A faint, semi-transparent background image of an aerial view of a rural landscape. It shows a mix of agricultural fields, some roads, and a small cluster of buildings that could be a town or a farm. The colors are earthy tones of brown, green, and tan.

Chapter 4

Land Use

The Land Use Chapter and its Future Land Use Map (together referred to as the “2040 Land Use Plan”) is arguably the most prominent chapter in the Benton County Comprehensive Plan. It helps articulate future land use patterns, while providing policy direction that protects the County’s natural features and enhances the agrarian lifestyle. The text, maps, and images in this section will also help inform updates to the Benton County Development Code. The Development Code provides specific regulations on how a property can develop. The Development Code defines the permitted and conditional uses within a zoning district, and sets the lot size and development requirements. The County’s Development Code is applied primarily in unincorporated areas of the county (i.e., townships). Cities are the responsible agency for establishing and enforcing zoning ordinances within their boundaries.

Existing Conditions

Benton County is approximately 259,000 acres in size (see Table 4.1). Approximately 10 percent of those acres are within incorporated areas or orderly annexation areas. Benton County's land use control falls within the remaining 233,000 acres. Of those acres, 76 percent is predominantly used for agricultural purposes, including land for crop production, pasture lands, dairy farms, and other open areas associated with farming. Non-farmstead (i.e., rural residential) homes are also scattered throughout Benton County. These land use patterns (8.5 percent) are small-scale in nature and thus far have not significantly altered the County's rural areas.

Commercial and industrial land uses are also located throughout rural parts of the county. The type of uses vary greatly, but typically cater to the agrarian economic lifestyle. These uses for the most part have been confined to the areas around Highway 10 and Highway 23. It is also important to recognize the numbers in Table 4.1 do not account for the number of small businesses that are operating from their home or farm. These type of businesses (e.g., salons, woodworking, auto mechanics and accountants) are typically approved through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). A total of ten CUPs were issued by the County in 2017 and 2018. Figure 4.1 illustrates the existing land use patterns as of 2018.

Table 4.1. 2018 Generalized Existing Land Uses

Generalized Existing Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Incorporated Areas (Cities)	10,972.11	4.24%
Orderly Annexation Agreements (Existing)	14,483.86	5.60%
Sub Total	25,455.97	9.84%
Agriculture & Farming Uses	196,524.84	75.99%
Rural Residential (40 acres or less)	22,230.40	8.60%
Commercial/Industrial	691.63	0.27%
Public / Semi-Public (e.g., ROW, Church, School)	1,088.18	0.42%
Parks & Open Space	4,811.29	1.86%
Rural Vacant *	7,810.99	3.02%
Sub Total	233,157.33	90.16%
Total	258,613.30	100.00%

* The parcel is not actively being farmed or contain a structure/home.

Source: Benton County Tax Assessor Data

How are Land Use Decisions Made Today?

The authority to engage in land use planning is set forth in Minnesota law. Planning is considered to be an exercise of the police powers of the state. City, township, and county planning is based on state law, often called state planning enabling legislation. Under enabling legislation, planning begins with an analysis of community needs and goals, which are then formulated into a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan then becomes the guiding policy for community development. The zoning ordinance and other land use regulations must be based on this comprehensive plan.

For cities and townships, the authority to plan is found in Minnesota Statutes Section 462.353. Counties are authorized to plan under Minnesota Statutes Section 394.23.



2040 Land Use Plan

The 2040 Land Use Plan takes a system-wide approach that integrates natural features and soil data to better inform land management and decision making. This approach was established to provide the following benefits:

- Articulate desired land use patterns that align with the Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals and policies.
- Identify areas that should be preserved for farming based on soils, natural features and development patterns.
- 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.
- Conserve farmland and natural areas by limiting sprawl.

The 2040 Land Use Plan (see Figure 4.2) should also be used to help articulate the County's expectations for future development. These expectations are translated through a set of community values. The community values were identified by county stakeholders during the planning process and serve as a blueprint for future land use decisions, while helping align the 2040 Land Use Plan with the County's Development Code.

