2025 Comprehensive Land Use Plan

DRAFT

October 3, 2025

Prepared by: Bolton & Menk, Inc.

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Acknowledgments

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- Kathryn Wade

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- Michelle Marotzke, Economic Development Director*
- Mitchell Walbridge, City Administrator*
- Jerod Wagner, Public Utilities General Manager*

Consultants

- Robin Caufman, Planning Project Manager – Bolton & Menk
- Sarah Swedburg, AICP, Planner II – Bolton & Menk

**Indicates Steering Committee member*

1.0 Overview

1.1 Introduction

Lanesboro's Comprehensive Plan was last prepared in 2020, which replaced the 1998 Comprehensive Plan. This update aims to assess the community's progress over the past five years and refresh the existing conditions, community's goals, and implementation plan. This plan will continue to guide the community for the next 10-15 years with decisions about the city's investments and development.

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range, strategic document that outlines the community's vision for the future. This plan provides an overview of the community's current environment, conditions, and policies to prepare for future changes.

1.2 Purpose and Intent

The City of Lanesboro's Comprehensive Plan is a practical guide for shaping our community's future, providing a legal and policy framework for zoning and land use decisions. Rooted in local values and built on input from residents, businesses, and public partners, this plan is designed to help the city council, staff, boards, and commissions make informed decisions about land use, infrastructure, housing, and economic development. This plan is also a key tool to communicate with other government agencies and regional partners, grant funders, businesses, and developers. It does not impose rigid mandates; rather, it provides a flexible framework that aligns public investments with community priorities and supports orderly growth. By clearly communicating a shared vision and priorities, the plan helps Lanesboro respond to change thoughtfully and transparently, ensuring that decisions reflect both current realities and long-term aspirations. Whether used by city leaders, residents, or local businesses, this plan is a tool for collaboration, accountability, and progress.

1.3 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:

- Based on previous development patterns, existing land use is how land is used in Lanesboro. 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.
- 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

Figure 1: Land Use Pyramid of Discretion

Source: League of Minnesota Cities

builds upon what we have currently as land uses, 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.

- Zoning is the classification of parcels of land based on how they are being used, and the best potential uses for these parcels 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.

1.4 Vision and goals

Lanesboro is a forward-thinking community that has devoted time, energy, and funds to creating a collective, inspired vision of its future. Through continuously leading the way, designing, and realizing its own best version of itself, the following vision statement was developed:

The City of Lanesboro strives to be a multigenerational community that melds tradition with innovation, utilizes its natural resources responsibly, maintains fiscal health, and promotes the vitality and well-being of its businesses, citizens, and visitors.

A series of city-wide goals were established throughout the visioning and planning process. These goals reflect themes heard from engagement with the public, city leadership, and area industry professionals. These goals aim not to be comprehensive in scope but rather inform Plan implementation across multiple focus areas.

2.0 Community Profile

2.1 Regional Setting

The City of Lanesboro is approximately 40 miles southeast of Rochester and 15 miles north of the Iowa-Minnesota border. The community comprises 1.32 square miles of land in Fillmore County (862 square miles). The Southern Branch of the Root River travels through the City along with the Root River State Trail.

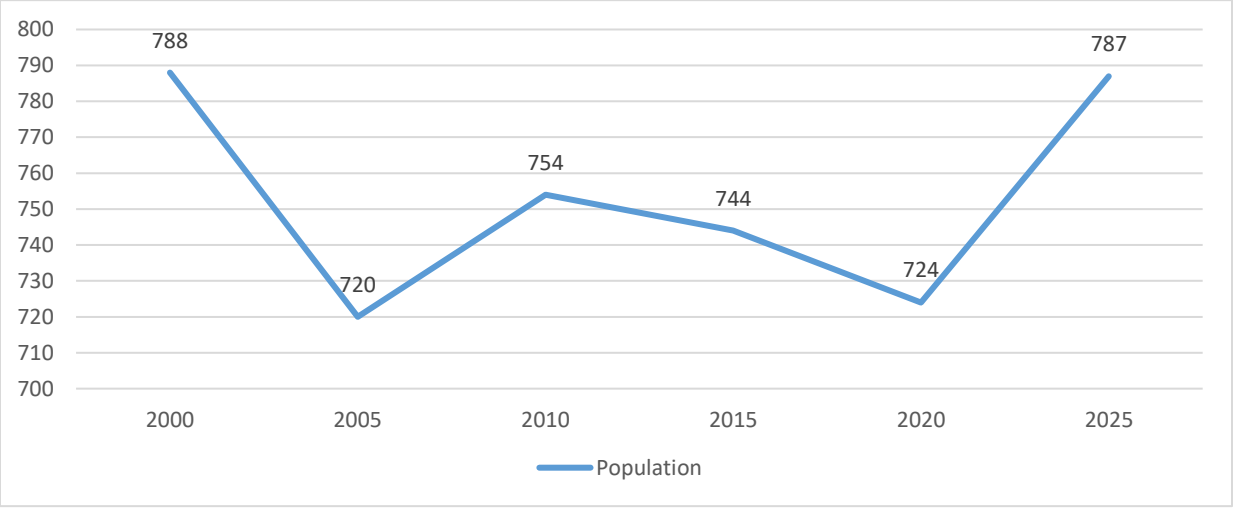
2.2 History

The city was first settled in 1856 by Irish Immigrant John Scanlon and grew in population with the completion of a rail line that passed through the village in 1868. A post office was established as Lanesborough in 1868. However, the name was changed to Lanesboro in 1883. Historically, the community is named after F.A. Lane, one of the founders and an early landowner. The Lanesboro Townsite Company was formed to build the community. A stone dam was built on the Root River as a power source for the town, and it eventually supplied power for three of four mills. Development continued steadily after the railroad's construction and the four mills' establishment. Today, the dam continues to serve as an iconic feature within the community. The town is now home to many unique shops, restaurants, campgrounds, parks, and bike paths.

2.3 Population

The City of Lanesboro is the 417th largest city in Minnesota, with 787 residents in 2024. The city has experienced population decline and growth intermittently since 2000.

Figure 2: Population of Lanesboro, 2000-2025



Source: Esri, American Community Survey

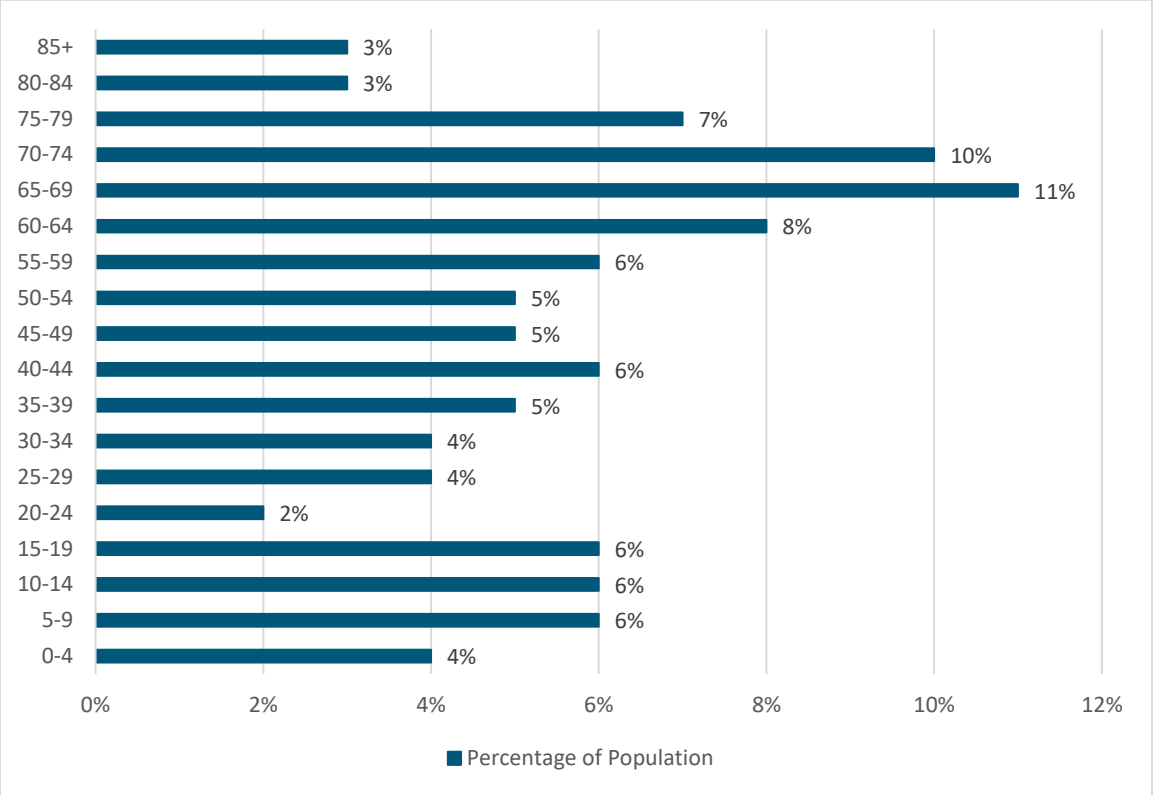
2.4 Households

In 2024, the city had 343 households, with an average household size of 2.28. This is smaller than the average household sizes in the State and Fillmore County, which are 2.46 and 2.42, respectively.

2.5 Age

Lanesboro is an aging community, with its largest age cohorts being 65-69 (11%), 70-74, (10%), and 60-64 (8%). This contributes to the median age being 51.7 years, significantly higher than the state average of 38. The population distribution of those under 60 is relatively even. Notably, the smallest cohort is 20-24, 2% of the population.

Figure 3: Age Distribution of the Lanesboro Population



Source: Esri, American Community Survey

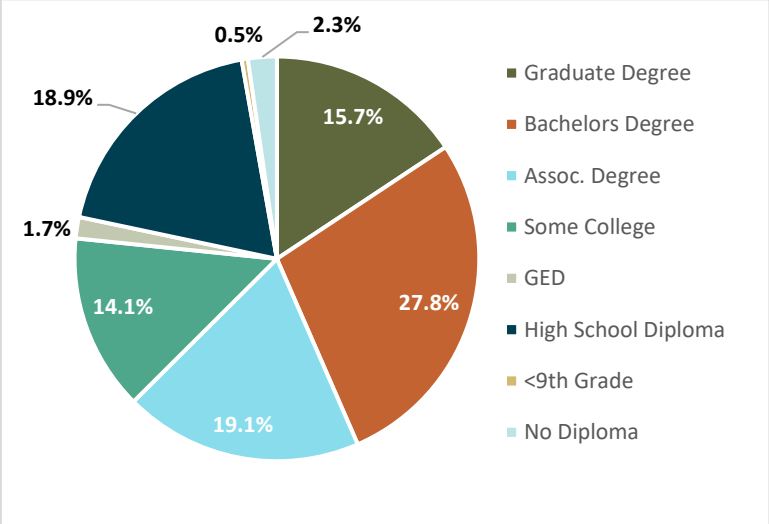
2.6 Race and Ethnicity

The city's population is diversifying, although it is still predominantly white.

2.7 Education

Lanesboro residents tend to have higher education attainment, with 76% having some college or a degree. Only 3% of the community does not have a high school diploma.

Figure 4: Educational Attainment of the Lanesboro Population

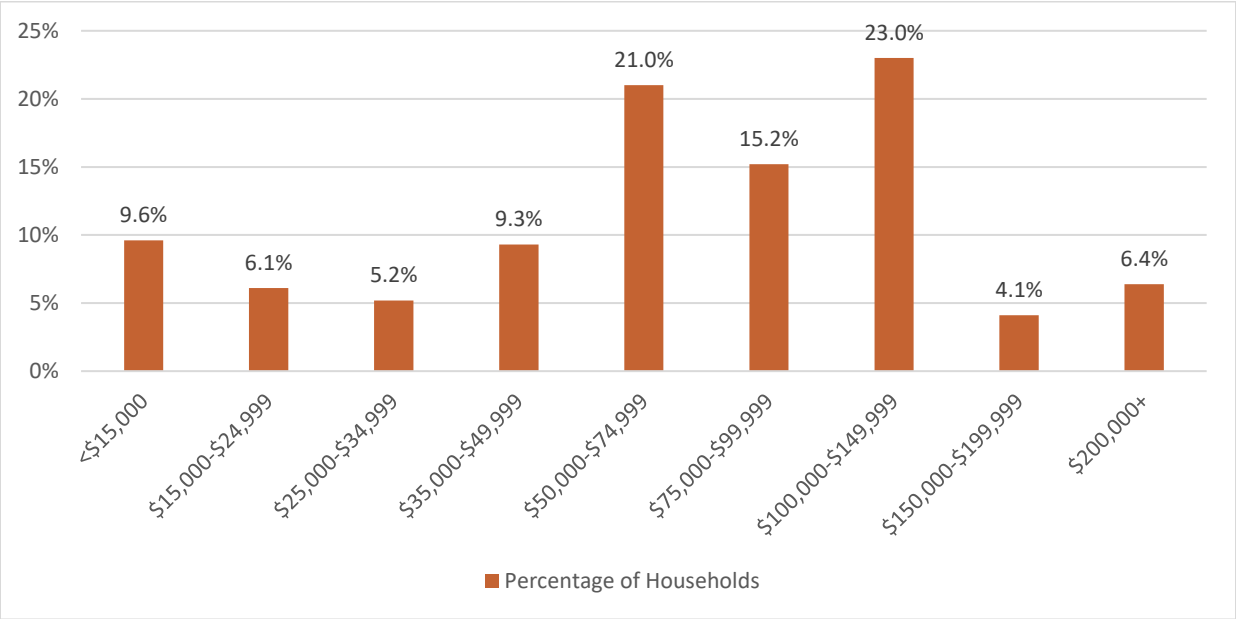


Source: Esri, American Community Survey

2.8 Income

The median household income is approximately $72,778. Seven (7%) percent of the city's households live below the federal poverty line, and 14% utilize food stamp programs.

Figure 5: Income Distribution of Lanesboro Households



Source: Esri, American Community Survey

2.9 Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

The planning process included ongoing engagement with the public and community stakeholders. The engagement goals ensured that the process was inclusive and transparent and that 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

A project website included general project information, a survey, public meeting details, and project updates. It was updated on critical points, such as posting drafts and informing the public about upcoming engagements.

Social Media

The city promoted the project and engagement opportunities on its social media pages.

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 shared and posted around the city. The fact sheet is also included with the May 2025 utilities bills. All materials included the project URL and a QR code to direct people to the website for more information.

Survey

An online survey was set up to gather public input on issues, opportunities, and priorities. The survey was promoted through social media, community newsletters, and QR codes on posters or print materials.

Steering Committee

The City established a nine-member steering committee meeting that met four times throughout the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update project to provide insight, review progress, and champion the effort.

A kickoff meeting was held in April 2025 to review the 2020 goals, learn about updated city data, and participate in a walking tour. Three subsequent virtual meetings were held in June, August, and September 2025. During these meetings, the Steering Committee reviewed and discussed refinement of goals, policies, and narrative.

Focus Groups

Two focus groups were held in September 2025 to solicit additional feedback on economic development and housing. These meetings were held virtually and were comprised of participants that had a wide range of experiences as longtime residents, returned residents, new residents, and business owners.

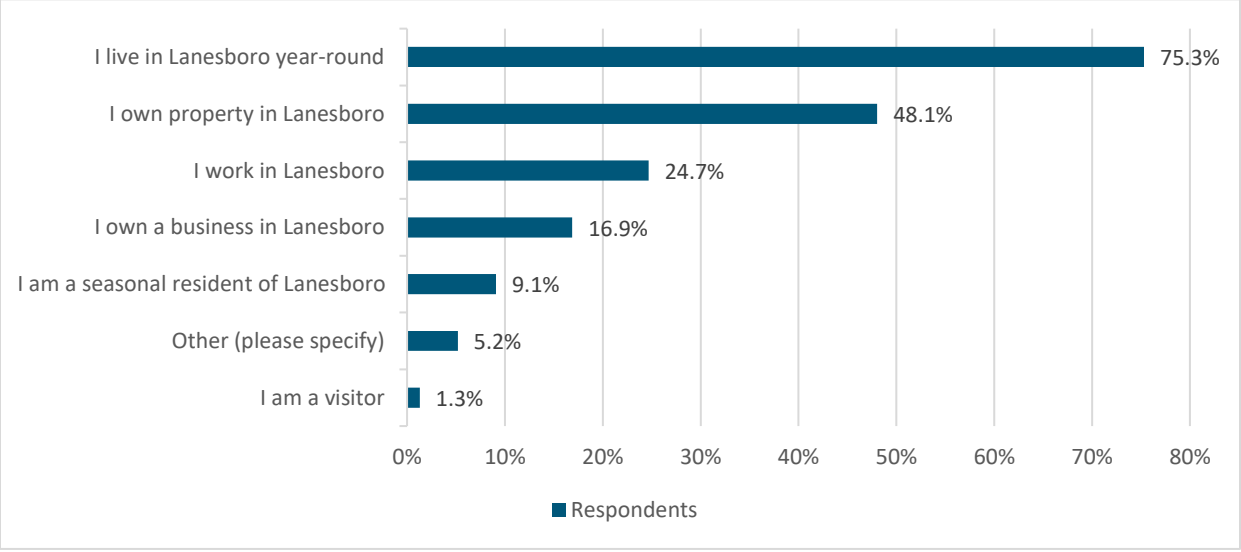
Public Meetings

Placeholder for Public Open House Summary

2.10 Stakeholder Input

A survey of Lanesboro residents conducted throughout May 2025 received 80 responses, providing valuable insights into the city's future priorities and current points of pride and concern.

