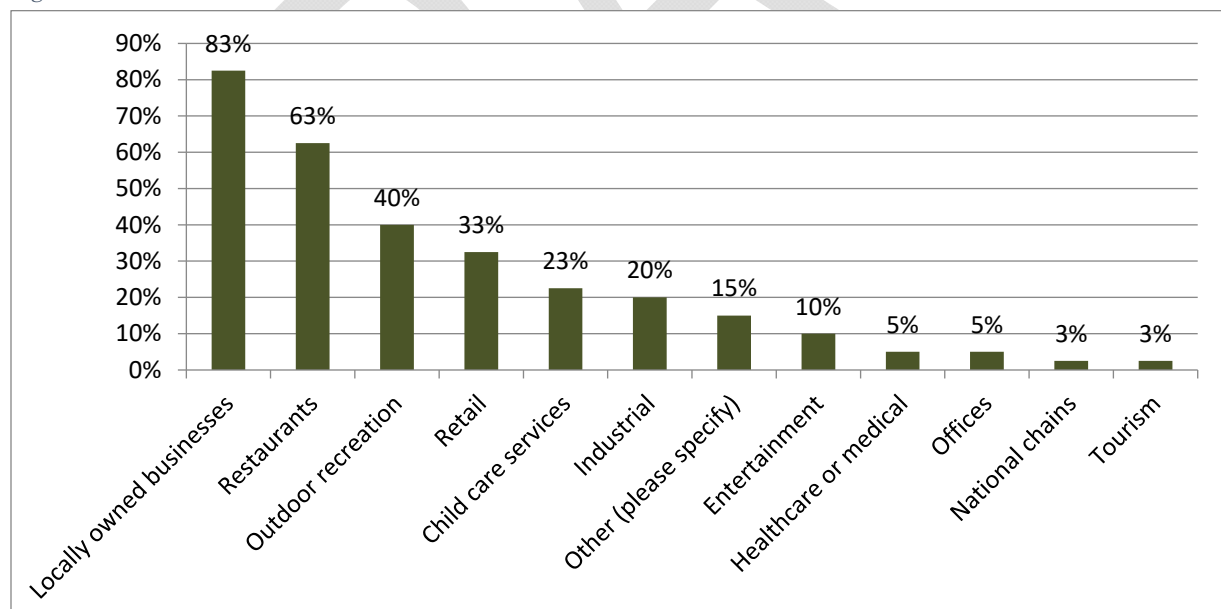
According to the survey, half of the respondents do not support increasing the number of rental properties in the community, and nearly 60 percent do not support adding apartments. The types of housing that people supported the most were senior housing and single-family homes. These responses imply that the community favors small-scale housing growth that meets existing needs. Senior housing offers an example of this, with 33.3 percent agreeing more is needed and 46.3 percent neutral.

Figure 4: Access to Goods and Services



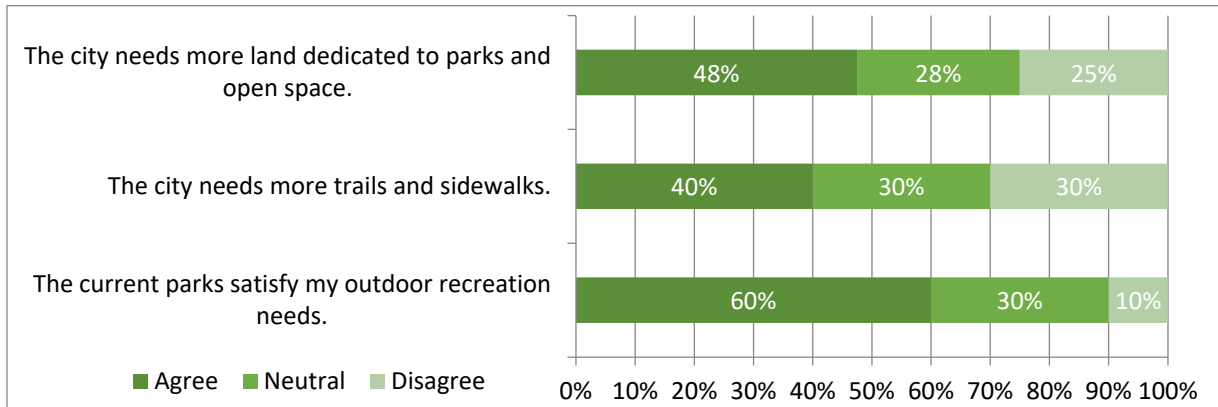
While housing views in Rockville are not aligned with a growth focus, the community’s views of economic development are almost the opposite. Seventy percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that they can access all goods and services in the city, while 62.5 percent agree that the city should engage with partners for workforce recruitment and business retention. The implications are that the city could better serve its residents by attracting more businesses that provide basic goods and services.

Figure 5: Businesses Wanted in Rockville



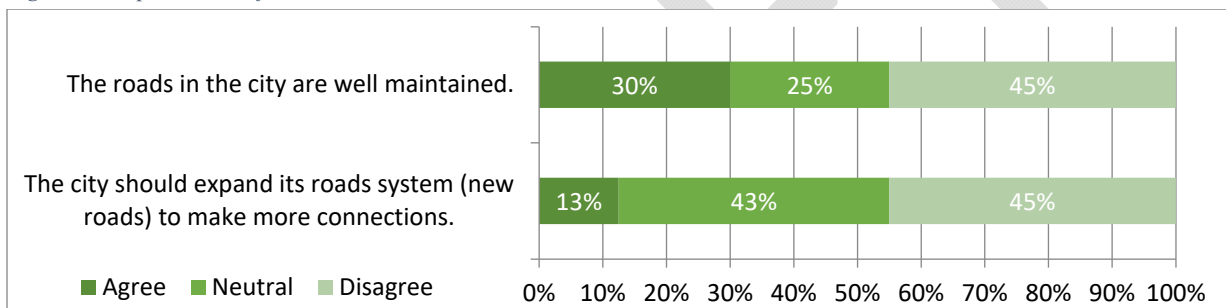
When residents were asked what businesses they wanted to see more of in the community from a list of a dozen options, locally owned businesses, restaurants, and outdoor recreational businesses received the highest response rates. These businesses are or could be focused on Rockville's recreational and tourist potential. This also indicates a desire by community members to see local development to meet perceived community needs.

Figure 6: Responses on Parks and Trails



Public viewpoints on the parks are positive, with 60 percent agreeing that the existing parks meet their needs. However, the survey responses prompted suggestions that the city lacks trails and sidewalks to accommodate users; these are especially important if the city follows public guidance on economic development and growing the local business presence.

Figure 7: Responses on Infrastructure



The survey questions used to understand the public’s views on infrastructure in Rockville netted a clear vision for future efforts. Forty-five percent of respondents thought that roads were poorly maintained, and only 12.5 percent agreed that roads should be expanded to allow for more connections. The message from the public is to focus on existing infrastructure and not seek expansion of an under-maintained system.

Focus Groups

On May 21, July 16, and November 19, 2024, the City held four focus groups, two related to economic development in the community and two centered on agriculture and property owners. The discussions with business owners in the community centered on bringing more business and people into the community. The prevailing theme was that the trailhead in the downtown area was a ripe opportunity to start a business. Developing more businesses along Highway 23 was also suggested to take advantage of good access and visibility. There was also consensus on reviving the Economic Development Authority or forming a Rockville-based business association to allow community businesses to share ideas and coordinate efforts to increase economic development.

The first agricultural focus group held in May brought residents in the agricultural trades together to discuss their reasons for wanting to retain agricultural uses in the City and the difficulties they face in farming. The primary reasons that members of the community wanted to retain agricultural land fell into the following categories:

- Maintain land for food production
- Maintain the green footprints that exist
- Historical value
- Maintain rural life
- Maintain a rural environment
- Agriculture supports communities, and supports wildlife and the environment

These responses represent a value-based understanding of agriculture's importance to the community and those active in agricultural trades.

The main challenges to farming that were discussed included the following themes:

- Inflation
- Increases in property taxes
- Revenue
- Increased residential development creates demand for land, increase in property values, and conflict between agricultural activities and residents
- Property taxes without perceived benefit
- Road maintenance
- Traffic
- Navigating roads with larger farm equipment and passenger vehicles
- Controlling wildlife
- Permits

While some of these concerns are within the city's purview to change, many are outside the control of either the farmers or the city government, as seen in the conversations that followed this exercise. There was a discussion about how to preserve agricultural land and whether putting regulations in place to preserve land would hinder the succession plans of farmers to sell to developers when they are ready to retire. The overall sense of the focus group was in favor of preserving agriculture, especially on high-quality farmland.

The second agricultural focus group was held on November 19, 2024. The topics that were discussed included:

- Concern about shoreland overlay requirements for farming
- Concern about property taxes if future land use is shown as residential or commercial
- Desire to retain high-quality farmland for agriculture
- Interest in having more of the land along Highway 23 as commercial or industrial to generate property taxes and jobs
- Suggestions to refine the boundaries of some of the proposed areas to keep quarries as Agricultural since they will likely be mined for some time
- Suggestion to add Commercial at the intersection of Highway 23 and CR 47

Planning Commission/City Council Workshops

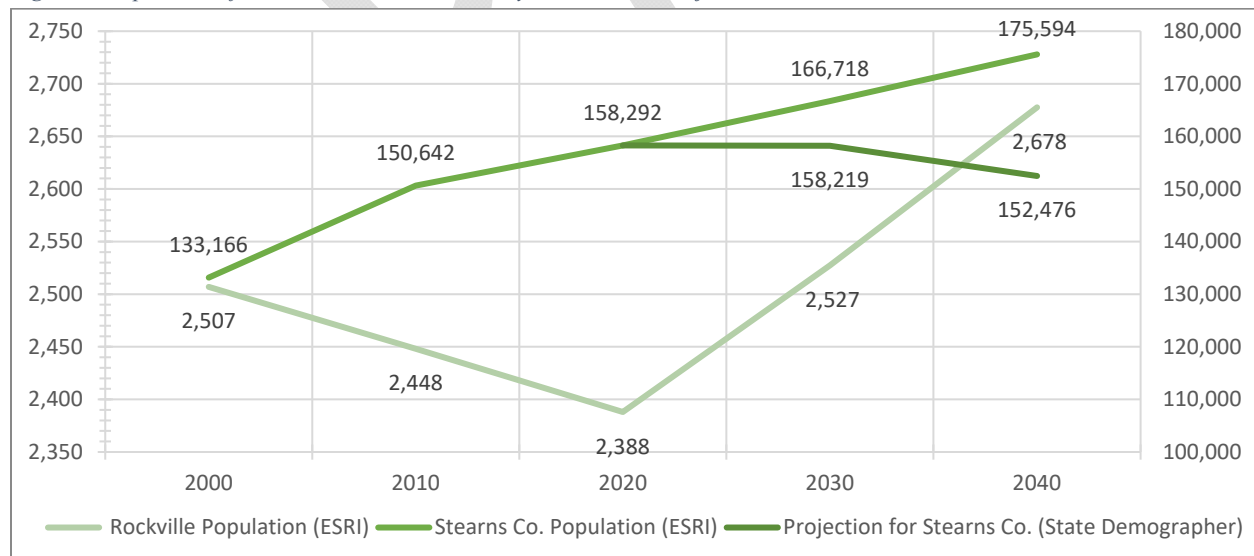
The Planning Commission and City Council held regular workshops to discuss the comprehensive plan and zoning code. The meetings were posted and open to the public to attend and provide comments. Following is a list of the workshops and the topics covered in each.

- March 6, 2024: Kickoff meeting to review the existing conditions, discuss vision, and identify issues and opportunities.
- April 3, 2024: Review proposed vision and mission statement, review existing land use map, and narrow policies and goals.
- June 5, 2024: Review draft goals and policies and discuss land use and zoning categories.
- August 7, 2024: Review the draft comprehensive plan and discuss areas for future growth and development.
- November 6, 2024: Review the draft comprehensive plan and draft future land use plan.
- February 5, 2025: Discuss draft zoning code updates.
- March 5, 2025: Review the final draft of the comprehensive plan and zoning code and provide comments.
- May 7, 2025: Reviewing the land use tables considering cannabis uses and the permitting of chicken ownership in the city's residential zoning districts.
- August 6, 2025: Summary of all zoning changes made and finalized code and comprehensive plan drafts presented.

1.6 Population

Between 2000 and 2020, the city's population declined. However, since then, the city has been growing with a population of 2,527 residents in 2023. The city is growing at an annual rate of 0.58 percent, like Stearns County's yearly growth rate of 0.52 percent. Based on this growth rate, ESRI forecasts that the city will have a population of 2,527 in 2030 and 2,678 in 2040.

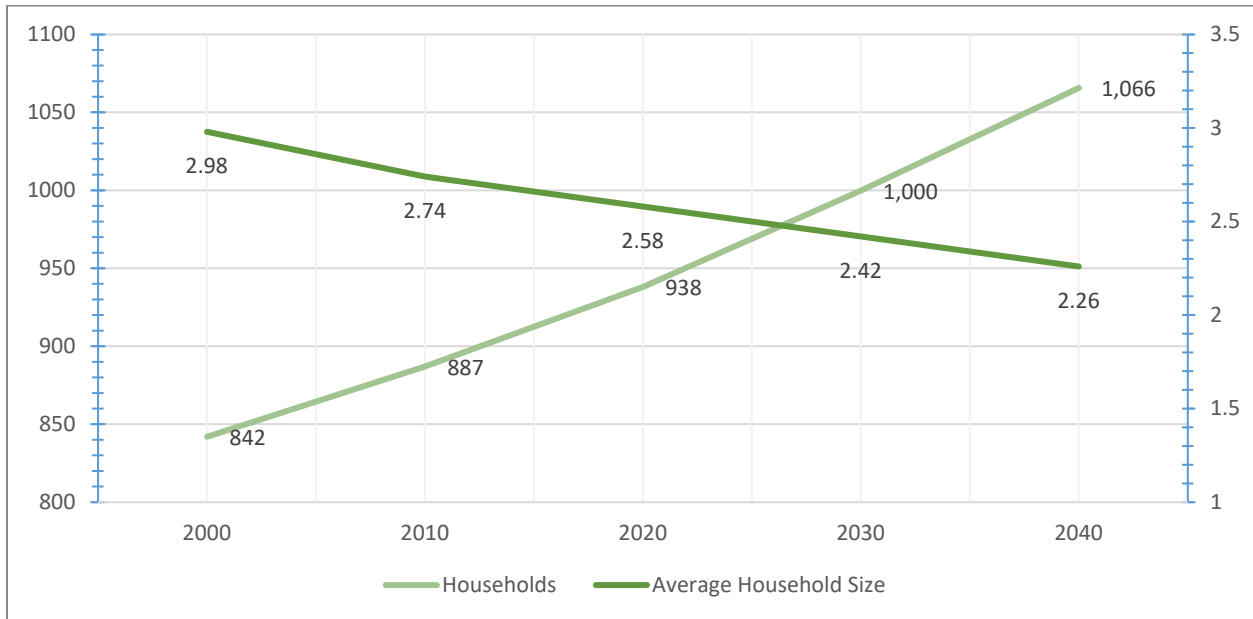
Figure 8: Population of Rockville and Stearns County Historic and Projected



1.7 Households

Rockville’s average household size decreased from 2.98 people in 2000 to 2.54 people in 2023. However, housing units have increased proportionally, resulting in net population gain despite the smaller average household. Stearns County's average household size is slightly smaller than Rockville’s, at 2.49 people per household.