Community Values

- **Aggregate Resources:** Encourage development to occur in areas that do not contain accessible large aggregate deposits.
- **Agricultural Resources:** Protect Benton County's agricultural lands as a resource base for its agricultural industries and for related benefits they contribute towards the County's rural character, scenic quality, natural environment, and economic health.
- **Environmental Resources:** Enforce State and County regulations that protect natural resources, wetlands, shorelands, and floodplains.
- **Growth:** Protect existing farms by directing development pressure towards areas served with urban services or existing complementary development.
- **Housing:** Expand housing choices for county residents and an expanding workforce by creating development opportunities throughout Benton County.
- **Natural Resources:** Preserve and manage Benton County's natural resources in order to protect the environment and conserve resources for future use.
- **Open Space Preservation:** Encourage open space preservation through the process of clustering homes.
- **Rural Residential:** Buffer development from farming operations to minimize conflicts between the two uses.
- **Water Resources:** Protect the quality and supply of surface water and groundwater resources.

Figure 4.1. Existing Land Use

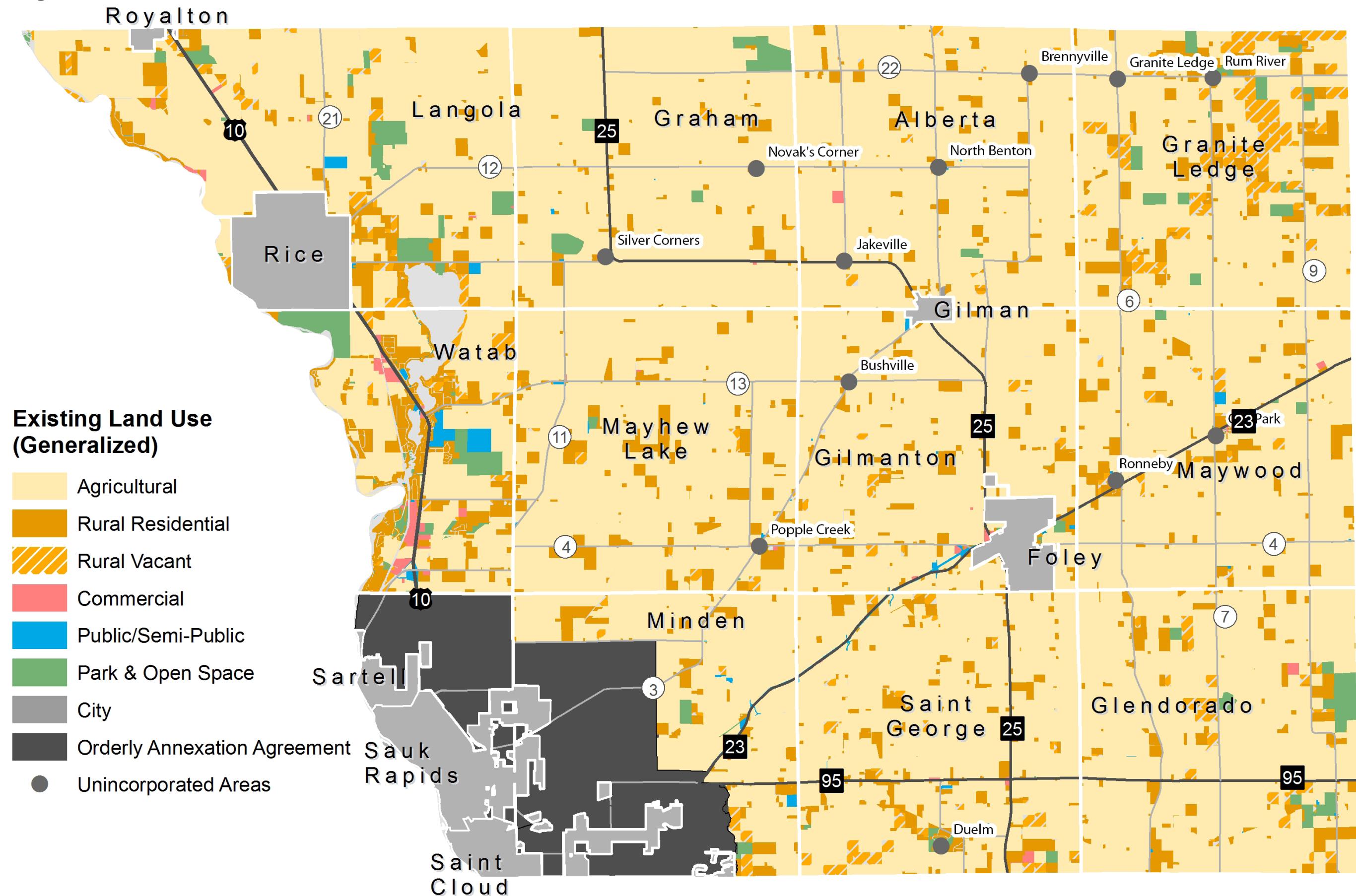
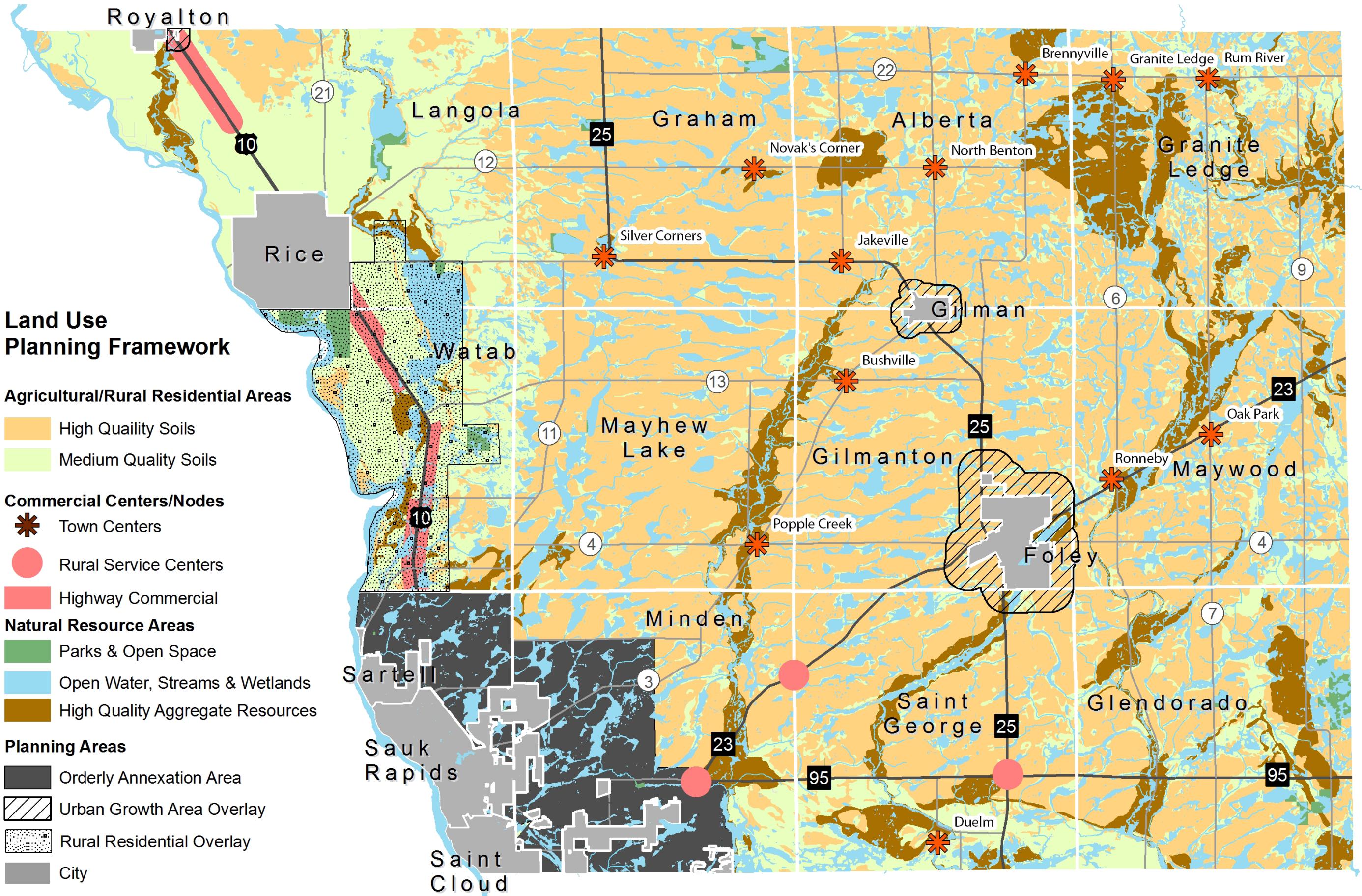


Figure 4.2. Planned Land Use (2040)



Future Land Use Categories

The following section provides general descriptions of the future land use categories (or typologies) contained within Benton County's 2040 Land Use Plan (see Figure 4.2). The categories were established to better reflect future land use patterns and community values. The boundaries of the future land use categories are defined based on existing land use patterns, local jurisdictional growth plans, and natural resources.