Figure 6: Survey Respondents' Relation to the City of Lanesboro

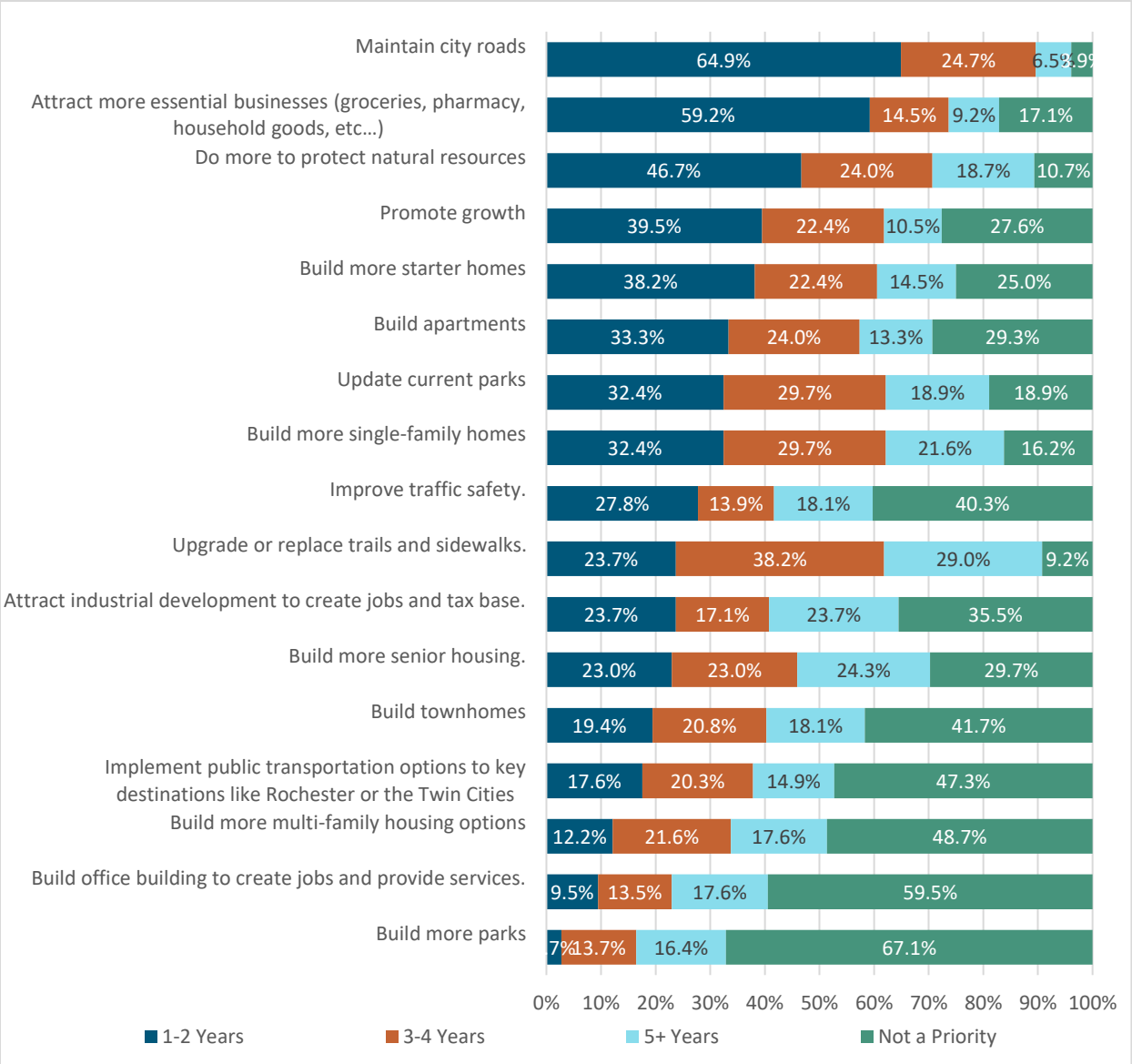


Source: 2025 Lanesboro Comprehensive Plan Update Public Survey

The majority of respondents are full-year city residents, and 9.1% are seasonal residents. Residents were asked to note what they felt made their community special and what key issues the city faced. The general sentiment of respondents about Lanesboro was that it had prominent arts and culture, natural resources, a location on the river, and a sense of togetherness. The respondents' top concerns were the limited housing and the condition of the infrastructure. Other concerns related to the Hwy 250 project and the effect of seasonal residents and tourism on housing in the city.

The survey asked respondents to indicate how soon a range of issues should be addressed; the results are shown in the following graph. The blue bars represent the percentage of people who think the issue should be addressed immediately (within the next 1-2 years). Orange and teal are more moderate priority items, and green indicates not a priority.

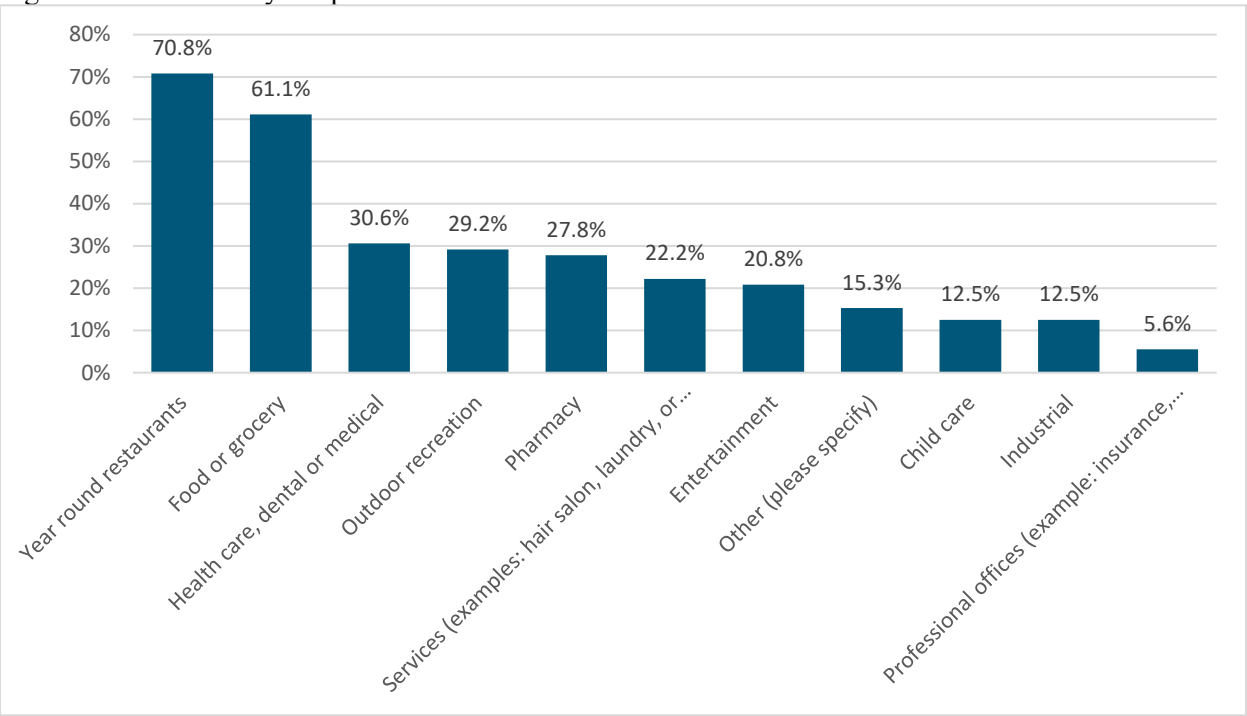
Figure 7: Public Survey Response to Lanesboro Priorities



Source: 2025 Lanesboro Comprehensive Plan Update Public Survey

Respondents indicate that year-round restaurants and food or grocery stores were the most important businesses to attract to the city, as shown in the chart below. The lowest priority was for additional child care, industrial uses, and office businesses.

Figure 8: Public Survey Responses on Businesses Needed in Lanesboro



Source: 2025 Lanesboro Comprehensive Plan Update Public Survey

3.0 Natural Resources

This chapter describes the city's natural resources and features and considers the existing land use as the starting point of the planning process. Wetlands, bluffs and steep slopes, floodway, and flood hazard areas are the city's most prominent development constraints, as detailed on the Environmental Development Constraints map.

3.1 Goals

Protect

- Continue leveraging natural resources, including prime agricultural land, for economic, recreation, and tourism purposes
- Continue pursuing carbon neutrality and reduction of PFAs in public utility operations

Create

- Update land use regulations to protect natural and sensitive areas from encroachment, degradation, or incompatible development

3.2 Rivers

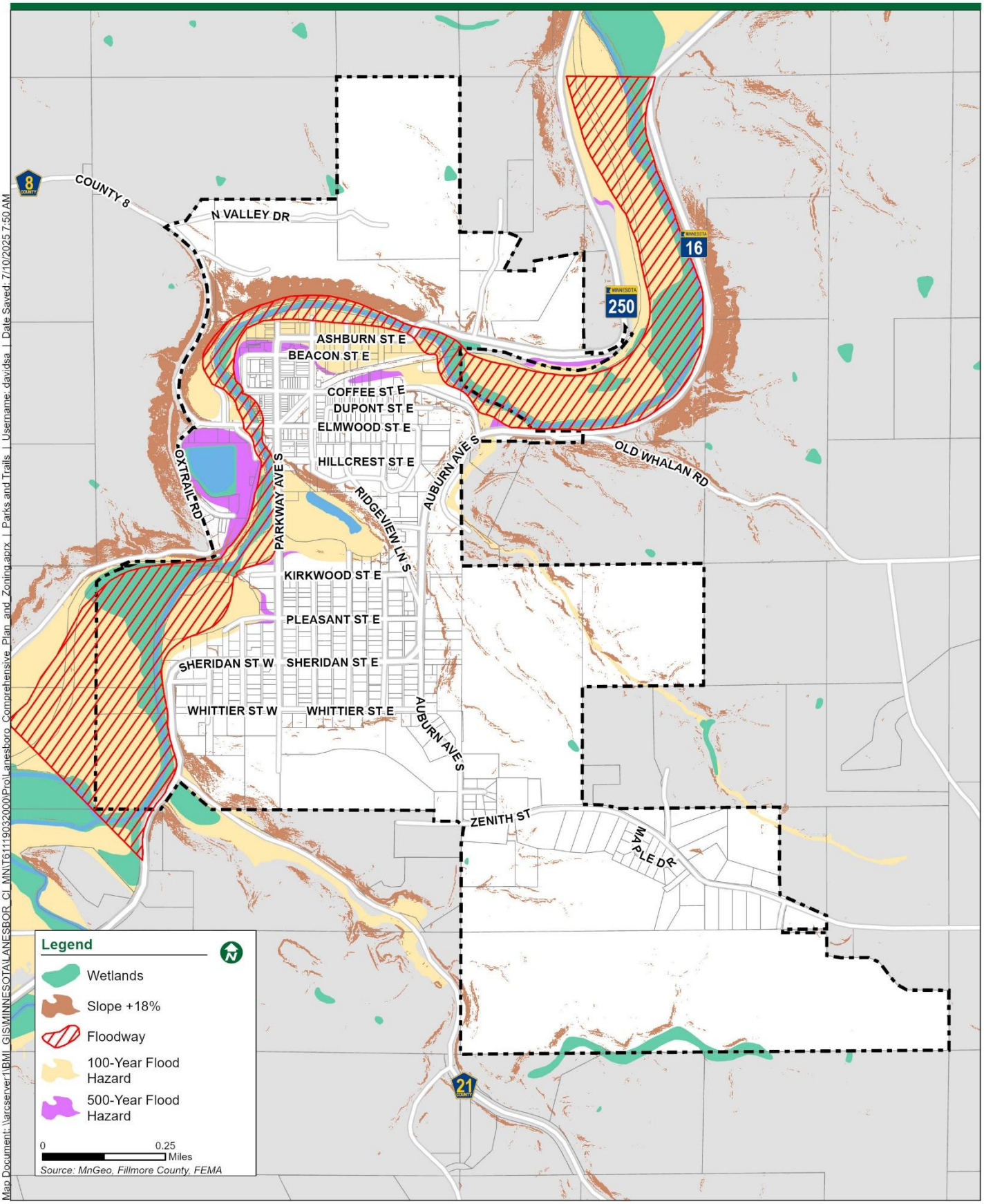
The Root River is one of Lanesboro's defining features. Lanesboro is within the South Branch Root River Watershed within the greater Root River Watershed. The South Branch Root River joins the main stem of the Root River about one mile northeast of the city. This river is a Designated Trout Stream.

Root River Watershed One Watershed, One Plan

In December 2016, the Root River One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) was approved by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and was adopted by all 13 Local Government Units (LGUs) in 2017. The plan and results of the 2023 5-year assessment are available on the Fillmore County Soil and Water Conservation District website, Root River Watershed One Watershed, One Plan. This plan prioritizes the protection of:

- Groundwater, especially as it relates to the drinking water supply
- Surface water, especially as it relates to wildlife habitat, stormwater management
- Landscape such as protection of riparian areas, habitat, trout streams, biodiversity
- Sustainability, such as land use considerations, soil erosion, public health, draining, water storage, and non-point source pollution

The 1W1P outlines specific strategies that the city should review and incorporate by reference into their comprehensive plan, as well as review and update the zoning codes to comply with the recommendations. The 1W1P was reviewed in 2023 to track the progress on its goals in the prior six years of implementation. Starting in summer 2025, the Root River Watershed Partnership is reviewing and amending the Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the next 10-year planning cycle.



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Floodplain

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) updated its map in 2019, showing several areas of the city now designated as floodplain or flood hazard areas, as shown in the Environmental Development Constraints map on the previous page. Floodway and flood hazard areas cover much of the valley floor and threaten development on properties along the river. The designated areas include residential areas in the northern part of the city, along Ashburn Street East, and recreational areas such as Sylvan Park, River View Campground, the High School Football field, and the privately owned Highway 250 campground. These areas should not be planned for intense development or infrastructure investments, but they are good for recreational and open space uses. The City's Floodplain District Code sets the standards for any development in the flood hazard areas.

Water Quality

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency lists the portion of the river flowing through Lanesboro as Impaired for aquatic life and recreation. The river's impairment remains an issue, with an Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) measurement for invertebrates now exceeding criteria and indicating further impairment. The bacteria levels in the river also pose continued concern, exceeding the acceptable levels. This data can be verified in the Assessment Unit MN07040008-550, Duschee Creek to main branch of the Root River section of the Root River Watershed Monitoring and Assessment Report (June 2012).

Source: City of Lanesboro

3.3 Surface Water

Due to the importance of water to Minnesotans for drinking, food production, and recreation, both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources protect and regulate the use and alteration of wetland/drainage areas. The waters under each organization's jurisdiction vary according to location and characteristics, although some waters are dually protected. All wetlands within the State are protected from draining or filling by the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991, regardless of their protection status by other agencies. There are four types of wetlands in Lanesboro: Freshwater Emergent Wetland, Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland, Freshwater Ponds, and Lakes. All development should consider its impact to wetlands and work with the appropriate agencies to mitigate identified impacts.

3.4 Topography

The topography within Lanesboro includes steep slopes and bluffs along the Root River, flatlands in the floodplains, and gentle hills in the city's core. The steep slopes, bluffs, and river complicate extending municipal water and sewer utilities to support growth to the west and north of the city. The community has slopes over 18% along the streams in the center of Lanesboro, providing some of the area's natural beauty.

Source: City of Lanesboro

3.5 Habitat

When considering land use decisions and future development, it is important to understand the area's high quality and sensitive environmental features, endangered species, rare plants, and other similar natural resources.

The City of Lanesboro lies within the Eastern Broadleaf Forest (EBF) ecoregion, Paleozoic Plateau Section, and Blufflands Subsection. The historical glacial and environmental activity created the "Driftless Area," unique to this region in Minnesota. To explore more about these classifications, visit the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Ecological Classification System Website.

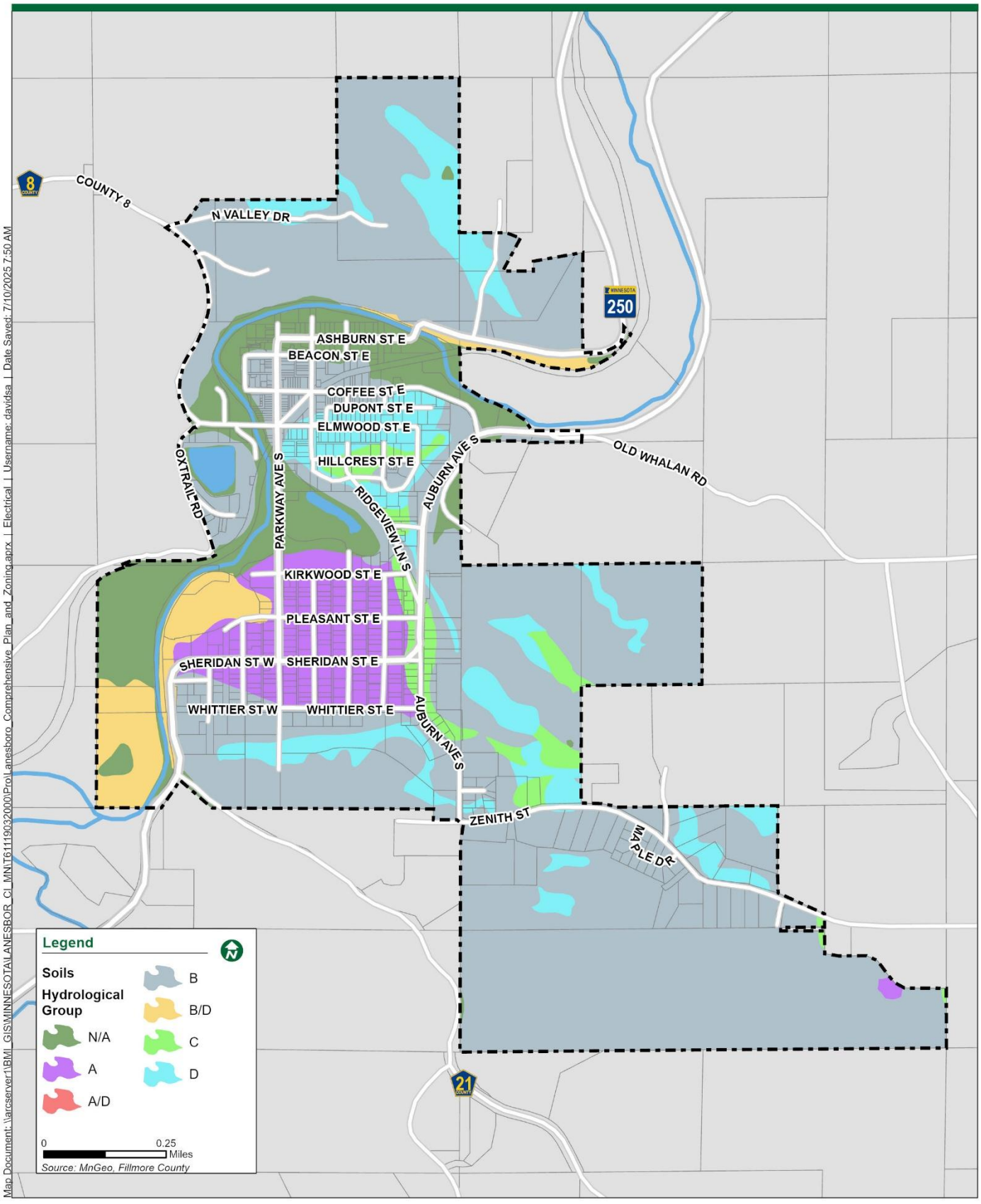
This unique landscape supports a variety of habitats. Cliff/Talus, Floodplain Forest, and Mesic Hardwood Forest are DNR Native Plant Communities in and around Lanesboro. Additionally, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with Audubon Minnesota, has identified the forest and streams of the Blufflands as providing critical habitat for migrating songbirds such as prothonotary warblers and raptors such as red-shouldered hawks and peregrine falcons. The Blufflands-Root River Important Bird Area (IBA) was established as part of an international conservation effort to help identify essential habitats, monitor habitats and birds, and prevent further habitat loss to residents and communities within the IBA. Explore additional natural resources through the University of Minnesota Natural Resources Research Institute's Natural Resource Atlas.

