BENTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
TOWNSHIP LISTENING SESSIONS

JANUARY 16, 2019
Today’s Talking Points
- Comprehensive Plan Overview
- Draft Goals & Policies
- Land Use Plan
- Group Discussion
- Project Update
Comprehensive Plan

Purpose
• Sets a 20 Year Vision
• Establishes goals and policies
• Provides guidance for future decision making

Plan Elements
• Land Use
• Parks, Open Space and Trails
• Natural Resources
• Economic Development
• Transportation

10,000’ View
GOALS AND POLICIES

- Input Driven
  - Township Officials *(Township Meetings Occurred in July)*
  - Economic Development Representatives
  - Department Staff (Public Services)
  - Parks Commission
  - Natural Resource Representatives
  - Farming Representatives
  - Planning Commission
  - Project Management Team
  - Online Engagement
GOALS & POLICIES

- General Themes
  - Preserve our Agrarian and Farming Community
  - Preserve our Natural Amenities (e.g., water features, open spaces and parks)
  - Expand our Economy
  - Embrace New Technologies (e.g., energy, communication and transportation)
  - Recognize the Importance of a Healthy Community
GOALS & POLICIES

- **Vision**: The vision is a broad statement that encompasses the overarching aspirations of the county over the next twenty-years.

- **Goals**: Goals are broad statements that describe a desired outcome or end-state. Goals are often long-term in scope.

- **Policies**: Policies describe the general course of action or way in which programs and activities are conducted to achieve a stated goal. Policies speak to underlying values, context, or principles, and are sometimes place-specific.

Overall, the goals & policies provide guidance, direction and flexibility when planning for the future.
Benton County is a vibrant community which seeks to:

- Uphold its **quality of life**, a standard of living that preserves the rural and agricultural nature of the County, while enhancing its worth with quality services and programs.
- Balance **land uses** and growth in a sustainable manner.
- Promote **economic development** in business and agriculture through its use of technology and available resources.
- Protect its **environment and natural resources** including farmland, water, habitat and aggregate resources.
- Recognize **mobility** as a contributing factor to the economic development, health, and quality of life of rural communities.

**Core Themes**

- Quality of Life
- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Mobility
Have your Say!

https://www.co.benton.mn.us/563/Comprehensive-Plan-Update
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Comprehensive Plan

• Capital Improvement Programs
• Development Code (Zoning) Updates
• Master Plans

10,000’ View

Informs

1,000’ View
Each one of these tools have a separate approval process.
Assessment of the 2005 Land Use Plan

- Reflects zoning policies vs. a 20 year vision
- Does not fully recognize natural features and prime farm land
- Does not clearly articulate potential growth areas

Moving Forward

- Establish a 20 year vision
- Bring a new approach to the Land Use Plan
- Coordinate and collaborate with you
LAND USE PLAN

Land Use Plan

Development Code (Zoning)

1,000’ View

10,000’ View
Goals for Updating the Land Use Plan

- Articulate desired land use patterns that align with the Comprehensive Plan’s vision, goals and policies.
- Identify areas that should be preserved for farming, while discovering areas that are better suited for development.
- Illustrate the County’s vast range of natural features (e.g., open water, wetland and streams) that defines its landscape.
- Manage growth in a sustainable manner that preserves and protects natural features.
- Conserves farmland, natural areas, and open space by limiting sprawl.
- Redefine the Urban Growth Areas with City and Township participation.
Building A Land Use Planning Framework
Land Use Planning Framework:
- Identifies High Quality Soils for Crop Production
Land Use Planning Framework:
- Identifies High Quality Soils for Farming
- Identifies Moderate Soils for Crop Production
Land Use Planning Framework:
- Identifies High Quality Soils for Farming
- Identifies Moderate Soils for Farming
- Identifies Aggregate Resources
Land Use Planning Framework:
- Identifies High Quality Soils for Farming
- Identifies Moderate Soils for Farming
- Identify Aggregate Resources
- Identifies Water, Wetlands, Streams, etc.
Land Use Planning Framework:
• Identifies High Quality Soils for Farming
• Identifies Moderate Soils for Farming
• Identifies Aggregate Resources
• Identifies Water, Wetlands, Streams, etc.
• Identifies Commercial Areas
LAND USE PLAN