Agricultural & Rural Residential Areas

The majority of Benton County will continue to be used for agricultural purposes, while supporting low-density non-farming housing (i.e., rural residential). Figure 4.2 helps demonstrate future land use patterns suitable for agricultural purposes by depicting soil types (source: University of Minnesota and Land Management Information Center). The soil types include:

- **High Quality Soils:** These areas have been determined to be the most appropriate for long-term farming because of its soils and history of agriculture. High quality soils are generally considered "prime" or "good" for agriculture use.
- **Medium Quality Soils:** Medium quality soils are generally considered "good" or "fair" for agriculture use or can be made so through irrigation, tilling, fertilization and crop rotation. The sandy soils of southern Minden and St. George Townships are an example of soils that are not naturally prime for agriculture, but can be managed for high productivity. Farming is supported in these areas as long as it is maintained outside of the current city limits and planned growth areas.





To help preserve these areas for future agricultural uses, development should be guided at lower densities. A density of 4 dwelling units per 40 acres is desired. A slightly higher density can be achieved if homes are clustered and developed at 6 dwelling units per 40 acres (measured on a quarter-quarter section basis). Future residential development should also be situated in a way that maximizes the agriculture use of the remaining farmland.

Natural Resource Areas

The Natural Resources Areas begin to highlight some of the unique features that define Benton County's landscape. The 2040 Land Use Plan depicts these natural resources as parks and open space, open water, streams and wetlands, and high quality aggregate resources.

Parks and Open Space

Parks are an essential amenity that positively impact the health of the county. Benton County maintains and operates 4 county parks that encompass 338 acres in total. The two largest county parks include Benton Beach and Bend in the River. Benton County's parks provide a range of community gathering space and recreational activities. The parks system also offers a variety of options for the user, such as camping, picnic shelters, trails, and passive open spaces. The park system is further complemented by city parks and open space areas. A more in-depth look at the Benton County park system is discussed in Chapter 6.