3.6 Soil

Knowing the soil type is important when planning land uses because it can influence how stable the ground is as well as whether stormwater will pool, runoff, or infiltrate into the ground. Soil type can be classified into four main groups, as described below:

- Group A. Soils have a high infiltration rate (low runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist mainly of deep, well-drained, excessively drained, or gravelly sands. These soils have a high rate of water transmission.
- Group B. Soils have a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of moderately deep or deep, moderately well-drained, or well-drained soils with moderately fine to coarse texture. These soils have a moderate rate of water transmission.
- Group C. Soils have a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of soils with a layer that impedes the downward movement of water or soils of moderately fine or fine texture. These soils have a slow rate of water transmission.
- Group D. Soils have a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of clays with a high shrink-swell potential, soils with a high water table, soils with a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission.

The map on the following page shows that the predominant soil types of the historic downtown area and residential neighborhood between Kirkwood and Whittier are well-drained soils. The soils along Auburn Avenue and Hillcrest have poorly draining soils, which could be a concern for flooding if they were low-lying areas. However, these areas are sloped and hilly, mitigating flood concerns.



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4.0 Land Use

A thoughtful land use plan and regulations foster effective, compatible, and efficient development that serves the public interest. It establishes the future land use map for geographic areas under Lanesboro's jurisdiction, providing a blueprint for future development and redevelopment within the city. It also provides direction and guidance for how land uses, infrastructure, and related elements fit within the geographic context of the community. It provides direction for how growth should be accommodated, including character, scale, and intensity.

The overall goal of the City of Lanesboro is to provide a well-balanced mix of residential, business, recreational, agricultural, and forestry uses to serve the community's future needs and maintain its character and status as a desirable place to live, work, and play.

4.1 Goals

Protect

- Retain the historic character of downtown, historic homes, and residential neighborhoods

Create

- Update land use regulations to align with the comprehensive plan, such as city ordinances, procedures, and policies
- Support orderly development that makes best use of the land that is available, including supporting infill development opportunities when possible

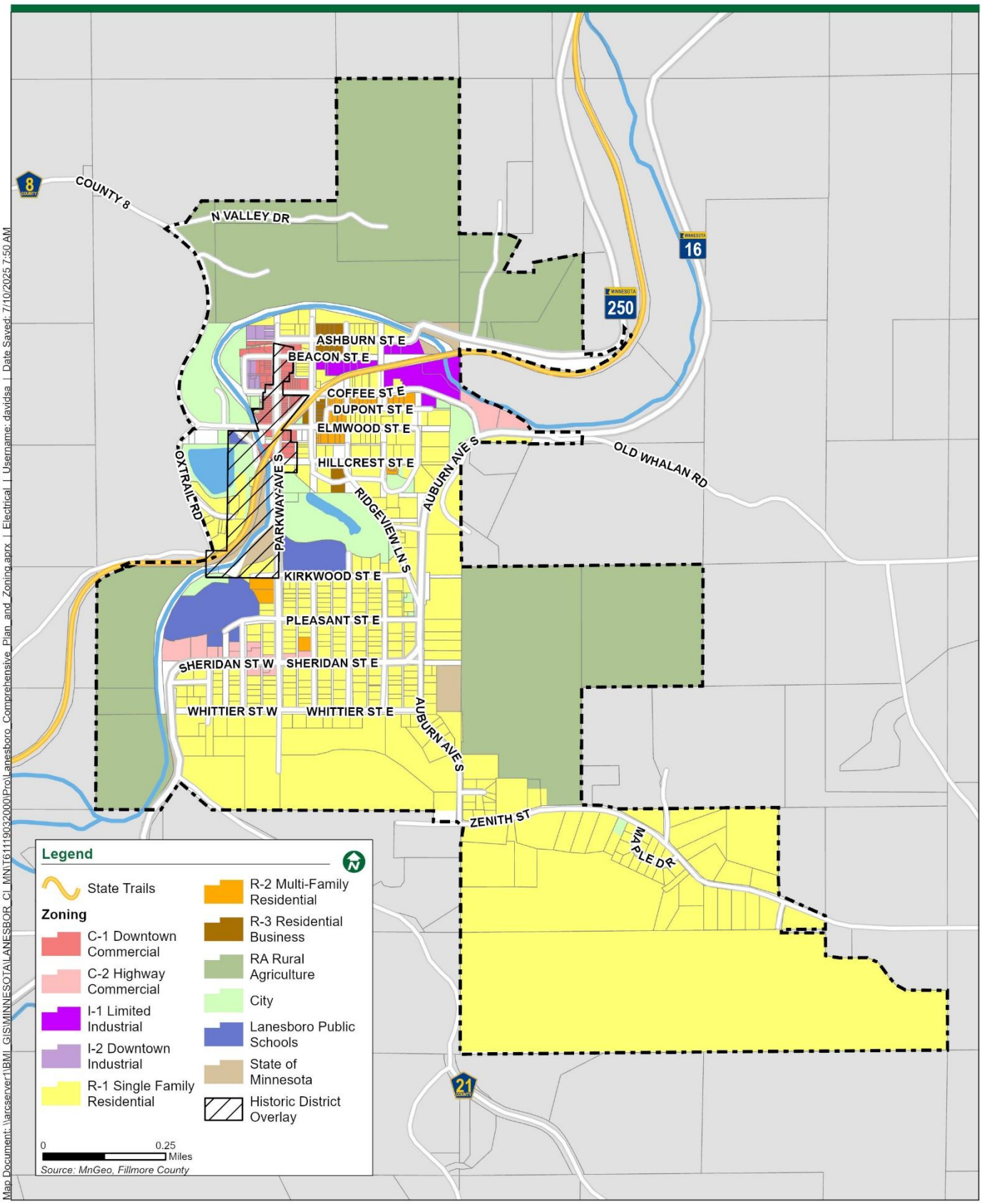
Source: City of Lanesboro

4.2 Existing Land Use

The City of Lanesboro's former comprehensive plan, published in 2020, and its subsequent zoning code update for 2023-2024, includes eight districts. Its most common land use is low-density residential, followed closely by the agricultural reserve. Only 2% of the community's land is in a Commercial District, and 1% is in an industrial district. A defining feature of the community's tourism and recreation-based economy is that nearly 10% of the city area is designated for park and recreational uses.

4.3 Zoning

The Zoning Map identifies the land use district for each parcel within the city and the associated uses allowed. Zoning codes related to the zoning district establish standards such as building heights, size, setback requirements, and other design requirements. The Current Zoning Map on the following page shows the zoning districts when the city adopted this comprehensive plan. See the Zoning Administrator for the most current official zoning map.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4.4 Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan, shown on the following page, builds upon the City's existing zoning to align with the goals and future needs of the community. The Future Land Use Map provides a proposed designation for land within the city that anticipates the most appropriate use type. This considers public input, demographic considerations, housing needs, economic development, and the city's unique natural environment constraints. Land noted as "Annexation Required" delineates areas outside Lanesboro city limits that may be suitable for future residential development but require annexation before investment. The annexation process must follow Minnesota Statute 414.

In the comprehensive planning process, future land use is being used to signal what potential zoning changes could occur over time after the adoption of this plan. Thus, the existing zoning will remain unchanged until a rezoning is pursued. When these requests are made by an applicant or initiated by the city, they must be consistent with the future land use map and plans. Future land use categories include the following:

Agricultural Reserve – Agriculture is a vital element of the region and essential to maintaining a diverse economy. Primary activities in this land use category include farming, raising livestock, and larger-lot rural residential development not connected to city utilities. Residential use should not exceed one unit per two acres.

Low Density Residential – This land use allows urban residential development in areas serviced by public infrastructure. Modest flexibility encourages smaller lot sizes to encourage cost-effective public infrastructure investment, while allowing for a range of housing types and densities. Density in this land use is estimated at up to 8 units per acre.

Medium Density Residential – Similar to low density residential, this land use allows urban residential development in areas serviced by public infrastructure. Density in this land use is estimated at up to 16 units per acre.

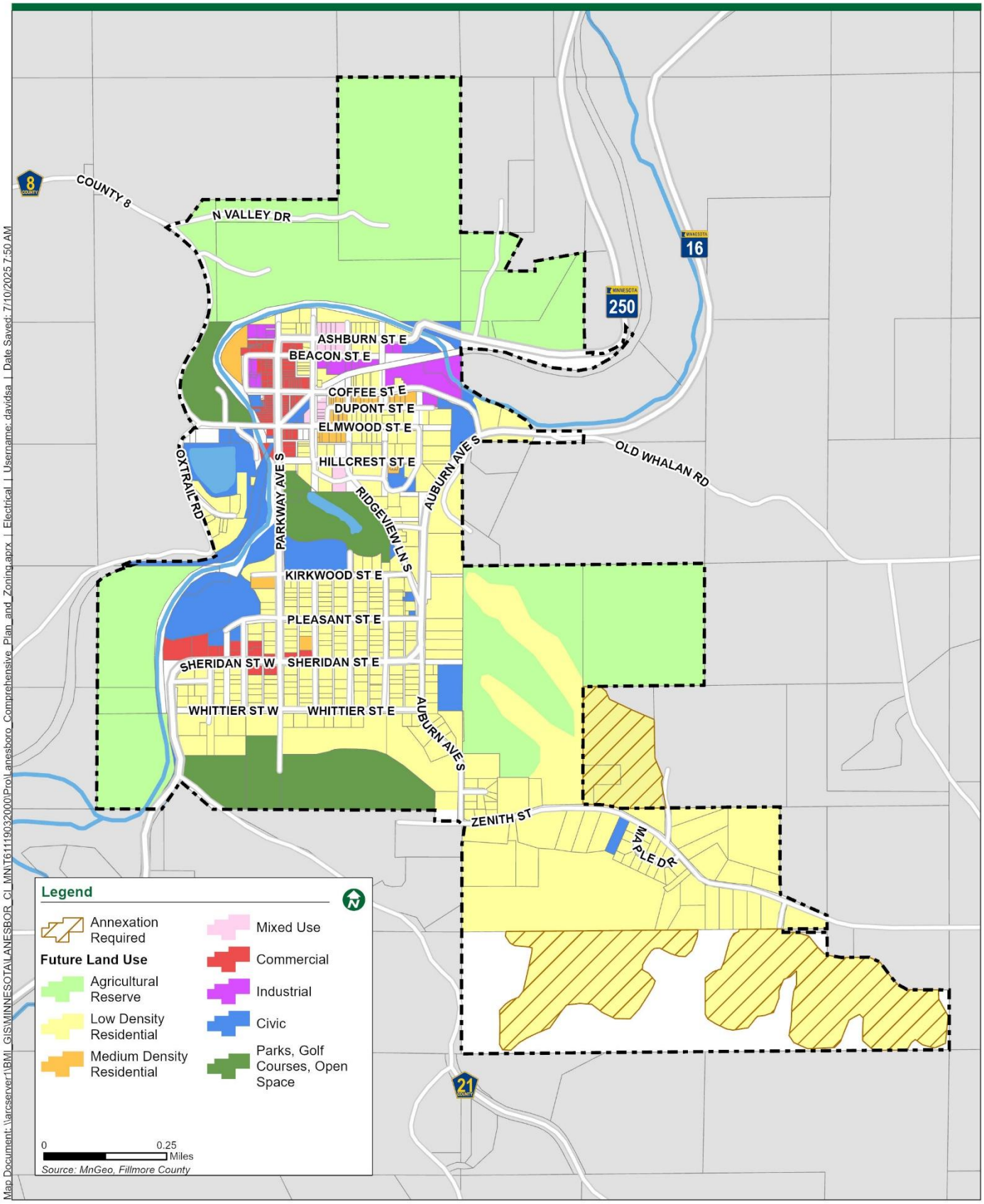
Mixed Use – The Mixed Use land use category aims to support the historic downtown area that provides walkable access to goods, services, and jobs. It's intended for mixed use nodes to support the transition of uses between commercial and residential.

Commercial – The Commercial land use category identifies areas of convenient access to jobs, goods, and services along transportation corridors. Commercial development is contingent on the availability of public utilities to service the needs of the businesses.

Industrial – This land use category provides dedicated area for industrial users. The areas are suitable for general industrial activities, have adequate and convenient access to major roads and highways, and provide effective controls for "nuisance" characteristics.

Civic – Civic land use either currently provides a public or institutional use or are planned for future public use. These uses often provide services or resources, typically public in nature, rather than selling goods or services. Uses should be compatible with adjacent development.

Parks, Golf Courses, and Open Space – This land use identifies areas that are currently used or are planned for future use as a public recreational area.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5.0 Economic Development

The local economy and employment are a key part of any thriving community. The primary purpose of this chapter is to present Lanesboro's opportunities and challenges in creating jobs, wealth, and economic development. The main economic driver in Lanesboro is tourism, given that the city is a small community with beautiful scenery in the Driftless Region of Southeastern Minnesota. The natural beauty, recreational opportunities, arts and cultural activities, and historic downtown make Lanesboro a tourist destination.

Lanesboro is 43 miles southeast of Rochester, 50 miles west of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and a few hours' drive from the Twin Cities metro area. The short drive in a rural setting makes the community attractive for tourism and recreational activities, but inconvenient for large industrial or manufacturing facilities that prefer easy access to major highways.

Economic development generally includes public and private efforts that foster and cultivate business enterprises within a community, along with housing developments that accommodate commuters and the surrounding areas. The City's regulatory environment can influence business retention, expansion, and attraction.

5.1 Goals

Protect

- Continue revitalizing the downtown commercial district by retaining and supporting existing businesses and making space for new businesses on vacant or underutilized parcels
- Continue using art and culture to promote business, tourism, and placemaking

Create

- Update zoning and land use regulations to support development and provide clear requirements and procedures to developers
- Develop incentive programs and partnerships to retain and expand existing businesses, especially those that serve year-round residents

5.2 Local Business Resources

Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

The Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center (LACC) exists to serve as a catalyst for economic vitality by providing advocacy, information and services to their members, and promote the City of Lanesboro and Lanesboro area as a desirable place to visit, live, work, and play. Established in 1995, LACC currently has more than 125 members. LACC plays a key partnership role with the City of Lanesboro in business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts.

Lanesboro Economic Development Authority

In 2025, the City of Lanesboro partnered with the City of Preston to hire an Economic Development Director. This position provides dedicated staffing to the City's Economic Development Authority (EDA) that was established in 1992. The EDA advises the City

Council and Planning Commission on all economic development opportunities and activities in addition to working in cooperation with LACC.

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

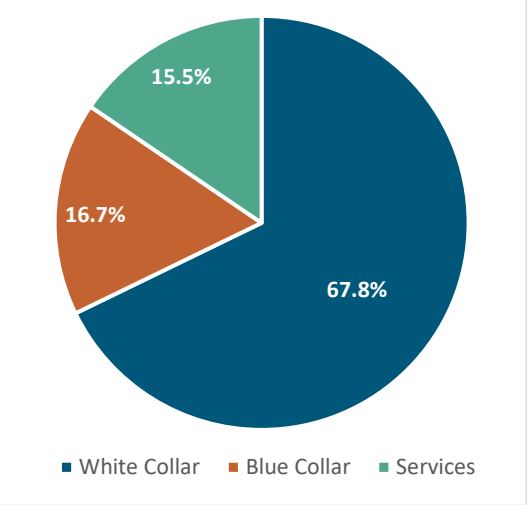
The Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) is a regional development and philanthropic organization that fosters economic and community vitality in 20 counties of southern Minnesota through a culture of collaboration and partnership. In 2024, Lanesboro began participation in SMIF's Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) – a proven entrepreneurial development program designed to advance small town economies through a targeted business approach. Through participation in this program, Lanesboro is working to collaborate with its neighbors in the county, support new businesses and hiring an economic development staff person. Creating business enrichment classes is a key task for the new economic development staff through the REV program.

5.3 Employment and Employers

Lanesboro is the home of 86 businesses that employ 590 employees. The distribution of employees is heavily weighted towards white collar work, with 67.8% of employees falling in this category.

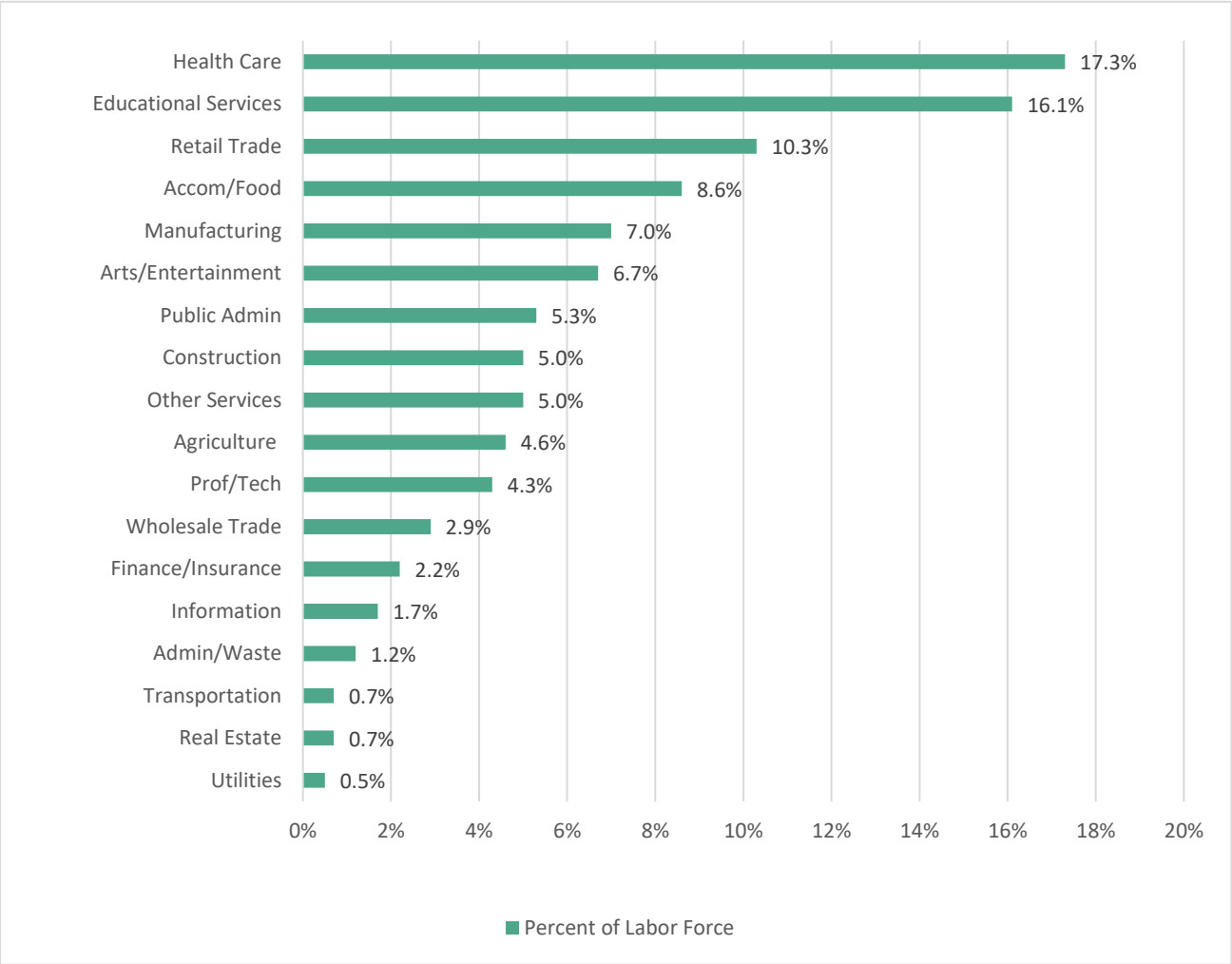
Health Care, Educational Services, and Retail-related occupations of the city's residents, as shown in Figure 10.