Draft Plan vs. Old Plan

Figure 5
Land Use Plan, 2005

- Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Rural Service Center
- Commercial Industrial
- Urban Growth Area
- Elkhorn Associated Area
- Parks and Public Open Space
- Seasonal Recreations
- parks
- Forest/Parks
- Diked
- Water
- Township Boundaries
- County State Aid Highways

I 0,000’ View

1,000’ View
LAND USE PLAN

1999 Comprehensive Plan
(Urban Transition Areas)

2005 Comprehensive Plan
(Urban Growth Areas)
Land Use Planning Framework:

- Working with cities and townships to better define the boundaries
- Removes a Parcel-by-Parcel Approach
- Needs to Recognize Potential Areas for Growth (Required by State Statue)
- THIS IS NOT A ZONING CHANGE
The following are excerpts from Minnesota State Statue § 462.352 regarding Urban Growth Areas:

- **Subd. 18. Urban Growth Areas**: “Urban growth area” means the identified area around an urban area within which there is a sufficient supply of developable land for at least a prospective 20-year period, based on demographic forecasts and the time reasonably required to effectively provide municipal services to the identified area.

- **Subd. 1. General**: Each municipality is encouraged to prepare and implement a community-based comprehensive municipal plan.

- **Subd. 4. Cities; urban growth areas.** (a) The community-based comprehensive municipal plan for a statutory or home rule charter city, and official controls to implement the plan, must at a minimum, address any urban growth area identified in a county plan and may establish an urban growth area for the urbanized and urbanizing area. The city plan must establish a staged process for boundary adjustment to include the urbanized or urbanizing area within corporate limits as the urban growth area is developed and provided municipal services.

- **Subd. 5. Urban growth area boundary adjustment process.** (a) After an urban growth area has been identified in a county or city plan, a city shall negotiate, as part of the comprehensive planning process and in coordination with the county, an orderly annexation agreement with the townships containing the affected unincorporated areas located within the identified urban growth area.
Why Plan For Growth?

- Careful planning and regulation is needed in the Urban Growth Areas to *prevent unplanned semi-rural sprawl near the cities*.

- This type of long-range planning helps *prevent the encroachment of nonfarm uses into agricultural lands*, and to allow for the orderly conversion of agricultural lands to urban type uses.

- To help achieve this objective, new housing in the Urban Growth Area should be limited to very low densities (4 units per 40 acres) in order to promote efficient extension of roads and utilities, cost-effective urban growth, affordable housing, compact neighborhoods, and agricultural preservation.
LAND USE PLAN

How Does Annexation Occur?

- At a property owner's request
- A local government decides to expand its territory – typically driven by growth or development
- A township requests full incorporation into a municipality by a petition

Each process has its own rules and criteria

Resources to Learn More about the Process & State Statutes

- Minnesota Association of Townships
- Handbook for Minnesota Cities
  Chapter 2
  Change of Boundaries, Status, and Name

- League of Minnesota Cities
- Office of Administrative Hearings
What are the challenges?

- It is a difficult conversation to have between local governments.
- There are competing interests for economic growth and tax base.
- Predicting when and where development will occur.
- In some cases annexation is contingent on the property owners and the City agreeing to certain terms or conditions.
BENTON COUNTY’S ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY

CITY’S AND TOWNSHIP’S ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY

These agreements, are a commitment between both the City and Township according to agreed upon terms:

- Location
- Timing
- Land Uses
- Tax Revenue
- Infrastructure

Determines growth projections, land capacity and infrastructure needs at a parcel level.

Comprehensive Plan

- Urban Growth Areas
- Zoning Updates

Monitor Growth (Reactive)
Establish Boundaries at a Parcel Level (Pro-active)

Capacity Analysis

Enter into Orderly Annexation Agreements
DISCUSSION
**Next Steps**

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<th>Key Milestones</th>
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<td>Present at the Annual Township Meeting</td>
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<td>Draft for review in early spring</td>
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<td>More engagement</td>
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### Benton County Comprehensive Plan Update

**Schedule (the schedule is subjective to change as the update progresses)**

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*The schedule will be adjusted to reflect the time required to address the zoning modifications.*
THANK YOU!