Open Water, Streams and Wetlands

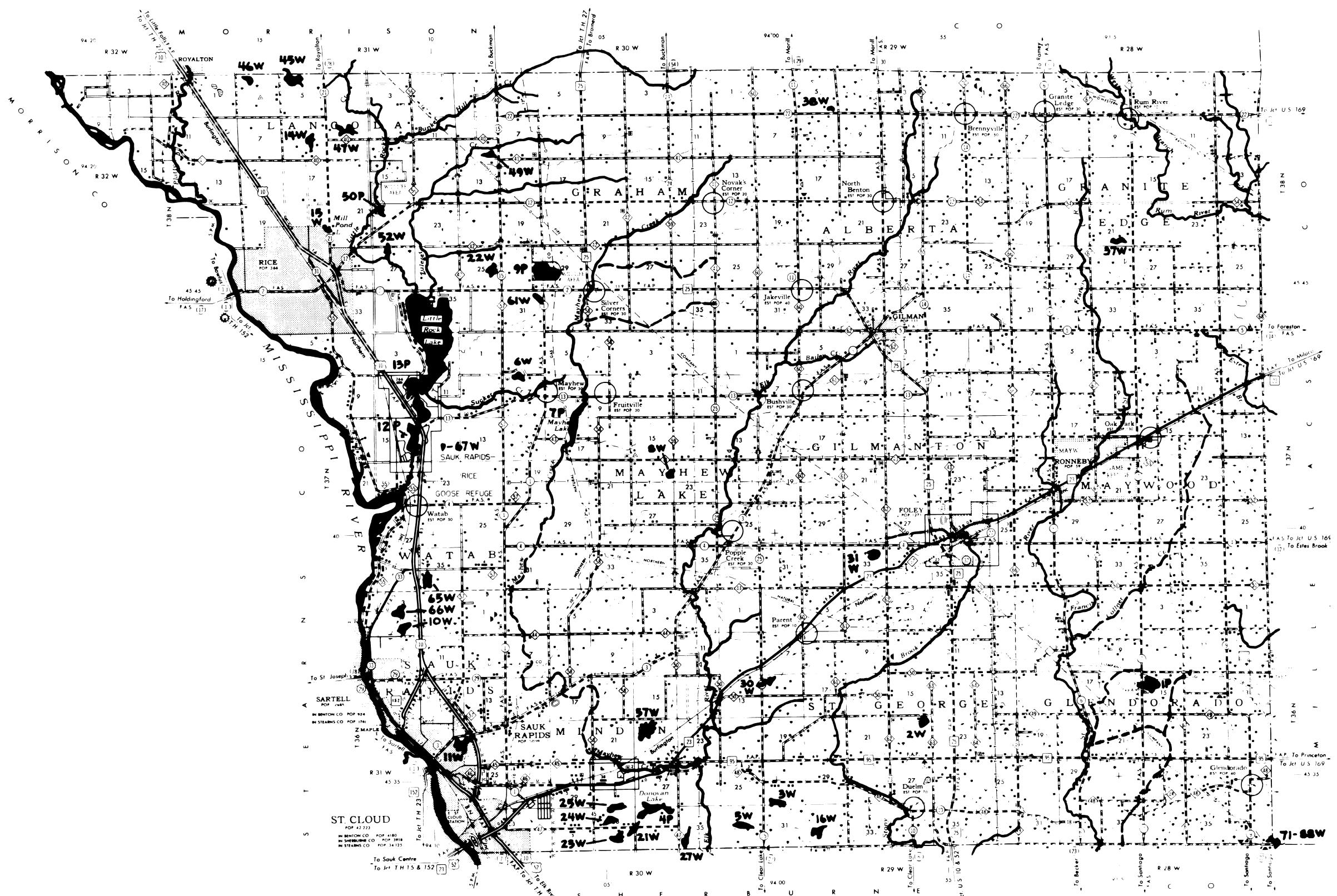
Water features are among the highest profile natural amenities within the county. The vast amount of wetlands, creeks, and streams are particularly valuable. The Mississippi River is also a defining water feature that draws visitors throughout the region for boating, fishing, and other recreational activities.

The water features identified in Figure 4.2 represent wetlands, lakes, rivers, streams, and creeks. These water systems support wildlife habitat, natural vegetation and spawning areas. Alteration of these systems in the form of pollutants, filling or draining can have an adverse effect. For this reason, they require special attention (see sidebar).

High Quality Aggregate Resources

Large portions of aggregate resources can be found throughout the county. High quality aggregate areas are identified in Figure 4.2 (source Minnesota Geological Survey) and may consist of sand and gravel and crushed stone. Most of the highest quality aggregate in these areas are used for construction purposes, such as the manufacturing of concrete or asphalt. Aggregates of lower quality are used for fill, base-course for roads, and for a variety of other purposes.

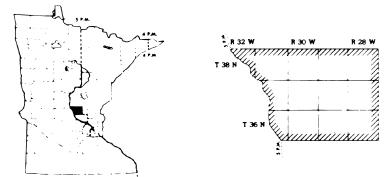
Figure 4.3. Protected Waters and Wetlands



PROTECTED WATERS AND WETLANDS

BENTON COUNTY MINNESOTA

SHEET 1 of 1



LEGEND

Protected Waters:

- Basins are identified with a number and the letter “P”.
- Watercourses are identified with a heavy, dark line.
- Public ditches are identified with a dashed line.

Protected Wetlands:

Protected Wetlands:

This map is intended for use with a separate descriptive list. The boundaries of the protected water bodies shown on this map are plotted as accurately as possible, consistent with the map scale, but are still approximate. A protected water body boundary coincides with the ordinary high water mark of the water body as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Section 105.37 and is determined through DNR field inspection or survey.

Protected waters and wetlands are subject to Minnesota Statutes, Section 105.42, which requires that a permit be obtained before making any alteration in the course, current or cross-section of these waters. Contact the DNR office in your area for further information.

Trespass

The designation and mapping of protected waters or wetlands **does not** entitle anyone to cross private land in order to gain access to the water. Please respect the property of others.