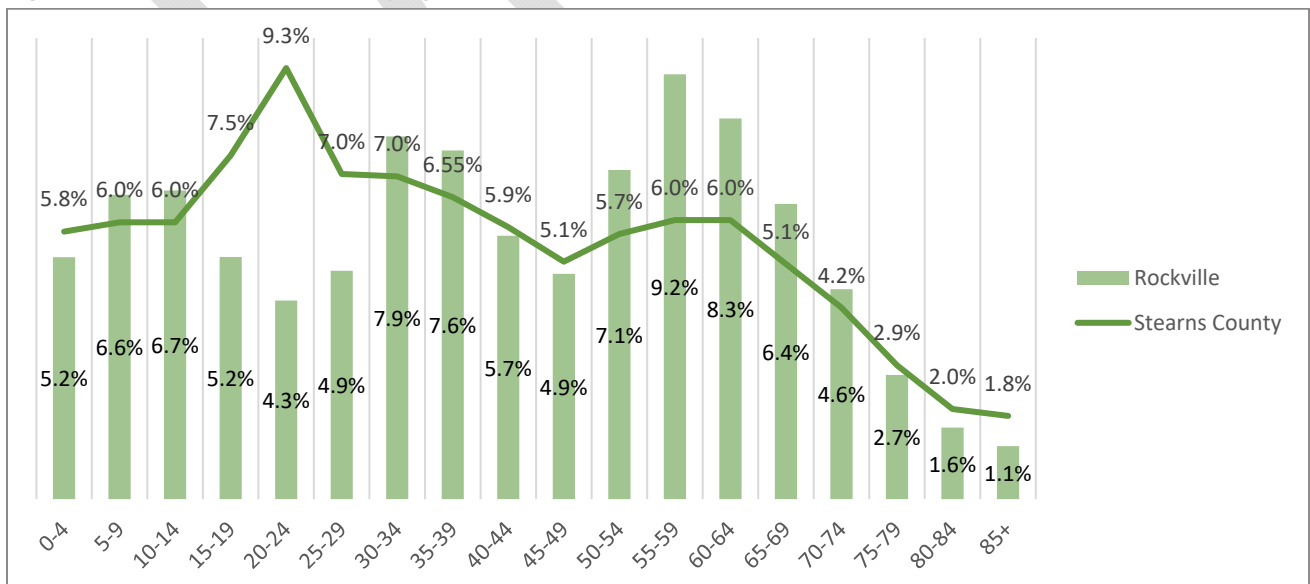
Figure 9: Rockville Household and Household Size



1.8 Age

The population's median age is 41.3 years, two years above Minnesota’s median age of 39 years. Rockville’s age distribution shows dips in the number of people in their 20s, 40s, and 70+. The largest age groups come from families with parents in their 30s and children in grade school and middle school, or later career and empty nesters in their 50s and 60s.

Figure 10: Rockville and Stearns County Age Distribution



1.9 Race and Ethnicity

The city’s population has remained predominantly white, with 3% identifying as Hispanic. This is not the case in Stearns County, which has a more diverse populace.

Figure 11: Rockville Race and Ethnicity of Residents

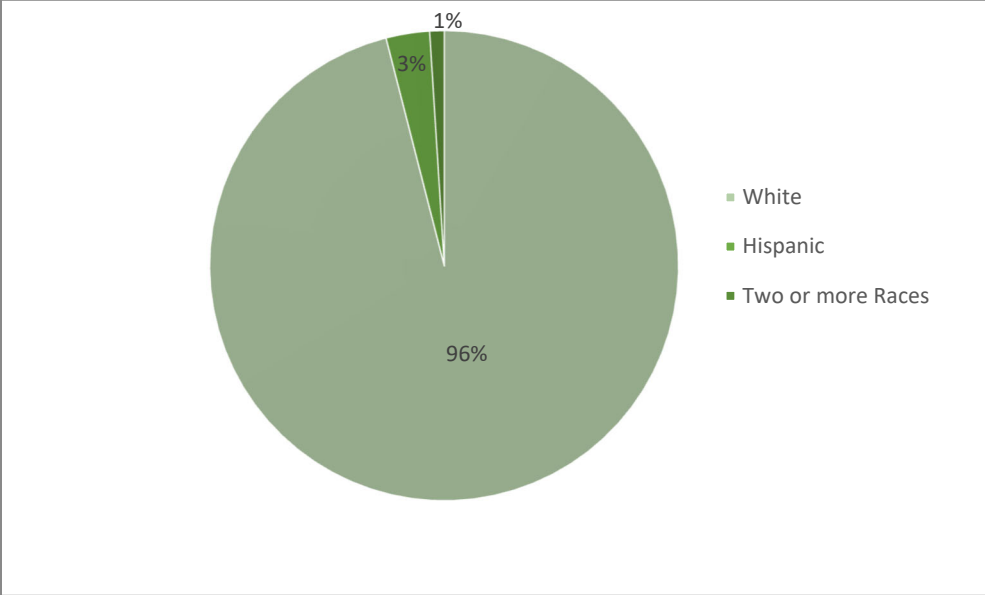
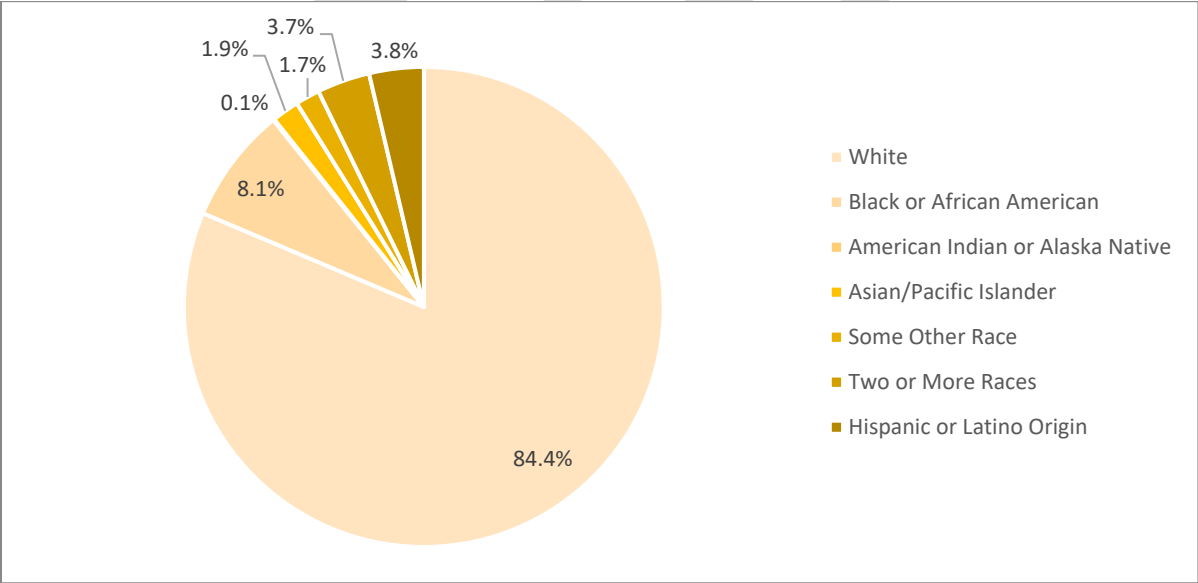


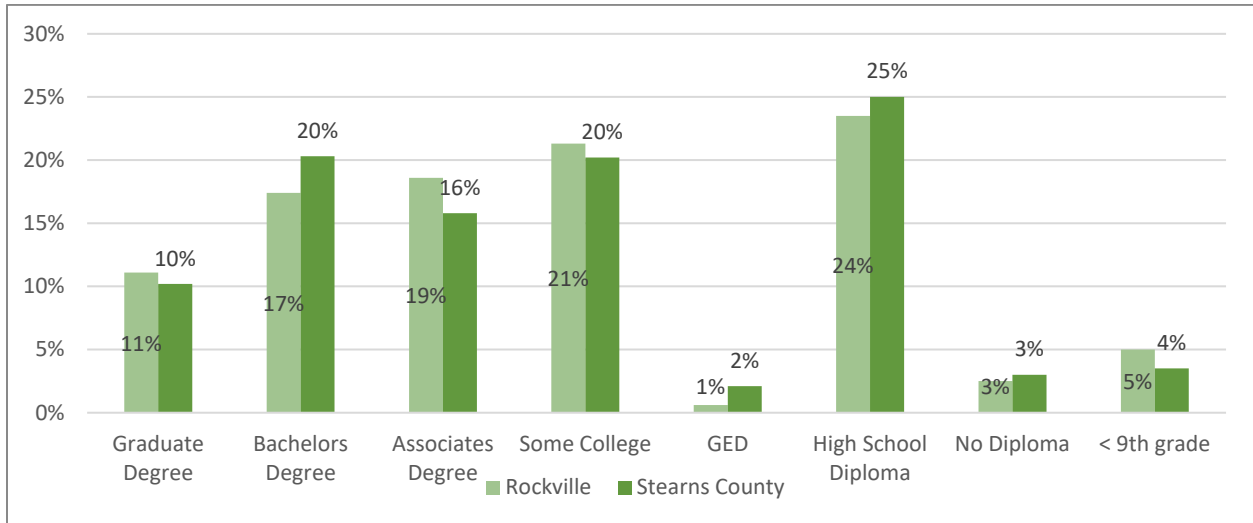
Figure 12: Stearns County Race and Ethnicity of Residents



1.10 Education

Rockville residents are well-educated, with 28.4 percent having a bachelors degree or higher and 39.9 percent having some college education.

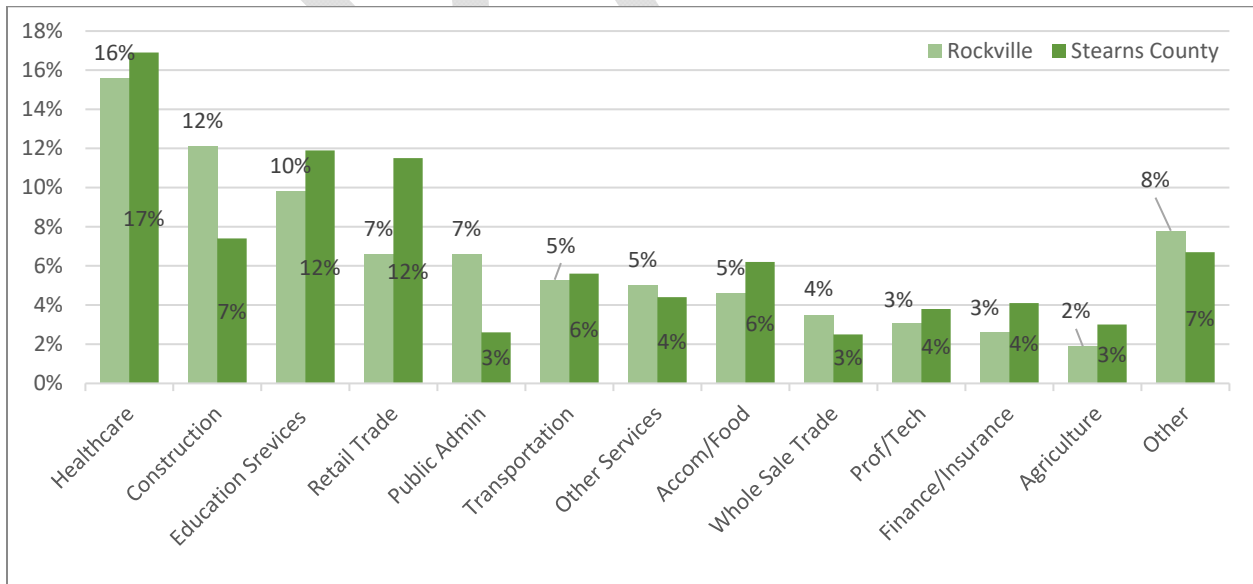
Figure 8: Education Levels of Rockville and Stearns County Residents



1.11 Jobs

Rockville has a civilian labor force of 515 and hosts seventy businesses. Most Rockville residents (53.7 percent) have white-collar jobs, followed by blue-collar jobs (34.9 percent), and service industry jobs (11.3 percent).

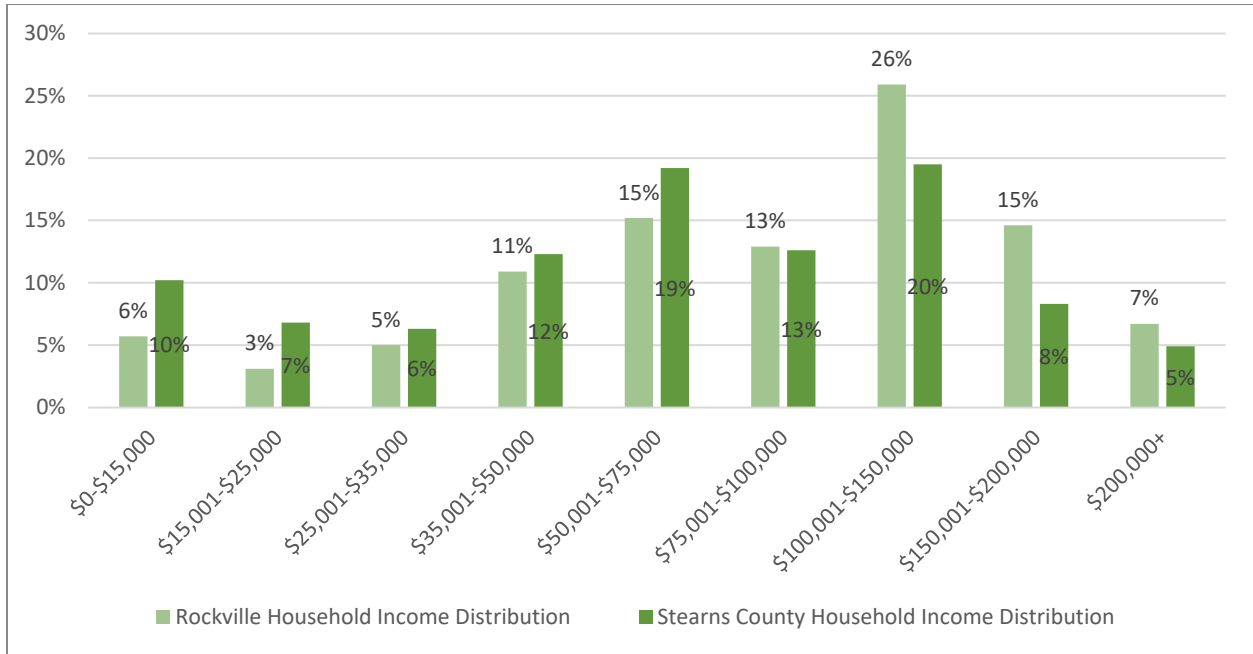
Figure 14: Job Classifications of Rockville and Stearns County Residents



1.12 Wealth and Income

The median household income is \$93,298, with a median net worth of \$280,014.