Figure 9: Lanesboro Labor Force Sectors



Source: Esri, American Community Survey, AGS

Figure 10: Lanesboro Residents' Occupations

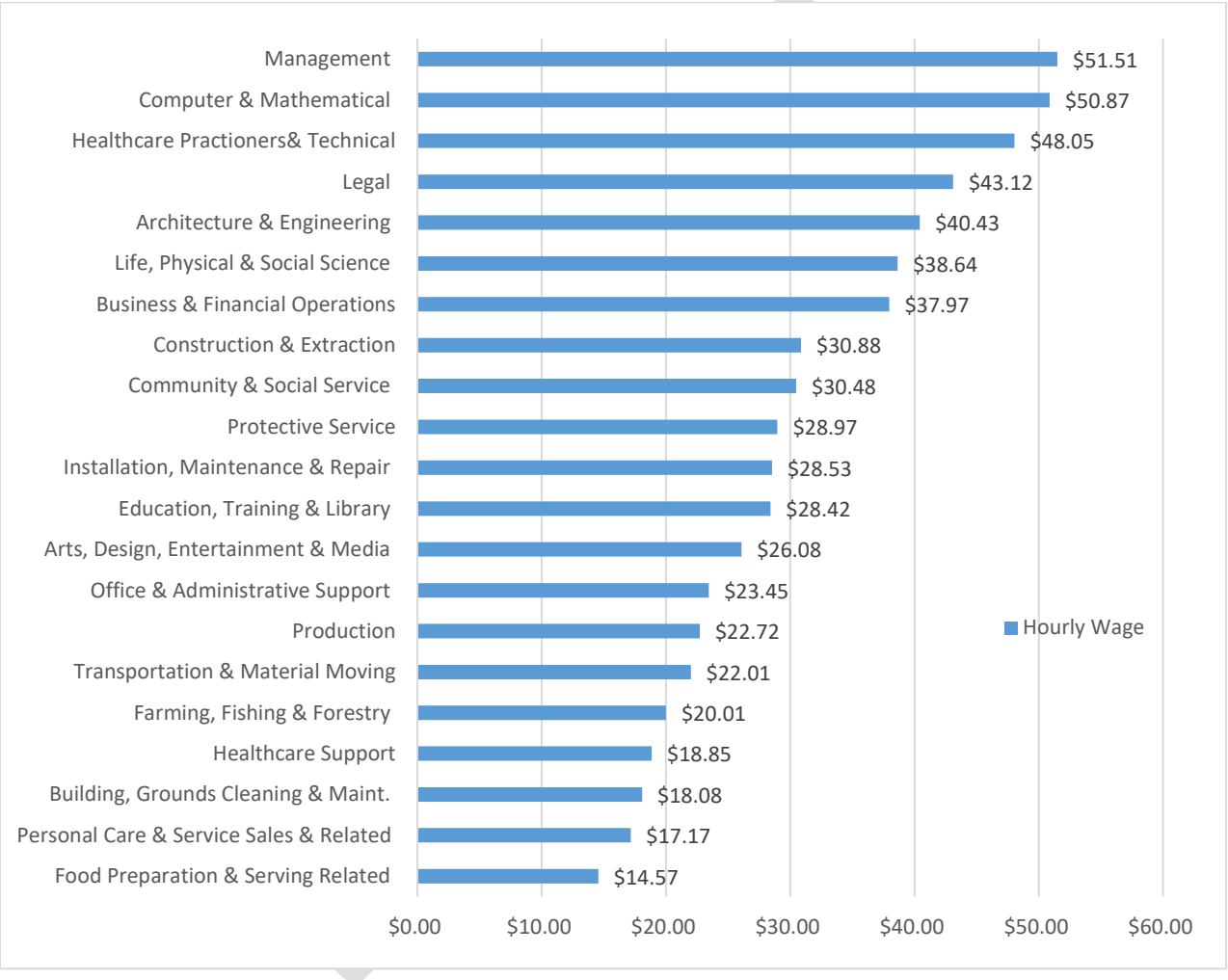


Source: Esri, American Community Survey, AGS

5.4 Wages

The wages of the fields that make up the highest portion of the labor force are towards the middle of the $14.57 to $51.50 per hour range. The grouping of health care into one category places two groups, one with an average wage of $48.05, healthcare practitioners, and the other with an average wage of $18.85, healthcare support, together. This complicates determining the economic state of residents, as these workers have such different wages. The average hourly wage in the economic region is $24.00.

Figure 11: MN Economic Region 10 Average Hourly Wage for Top Lanesboro Career Fields



Source: Esri, American Community Survey, AGS

5.5 Commuter In/Out Flow

According to the US Census Bureau's "On the Map" data tool, in 2022, there were a total of 54 residents who lived and worked in the city. However, many residents leave for work, and an equal number of workers live elsewhere and commute into the city, as illustrated in Figure 12:

- 344 people work in the city but live outside the city.
- 301 people live in the city but are employed outside the city.

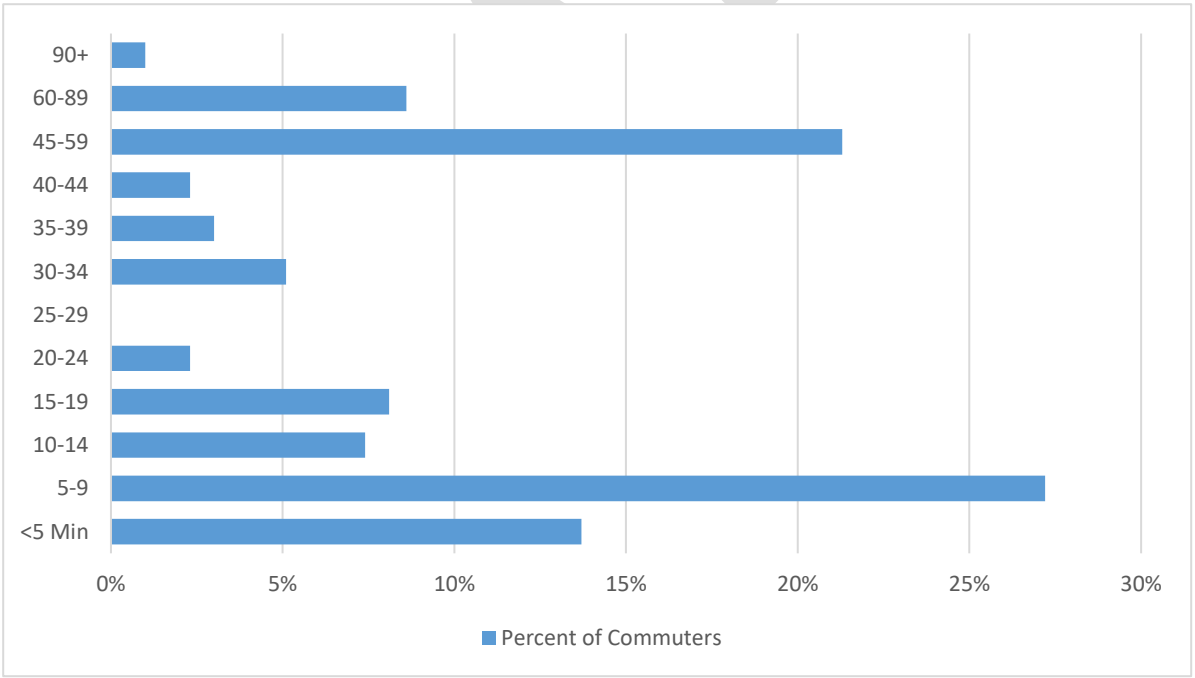
Figure 12: Lanesboro Inflow and Outflow of Labor Force

Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap

5.6 Commute Time

Nearly half of the residents have a 15-minute or shorter commute to work, as shown in Figure 13. Another 30% of the community is 45 minutes away, likely to larger employment centers like Rochester.

Figure 13: Lanesboro Residents' Commute Times to Work



Source: Esri, American Community Survey, AGS

6.0 Housing

Housing is a fundamental human need and pivotal to a community's growth and character. Lanesboro has a large percentage of older homes, with 43% built before 1940, that create a historic feel for the community. However, the city has seen some recent construction, with 22% of homes built since 1990. This chapter looks at the city's existing housing stock, forecasts housing need, and recommends strategies for diversifying and adding housing to the city.

6.1 Goals

Protect

- Focus new housing development in areas with existing infrastructure to minimize costs and environmental impacts
- Develop programs and identify resources to support the maintenance of existing homes

Create

- Update zoning and land use regulations to promote a range of housing types that serve area employees, the aging population, and seasonal residents
- Prioritize developing housing affordable to first-time home buyers and the local workforce

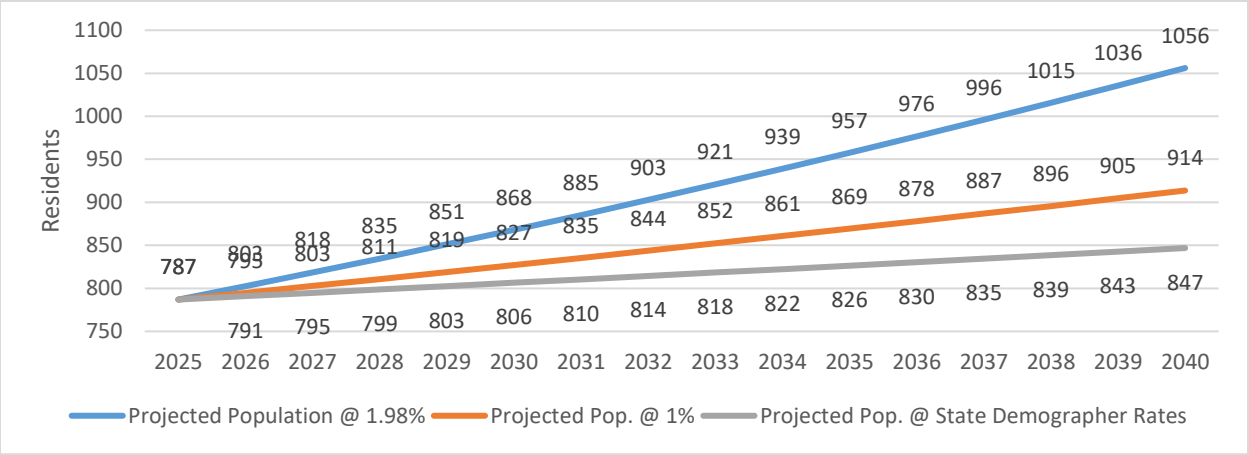
6.2 Housing Development

The Lanesboro Economic Development Authority (EDA) continues to support housing development opportunities in the city. Most notably during the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update, the City has recently submitted a new grant application to Minnesota Housing. This grant would help pay for public infrastructure extension for a housing development south of Maple Drive. This development would create 14 lots for single family homes in an area that can be serviced by public utilities. The Comprehensive Plan is a key tool for the EDA as they continue to pursue funding for housing development. This chapter is intended to equip the City and the EDA with additional data and analysis to inform their continued housing development pursuits.

6.3 Existing Housing Conditions

Lanesboro has a current population of 787 people and a projected growth rate of 1.98%, which is higher than the state's annual growth rate of 0.6%. At 1.98% annual growth, the city population would increase by 170 people to 957 by 2035. A more moderate growth rate of 1% would add 90 people by 2035. The State demographer has a lower annual growth projected for the county at 0.049%. Applying this rate to the population of Lanesboro, the city would see a modest population increase of 60 people in ten years.

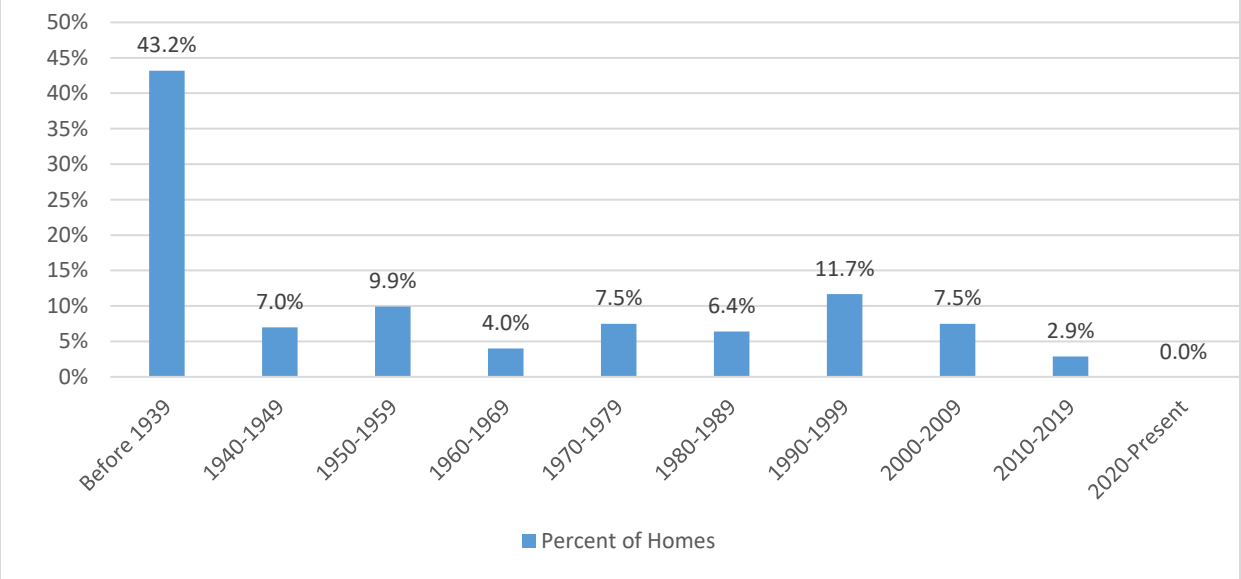
Figure 14: Lanesboro 2050 Population Growth Scenarios



Source: Minnesota Demographer, Bolton & Menk

Housing in Lanesboro is older, with over 43% of homes built before 1940. While the character of pre-war homes adds to a community's character, they also incur higher maintenance expenses annually due to their age. The city has seen some housing development, with one single-family home completed in 2025 and 10 apartments completed in 2024 in an adaptive reuse of the former Methodist Church.

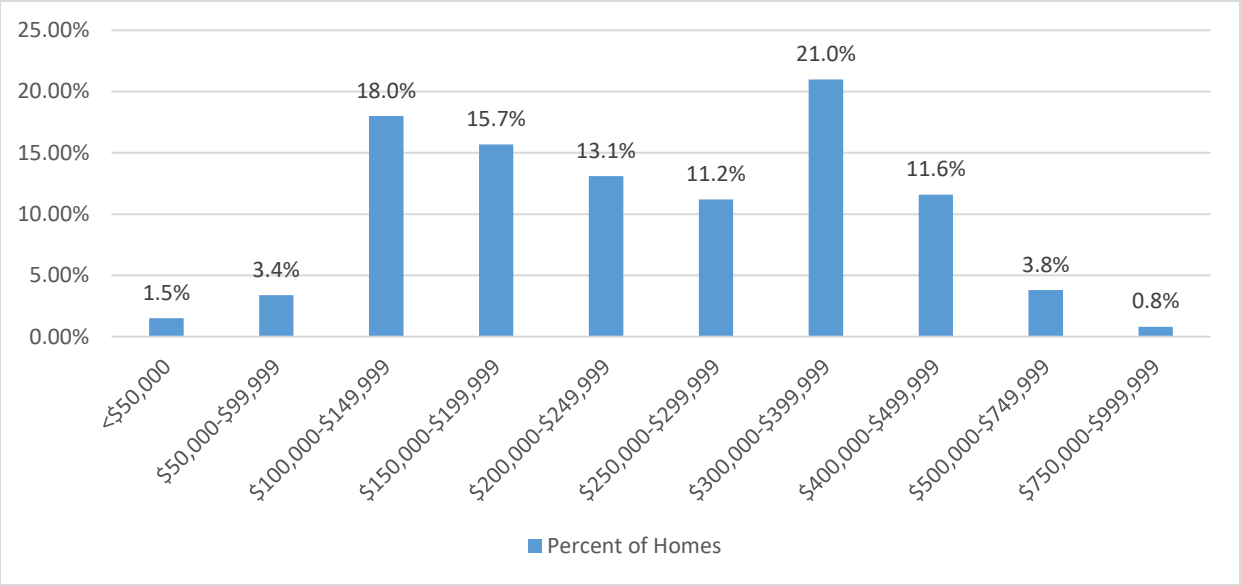
Figure 15: Housing Stock Age by Decade



Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau

The value of homes, despite their age, remains high. In 2025, the median home value was $243,571, less than the state median of $360,000. The city's median rent is one-third of the state median, at only $532 monthly.