Figure 9: Household Income of Rockville and Stearns County Residents

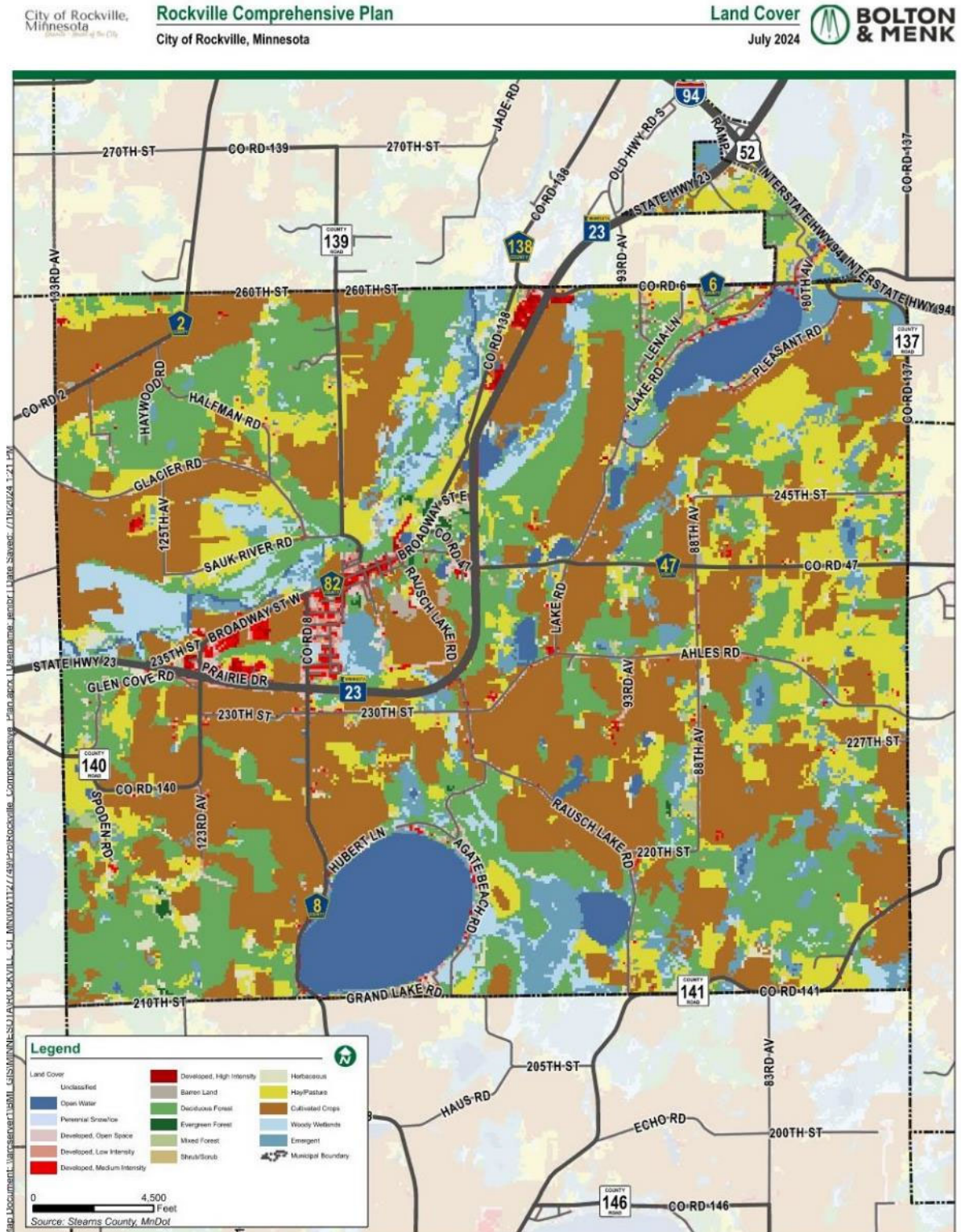


1.13 Natural Resources

The City of Rockville’s natural resources are key factors that guide land use and development. Mapping the city’s natural resources such as the Sauk River, lakes, wetlands, streams, soils, and land cover, can identify areas that should be preserved or areas that can be developed. Its ancient granite deposits and rolling glacial plains provide fertile land and valuable rock that drives the economy and creates the ambiance Rockville citizens know and love. The following maps explore numerous aspects of the land and explain how and why it is used in the way it is.

Land Cover:

Most of Rockville's land is covered by cultivated crops and pastures, with deciduous forests covering much of the remaining area. There are relatively few areas in the community that feature development, mainly the downtown core and areas along the main transportation corridors. Agriculture in the form of cultivated crops and pastures is concentrated in the areas with the highest-quality soils.





Chapter 2: Land Use



2.0 Land Use

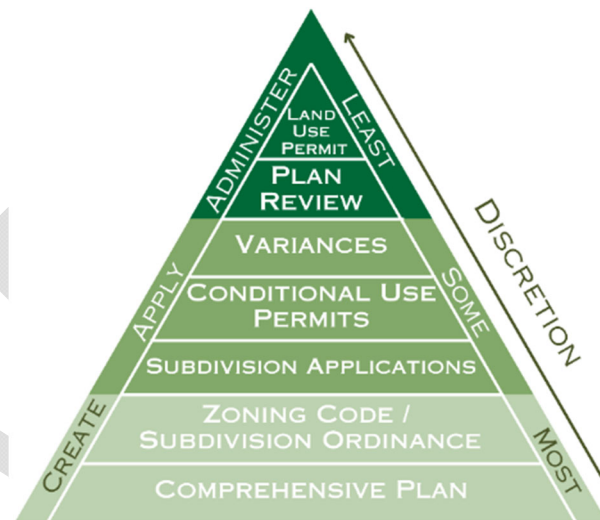
A land use plan supports a city's development consistent with its values, fosters compatible development, and provides efficient infrastructure investments that serve the public interest. This chapter describes the existing land use as the starting point of the planning process. It also identifies future land uses and how the city could develop over the next few decades. It reflects public input and interests by balancing areas for new housing and commercial and industrial development while recognizing that most of the city will continue to be farmed.

2.1 Land Use Versus Zoning

The Rockville Comprehensive Plan sets the city's goals and objectives. These goals are accomplished by revising, implementing, and enforcing the zoning and subdivision ordinances administered by city staff, the planning commission, and the city council.

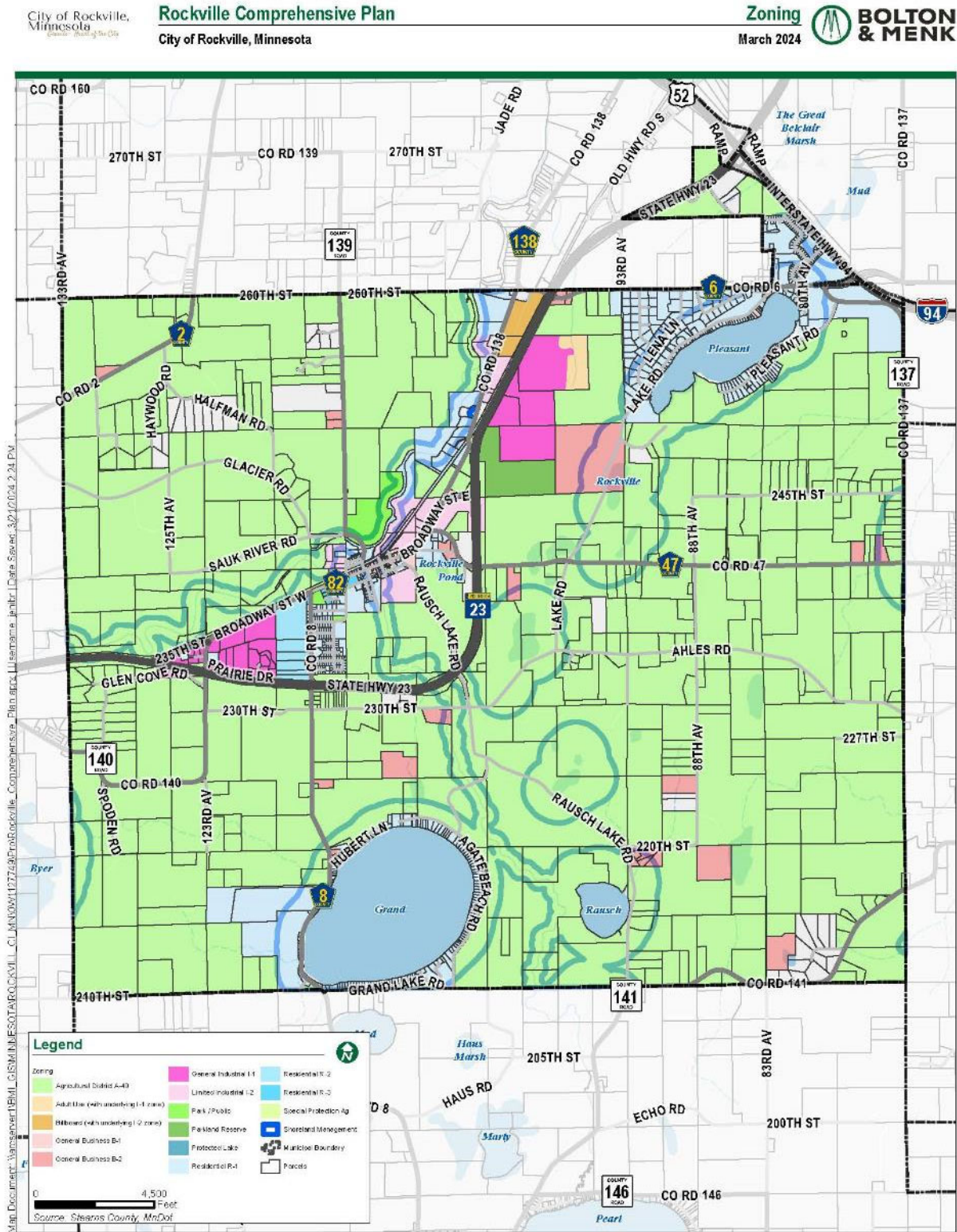
Future land use categories are general designations based on general functions, such as agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use. Land use designation sets the vision for what development or use is expected for each parcel.

Zoning regulates the specific type and intensity of use within land use categories. The Zoning Map shows where specific land uses are permitted or prohibited, and the codes define development standards such as the types of buildings allowed, their size, heights, placement within a parcel, and the intensity or density of development.



2.2 Current Land Use

The following map shows existing the land uses and zoning in 2024, at the time that the comprehensive plan and zoning code updates were initiated.



2.3 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Preserving agricultural land for future generations and ensuring land remains in production is a public concern.

Opportunities

- The city could create a land trust with public support to reduce barriers to entry for those interested in using agricultural land for Agricultural purposes.
- Setting up an agricultural land bank could allow the city to balance development pressures while preserving agricultural land.
- Agritourism provides a means of keeping land in production while increasing the economic impact on the community from agricultural land usage.

Issues

- Protecting agricultural land uses could hinder growth opportunities if development is disjointed.

Trend 2: Residents support growth and do not see the community growing too fast. Concerns exist that the city could grow too fast and impact or conflict with agricultural activities.

Opportunities

- There is awareness and appetite for more commercial land use in the city if it generates tax revenue and provides easy access to more goods and services in the community.
- Putting conditions on development in the Agricultural area would help preserve the rural character.

Issues

- Limiting future land development could hinder attempts to attract the commercial development of goods and services that accompany new land development or redevelopment efforts.
- There is an even split in the public’s perception that growth is needed or should be avoided, suggesting the need for a balanced approach to growth.

Trend 3: Undeveloped land along Highway 23 has good access and visibility and could support economic development.

Opportunities

- Planning for future commercial and industrial development along Highway 23 may increase traffic exposure and draw commercial activity into the city.
- Planning for commercial and industrial development that aligns with the community's agricultural heritage could complement the land uses in the city and surrounding area.
- Connecting commercial development along the Highway 23 corridor intersection of County Highway 82 could draw people to the downtown area.

Issues

- The City will need to follow the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s access management guidelines for its arterials, which would require the construction of backage roads. Backage roads facilitate efficient development on both sides and avoid congestion on the arterial.
- Transitioning land along Highway 23 from Agricultural to Commercial or Industrial uses may impact the sense of rural character as people pass through Rockville.

Trend 4: Land use priorities include the revitalization of downtown Rockville and its connection to Highway 23.

Opportunities

- Increasing the amount of commercial and residential activity in Rockville's downtown area would decrease the barriers preventing businesses from growing and establishing there.
- Planning for commercial and residential uses along County Highway 82 could draw people from Highway 23 into the downtown area without significant new infrastructure investment.
- Revitalizing the downtown area would increase its use as a community gathering space where people can shop and recreate, which could increase the community's desirability to potential new residents and visitors.

Issues

- The strategy of drawing people downtown requires businesses to be a destination or something of interest.
- Survey responses did not generally support higher-density housing, such as apartments, but increasing residential density in the downtown core would help support the revitalization effort.

Trend 5: Protecting the natural resources and beauty of the community while allowing development that allows it to be appreciated.

Opportunities

- Ensuring the natural beauty of Rockville is available for future generations to appreciate will allow the city to retain a unique character that other cities will have developed over.
- Seeking adaptive use and reuse opportunities to maintain the visual character of the land and the city while increasing the economic value of what occurs there will bolster the city's tax base.
- Recreation and commercial activity based on recreation are key features the public wants more of in the city, which is well suited to protecting and appreciating the natural environment.

Issues

- Protecting too much of the area may hinder land development, which is necessary to meet other city priorities.

2.4 Goals and Policies

Goal 1. Protect and make the most of the city’s natural resources for their environmental value and an asset that draws people to the community.

Policy 1. Minimize development impacts on the city’s lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and other natural features, such as bluffs, forests, and steep slopes, as they perform important protection functions and viewsheds in their natural state.

Policy 2. Ensure new developments and updates or expansion of existing buildings properly manage stormwater runoff, and post-development runoff rates/effluent ratios do not exceed predevelopment rates.

Goal 2. Create a unique, sustainable, and stable community that balances land uses where people can live, work, and play.

Policy 1. Improve existing parks and preserve natural amenities for outdoor recreational activities.

Policy 2. Promote an organized pattern of development that is easily served by municipal utilities, facilities, and infrastructure when/if extended.

Policy 3. Implement design standards to ensure quality development, including landscaping standards, building construction, lighting, screening, sidewalks and trail connections, and open space.

Policy 4. Support economic development by planning for additional commercial and industrial land uses along existing transportation corridors and connecting downtown to State Highway 23.

Goal 3. Implement a land use plan and ordinances that ensure orderly new development, strengthen existing neighborhoods, and minimize conflicts between uses.