Figure 16: Lanesboro Home Values



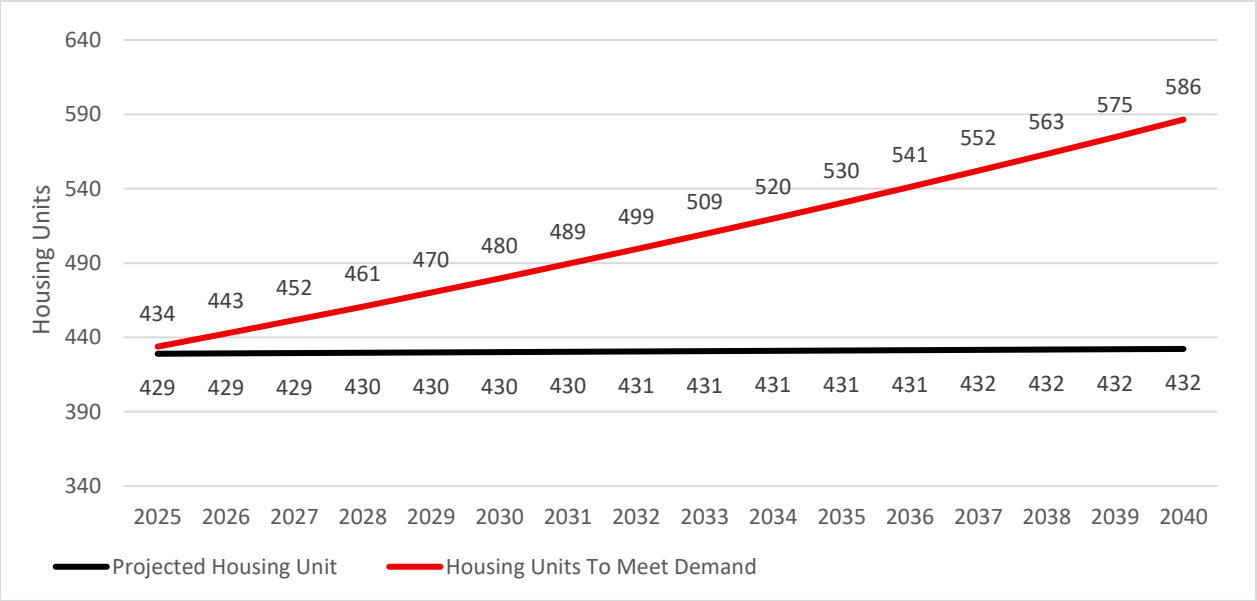
Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau

6.4 Housing Projections Cost Projections

Currently, the city has 429 housing units, of which seasonal residents occupy 45. However, housing is not being added at the same growth rate as the population. The city has had very few new homes built over the past decade, resulting in an average housing growth rate of 0.05%. If the city is to grow, it will need to add a variety of styles and increase the cost of housing. However, a challenge in Lanesboro is that over 10% of the current housing stock is occupied by seasonal residents. This means the residents support the local economy during the summer but not during the cooler winter months.

The city currently has a vacancy rate of 3.7%, which may include homes for sale, for rent, being renovated, unoccupied, or in disrepair and not livable. An optimal housing market has a vacancy rate of 5%, allowing residents to find homes that meet their needs and enabling building managers to perform routine maintenance and upgrades between tenants. Assuming the state demographer's population forecasts, with 10% of new housing designated for seasonal owners and a 5% vacancy rate, the projected number of housing units by 2040 would be 586, or an average of 10 new units per year. Figure 16 on the following page forecasts housing needs through 2040, based on an annual household growth of 1.98%, where 10% of new housing is allocated to seasonal residents and a 5% vacancy rate is maintained.

Figure 17: Current Housing Supply and Forecasted Need

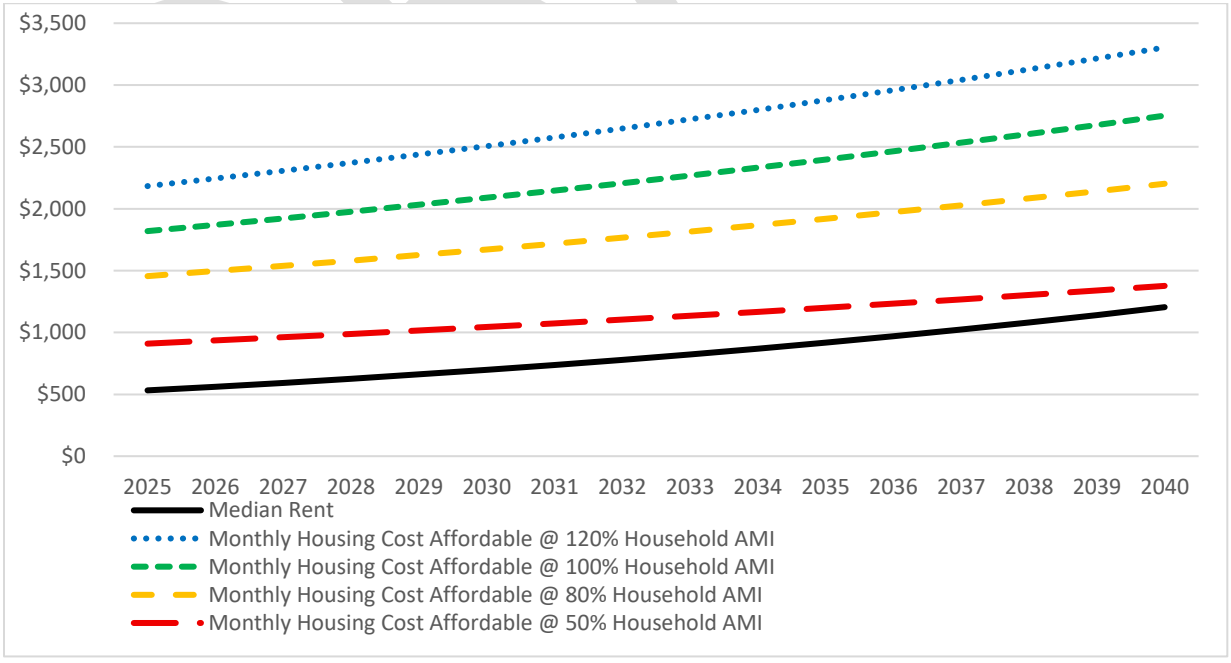


Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau, Bolton & Menk

6.5 Cost Projections and Affordability

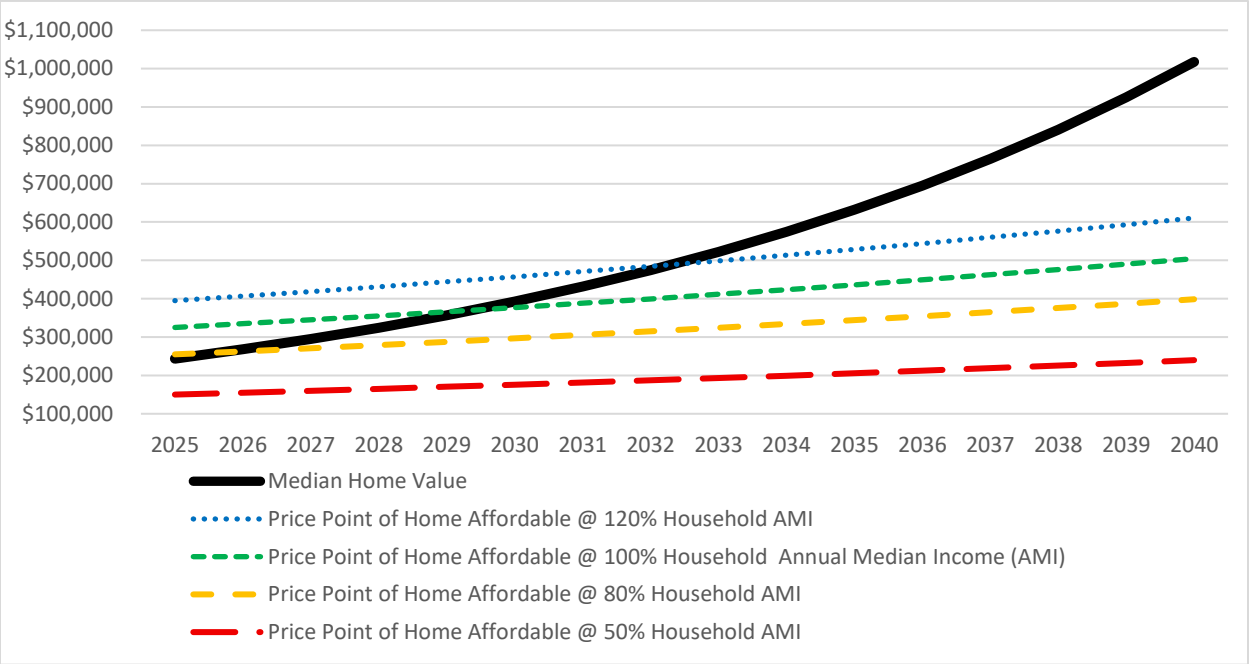
The cost of housing in Lanesboro increased over the last two years, with the median value of homes rising by 24.5% per year. The following tables show what households can afford for rent or monthly payments on a house at the area median household income of $77,000 and at 120%, 80%, and 50% of AMI.

Figure 18: Lanesboro Housing Costs versus Household Income Projections



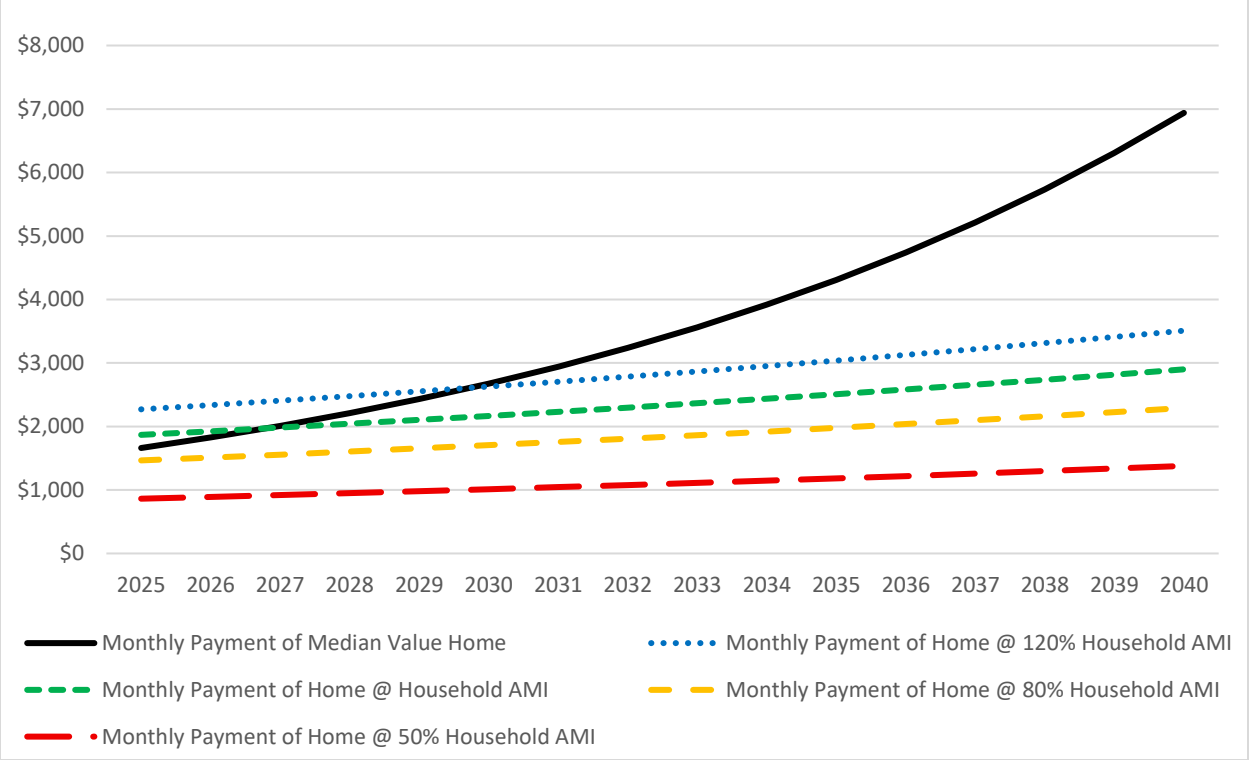
Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau, Bolton & Menk

Figure 19: Lanesboro Home Value versus Household Income Projections



Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau, Bolton & Menk

Figure 20: Monthly Payments of Median Value Home vs Household Income Projections



Source: Esri, U.S. Census Bureau, Bolton & Menk

7.0 Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Parks, trails, and open space provide communities with many benefits. These resources can promote health and well-being, benefit the economy, and create a socially active community. This section of the comprehensive plan aims to analyze Lanesboro's existing parks and trails to identify a series of goals and objectives to reinvigorate the community's parks, trails, and recreation offerings for residents and visitors alike.

7.1 Goals

Protect

- Maintain parks and trails to support local quality of life, tourism, and economic vitality
- Prepare a parks plan based on community input to upgrade existing parks to reflect evolving recreational needs

Create

- Expand trails and sidewalks to connect area destinations and the existing park and trail system

7.2 Existing Conditions

Lanesboro's quality recreation trails and facilities create a great sense of community pride, are heavily valued by residents, and attract visitors.

Sylvan Park & Riverview Campgrounds

Source: City of Lanesboro

The largest recreation area in Lanesboro is Sylvan Park & Riverview Campgrounds, located in the center of town at the bottom of Church Hill. The park and campground encompass 11.5 acres of land and provide several amenities, including a gazebo, basketball courts, tennis courts, playground equipment, and two ponds stocked with trout by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Sylvan Park and Riverview Campgrounds offer campsites on a first-come, first-served basis. In 2026, the park board is converting to a reservation system. The campgrounds are available from spring through fall and include spaces for RVs with water and electrical hookups. Sylvan Park offers additional amenities for campers, including a bathhouse with shower facilities and a dump station. Together, the park and campground serve as a key destination.

Root River State Trail

The Root River State Trail System is a regional icon that links people to an outdoor experience while fostering community connections. The connection of two major bike trails, the Root River State Trail and the Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail, provides over 60 miles of scenic views, attractions, and recreation alongside restaurants, hotels, art, boutiques, and more. The trails are owned and maintained by the Minnesota DNR and connect the towns of Fountain, Preston, Harmony, Lanesboro, Whalan, Peterson, Rushford Village, Rushford, and Houston in southeastern Minnesota.

Gateway Park

Source: City of Lanesboro

Scenic Gateway Park is a flexible community green space next to the Root River and across from the community's baseball/softball field. It connects to Downtown Lanesboro via pedestrian trails and the 1893 Coffee Street Bridge. It also serves as a site for concerts, yoga retreats, youth education, artist residency projects, and other local activities. Gateway Park also connects to the Poetry Parking Lot, an initiative that weaves poetry into Lanesboro's social and municipal fabric. The once underutilized parking lot now includes poetry and promotes walkability with a short walking trail to the restored historic bridge crossing the idyllic Root River into downtown. Immediately south of the Poetry Parking Lot is Bass Pond, which has a fishing pier and provides an opportunity to paddle a canoe or kayak during the summer months.

Mill Pond and Stone Dam

Located near the Lanesboro Public Schools and along the Root River, Mill Pond and Stone Dam are a rare environmental and historical attribute that draws tourists to Lanesboro. The original gravity dam constructed on the site proved insufficiently durable and was replaced with the current stone arch dam in 1868. Originally intended to power flour mills, the dam has been paired with a hydroelectric plant to generate electricity since 1895. The dam is considered one of the oldest remaining masonry arch dams in the United States of America and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Stone Dam is part of the three percent of the 80,000 dams in the U.S. that generate electricity. In 2017, the Minnesota State Legislature granted Lanesboro $4 million to repair the Stone Dam. A short walk to Mill Pond at the foot of the dam rewards visitors with an impressive waterfall.

Elmwood Hiking Trail

The Elmwood Hiking Trail is located in the northeast part of the city, near the Welcome to Lanesboro sign off Highway 16. The trail takes visitors through an area that the City of Lanesboro is restoring to an oak savanna prairie in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Division of Forestry, and local prairie enthusiasts.

7.3 Community Events

The City of Lanesboro's parks, trails, and open space are important public spaces for community placemaking through events for residents and tourists. This contributes to the quality of life and economic vitality of the region.

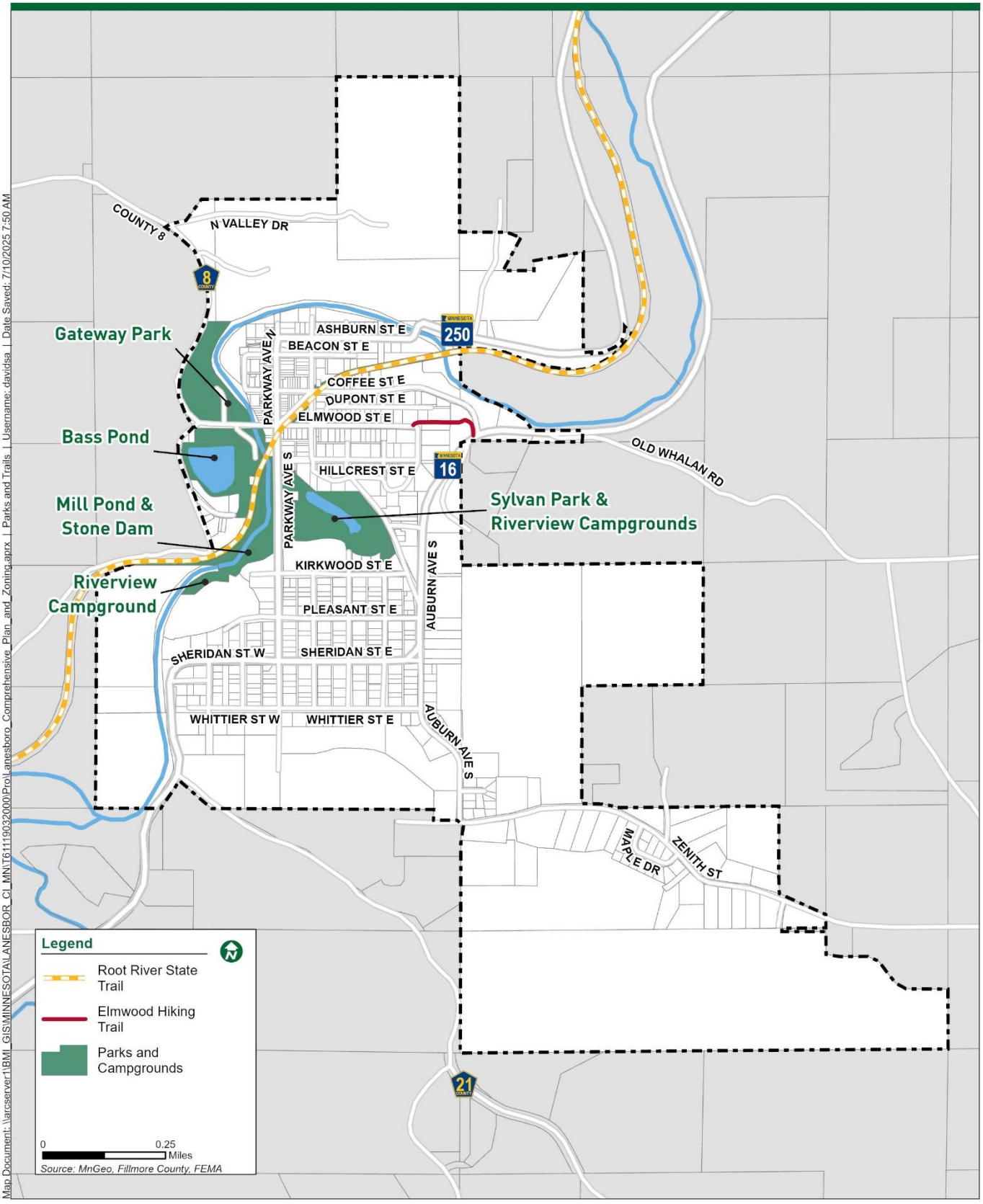
Facilities that support continued use of these spaces for events are valued by the community. Sylvan Park is home to several of these events: Lanesboro Arts' Annual Art in the Park Festival, weekly Farmers Market, Rhubarb Festival, and Buffalo Bill Days. In 2025, Lanesboro received the League of Minnesota Cities City of Excellence Award for the grassroots initiative establishing the Lanesboro Legion Lights winter programming in Sylvan Park.