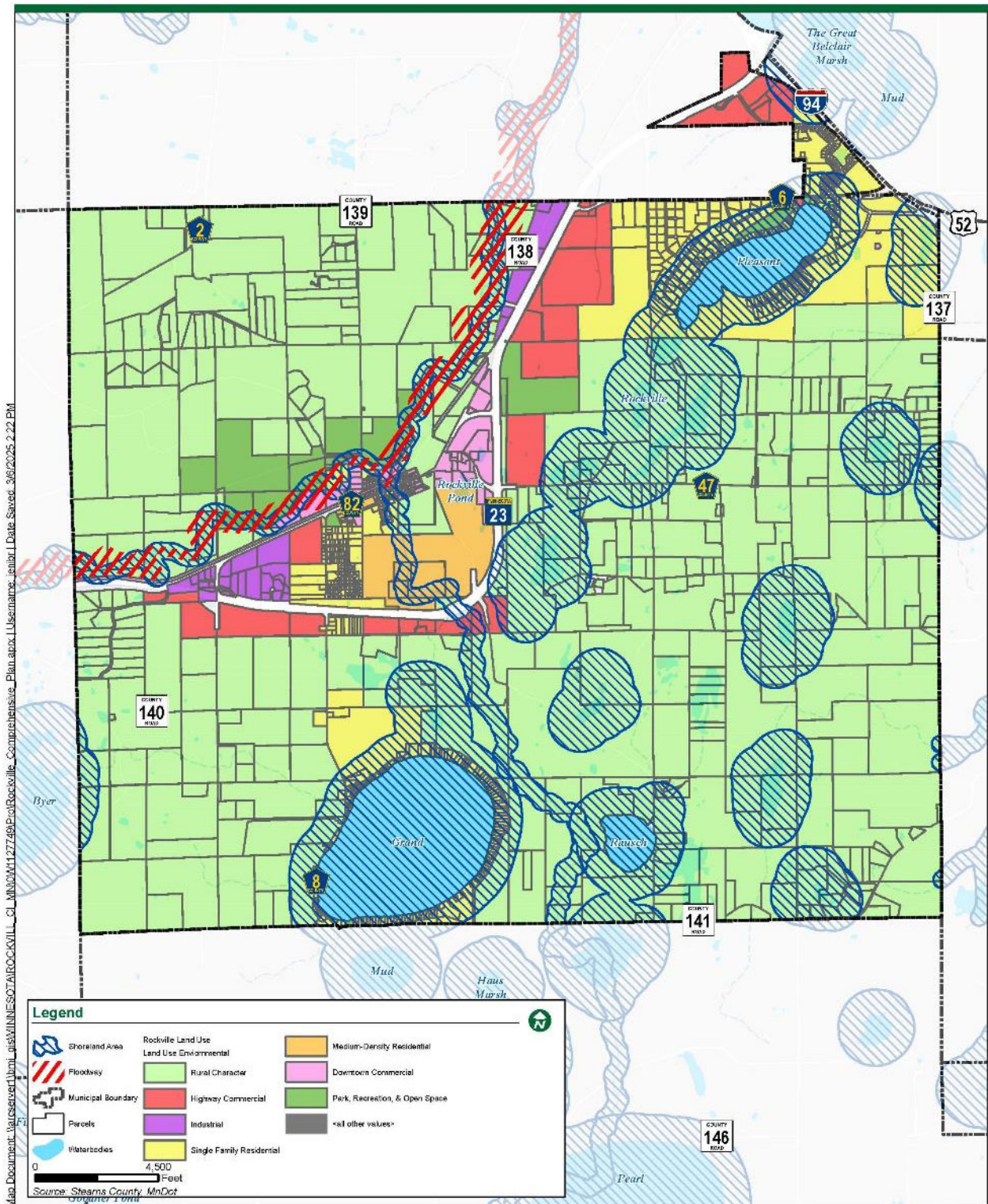
Policy 1. Require buffering and separation between residential and higher-intensity industrial uses to avoid adverse environmental impacts, including noise, air, and visual pollution.

Policy 2. Require all new developments adjacent to agricultural land or operations to provide a buffer (or retain a natural buffer) to reduce the potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.

Policy 3. Cluster residential development in rural areas along existing paved roads on small lots to maintain open space and the potential for efficient urban services in the future.

2.5 Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map guides growth and development planning. The Future Plan Use Map aids property owners, developers, and the City in making well-informed decisions and orderly growth. It shows where the city anticipates development to realize its vision for protecting natural resources, preserving agricultural land uses, accommodating a variety of housing, and increasing economic development. It also reflects areas planned for public infrastructure investments, such as roads, wastewater service, and water mains.

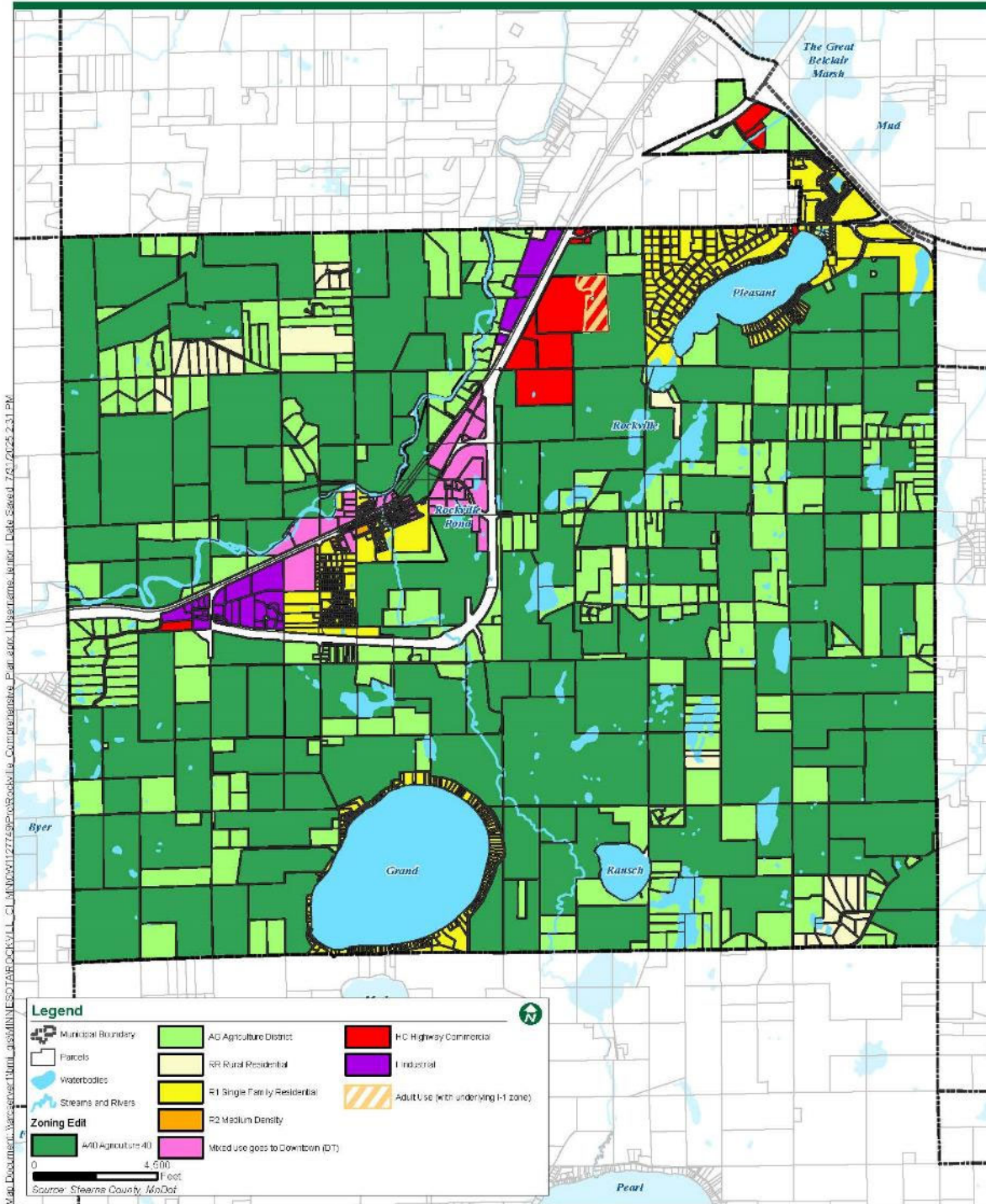


2.6 Zoning

While developing the Comprehensive Plan, the city reviewed and updated its entire zoning code. The City consolidated and updated its zoning districts as follows. See the Zoning Administrator for the most current official Zoning Map.

- AG-40: Agriculture 40 – parcels 40 acres and larger
- AG: Agriculture – parcels 2-39.99 acres
- RR: Rural Residential – Only existing parcels with this zoning designation as of October 8, 2025
- R-1: Single Family Residential
- R-2: Medium Density Residential
- DT: Downtown
- HC: Highway Commercial
- I-1: Industrial

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Chapter 3: Parks, Trails, and Open Space



3.0 Parks, Trails, and Open Space

3.1 Existing Conditions

Renowned for the granite deposits that inspired its name, Rockville has many natural features. The Sauk River runs through the city, providing recreational opportunities and beautiful views. The thirty-one square miles of territory under Rockville's jurisdiction contain many lakes and wetlands. The natural environment is valued by Rockville residents, as reflected in the city's priority for park and trail efforts. Rockville features Eagle Park, a 500-acre Stearns County Park, and Rockville County Park. The park complex features many amenities, including river access to the Sauk River, and is a habitat for nesting Eagles. The city also has the Rockville Lions Park, which hosts a Sunday concert series in the summer. The City is working with its neighbors, Cold Spring and Richmond, to develop the ROCORI trail, which will eventually connect to both the Wobegon Trail and the Glacial Lakes Trail.

3.2 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: The public desires a beach park in the community, as this is one key amenity missing from Rockville's current parks.

Opportunities

- A lakeside beach park could provide lake access to City residents who do not live on a lake, bring more people into the community for recreation, and provide an added opportunity for commerce for local businesses.
- There is relatively low commitment of land necessary to create a park on one of the lakes in the community.

Issues

- There are already complaints about the local taxes, which could make such an expenditure unpopular.
- The park's economic impact requires other businesses to be located near it to be most efficient, which may intrude on neighborhoods.

Trend 2: The bike trailhead in Rockville needs upgrading to meet the community's needs and wants.

Opportunities

- Some grants could help fund the improvements in the trails for transportation and recreation.
- A more visible trailhead with amenities could draw people downtown and support businesses.

Issues

- Costs associated with trail improvements and long-term maintenance of the trail and trailhead amenities.

Trend 3: Survey respondents indicated that the city needs more parks and open space. However, some thought that the existing county and city parks met current outdoor recreational needs.

Opportunities

- Park dedication fees can assist with developing new parks or updating current ones.
- Upgrading existing park facilities could create a regional attraction that could increase economic activity in the downtown area without the cost of land acquisition.

- Updating existing parks would save costs and meet the public’s needs without requiring land acquisitions.
- Continuing the maintenance regiments on the existing facilities will extend their lifespan and maintain community satisfaction with them.

Issues

- If neighborhood parks are included in new subdivisions, ongoing maintenance must be considered.

Trend 4: Including sidewalks and trails in the downtown area and new residential development would connect the community and neighborhoods.

Opportunities

- Improving and extending sidewalks and trails would make it easier for children and seniors to get to destinations without driving.
- Sidewalks and trails would make children and pedestrians of all ages and abilities safer and provide greater access between neighborhoods.

Issues

- Maintenance and snow removal would be required to ensure the sidewalks and trails are accessible year-round.

3.3 Goals and Policies

Goal 1. Develop and maintain a public park and trail system that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.

Policy 1. New developments are required to consider park, sidewalk, and trail needs and invest in appropriate improvements.

Policy 2. Work with area partners such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Stearns County, and local civic and business groups on modernizing, maintaining, and expanding park amenities, especially completing the ROCORI Trail.

Policy 3. Seek grants to upgrade existing parks and trail facilities and develop additional trails, including connecting incomplete trails/bike routes adjacent to CSAH 6, 8, and 47, Broadway Street, and County Road 141.

Goal 2. Promote Rockville's public parks and trails to build community and draw people to the city for economic development.

Policy 1. Identify land uses and support small-scale developments adjacent to parks and trails that provide spaces for recreation and tourism-related businesses.

Policy 2. Develop a trail and sidewalk network to connect attractions with downtown Rockville.

Policy 3. Develop Broadway Street corridor as a point of destination.

Policy 4. Develop seasonal programming and events to create a sense of community.



Chapter 4: Housing

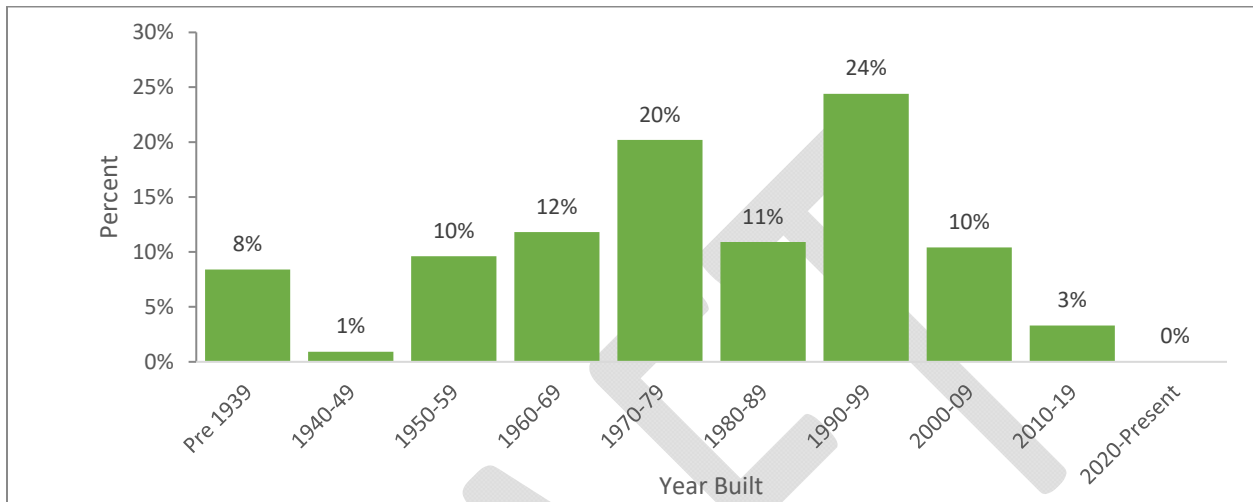


4.0 Housing

4.1 Existing Conditions

Rockville currently has 1,081 housing units. The housing stock is relatively new, with only 30.7 percent of homes built before 1970.

Figure 10: Age of Housing Stock



Most of Rockville's residents own their own home, with only 16 percent living in rental housing.

The city features a high percentage of owner-occupied housing with a median value above \$350,000 (Figure 18). This housing market would make it difficult for younger residents to move into the community. With only 13.7 percent of homes valued at or below \$300,000, Rockville could likely attract this demographic with more moderately priced housing options.

Figure 17: Home Ownership

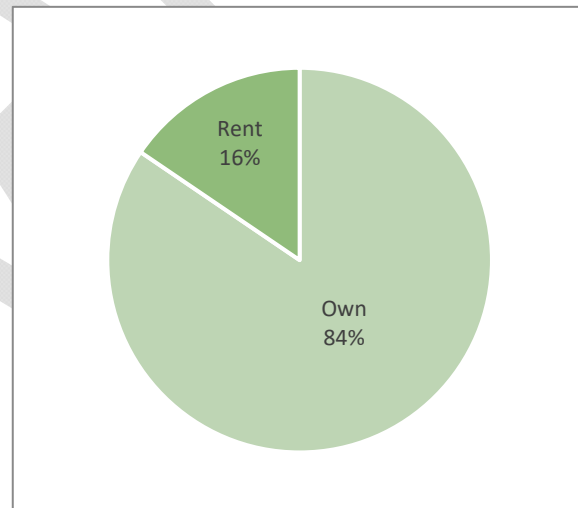
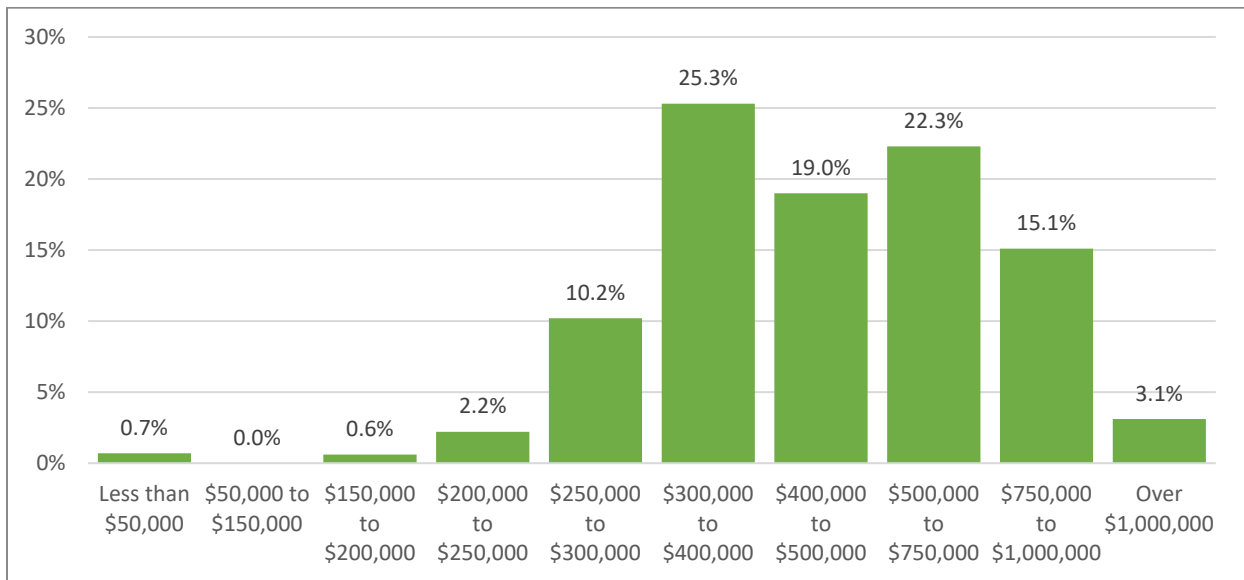


Figure 11: Homes Values



4.2 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Community survey responses indicated people did not want to see more apartments or rental housing; however, there is support for senior housing.

Opportunities

- Developing single-story housing with no step-to-grade and small scale will make transitioning the existing housing stock to younger residents easier.
- Senior housing allows elderly residents to remain in the community rather than relocate.
- Smaller, less expensive single-family or townhomes that may be affordable to lower- and moderate-income families could attract first-time home buyers and younger families to the city.
- There may be interest in housing units over commercial space in the downtown area to make development cost-effective and create vitality.

Issues

- Creating housing for a targeted age group can be problematic if the population or housing needs change after construction and the housing cannot be filled.

Trend 2: Water and sewer capacity and infrastructure location determine where and how much housing can be developed.

Opportunities

- The city has sufficient water and sewer capacity to serve existing residential areas around lakes, allowing for sewer and water connections to those homes, which would help protect the lakes' water quality.
- The water and sewer capacity are large enough to accommodate the city's forecasted economic development and household and residential growth by 2040.
- Areas with existing infrastructure are easier and less expensive to develop, resulting in more affordable housing.

Issues

- Locations with sewer and water capacity are in areas where there is already development, which may make it easier to increase density in between and near these areas.
- The area of the city north of the Sauk River is not planned for public water supply and sanitary sewer investments; therefore, it is unlikely to see urban-scale development in the foreseeable future.

Trend 3: Survey responses indicate that localized and lower-density housing development is preferred to retain rural character.

Opportunities

- Population and household forecasts indicate there is not a significant demand for housing; therefore, rural residential and smaller-scale residential development may meet demand.

Issues

- Finding local builders willing to take on smaller projects may be difficult.
- Property owners looking to subdivide and develop a portion of their property could benefit from education and guidance in the development process and necessary approvals.

Trend 4: Land values are increasing adjacent to development and the highway corridors, which may raise property taxes.

Opportunities

- Raising land values may push lower-quality agricultural land out of production, allowing more developable land to become free for development.
- Enrollment in Green Acres relieves some of the property tax pressures.

Issues

- The community values agriculture and rural character, which may be hindered by the rising property values and tax, which could pressure landowners to sell to developers.
- The profitability of agriculture becomes harder to manage, which is problematic when many people choose to live in Rockville for its agricultural lifestyle.

4.3 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Seek opportunities to update and improve the city's housing stock to meet the needs of a diverse community.

Policy 1. Facilitate private investment in maintaining, updating, and diversifying housing stock to meet evolving community needs.

Goal 2: Promote and encourage housing development that respects the community's natural environment and agricultural heritage.

Policy 1. Review land use and subdivision ordinances to protect rural character and the community's amenities.

Policy 2. Support housing development, including mixed-use buildings with apartments over commercial spaces, within the downtown area to create demand for small-scale retail, offices, and activity.



Chapter 5: Economic Development

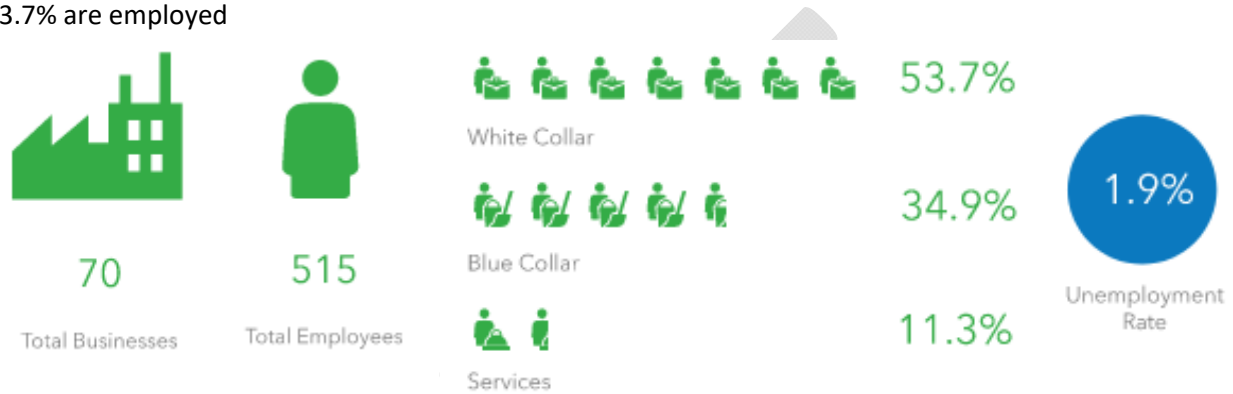


5.0 Economic Development

5.1 Existing Conditions

Historically, the agricultural and granite industries have been the main economic drivers in the City of Rockville. However, in the last 20 years, as the city has experienced a growth in housing through the subdivision and development of some agricultural land, more residents live in Rockville and work elsewhere. Based on commute times, 78.2% of residents live more than 15 minutes from work, indicating that many people choose to live in Rockville and work elsewhere. The unemployment rate for the city is lower than the state or national average at 1.9 percent. The recent Love's Travel Plaza development in Rockville off I-94 will be a significant revenue generator.

53.7% are employed



5.2 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Partnerships are a way to support business and workforce recruitment and retention efforts.

Opportunities

- Separate entities in the private and non-profit sectors have more expertise in attracting and retaining businesses that the local government may not readily have.
- Partnerships make achieving tasks easier if the work is spread to more entities crafting a solution.
- Private entities are more likely to choose a location where they cooperate with local public entities.

Issues

- There is a risk that parties in the partnership will fail to complete their tasks.
- Partnerships may drift out of alignment as partners' goals change to meet new objectives.

Trend 2: Lack of access to goods and services within the to meet the needs of residents

Opportunities

- The lack of access to all goods and services reduces the incentive for more people to move to the community, helping to retain the city's low density of residential development and population.

Issues

- Residents may leave the community to be closer to goods and services they cannot access in Rockville.
- As residents age and are less able or willing to travel to another area to access groceries and essentials, they will be forced to leave even if this is not their preference.

Trend 3: Small businesses, restaurants, and outdoor recreation businesses had the greatest public support for economic development. These can all be part of placemaking efforts to reinforce the community's character.

Opportunities

- Developing the local economy through small businesses will keep profits and the workforce closely tied to the city, making the business community more responsive to community needs.
- Cultivating good restaurants and outdoor recreational businesses could help the city build a reputation as a place to go for food and entertainment.
- These business types contribute to a sense of place that aligns with small-town character and expresses this vision in a way that may attract visitors.

Issues

- Small businesses are harder to keep open due to the higher risk levels, as personal circumstances, external influences, and consumer trends can derail a small business.
- Small businesses do best when they have a niche market or low competition in the area, so economic development efforts need to look for opportunities that can excel.

Trend 4: The public desires a community gas station and grocery store, as these are far from residential areas.

Opportunities

- The ability to get gas and groceries in the core areas of the city where people are located makes the city more walkable and easier for those who do not have access to personal cars.
- As each of these businesses tends to be easy to attract from larger corporations, the investment is more likely to produce the desired impact of a functional business in the community.
- Gas stations and grocery stores are scalable businesses that do not require a significant influx of labor to make them function; they can employ locally available labor, which would not increase the need for local housing.

Issues

- Neither of these businesses is going to draw people into the community from outside purposely; however, that does not necessarily matter if local customer traffic could support it.

5.3 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Develop and revitalize the downtown area as a vital community center.

Policy 1. Create a civic center by focusing on governmental, semi-governmental, and institutional services and buildings downtown to increase the vitality of the business district.

Policy 2. Plan an active and visually interesting commercial corridor that pulls people in from Highway 23 to downtown along Broadway Street East.

Policy 3. Plan for a mix of commercial land uses to provide goods and services that meet residents' needs, create jobs, and attract visitors.

Policy 4. Support redevelopment of existing homes and businesses to maintain community character, affordability, and sense of place.

Policy 5: Support housing development, including mixed-use buildings with apartments over commercial spaces, within the downtown area to create demand for small-scale retail, offices, and activity.

Policy 6. Connect downtown to the Sauk River as a natural feature and recreational attraction.

Policy 7. Coordinate commercial areas to be cohesive, connected, and walkable with appropriately regulated access points.

Policy 8. Create an organization to coordinate business activities, attract businesses, and promote economic development.

Goal 2: Focus on industrial and large-scale commercial activity along Highway 23 to create jobs and a tax base for the city.

Policy 1. Establish design standards for industrial areas and buildings to create appealing places to do business and minimize visual impacts, such as building materials, screening, landscaping, and signage.

Policy 2. In planning and designing new large-scale commercial and industrial uses, consider infrastructure and physical implications, services, and facility demands such as traffic generation, sewer, water needs, and stormwater management.

Policy 3. Encourage industrial and commercial businesses that complement agriculture and other businesses or area industries.

Policy 4. Ensure existing industrial uses and new industrial development are designed and built in a way that does not cause pollutants or contaminants to be emitted into the surrounding environment (including air, soils, groundwater, drainage ways, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer).



Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Infrastructure



6.0 Facilities and Infrastructure

6.1 Public Facilities

Since the City's incorporation in 2002, it has invested in its public facilities. The Fire Department building was constructed in the early 2000s to accommodate the equipment needed to cover the geographic area. The City Hall was constructed in downtown Rockville in 2006. These facilities replaced the one building that previously housed both City Hall and the Fire Department.

In 2021, the City constructed a new Public Works building to support the work of this department.

ROCORI School District's John Clark Elementary School is within the City boundaries. It is housed in a historic brick school building constructed in the 1930s as part of The New Deal.

6.2 Public Utilities

Overview

The public utilities chapter describes Rockville's existing sanitary sewer, water, and stormwater systems, which support the City's development, and identifies the public investments needed to support future growth. Public utilities are critical public services that support the community's health, safety, and welfare by providing clean drinking water, properly handling wastewater, and managing stormwater.

Wastewater

The City of Rockville's sanitary sewer system consists of a collection system covering three major areas of the City: Pleasant Lake area, Grand Lake area, and downtown area. There are six sewer main lift stations (3 in the Pleasant Lake Area, 1 in the Grand Lake Area, and 2 in the Downtown Area). The initial collection system within the Downtown Area was constructed in 1996. The signing of an agreement between the City of Rockville and the City of Cold Spring initiated the City's collection system. This agreement allowed the City of Rockville to pump its wastewater to the City of Cold Spring's wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater collection system was expanded to the Pleasant Lake and Grand Lake areas in 2004. The most recent expansion of the collection system, constructed in 2021, was in the northwestern portion of the Pleasant Lake Area, extending sewer to the new Rockville Crossing Development, which includes a new Loves Travel Plaza Center. Before the City of Rockville entered the wastewater contract with the City of Cold Spring in 1996, the city relied on individual sewer treatment systems.

Collection System

The wastewater collection system consists of a mixture of gravity sewer and force main pipes. The City's gravity sewer system has pipe sizes ranging from 8 inches to 12 inches. The force main pipe within the City's collection system ranges from 2 to 14 inches. The gravity sewer pipe material is mostly PVC, and the force main pipe materials combine PVC and HDPE.

The downtown collection area is mostly gravity sewer that flows to the "Core City Lift Station" on the north side of Broadway Street near Birch Street. From that lift station, the wastewater from the downtown area is pumped southwest to the Cold Spring Treatment Plant. A second lift station, referred to as Prairie Industrial Park (ask "PIP") Lift Station, in the downtown area is in the Prairie Industrial Park near TH 23 and Prairie Drive. This lift station accepts sewer flows from the Prairie Industrial Park, Grand Lake, and Pleasant Lake area. The PIP Lift Station pumps flow west to the Cold Spring Treatment Plant.

The other two main collection areas are around Grand Lake & Pleasant Lake. These two collection areas are mostly forcemain systems. The Grand Lake area has a forcemain around the entire lake, and properties use grinder pumps to pump their wastewater into the forcemain. The wastewater around Grand Lake goes to the “Grand Lake Lift Station” at County Road 8, north of Hubert Lane. The Grand Lake wastewater is pumped from that lift station to the “PIP Lift Station.”

The Pleasant Lake collection area uses a combination of gravity and forcemain pipes around the lake, in the Brentwood Hills Development Area to the north of Pleasant Lake, as well as out to the Love’s Truck Stop northwest of Pleasant Lake near Trunk Highway 23 (Rockville Crossing Development). The “Rockville Crossing” Lift Station is near Loves Truck Stop and pumps sewer flows from the Rockville Crossing Development to the Pleasant Lake Lift Station. The “Voigt Lift Station” is on the east side of Pleasant Lake. It takes sewer flows from the east side of Pleasant Lake and pumps them to the Pleasant Lake Lift Station. The entire Pleasant Lake collection area flows to the “Pleasant Lake Lift Station” at the intersection of County Road 6 & 82nd Avenue. The Pleasant Lake Area wastewater from this lift station is pumped to the “PIP Lift Station.” The Sanitary Sewer Map on the following page shows the city’s collection system.

Several properties within Rockville's rural and rural residential areas still have septic tanks for individual wastewater treatment. Due to the spread of the City’s limits and the rural area of these properties that are still on individual sewage treatment systems, septic systems will continue to exist in some capacity within the City of Rockville.