7.4 Future Parks and Trails Investment

Based on input through the survey, new parks and open spaces are a low priority. However, respondents did indicate an interest in updating and modernizing the existing parks. With the attraction of the Root River State Trail, the City of Lanesboro prides itself on being a great place to camp, walk, bike, and play.

Source: City of Lanesboro

Future park improvements will be based on the goals to maintain and improve the existing parks and continue to connect the city through trail and sidewalks. Incorporating energy efficiency projects in the maintenance and improvement of existing park and recreation infrastructure is of interest to the city. One example of a project being explored is a feasibility study for a solar powered e-bike charging station.



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8.0 Transportation

This chapter's purpose is to guide the City of Lanesboro, as well as existing and future landowners, in preparing for growth, development, and redevelopment. Transportation is critical because it is needed to move goods and people, which keeps a community vibrant and economically sound. Maintaining or improving the city's roads was one of the top priorities identified in the public survey. 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.

Overall, this plan is intended to provide safe, efficient movement throughout the community for all modes of transportation. The plan recommends working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the county to address issues and improve the safety and condition of the city's roads.

8.1 Goals

Protect

- Guide development to areas already served by collector and arterial roads and where new roads could be extended in a way that minimizes costs and environmental impacts
- Cooperate with county and state jurisdictions to keep through-traffic on arterials at a minimum disruption to local circulation and residents
- Support active transportation options through maintenance of a connected, accessible network of trails and sidewalks

Create

- Maintain a road, alley, and sidewalk Capital Improvement Plan
- Address transportation safety for all roadway users in the downtown area, including pedestrians, cyclists, mobility-impaired individuals, and drivers

8.2 Jurisdiction

Roadways are classified based on which level of government owns and has jurisdiction over them. The jurisdiction of the roadway system in the City of Lanesboro is shared among state, county, and local levels of government. Roadway jurisdiction is important because it affects several critical organizational functions and obligations, including regulatory maintenance, construction, and financial commitments. The type of travel generally determines the jurisdictional classification. MnDOT typically owns and maintains roads that serve regional or statewide travel needs. Roads serving sub-regional needs are classified as County State Aid Highway (CSAH) or County Road (CR) and are owned and maintained by Fillmore County. The City of Lanesboro owns and maintains roads that primarily serve local commuter needs or provide property access. Figure 26 depicts the existing roadway jurisdictional classification system in Lanesboro.

8.3 Traffic Volumes

The transportation map shows the average daily traffic volume (AADT) on the transportation map for the main roads in the city. The numbers in red show all vehicles, and the numbers in purple show commercial vehicles such as trucks. The highest traffic numbers are on Parkway Avenue between State Highway 16 and County Road 8.

8.4 Functional Classification

The current roadway functional classification is shown on the transportation map on the following page. The roadway system presently consists of minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local streets as described in the table below.

Minor Arterials

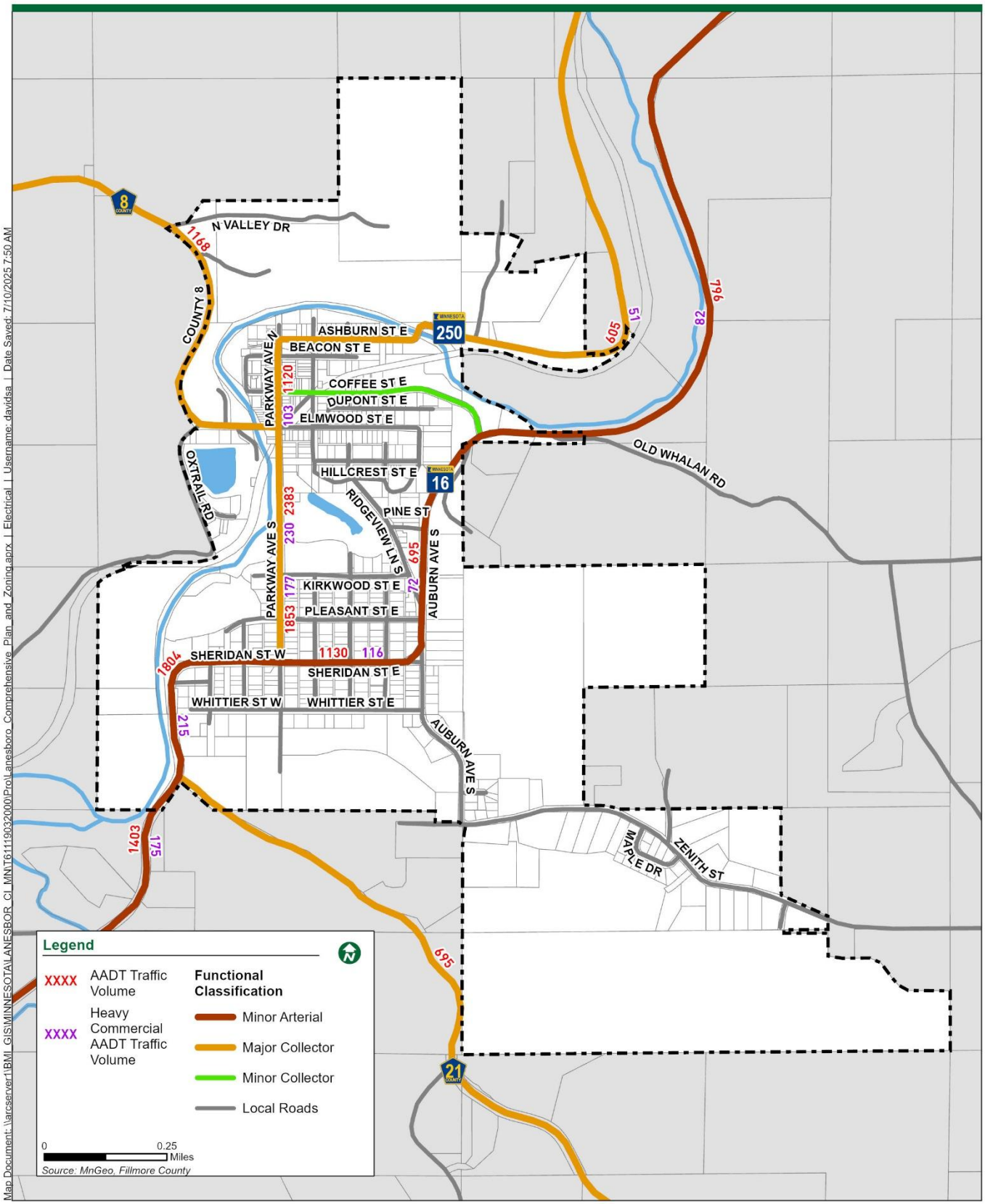
These roads connect important locations within the City of Lanesboro with access to the highway system and with important locations outside the city. These arterials are also intended to carry short to medium trips that would otherwise use principal arterials. Their primary function is to provide mobility rather than access to the lower-level roadways or adjacent land uses. The minor arterial roadways in Lanesboro are identified in Table 5:

Major and Minor Collectors

Collector roadways serve trips entirely within the City and connect neighborhoods and smaller commercial areas to the arterial network. Minor collectors generally are short in length, with lower volumes and speeds than major collectors.

Table 1: Lanesboro Roadway Functional Classifications

	Roadway	From	To	Travel Lanes
Minor Arterial	MN State Highway 16/Auburn Ave/Sheridan St	SW City Limits	NE City Limits	2
Major Collectors	MN State Highway 250/Parkway Ave/Ashburn St	Sheridan St and Parkway Ave	NE City Limits	2
	CSAH 8	NW City Limits	MN State Highway 250	2
	CSAH 21	SW City Limits	MN State Highway 16	2
Minor Collectors	Coffee St E	MN State Highway 250	MN State Highway 16	2


N VALLEY DR
COUNTY 8
ASHBURN ST E
BEACON ST E
COFFEE ST E
DUPONT ST E
ELMWOOD ST E
HILLCREST ST E
PINE ST
KIRKWOOD ST E
PLEASANT ST E
SHERIDAN ST W
SHERIDAN ST E
WHITTIER ST W
WHITTIER ST E
PARKWAY AVE N
PARKWAY AVE S
OXTRAIL RD
RIDGEVIEW LN S
AUBURN AVE S
OLD WHALAN RD
MAPLE DR
ZENITH ST
1168
1120
103
2383
230
695
177
1853
72
1804
1130
116
215
1403
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8.5 Biking and Walking

Walking and biking are viable forms of transportation throughout Lanesboro, with most of the city accessible through sidewalks and trails. Sidewalks can connect residents to their workplace or shopping, and trails can connect. The only exception is the outer edges of the city, where there is newer development. As new residential subdivisions are developed, sidewalks should be included to maintain the walkable nature of the community.

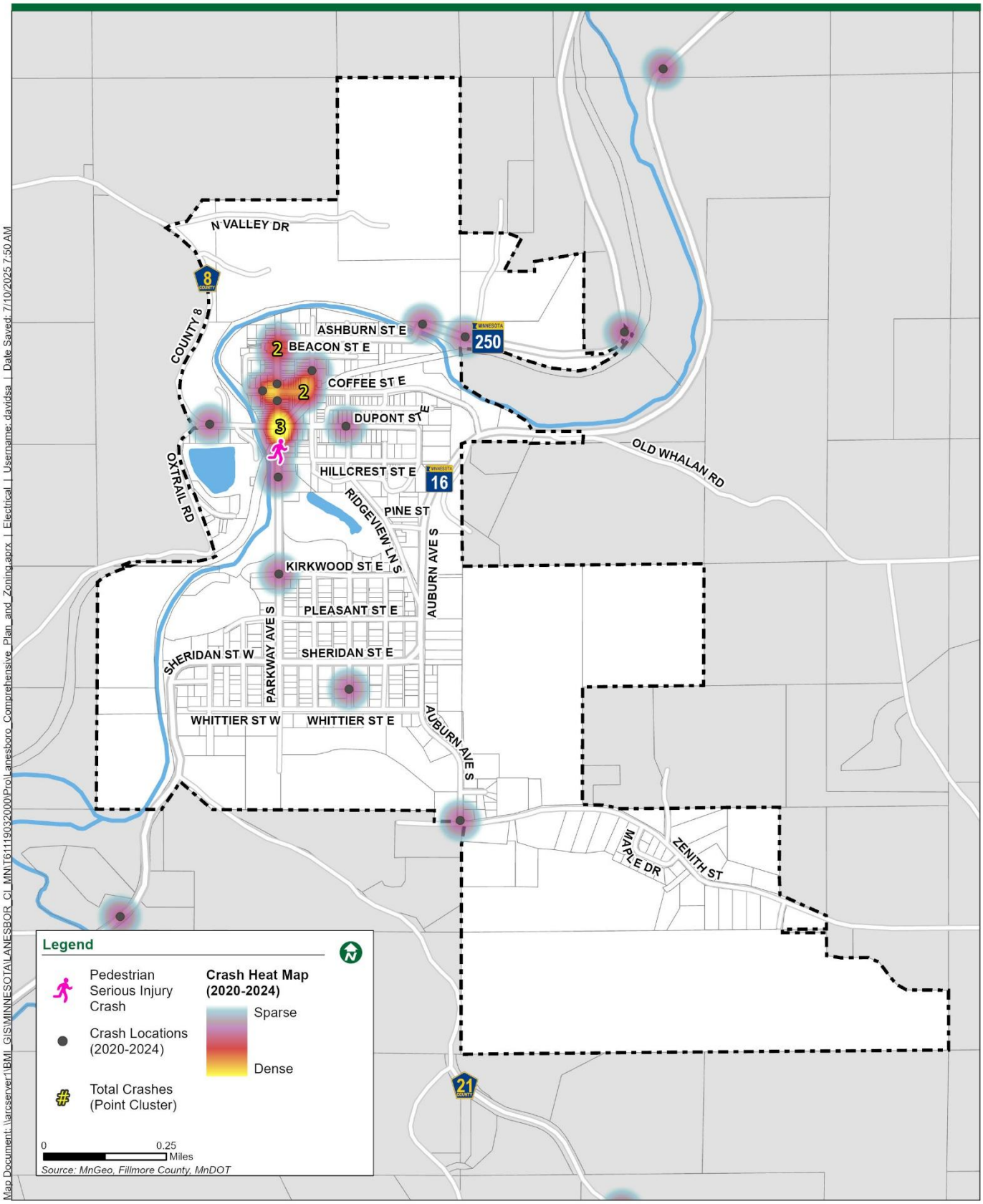
Source: City of Lanesboro

Lanesboro is located along the Root River Trail system, which is approximately 42 miles of shared-use path that can be used by people who choose to use bikes to get to Fountain, Harmony, Whalan, Peterson, Rushford, and Houston for work, services, or recreational purposes. The Root River Trail network can also connect to the Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail.

In 2027, the City of Lanesboro and MnDOT will reconstruct Highway 250 from the bridge over the Root River to Highway 16. The project will coordinate efforts to improve the overall infrastructure of the area and address safety concerns for all road users, including pedestrians. Improvements to bike and pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and trails will also improve vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

8.6 Safety

The map on the following page illustrates the road segments and intersections with the highest number of crashes or accidents. Many of the incidents are located along Highway 250 and downtown. The Highway 250 reconstruction project, scheduled to begin construction in 2027, will include safety features. The city should continue to monitor these areas after construction is complete to ensure that the safety improvements have reduced the number of incidents.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RIDGEVIEW LN S
PINE ST
KIRKWOOD ST E
AUBURN AVE S
PLEASANT ST E
PARKWAY AVE S
SHERIDAN ST W
SHERIDAN ST E
WHITTIER ST W
WHITTIER ST E
OLD WHALAN RD
MAPLE DR
ZENITH ST
250
16
21
2
2
3
Legend
Pedestrian Serious Injury Crash
Crash Locations (2020-2024)
Total Crashes (Point Cluster)
Crash Heat Map (2020-2024)
Sparse
Dense
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0.25
Miles
Source: MnGeo, Fillmore County, MnDOT
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9.0 Public Utilities

The chapter on public utilities and facilities describes the existing conditions and includes goals for future investments. Public utilities that provide water resources and sanitation collection are essential to community life and future development. This chapter summarizes the existing conditions, capacity, and future needs of the water, sewer, storm drainage, and electric utilities. Overall, this plan is intended to guide how future land use patterns and development rates will affect the demand for utility infrastructure in the City of Lanesboro.

9.1 Goals

Protect

- Focus infrastructure investments on maintaining existing infrastructure that is resilient to climate impacts
- Promote energy and water efficiency to extend the life and capacity of the existing system

Create

- Extend utility infrastructure to areas most suitable for development and that minimize costs and environmental impacts

9.2 Public Utilities Commission

The City of Lanesboro's Public Utilities Commission oversees administrative activities related to water, sewer, and electricity. The Commission operates these public works from multiple locations in Lanesboro, including the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Water Treatment Facility, Power Plant, and City Office.