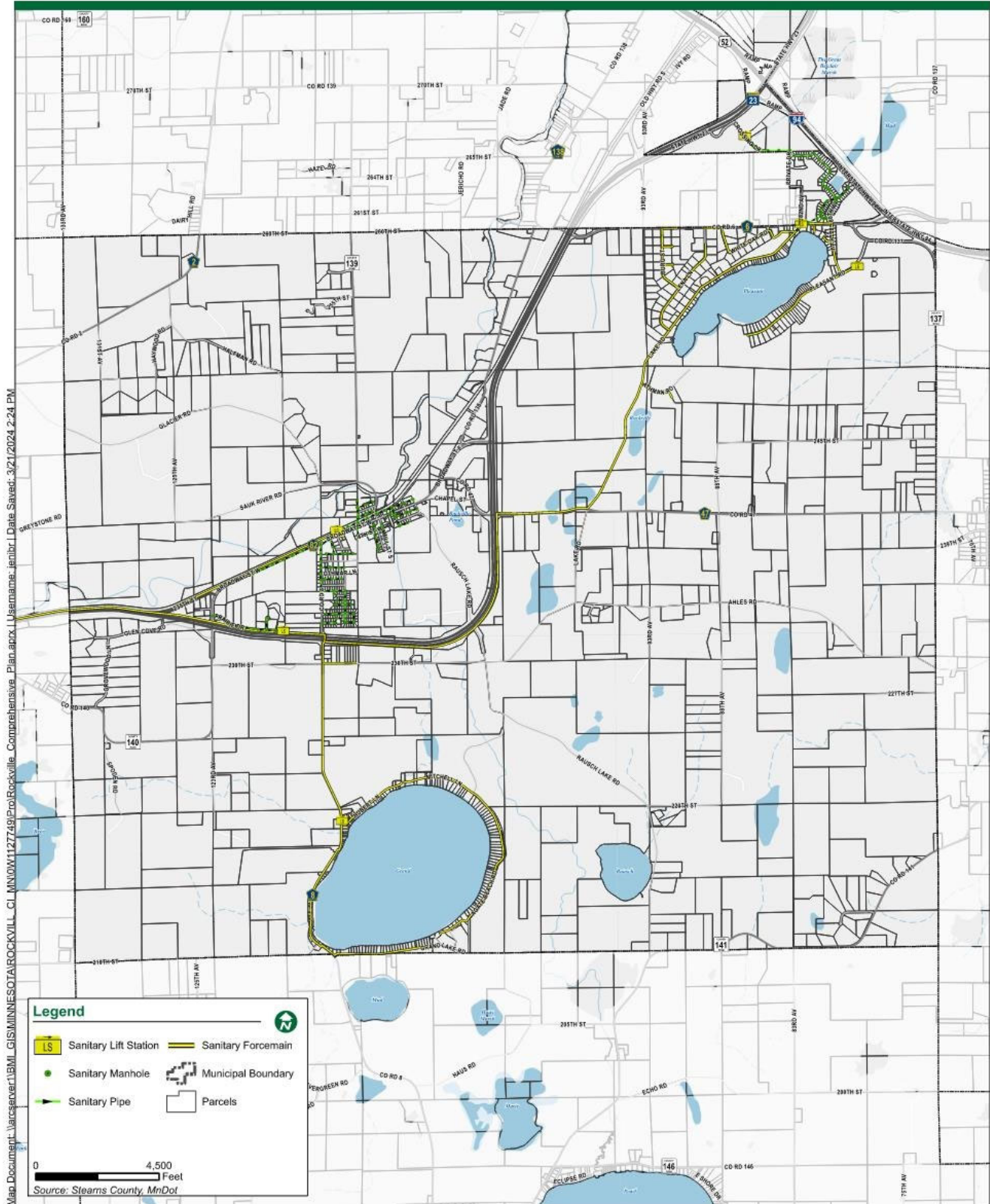
Wastewater Treatment Facility

The City of Rockville signed a 1996 contract with the City of Cold Spring for wastewater treatment. The current capacity at the Cold Spring treatment plant is approximately 1.79 million gallons per day (average annual flow), and the current average daily flow to the wastewater treatment plant is 0.98 million gallons per day. The City of Rockville is estimated to account for approximately 15% of the Cold Spring treatment plant’s daily flow.

The Cold Spring treatment facility removes solids, organic compounds, and other pathogens that harm the environment. After all wastewater has been appropriately treated, it is discharged into the Sauk River.

The City of Rockville’s current agreement with Cold Spring is for a maximum of 271,000 gallons per day of wastewater conveyance and treatment capacity. The average daily wastewater flow over 2023 was 129,544 gallons per day or approximately 53 gallons per person per day (GPCD), and the peak average day demand in 2023 was 172,000 gallons per day. The average daily wastewater flow over the 4 years from January 2020 through December 2023 was 141,981 gallons per day, and the peak average day demand was 203,500 gallons per day. These calculated wastewater demands for the City of Rockville are below the current contracted wastewater treatment capacity and have some room for continued growth within the City of Rockville.

Cold Spring is currently in the planning stages of a Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade and expansion project. The City of Rockville has provided an initial request to expand its maximum permitted flow capacity to 350,000 gallons per day with this expansion project. This increased permitted maximum flow is anticipated to provide adequate capacity for the City of Rockville for the next 20 years, assuming full build-out of existing preliminary platted developments plus 17 new homes per year with City sewer service.



Municipal Drinking Water

The City of Rockville provides municipal water to multiple areas within the roughly 36-square-mile community. The areas that are currently being served by municipal water are:

- Downtown System
 - North of Trunk Highway 23, south of the Sauk River, and west of Pine Street.
- Pleasant Lake System (Brentwood Hills and Rockville Crossing Subdivisions)
 - Platted developments north of CR 6, south of Interstate 94, and east of TH 23

Water Supply

Rockville's existing water supply system draws raw water from groundwater through four active wells. The existing wells were constructed between 1969 & 2005. The oldest well, Well #1, is no longer active. The newest wells, Well #4 and Well #5, were constructed in 2005 for the Brentwood Hills Addition in the Pleasant Lake Area. The active City wells, their locations, and their capacities are as follows:

- Well #2 (Downtown System): Southeast corner of Othmar Lane & Chestnut Street
 - Capacity of 200 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.24 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Well #3 (Downtown System): East side of Walnut Circle
 - Capacity of 350 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.42 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Well #4 (Pleasant Lake System): Pleasant Road (North Well)
 - Capacity of 50 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.06 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Well #5 (Pleasant Lake System): Pleasant Road (South Well)
 - Capacity of 88 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.105 million gallons per day (MGD)

The wells are typically not operated at full capacity and are not typically all operating simultaneously except during peak demand periods.

The "Ten States Standards" recommend that municipal wells have a capacity equal to or exceeding the design maximum daily demand and greater than or equal to the design average daily demand, with the largest producing well out of service. The City of Rockville's current capacity is .825 million gallons per day. The city's current water supply system does meet its current design needs; however, an additional well for the Pleasant Lake System should be considered in the near future due to low production rates on Wells 4 and 5.

Numerous properties within the City of Rockville still rely on private wells for their water supply. Due to the size and spread of the City's limits, private wells will continue to exist in some capacity.

Water Treatment

Water treatment is provided by chemical addition for disinfection along with the addition of fluoride. The City of Rockville currently treats the raw groundwater at the location of each well. Chlorine is added to provide disinfection, and fluoride is added as required by the Minnesota Department of Health. Polyphosphates are added at each location to keep iron and manganese in suspension, minimize iron and manganese from adhering to pipes, and minimize other discoloration issues within homes.

Water Storage

The City of Rockville has three elevated water storage tanks connected to the water supply system. The water tower locations and their capacities are as follows:

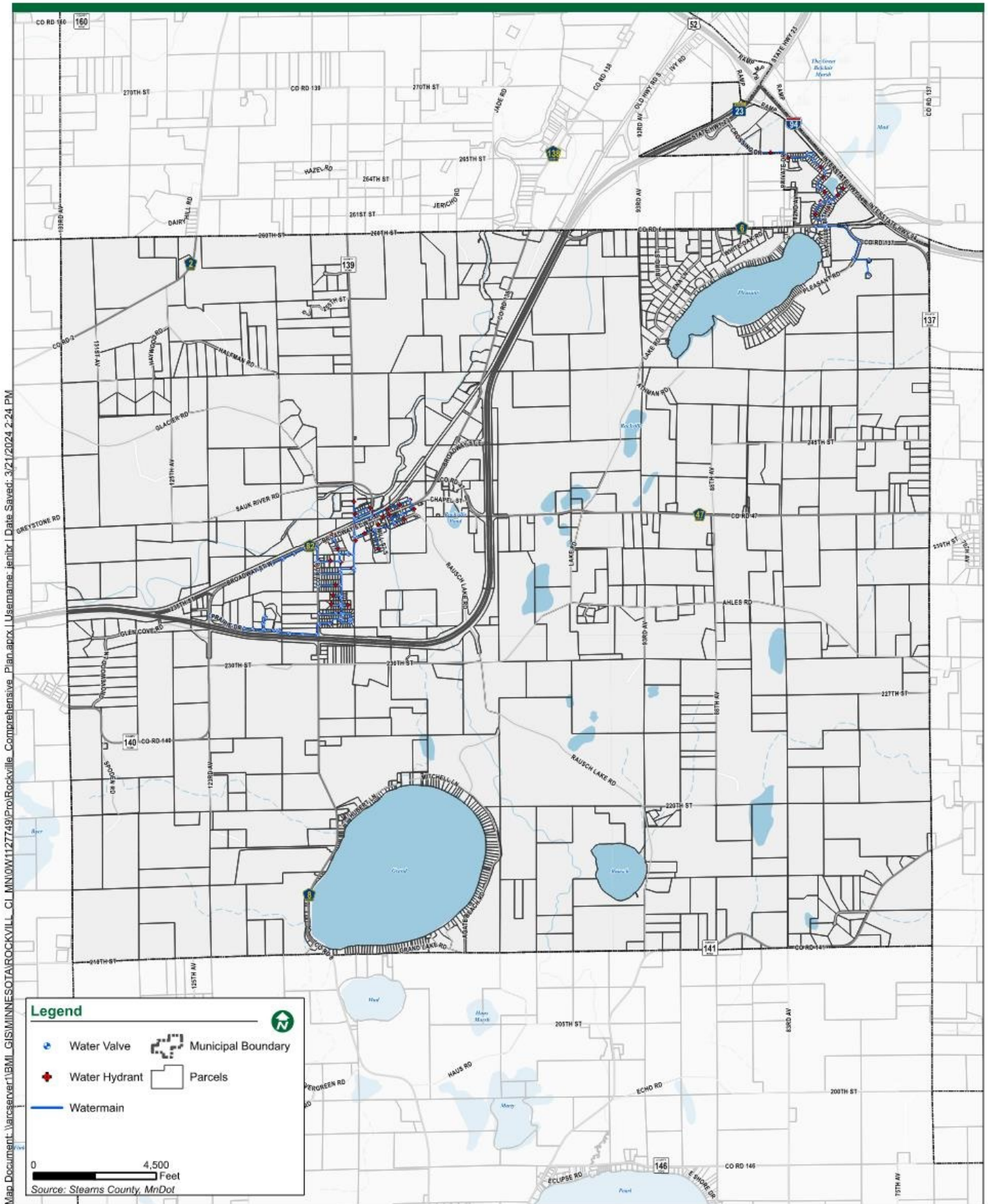
- INACTIVE - Chestnut Street Tower (Constructed in the early 1900's)
 - Capacity of 50,000 gallons
 - This tower is off-line and has been inactive for several years
- Walnut Circle Tower (Downtown System) (Constructed in 2001)
 - Capacity of 150,00 gallons
- Pleasant Lakes Tower (Pleasant Lake System) (Constructed in 2005)
 - Capacity of 100,000 gallons

The total elevated water storage for domestic use and fire demand is 250,000 gallons. The “Ten States Standards” recommends that cities have a minimum storage capacity equal to the average daily consumption and adequate storage capacity to meet fire demands. The existing elevated storage capacity meets the current demand for the City of Rockville.

Distribution System

The City of Rockville’s existing water distribution system varies in material from PVC to ductile iron to cast iron. The average watermain pipe ranges in size from four to 12 inches in diameter. The sizing and materials of some of the older areas of downtown that have not been recently replaced are unknown. For adequate fire protection, water pipe size is recommended to be a minimum of six inches in diameter. Most of the City’s water distribution network meets or exceeds this requirement. It is recommended that the City replace all undersized and deteriorated pipe materials in conjunction with other street and utility projects to provide appropriate supply, pressure, and fire protection. The Water Main map on the following page shows the City’s water distribution system.

The Minnesota Department of Health requires the City to complete a lead service line inventory of every service line in its system by October 16, 2024. The City has completed the inventory and continues to update the inventory as new information becomes available.

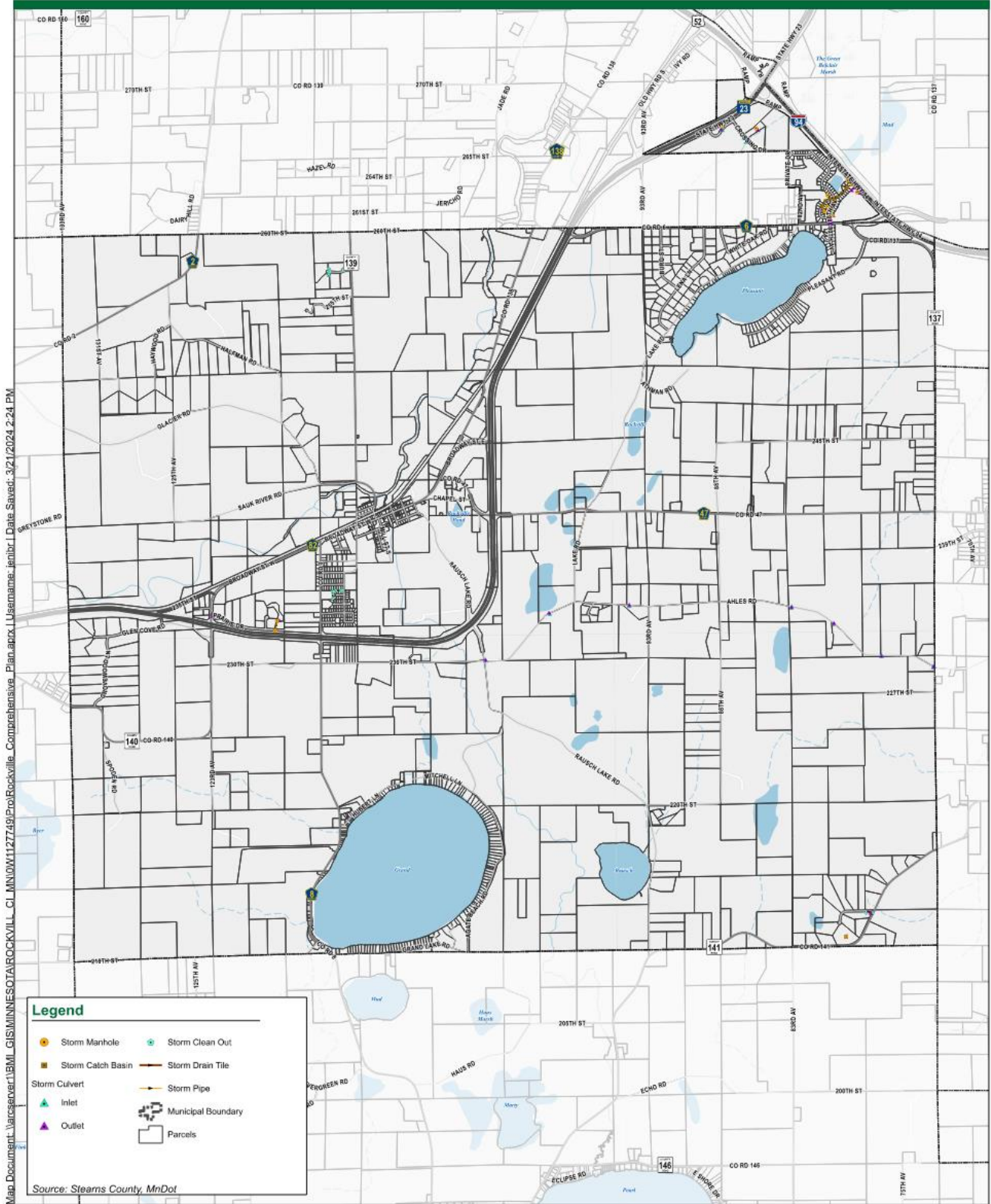


Stormwater

The City of Rockville's existing storm sewer system is minimal in scope and collection area. In the downtown area, Broadway Street from County Road 8 to Pine Street, the storm sewer system consists of a concrete curb and gutter that collects the surface water and directs it to concrete drainage basins through this stretch of Broadway Street. This area of stormwater collection is discharged into the Sauk River near downtown. The other area with subsurface stormwater collection is the Brentwood Hills neighborhood on the north side of Pleasant Lake. Rear yard and curb and gutter drainage basins collect surface water and discharge the stormwater in the drainage ponds and drainage ditch adjacent to Interstate 94. These storm sewer locations have been constructed within the last 25 years and are generally in good condition.

The rest of the City of Rockville primarily uses drainage ditches and storm culverts for stormwater conveyance. Most culverts are in good condition. However, some of the culverts throughout the City are in poor condition and undersized, and the material is failing. It is recommended that the City inventory the culverts that need to be fixed and/or replaced before structural failure.

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6.3 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: The City provides efficient, affordable, orderly public infrastructure.

Policy 1. Promote appropriately scaled and fiscally responsible public infrastructure development and redevelopment activities that safely and optimally serve Rockville.

Policy 2. Consider the feasibility of development based on infrastructure capacity and cost to the taxpayers. In cases where this is excessive, ensure the burden is placed on the developer.

Policy 3. Evaluate existing utilities and services, mains, and lines for replacement or reconstruction in coordination with other projects to conserve resources.

Policy 4. Consider creating a Comprehensive Water System Plan and Comprehensive Wastewater Plan to inform City leaders, property owners, and potential developers regarding the opportunities, limitations, and feasibility of future sewer and water service areas.

Goal 2: Provide effective, efficient, and friendly public services.

Policy 1. Restore volunteer committees and commissions to focus on topics related to community events, parks and recreation, and economic development to build community support and capacity to implement the plan.

Policy 2. Collaborate with area school districts, Stearns County, and community organizations to enhance programs offered to residents.



Chapter 7: Transportation



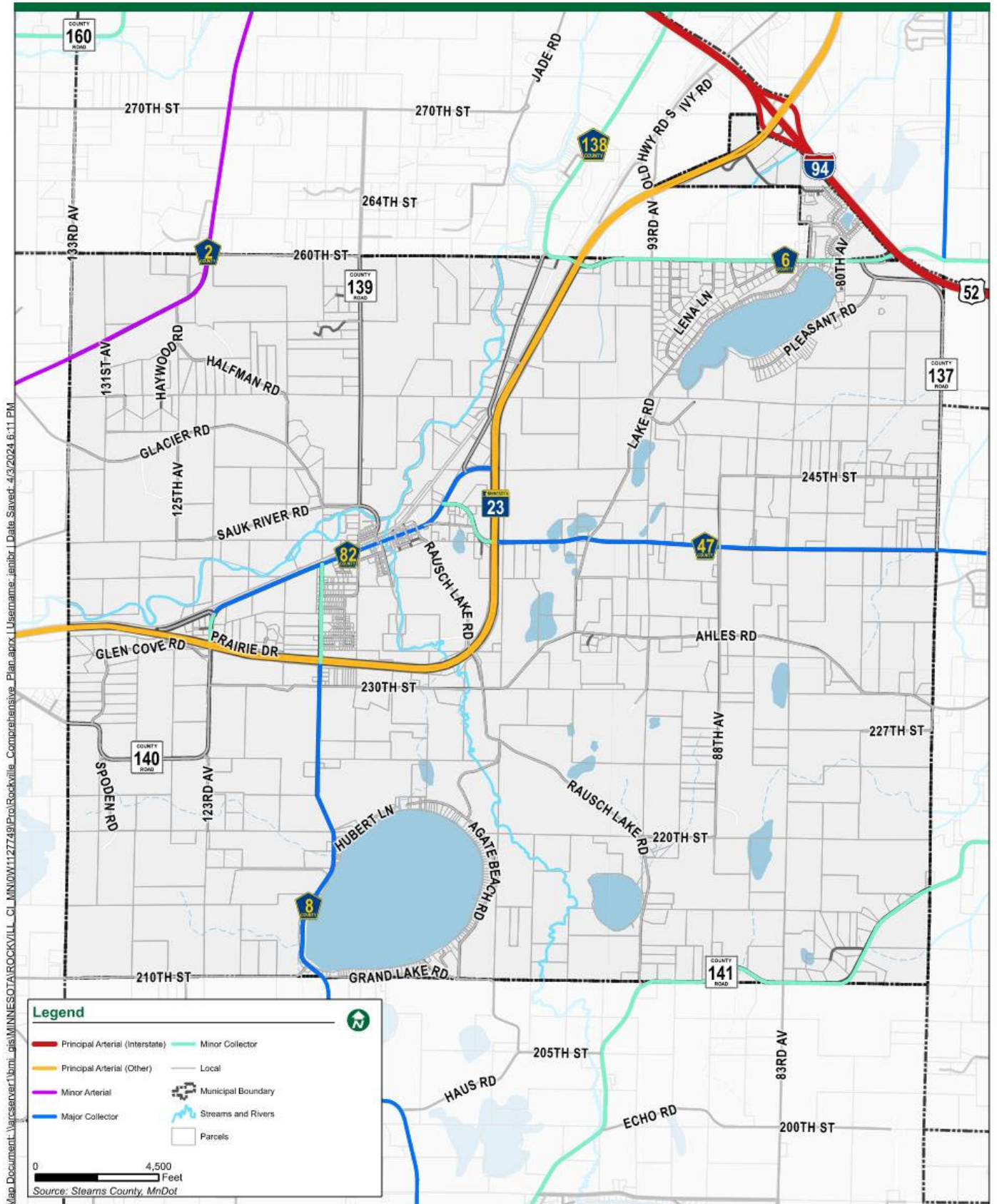
7.0 Transportation

7.1 Existing Conditions

Functional Class

The intersection of Interstate 94 (I-94) and Minnesota Highway 23 (MN 23) defines the city's far northeast corner, which features two significant arterials. Rockville has five different classes of roads: two types of arterials, two collector classes, and local roads.

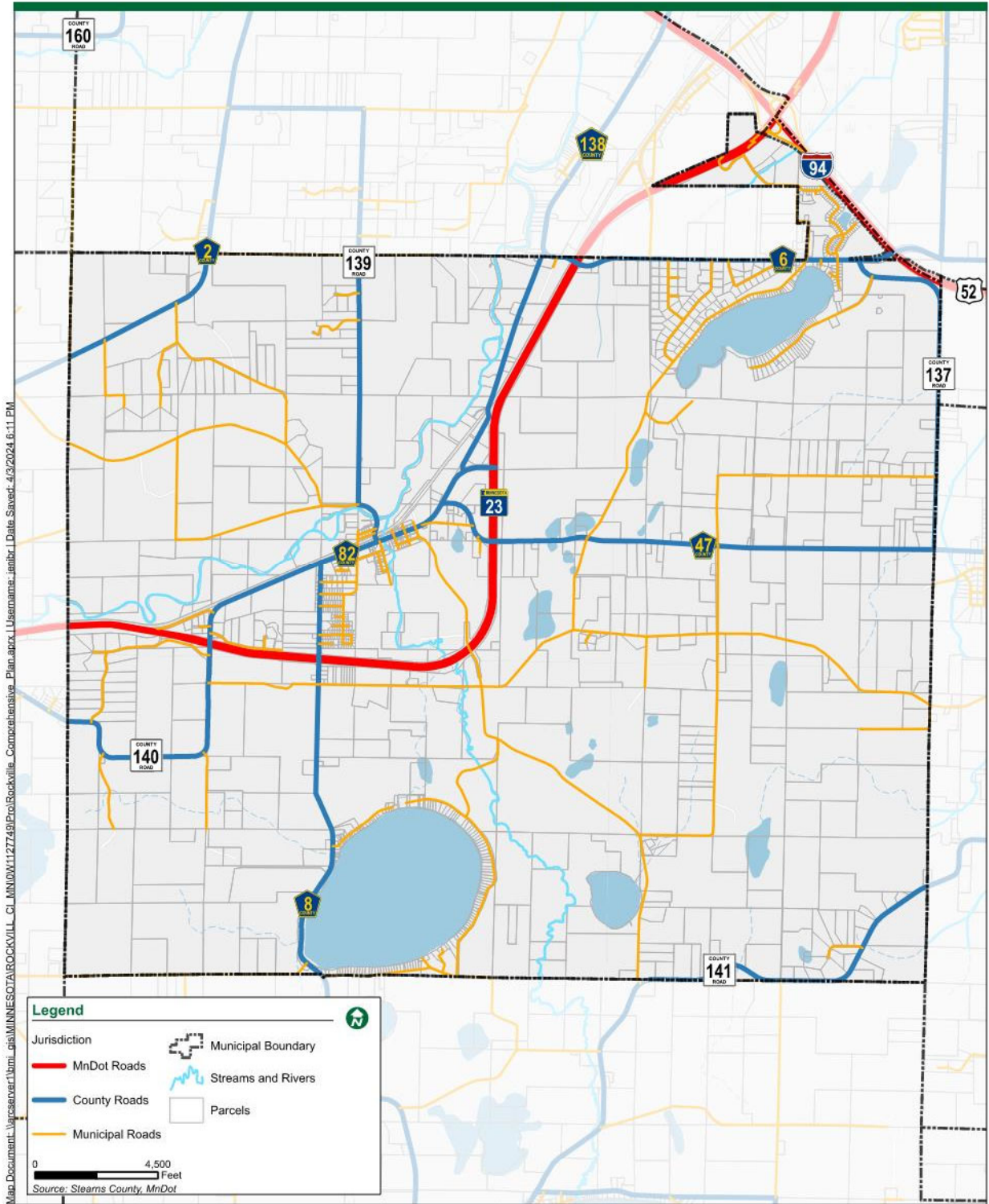
Functional Classification	Description	Example
Principal Arterial	These major roads provide mobility across regional communities.	I-94, MN-23
Minor Arterial	These roads link cities and towns within the regional community, often linking to principal arterials.	Stearns County Highway 2
Major Collector	These roads serve a critical role by gathering traffic from local roads and funneling it to the arterial network; in rural areas, they are primarily used for intra-county travel.	Stearns County Highway 8, 47, and 82
Minor Collector	These roads function like their major counterparts but are usually used for shorter distances, with more access points and lower speeds.	Stearns County Highway 6 and 138 and County Road 15
Local Roads	All other remaining roads within the transportation network.	Ahles Road and Rausch Lake Road



Jurisdiction

Three organizations have jurisdiction over the roads within the city limits of Rockville: the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), Stearns County Highway Department, and The City of Rockville. For maintenance purposes, MNDOT is responsible for the two principal arterials, I-94 and MN-23, providing maintenance and directing any changes to the access management. Stearns County is responsible for county highways and roads such as CSAH-2, 6, 8, 47, 82, CR-139, and 141. Each road is under the county’s maintenance plans and connects the city to other cities within Stearns County. All other roads are under the jurisdiction and maintenance of the City of Rockville, approximately 125 miles of roads. The Roadway Jurisdiction map on the following page shows which roads are managed by the state, county and city.

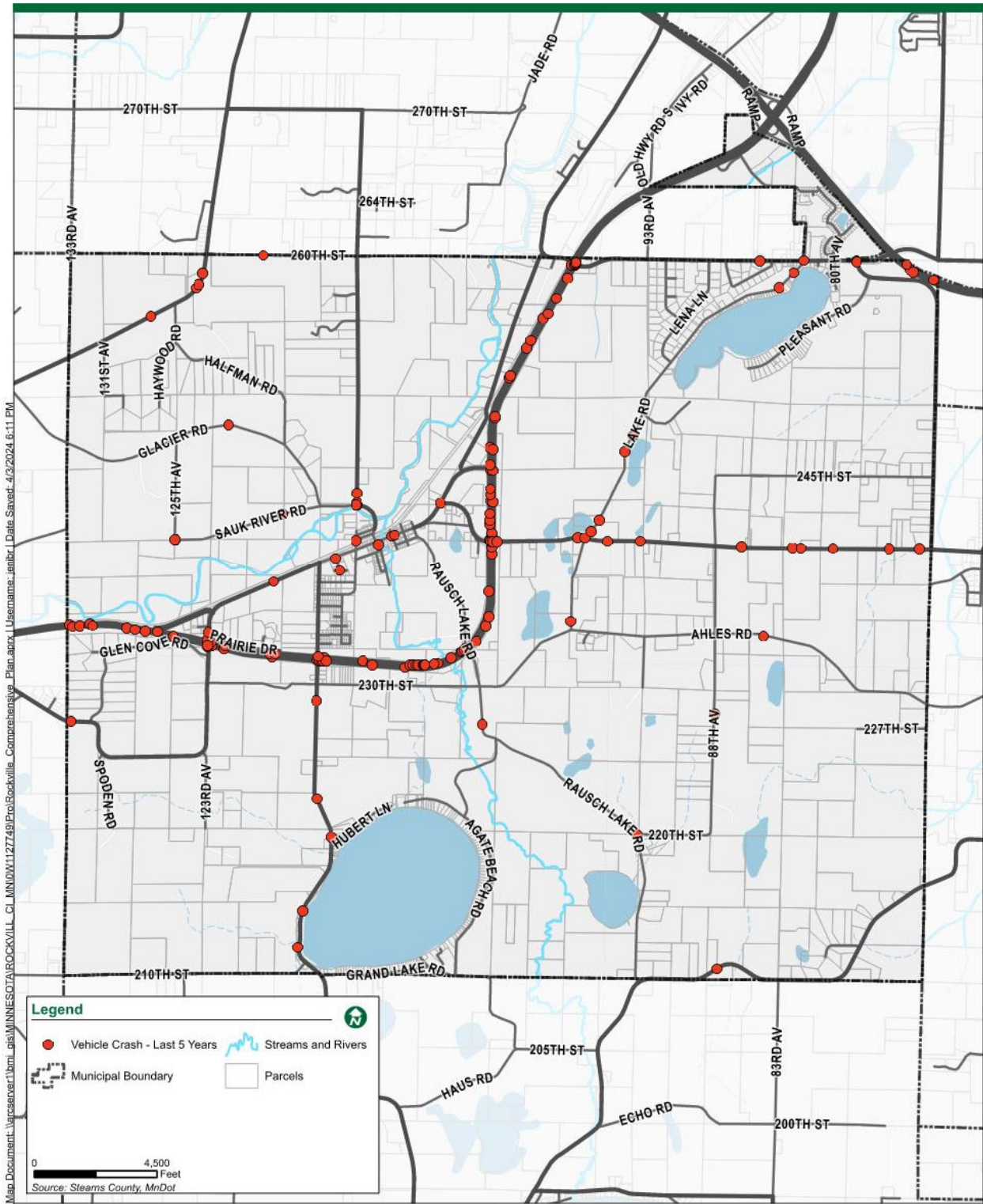
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Traffic Accident Occurrences

Most accidents in Rockville occur on MN-23, which has the highest traffic and speeds of any transportation corridor in the city. The highest concentration of crashes is localized to the access points between collectors and MN-23, a principal arterial. The intersection with County Highway 47 generates many traffic crashes within the City’s jurisdiction. While other vehicular collisions occur in Rockville, the frequency of accidents on other roads is approximately a third of the number on Highway 23. The Traffic Accidents map on the following page shows the crash activity in the previous five years.