9.3 Wastewater

Current System

In 2021, the City began construction on a new wastewater treatment plant to replace the existing plant, which was one of the oldest in the state. The new facility went online in 2022. The new facility is an extended aeration, activated sludge plant with aerated biosolids storage. The plant includes the following major treatment components:

- Influent Lift Station
- Fine Screening and Grit Removal
- Aeration Basins
- Final Clarifiers
- Ultraviolet Disinfection
- Aerated Biosolids Storage

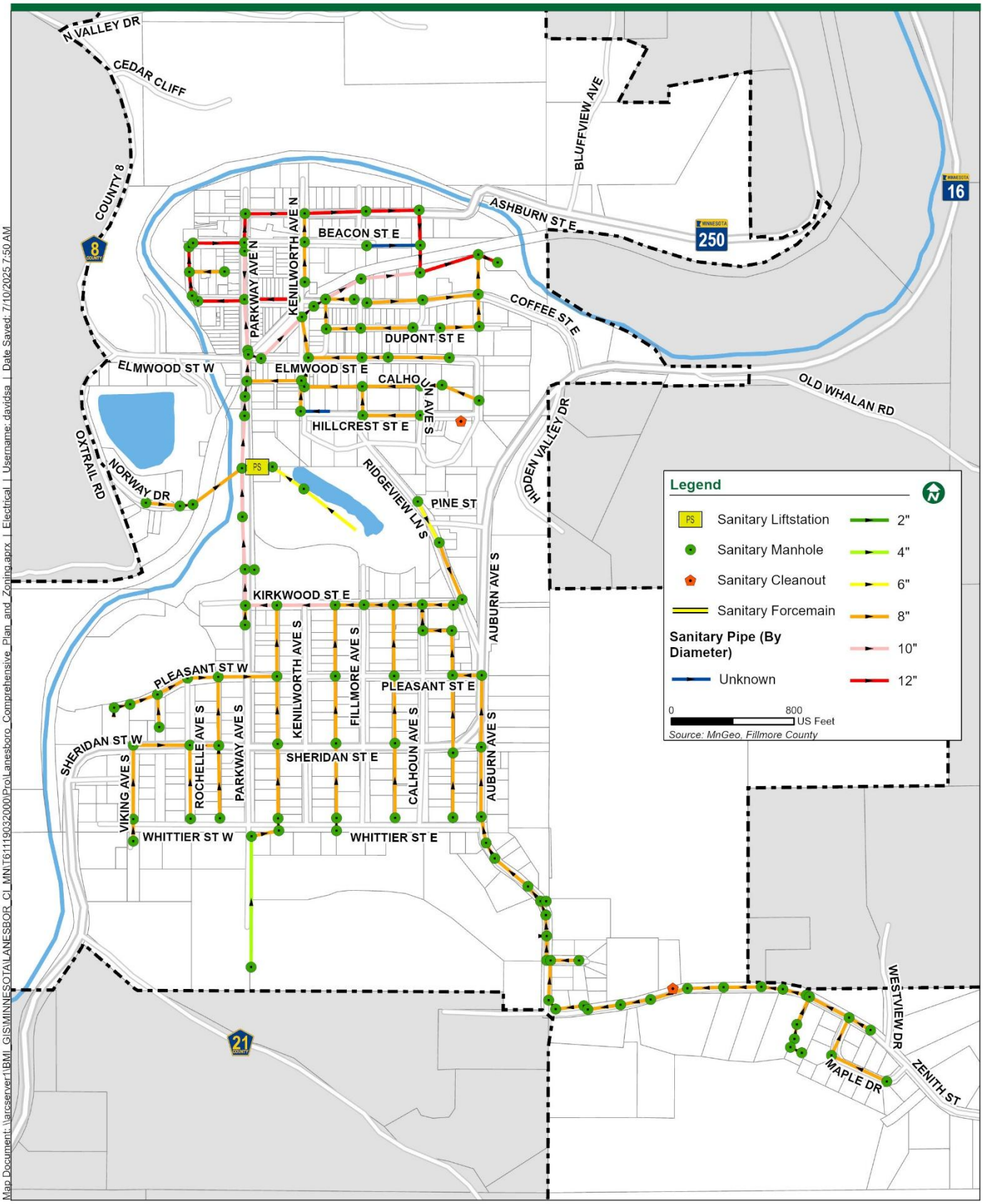
The wastewater treatment plant was designed with the following characteristics:

Table 2: Wastewater Treatment Plant Characteristics

Influent Design Criteria	
Average Dry Weather Flow (mgd)	.076
Average Wet Weather Flow, AWW (mgd)	.110
Peak Hourly Wet Weather Flow (mgd)	.245
Peak Instantaneous Wet Weather Flow (mgd)	.290
Maximum Hydraulic Capacity (gpm)	300
Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand, CBOD5 (lbs/day)	246
Total Suspended Solids, TSS (lbs/day)	327
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen, TKN (lbs/day)	40.8
Total Phosphorus, TP (lbs/day)	7.0
Effluent Design Criteria	
Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand, CBOD5 (mg/L)	25 (10 kg/day)
Total Suspended Solids, TSS (mg/L)	30 (12 kg/day)
Fecal Coliform Bacteria (April-October) (#/100 mL)	200
Minimum Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	Monitor Only
pH	6.0-9.0

It should be noted that due to population projections at the time of the plan design, additional capacity for growth was not built into the new system, but capacity can be gained by reducing I&I through collection system rehabilitation.

The existing sanitary collection system comprises 4 to 12-inch diameter pipes, one lift station, and a 6-inch forcemain pipe. Older developments, closer to the river, consist of vitrified clay pipe (VCP), while newer developments to the south consist of PVC pipe. Approximately 80% of the sanitary mainline pipe is estimated to be VCP. VCP is susceptible to infiltration through deteriorated joints, cracks, and broken pipe segments. The existing collection system exceeds the MCPA threshold values of excessive infiltration and inflow by nearly 20 percent. For this reason, groundwater infiltration into VCP sanitary mains and services is expected to be a significant source of clear water in the system. The city should implement a plan for capital improvements to replace the aging sanitary collection system. Replacing the aged VCP pipe will reduce the amount of clear water entering the system, reducing the treatment cost. Additionally, the City should annually monitor future planning for county and state highways to ensure those plans align with existing and future land uses.



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9.1 Water Supply

Current System

The City of Lanesboro operates a water supply, storage, and distribution system that serves single-family residential, multi-family residential, and commercial users in four pressure zones. The system is divided into a north system and a south system, each divided into two pressure zones. These systems are linked and operate in an interconnected manner. As described in the following tables, two groundwater wells currently provide water supply in the system, Well No. 3 and Well No. 4.

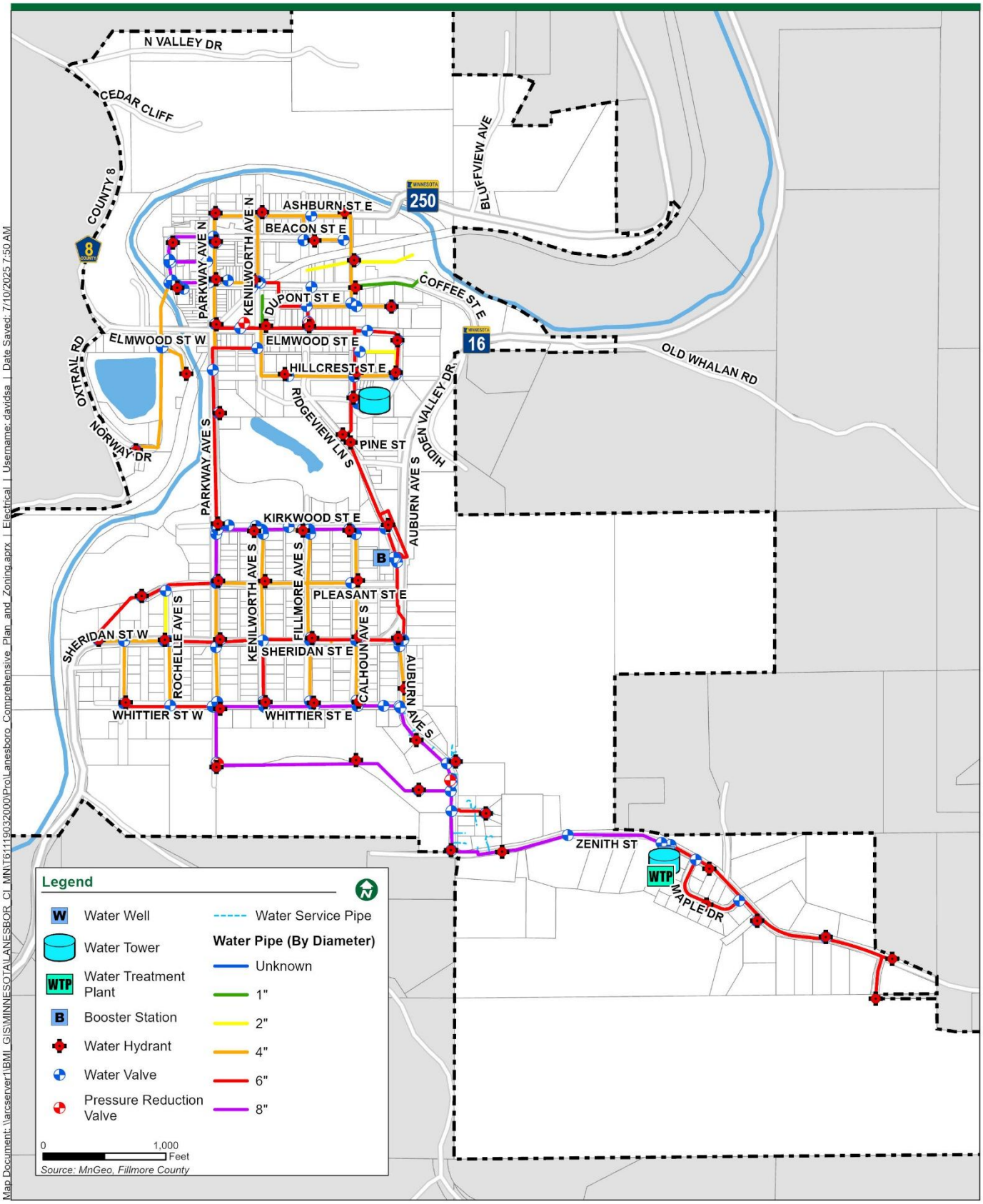
Table 3: City Groundwater Well Characteristics

Well Data		
Well Number	3	4
Year Constructed	1982	2014
Well Depth (ft)	1070	1075
Casing Diameter (in)	24 x 16	24 x 15
Water Supply Source	Groundwater: Mt. Simon Aquifer	
Pump Type	Submersible	Submersible
Capacity (gal/min)	450	500

Both wells are pumped to a water treatment plant. The City of Lanesboro's existing water treatment plant is designed to provide safe, palatable drinking water by regulations created by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and enforced by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The City's water supply contains elevated concentrations of radium and iron. These pollutants are removed in the City's treatment plant using a variety of physical and chemical processes, including mechanical aeration, detention, pressure filtration, and chemical feed of hydrous manganese oxide (HMO), chlorine, fluoride, and polyphosphate. The treated water is pumped to the distribution system and stored in two elevated storage tanks for consumption by residents and businesses in the City of Lanesboro and tourists who visit throughout the year. Both the north and south elevated storage tanks have a capacity of 150,000 gallons and were constructed in 1982. The system uses four pressure-reducing valves and one booster pump to provide water.

The distribution system consists of 4 through 8-inch diameter, cast- and ductile-iron and PVC pipe. Older developments closer to the town center generally consist of smaller diameter, cast iron pipes. New developments and reconstruction projects from the late 1990s and early 2000s generally comprise larger 6 to 8-inch ductile iron or PVC pipes. The city should implement a plan for capital improvements to replace the aging water distribution system, specifically focusing on cast iron and undersized water mains.

Growth projections indicate that the current water supply wells and storage tanks can serve the residential and small business community throughout the current planning period.



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9.2 Stormwater

Current System

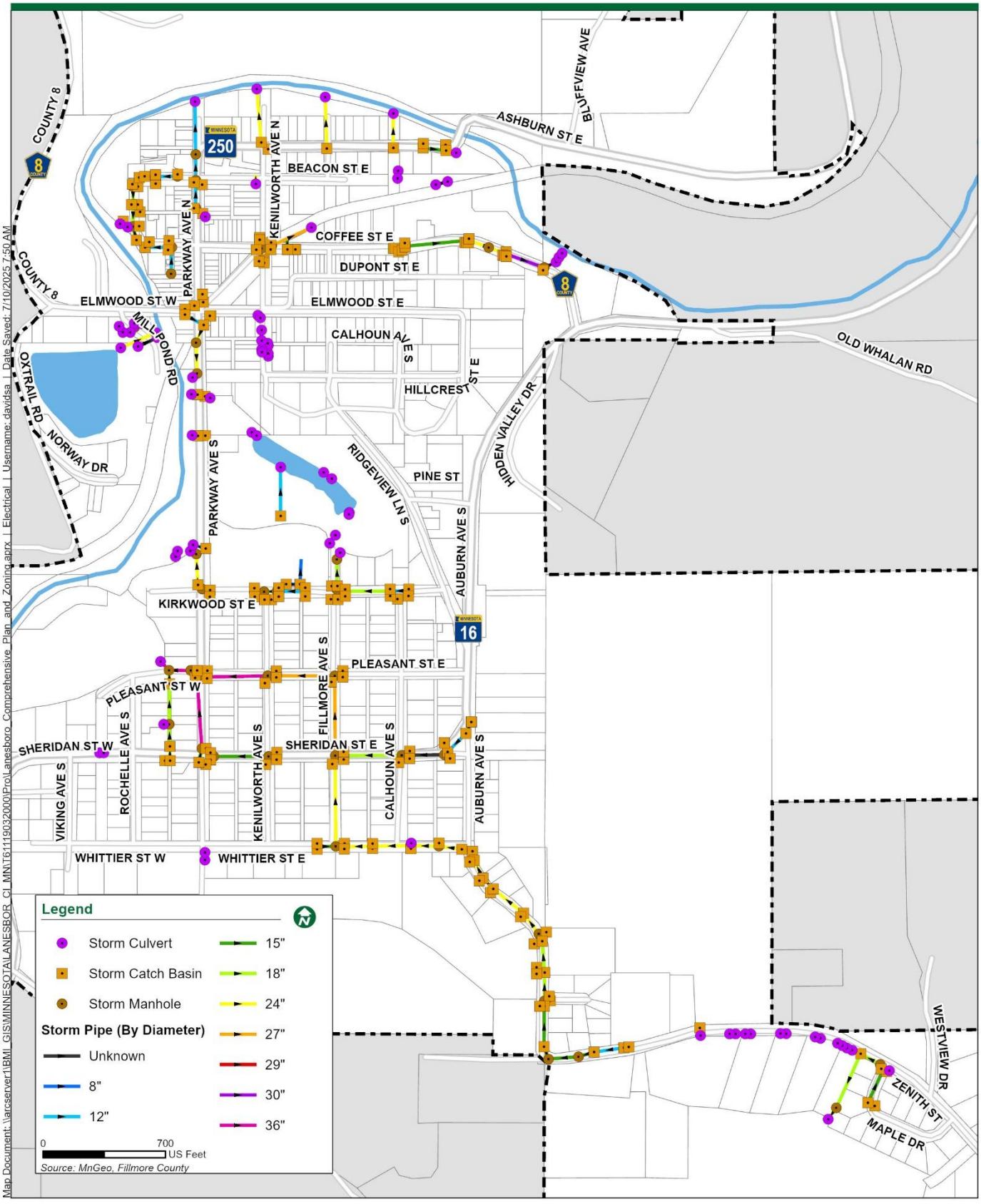
Most Minnesota cities have existing pipe networks that were only designed to relieve ponding in the original plat. These stormwater systems were not designed with the effects on downstream properties in mind. The goal was to provide efficient and cost-effective removal of stormwater runoff from developed areas. Within the City of Lanesboro, this resulted in the construction of stormwater pipes that drain directly into the Root River.

Based on the existing storm system, the effects of unmitigated growth can cause flooding of downstream systems. One of the best methods of mitigating growth effects is constructing stormwater retention basins. These basins are designed to store excess runoff at elevations without causing adjacent property damage. The runoff is stored until the existing storm sewer can take it away. Studies have shown that these basins not only provide flood protection but can also help to remove stormwater pollutants.

Generally, Lanesboro is ideally suited for infiltration because the underlying soils are predominantly sandy. Because most Lanesboro soils infiltrate, infiltration basins are the most cost-effective way to handle rate control and water quality. The City has no stormwater ponds as part of the stormwater system. Stormwater ponds should be considered for new development areas' rate control and water quality. It should be noted that some soils are clay in the south and east portions of Lanesboro, and areas with exposed bedrock do not promote infiltration. Other BMPs, such as filtration basins, may be necessary to achieve rate control and water quality in those areas.

Lanesboro's existing storm sewer system comprises 12 to 36-inch diameter pipes, ditches, and channels that convey water to the Root River. Pipe materials include metal (CMP) and concrete (RCP). Much of the stormwater system is undersized. It is recommended that the City consider providing a storm sewer network capable of providing a level of service that accommodates the 10-year storm event for all new development and redevelopment. Such a system would sufficiently drain the 10-year event with minimal to no ponding in the streets. Beyond a 10-year event, intermittent ponding could be anticipated. Simultaneously, the storm sewer network is also recommended to provide protection, accommodating the 100-year storm. The level of protection could be achieved by providing detention ponds, emergency overflow pathways, and other methods to minimize the likelihood of a 100-year event causing flooding to businesses and residential properties. It is suggested that such consideration be evaluated each time a street is reconstructed.

Current Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) policy dictates that developments greater than one acre are required to provide permanent stormwater management systems. As such, the City will ensure compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II permits for municipal operations and construction activity greater than one acre. These future developments should provide the capability of protecting from the 100-year storm event. In addition, future development should demonstrate that the runoff from the site will not increase during each of the 2-year, 10-year, and 100-year storm events. The storm sewer pipe network should be designed to provide a service capable of accommodating the 10-year event.


COUNTY 8
ASHBURN ST E
BLUFFVIEW AVE
BEACON ST E
KENILWORTH AVE N
PARKWAY AVE N
COFFEE ST E
DUPONT ST E
ELMWOOD ST W
ELMWOOD ST E
MILL POND RD
CALHOUN AVE S
OLD WHALAN RD
OXTRAIL RD
NORWAY DR
HILLCREST ST E
HIDDEN VALLEY DR
RIDGEVIEW LN S
PINE ST
PARKWAY AVE S
AUBURN AVE S
KIRKWOOD ST E
PLEASANT ST E
PLEASANT ST W
FILLMORE AVE S
SHERIDAN ST W
SHERIDAN ST E
ROCHELLE AVE S
VIKING AVE S
KENILWORTH AVE S
CALHOUN AVE S
AUBURN AVE S
WHITTIER ST W
WHITTIER ST E
WESTVIEW DR
ZENITH ST
MAPLE DR
Legend
Storm Culvert
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Storm Manhole
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9.3 Electric System

Current System

The City of Lanesboro operates an electric power generation and distribution system. The power generation facility includes a diesel-powered generator and a hydroelectric generator. The hydroelectric portion of the power generation facility is made possible by the historic Lanesboro Stone Arch Dam, located on the South Branch of the Root River, which has been owned and operated by the City of Lanesboro since 1903.

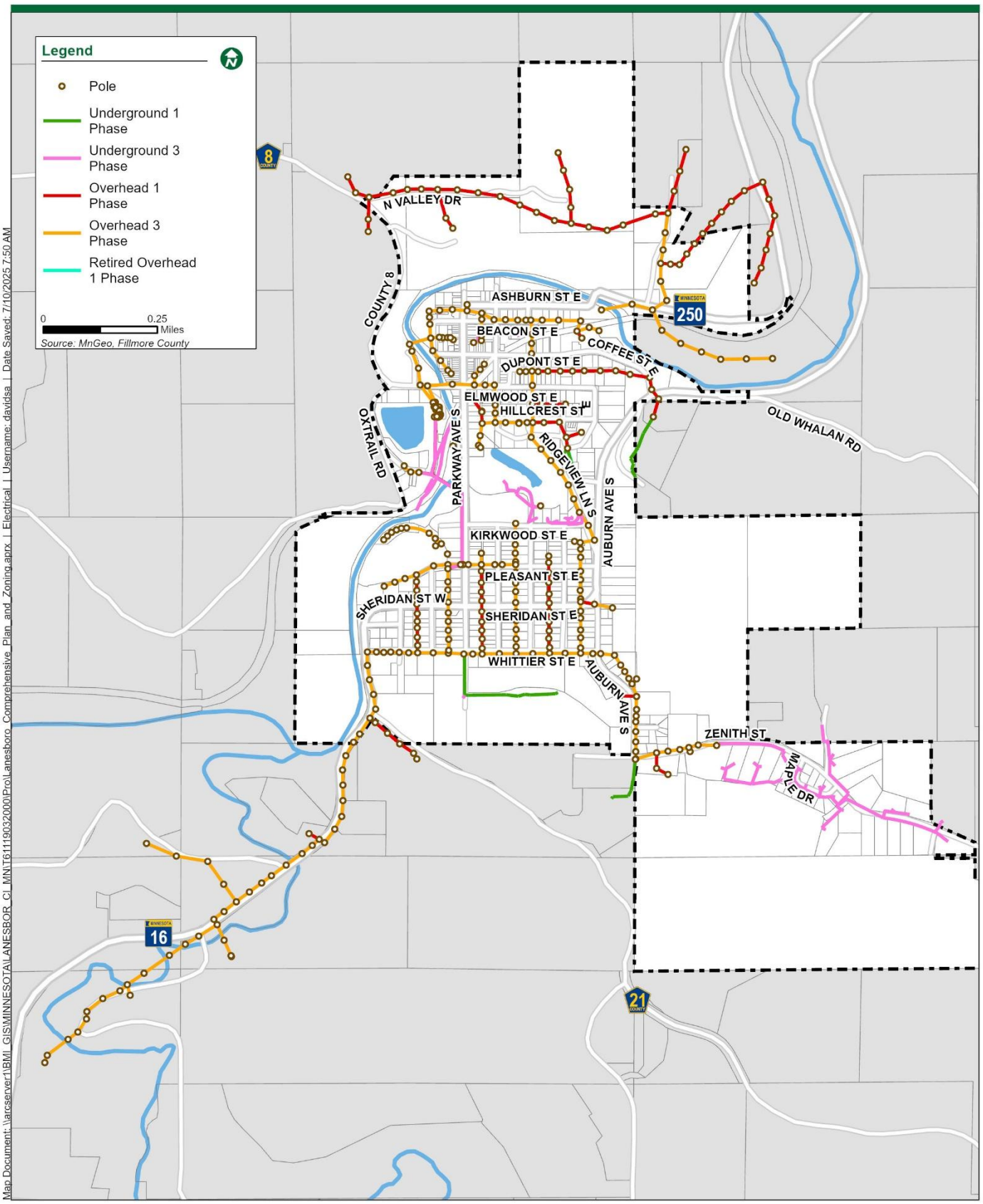
The dam was originally constructed in 1868 by the Lanesboro Townsite Company to divert water to the mills that the town founders envisioned as its economic center. The flour milling industry developed in the community, utilizing hydropower from the dam. The hydroelectric generating plant was later built in the early 1890s. In the 1920s, two diesel generators were installed to help meet the city's electrical demands. At one point, the plant had two hydro-generation units capable of generating 240 kW each. Various rehabilitation projects occurred over the years, including removing one of the diesel generators and one of the hydro-generators.

The power generation facility currently includes a single diesel generator and a hydro-generator. Although the hydro-facility can generate up to 10% of the City's overall power demands, operation is limited by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources requirements for maintaining river flow. To provide for the City's remaining power needs, the City purchases power through the Mi-Energy Electric Cooperative.

In 2020, a 4-million-dollar rehabilitation project of the dam was completed. The rehabilitation included:

- Constructing a cellular dam system upstream of the existing stone arch dam
- Replacing the existing power canal gate intake structure with two new slide gates
- Completing concrete repairs to the powerhouse intake structure
- Replacing the bypass pipe that feeds water to Bass Pond
- Upgrading the operating system for the existing hydro facility
- Addition of a river level monitoring upstream and downstream of the dam

Following is a map of the City's electrical distribution system.



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10.0 Public Facilities and Services

Public facilities include municipal buildings supporting public services, education, and cultural events. The following section describes existing community facilities.

10.1 Goals

Protect

- Coordinate and collaborate with overlapping jurisdictions and public services on maintaining buildings, equipment, services, and staff

Create

- Coordinating the expansion of public facilities and services to support growth as necessary
- Communicate availability of community facilities and services to residents and visitors

10.2 Public Facilities

Lanesboro Visitor Center

The Lanesboro Visitor Center is collocated with the Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce at the old train depot along the bike trail on the edge of downtown Lanesboro. The Visitor Center serves as the central resource to support visitors exploring Lanesboro, Whalan, and the surrounding region. Promoting the region as "The Gem of Southeast Minnesota," the Lanesboro Visitor Center promotes the area's arts, culture, recreation, and hospitality offerings that make Lanesboro unique.

Lanesboro Community Center

Located near the city's heart, the Lanesboro Community Center is a central hub for civic and community life. It houses the City Office, the Lanesboro Public Library, and various public gathering spaces. The City Office provides administrative services, including planning and zoning, permitting, and utility billing. City council, board, and commission meetings are regularly held in the building's meeting rooms. In addition, the Community Center features an gymnasium/auditorium, meeting room, dining room, and kitchen—all available for public rental.

Lanesboro Public Library

The Public Library offers various books, magazines, movies, computers, and programs for all ages, serving its mission to promote the power of knowledge, encourage the discovery of ideas, and instill the joy of reading. First established by a small group of women known as the Lanesboro Public Library Association in 1927, it wasn't officially recognized as a library until 1986. The Lanesboro Public Library currently resides in the basement of the Community Center. Funding for the library is provided by the City of Lanesboro, Fillmore County, private donations, and Southeast Libraries Cooperating (SELCO).

10.3 Public Safety

Lanesboro Volunteer Fire Department and Aid Association

The Lanesboro Volunteer Fire Department and Aid Association began in 1884 and was incorporated under state law in 1898. The Department currently has 22 active volunteer firefighter members and serves several cities and townships in the region: City of Lanesboro, City of Whalan, Holt Township, Carrolton Township, Preble Township, Amherst Township, Norway Township, Pilot Mound Township, and Arendahl Township. The Fire Department is located with the Preston Emergency Medical Services Garage on the southwest side of town in the Lanesboro Fire & Ambulance Building.

Preston Emergency Services

Preston Emergency Services (EMS) is a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance service owned by the City of Preston employing two full-time staff and 42 volunteers. The City of Lanesboro partners with Preston EMS to ensure ambulance services in the city. Preston EMS operates a substation in Lanesboro with one ambulance, located in the Lanesboro Fire & Ambulance Building on the southwest side of town.

Preston Police

The City of Lanesboro contracts the City of Preston for police services. Although located about eight miles southwest of Lanesboro's city limits, the Preston Police Department supports Lanesboro's law enforcement needs.

10.4 Education

K-12 Public Schools

Lanesboro Public Schools serves youth from infancy through 12th Grade. Kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment is approximately 440 students. Nearly 35 percent of these students come to Lanesboro through the state open enrollment program. Lanesboro Public School has operated a year-round daycare facility since 1988 – the first public school district to operate such a facility in Minnesota. The public school system also offers year-round day care and after-school programming. The current facility is at capacity and would need to expand if the city sees substantial growth in families with children. The Lanesboro Public School District has never had a public referendum vote fail. Its most recent referendum in 2018 addressed building renovation and energy efficiency upgrade needs.

Post-Secondary Education

Lanesboro residents can access two-year and four-year post-secondary education at following five higher education institutions located about 40 miles from Lanesboro:

- Minnesota State College Southeast – Winona
- Winona State University
- University of Minnesota – Rochester
- Rochester Community and Technical College
- St. Mary's University of Minnesota

10.5 Historic Resources

Historic resources include sites, places, or buildings that tell the story of the community and should be preserved and protected. Historic sites can be registered at the state or national level. One benefit of registering a site is that it may be eligible for funding and assistance for preservation, protection, and restoration efforts.

The Heritage Preservation Commission

The City of Lanesboro considers its areas, places, buildings, and structures of special historic interest valuable for enhancing the city's appeal to residents, visitors, and tourists and fostering civic pride. The city's Heritage Preservation Commission monitors registered heritage preservation buildings, educates the public about Lanesboro's civic and architectural heritage, and collaborates with the Planning & Zoning Commission to fulfill state Heritage Preservation District requirements.

Lanesboro Museum

The Lanesboro Museum has been operated by the Lanesboro Historical Preservation Association since 1976. The mission of the Museum is to tell Lanesboro's story by collecting, preserving, organizing, and displaying the community's historical and genealogical artifacts. The Museum is open mid-April through October and admission is free. The Lanesboro Museum is located on Parkway Ave on the southern side of downtown.

National Register of Historic Places

Source: City of Lanesboro

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the United States federal government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation for their historical significance or "great artistic value." A property listed in the National Register, or located within a National Register Historic District, may qualify for tax incentives derived from the total value of expenses incurred in preserving the property. Lanesboro contains two places on the National Register of Historic Places: the Lanesboro Historic District and the Michael Scanlan House.

The Lanesboro Historic District comprises a downtown commercial and water-power industrial district, reflecting the city's 19th-century economic activity. It is largely centered along Parkway Avenue between Kirkwood Street and Ashburn Street. The downtown commercial district contains mostly two-story stone or wood commercial buildings built in the late 19th or early 20th centuries. The water-power industrial district contains the Lanesboro Stone Dam, constructed in 1868, and associated industrial structures.

The Michael Scanlan House was built in the early 1890s in the Queen Anne style. It was the home of Michael Scanlan, a businessman, politician, and the son of the first settler in Lanesboro. The Michael Scanlan House currently operates as a bed and breakfast.

11.0 Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan creates a vision for the City of Lanesboro 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 city has a detailed implementation plan. This chapter prioritizes the plan's goals and identifies the lead and resources for implementing each goal.

11.1 Official Controls

Zoning

City zoning codes regulate land use to promote all citizens' health, safety, order, convenience, and general welfare. 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 Lanesboro. The Current Zoning Map on page 15 shows the zoning districts when the city adopted this comprehensive plan. See the Zoning Administrator for the most current official zoning map.

Portions of the City of Lanesboro are within the Floodplain along the South Branch of Root River. Areas encumbered with floodways, flood fringes, or general floodplain districts are restricted by a floodplain overlay district, which places additional restrictions on the area in addition to the underlying zoning district.

Subdivision Ordinances

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 standards for land development.

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 Civic and Park Spaces, Golf Courses, and Open Space as two new Land Use Designations.

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City is required to review and update the Zoning Map and Zoning Code within three years to be compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. If discrepancies or changes are needed to meet the City's goals and objectives, an amendment to the official controls (Zoning and/or Subdivision ordinances) may be appropriate.

11.2 Funding Mechanisms

The construction of public improvements requires a funding source. Several tools can be used to plan for these improvements. The two most used mechanisms are:

- **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 as the purchase of new or replacement equipment and buildings. A capital improvements program (CIP) is a budgeting plan that 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 Lanesboro implement its vision.

11.3 Implementation Matrix

The Implementation Matrix is a working document to be used by City Council, Committees, and Staff to align their budgets and resources with the comprehensive plan over the next 20 years. The Matrix identifies strategies, resources, priorities, and champions for each goal identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Priority levels are based on:

- High Priority: 1 to 2 years
- Moderate Priority: 3-4 years
- Low Priority: 5+ years

The champions are as follows:

- ED – Economic Development
- F – Finance
- HPC – Historic Preservation Commission
- L – Library
- PR – Parks & Recreation
- PU – Public Utilities
- PW – Public Works
- PZ – Planning & Zoning

Natural Resources

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Continue leveraging natural resources, including prime agricultural land, for economic, recreation, and tourism purposes.	Collaborate with local and regional organizations protecting and promoting the area's natural resources, including natural disaster preparedness planning.	MPCA Climate Resilience MN Hazard Mitigation Fillmore County Emergency Management	Mod	ED
	Promote Lanesboro's natural resources for their uniqueness as a workforce and tourist attraction strategy.	Explore Minnesota LACC	Low	ED
Continue pursuing carbon neutrality and reduction of PFAs in public utility operations.	When investing in existing infrastructure, choose modernized solutions that are energy-efficient and low-carbon, and encourage residents and businesses to do the same.	MPCA MN Commerce Department MN Public Facilities Authority	Mod	PW
	Invest in employee training so they can continue to pursue advanced treatment technologies to remove PFAs from water and wastewater.	BWSR Clean Water Fund Staff Time	High	PW
Update land use regulations to protect natural and sensitive areas from encroachment, degradation, or incompatible development.	Regularly review and update the city's land use ordinances, policies, and procedures to protect natural and sensitive areas.	Staff Time	Mod	PZ
	Evaluate and enhance the development review processes to ensure all proposed development are thoroughly evaluated for their potential impacts to natural and sensitive areas.	Low Salt Design	Mod	PZ

Land Use

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Retain the historic character of downtown, historic homes, and residential neighborhoods.	Seek opportunities to aid property owners in maintaining buildings over 50 years old.	MN SHPO MN Historical Society	High	HPC
	Educate the public about the value of historic preservation.	MN SHPO Certified Local Government Grant Lanesboro Historic Preservation Association RETHOS	Mod	HPC
Update land use regulations to align with the comprehensive plan, such as city ordinances, procedures, and policies.	Initiate a project to gather, evaluate, and update the city's land use ordinances, policies, and procedures for alignment with the comprehensive plan.	Staff Time	High	PZ
Support orderly development that makes best use of the land that is available, including supporting infill development opportunities when possible.	Maintain and regularly update a list of infill development opportunities, including the preferred type of development.	Staff Time MN DEED LOIS Platform	High	ED
	Review and update the city's subdivision and zoning ordinances to promote development appropriate for a land-locked city. Particular emphasis should be given to updating the cities lot size standards, encouraging smaller lots where municipal utilities can be accessed.	Staff Time	High	PZ

Economic Development

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Continue revitalizing the downtown commercial district by retaining and supporting existing businesses and making space for new businesses on vacant or underutilized parcels.	Regularly communicate with downtown businesses to understand their needs and initiate projects to support their businesses.	Staff Time	High	ED
	Promote vacant and underutilized parcels and buildings as prime opportunities for new businesses.	Staff Time MN DEED LOIS Platform	Mod	ED
Continue using art and culture to promote business, tourism, and placemaking.	Collaborate with local partners to continue creating art and culture project opportunities.	Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council SMIF	Mod	ED
Update zoning and land use regulations to support development and provide clear requirements and procedures to developers.	Evaluate and enhance the development review processes to ensure all requirements and procedures are written clearly for applicants.	Staff Time	High	PZ
Develop incentive programs and partnerships to retain and expand existing businesses, especially those that serve year-round residents.	Connect business owners with education and resources to support their specific business needs.	MN DEED SMIF US EDA	Low	ED
	Create incentives for businesses that remain open year-round.	Staff Time	High	ED
	Support businesses in preparation for Highway 250 construction.	Staff Time SMIF	High	ED

Housing

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Focus new housing development in areas with existing infrastructure to minimize costs and environmental impacts.	Incentivize cluster development to minimize costs and environmental impacts.	Staff Time	Low	PZ
Develop programs and identify resources to support the maintenance of existing homes.	Seek opportunities to aid homeowners in maintaining the community's homes built over 40 years ago.	MN Housing Strengthen Minnesota Homes Grant USDA Rural Development	High	ED
	Educate first-time home buyers about housing maintenance, and create a tool library for home maintenance equipment.	Semcac SMIF	Mod	L
Update zoning and land use regulations to promote a range of housing types that serve area employees, the aging population, and seasonal residents.	Plan land uses and zoning standards that support single-family homes, medium-density townhomes, apartments, and elderly or special-needs housing developments.	Staff Time	High	PZ
Prioritize developing housing affordable to first-time home buyers and the local workforce.	Create a zoning incentive program that rewards development of housing for first-time home buyers and local workforce.	Staff Time	Mod	PZ
	Educate buyers about financial resources for purchasing their first home.	Staff Time, See Resources Above	Low	L

Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Maintain parks and trails to support local quality of life, tourism, and economic vitality.	Evaluate existing parks and trails infrastructure to identify short-, mid-, and long-term maintenance needs.	Staff Time	High	PW
	Establish a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that includes maintenance of parks and trails.	Staff Time	Mod	PW
Prepare a parks plan based on community input to upgrade existing parks to reflect evolving recreational needs.	Initiate a parks and trails master plan project for the city that includes robust community engagement.	Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association	Mod	PR
Expand trails and sidewalks to connect area destinations and the existing park and trail system.	Prioritize projects that fill in sidewalk and trail system gaps through the parks and trails master plan project.	Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association	Low	PW
	Require new development (including infill development) to provide public trails and sidewalks in alignment with the parks and trails master plan.	Staff Time	Mod	PZ

Transportation

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Guide development to areas already served by collector and arterial roads and where new roads could be extended in a way that minimizes costs and environmental impacts.	Promote development opportunities where existing road networks already serve the site.	Staff Time	High	ED
	Require new development to expand the road network to the edge of their development in preparation for future development.	Staff Time	Mod	PZ
Cooperate with county and state jurisdictions to keep through-traffic on arterials at a minimum disruption to local circulation and residents.	Work across jurisdictions to champion local maintenance and improvement projects along arterials.	MnDOT Grants	High	PW
Support active transportation options through maintenance of a connected, accessible network of trails and sidewalks.	Analyze the trail and sidewalk system for ADA accessibility to identify maintenance and improvement projects.	Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association	High	PW
Maintain a road, alley, and sidewalk Capital Improvement Plan.	Establish, monitor, and regularly update a CIP that includes road, alley, and sidewalk projects.	Staff Time	High	PW
Address transportation safety for all roadway users in the downtown area, including pedestrians, cyclists, mobility-impaired individuals, and drivers.	Create a Safety Action Plan, such as through Safe Streets for All, to prioritize transportation safety needs for all roadway users.	US DOT Safe Streets and Roads for All	Low	PW

Public Utilities

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Focus infrastructure investments on maintaining existing infrastructure that is resilient to climate impacts.	Create a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to properly plan for existing infrastructure maintenance needs.	Staff Time	High	PU
Promote energy and water efficiency to extend the life and capacity of the existing system.	Educate residents and business owners about energy and water-efficient practices.	CERTs Seed Grant MN Commerce Department SMIF	High	PU
Extend utility infrastructure to areas most suitable for development and that minimize costs and environmental impacts.	Support expansion of municipal utilities on the south side of the city, and support rural residential development on the north side of the city where infrastructure is too costly to expand due to geological constraints.	MN Public Facilities Authority	Mod	PU, PZ, ED

Public Facilities and Services

Goal	Strategies	Resources	Priority	Champion
Coordinate and collaborate with overlapping jurisdictions and public services on maintaining buildings, equipment, services, and staff.	Collaborate with overlapping jurisdictions, facilities, and service providers to monitor capacity, maintenance needs, and understand when expansions will be necessary.	Staff Time	Mod	PW
Coordinate the expansion of public facilities and services to support growth as necessary.	Establish a growth fund to save resources from development to invest in future expansion projects.	Staff Time	Mod	F
Communicate availability of community facilities and services to residents and visitors.	Create a public information campaign that promotes local facilities,services, and events to residents and visitors.	Staff Time Explore Minnesota	High	ED