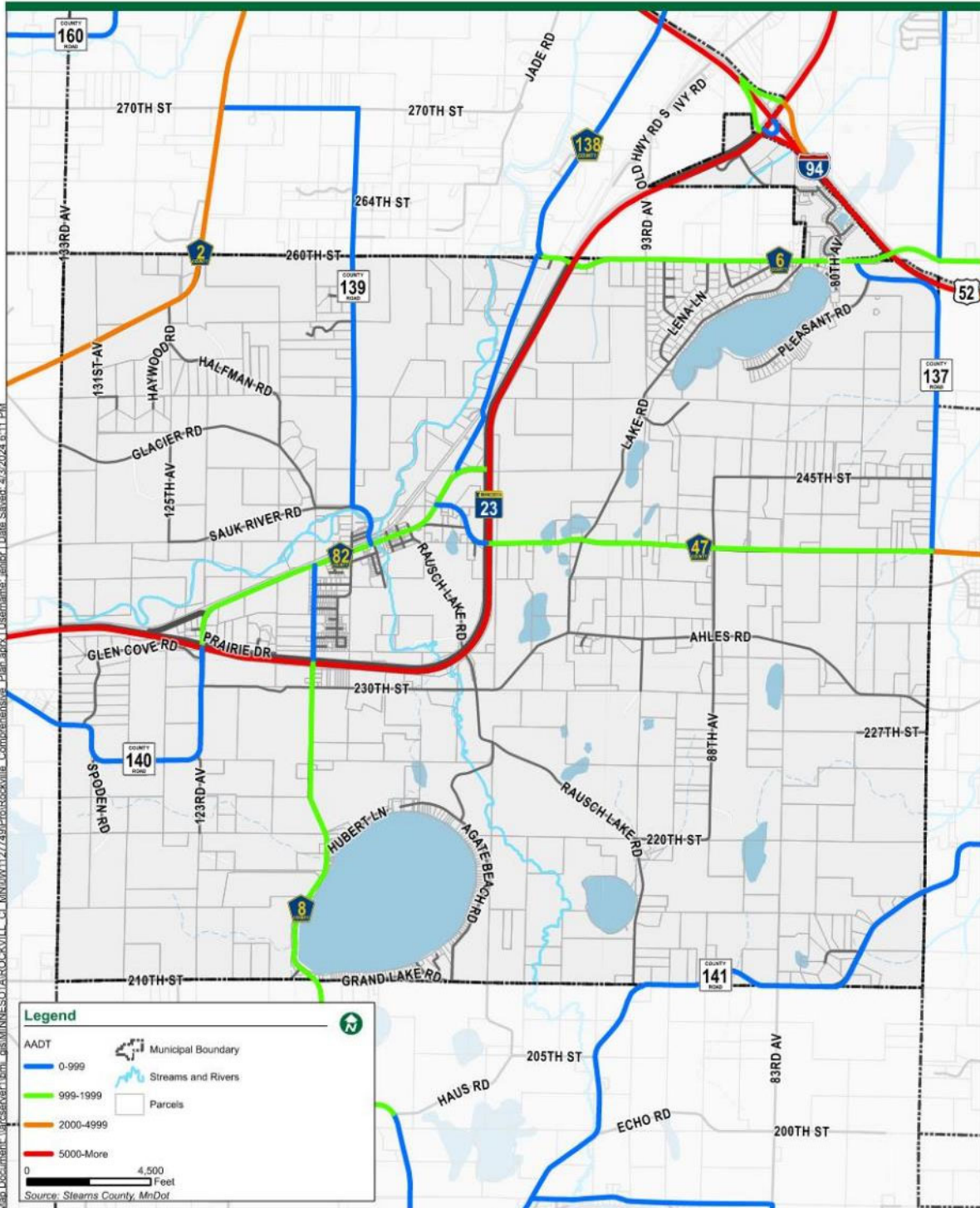
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Average Daily Traffic Volume

Being situated at the intersection of two principal arterials and bisected by one of them, Rockville receives a significant volume of daily traffic. I-94 carries approximately 30,000 vehicles per day and MN-23 sees traffic volumes of over 14,000 vehicles per day, a significant portion of that being commercial traffic. CSAH 2, which crosses the northwest corner of the city, has the next-highest traffic volumes. County Roads 6, 8, 47 and 82 are major collectors that have traffic volumes between 1,000 and 2,000 vehicles per day. All other roads are local roads that average less than 1,000 trips per day, giving these routes lower maintenance levels due to their lower daily usage levels. The ADT map on the following page indicates the traffic volume on major roadways.

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7.2 Goals and Policies

Goal 1. Maintain existing roads.

Policy 1. Prioritize maintaining existing roads over developing new roads.

Policy 2. Maintain the aesthetic quality of the existing T.H. 23 corridor on a regional level by promoting continuous viewing corridors, landscaping, plantings, and greenspace and working with utility service providers to place the overhead wire canopy underground.

Policy 3. Continue to promote the integrity of T.H. 23 as mobility is guided by MnDOT and St. Cloud APO recommended access management guidelines.

Policy 4. Promote the T.H. 23 entrance to Rockville as a high-quality, aesthetically pleasing corridor that creates a distinctive impression of the city. Distinguishing architectural design, quality building materials, limited outdoor storage, preservation of existing environmental features, and civic entrance monuments of superior quality should be emphasized.

Policy 5. Update the sign ordinance for commercial/industrial uses adjacent to T.H. 23, possibly in conjunction with other stakeholders in the corridor, to promote aesthetically pleasing signage and minimize visual clutter/confusion while meeting the needs of businesses and consumers.

Policy 6. Maintain existing gravel roads as a definitive part of Rockville's rural character, where appropriate based on traffic levels. Ensure proper design, materials, construction, and appropriate maintenance techniques to maintain surfaces' durability and usability.

Goal 2. Road improvements.

Policy 1. Develop an official future transportation map and plan depicting future intersections with T.H. 23, upgrading the T.H. 23 /CSAH 8 intersection to improve safety while also maintaining mobility, and developing collector streets (especially in the north-central and northeastern portion of the city).

Policy 2. Work with the County to address the impact of growth on CSAH 6 and CSAH 8 and review the best long-term location of CSAH 8 near Grand Lake.

Policy 3. Coordinate road maintenance and improvements with utility construction to promote efficiency, avoid duplicate costs, and minimize impacts to residents and businesses.

Policy 4. Consider safety issues and pedestrian access as road improvements are planned and designed.

Goal 3. New roads.

Policy 1. Implement a backage road in areas adjacent to T.H. 23, which would be guided toward commercial and/or industrial development.

Policy 2. As development plans are presented to the City, design future collector streets to provide continuity and prudent access to other collector streets and minor arterials and adhere to the recommended access management guidelines.

Policy 3. Discourage new development from direct property access to arterials; accommodate newly developing areas via collector or local roads or backage roads.

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Chapter 8: Implementation

8.0 Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan creates a vision for the City of Rockville 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.

Implementing the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan requires an action plan and the coordination and investments of many stakeholders. Following is a table that the City can use to prioritize and assign plan goals and policies. The goals and policies are pulled from each of the chapters. The City should identify the lead for each goal, which represents the department or position within the City that is most responsible for implementing each policy. Other agencies with an interest or resource may also support policy implementation. The priority column can be used to identify the timeline or order for implementing policies such as short-, mid-, and long-term.

The Implementation Plan will be updated regularly as part of other City processes, such as annual budgeting or project prioritization sessions. The worksheets' action steps and timeline sections are intended to be flexible and adaptable over short periods, so changes to these sections do not require a formal amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The goals, however, are high-level, long-term goals. Changes to the specific goals would require an amendment to the plan.

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8.1 Land Use Goals

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
<p>Goal 1. Protect and make the most of the city’s natural resources for their environmental value and an asset that draws people to the community.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Minimize development impacts on the city’s lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and other natural features, such as bluffs, forests, and steep slopes, as they perform important protection functions and viewsheds in their natural state.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Ensure new developments and updates or expansion of existing buildings, properly manage stormwater runoff, and post-development runoff rates /effluent ratios do not exceed predevelopment rates.</p>		
<p>Goal 2. Create a unique, sustainable, and stable community that balances land uses where people can live, work, and play.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Improve existing parks and preserve natural amenities for outdoor recreational activities.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Promote an organized pattern of development that is easily served by municipal utilities, facilities, and infrastructure when/if extended.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Implement design standards to ensure quality development, including landscaping standards, building construction, lighting, screening, sidewalks and trail connections, and open space.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Support economic development by planning for additional commercial and industrial land uses along existing transportation corridors and connecting downtown to State Highway 23.</p>		
<p>Goal 3. Implement a land use plan and ordinances that ensure orderly new development, strengthen existing neighborhoods, and minimize conflicts between uses.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Require buffering and separation between residential and higher-intensity industrial uses to avoid adverse environmental impacts, including noise, air, and visual pollution.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Require all new developments adjacent to agricultural land or operations to provide a buffer (or retain a natural buffer) to reduce the potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Cluster residential development in rural areas along existing paved roads on small lots to maintain open space and the potential for efficient urban services in the future.</p>		

8.2 Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
Goal 1. Develop and maintain a public park and trail system that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities.	Policy 1. New developments are required to consider park, sidewalk, and trail needs and invest in appropriate improvements.		
	Policy 2. Work with area partners such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Stearns County, and local civic and business groups on modernizing, maintaining, and expanding park amenities, especially completing the ROCORI Trail.		
	Policy 3. Seek grants to upgrade existing parks and trail facilities and develop additional trails, including connecting incomplete trails/bike routes adjacent to CSAH 6, 8, and 47, Broadway Street, and County Road 141.		
Goal 2. Promote Rockville's public parks and trails to build community and draw people to the city for economic development.	Policy 1. Identify land uses and support small-scale developments adjacent to parks and trails that provide spaces for recreation and tourism-related businesses.		
	Policy 2. Develop a trail and sidewalk network to connect attractions with downtown Rockville.		
	Policy 3. Develop Broadway Street corridor as a point of destination.		
	Policy 4. Develop seasonal programming and events to create a sense of community.		

8.3 Housing Goals

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
Goal 1: Seek opportunities to update and improve the city's housing stock to meet the needs of a diverse community.	Policy 1: Facilitate private investment in maintaining, updating, and diversifying housing stock to meet evolving community needs.		
Goal 2: Promote and encourage housing development that respects the community's natural environment and agricultural heritage.	Policy 1: Review land use and subdivision ordinances to protect rural character and the community's amenities.		
	Policy 2: Support housing development, including mixed-use buildings with apartments over commercial spaces, within the downtown area to create demand for small-scale retail, offices, and activity.		

8.4 Economic Development

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
<p>Goal 1: Develop and revitalize the downtown area as a vital community center.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Create a civic center by focusing on governmental, semi-governmental, and institutional services and buildings downtown to increase the vitality of the business district.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Plan an active and visually interesting commercial corridor that pulls people in from Highway 23 to downtown along Broadway Street East.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Plan for a mix of commercial land uses to provide goods and services that meet residents' needs, create jobs, and attract visitors.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Support redevelopment of existing homes and businesses to maintain community character, affordability, and sense of place.</p>		
	<p>Policy 5: Support housing development, including mixed-use buildings with apartments over commercial spaces, within the downtown area to create demand for small-scale retail, offices, and activity.</p>		
	<p>Policy 6. Connect downtown to the Sauk River as a natural feature and recreational attraction.</p>		
	<p>Policy 7. Coordinate commercial areas to be cohesive, connected, and walkable with appropriately regulated access points.</p>		
	<p>Policy 8. Create an organization to coordinate business activities, attract businesses, and promote economic development.</p>		
<p>Goal 2: Focus on industrial and large-scale commercial activity along Highway 23 to create jobs and a tax base for the city.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Establish design standards for industrial areas and buildings to create appealing places to do business and minimize visual impacts, such as building materials, screening, landscaping, and signage.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. In planning and designing new large-scale commercial and industrial uses, consider infrastructure and physical implications, services, and facility demands such as traffic generation, sewer, water needs, and stormwater management.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Encourage industrial and commercial businesses that complement agriculture and other businesses or area industries.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Ensure existing industrial uses and new industrial development are designed and built in a way that does not cause pollutants or contaminants to be emitted into the surrounding environment (including air, soils, groundwater, drainage ways, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer).</p>		

8.5 Infrastructure Goals

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
<p>Goal 1: The City provides efficient, affordable, orderly public infrastructure.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Promote appropriately scaled and fiscally responsible public infrastructure development and redevelopment activities that safely and optimally serve Rockville.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Consider the feasibility of development based on infrastructure capacity and cost to the taxpayers. In cases where this is excessive, ensure the burden is placed on the developer.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Evaluate existing utilities and services, mains, and lines for replacement or reconstruction in coordination with other projects to conserve resources.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Consider creating a Comprehensive Water System Plan and Comprehensive Wastewater Plan to inform City leaders, property owners, and potential developers regarding the opportunities, limitations, and feasibility of future sewer and water service areas.</p>		
<p>Goal 2: Provide effective, efficient, and friendly public services.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Restore volunteer committees and commissions to focus on topics related to community events, parks and recreation, and economic development to build community support and capacity to implement the plan.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Collaborate with area school districts, Stearns County, and community organizations to enhance programs offered to residents.</p>		

8.6 Transportation Goals

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
<p>Goal 1: Maintain existing roads.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Prioritize maintaining existing roads over developing new roads.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Maintain the aesthetic quality of the existing T.H. 23 corridor on a regional level by promoting continuous viewing corridors, landscaping, plantings, and greenspace and working with utility service providers to place the overhead wire canopy underground.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Continue to promote the integrity of T.H. 23 as mobility is guided by MnDOT and St. Cloud APO recommended access management guidelines.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Promote the T.H. 23 entrance to Rockville as a high-quality, aesthetically pleasing corridor that creates a distinctive impression of the city. Distinguishing architectural design, quality building materials, limited outdoor storage, preservation of existing environmental features, and civic entrance monuments of superior quality should be emphasized.</p>		
	<p>Policy 5. Update the sign ordinance for commercial/industrial uses adjacent to T.H. 23, possibly in conjunction with other stakeholders in the corridor, to promote aesthetically pleasing signage and minimize visual clutter/confusion while meeting the needs of businesses and consumers.</p>		
	<p>Policy 6. Maintain existing gravel roads as a definitive part of Rockville's rural character, where appropriate, based on traffic levels. Ensure proper design, materials, construction, and appropriate maintenance techniques to maintain surfaces' durability and usability.</p>		
<p>Goal 2. Road improvements.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Develop an official future transportation map and plan depicting future intersections with T.H. 23, upgrading the T.H. 23 /CSAH 8 intersection to improve safety while also maintaining mobility, and developing collector streets (especially in the north-central and northeastern portion of the city).</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. Work with the County to address the impact of growth on CSAH 6 and CSAH 8 and review the best long-term location of CSAH 8 near Grand Lake.</p>		

Goal	Policy	Lead	Priority
	<p>Policy 3. Coordinate road maintenance and improvements with utility construction to promote efficiency, avoid duplicate costs, and minimize impacts to residents and businesses.</p>		
	<p>Policy 4. Consider safety issues and pedestrian access as road improvements are planned and designed.</p>		
<p>Goal 3: New roads.</p>	<p>Policy 1. Implement a backage road in areas adjacent to T.H. 23, which would be guided toward commercial and/or industrial development.</p>		
	<p>Policy 2. As development plans are presented to the City, design future collector streets to provide continuity and prudent access to other collector streets and minor arterials and adhere to the recommended access management guidelines.</p>		
	<p>Policy 3. Discourage new development from direct property access to arterials; accommodate newly developing areas via collector or local roads or backage roads.</p>		

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