Water Bank

Wetland owners may be eligible for compensation for preservation of protected wetlands. Contact the DNR office in your area for further information.

SCALE: $\frac{1}{2}$ " = 1 MILE



Department of  Natural Resources
Division of Waters 1983
Revised 1996

Figure 4.4. Floodplain Management Areas

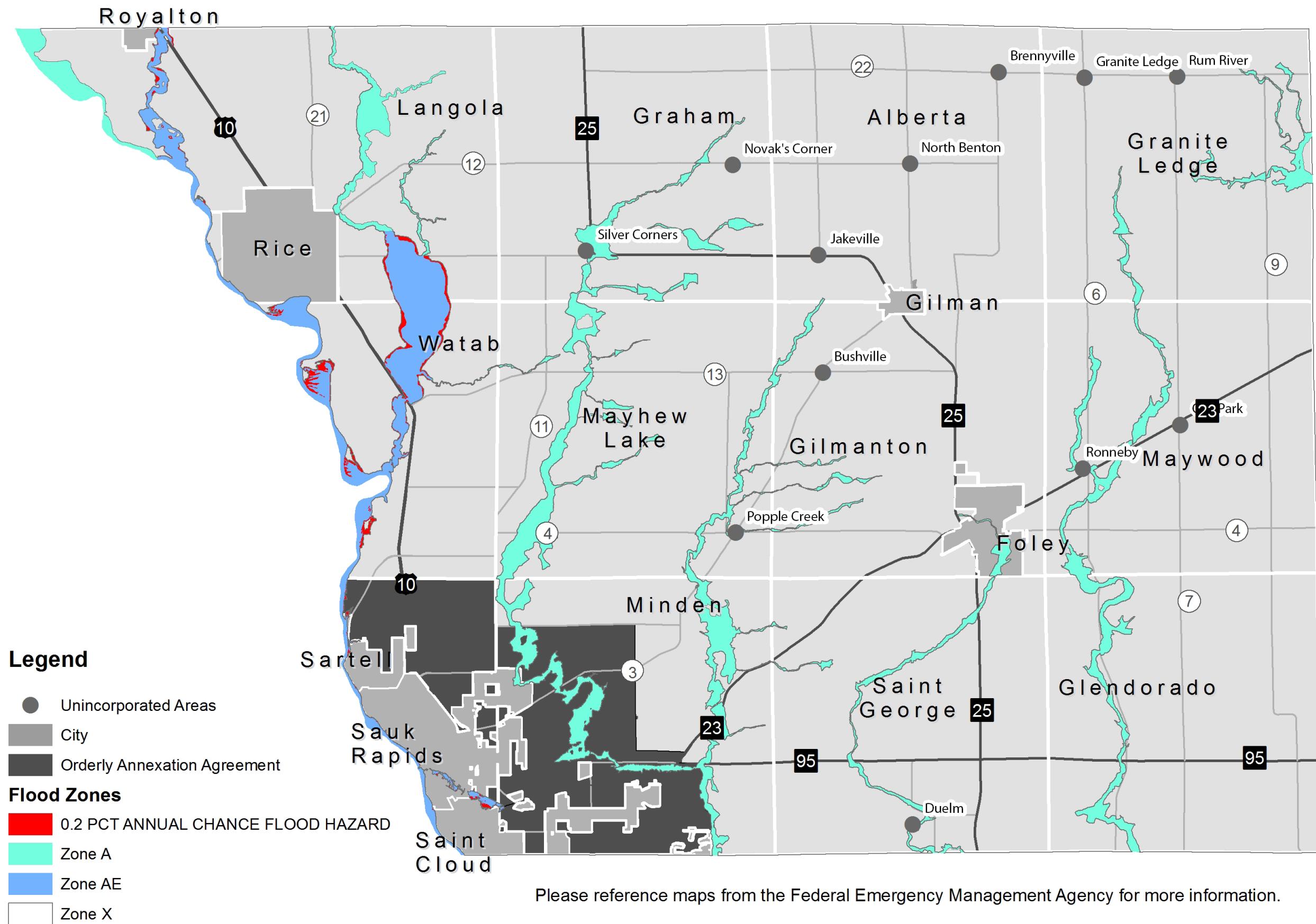
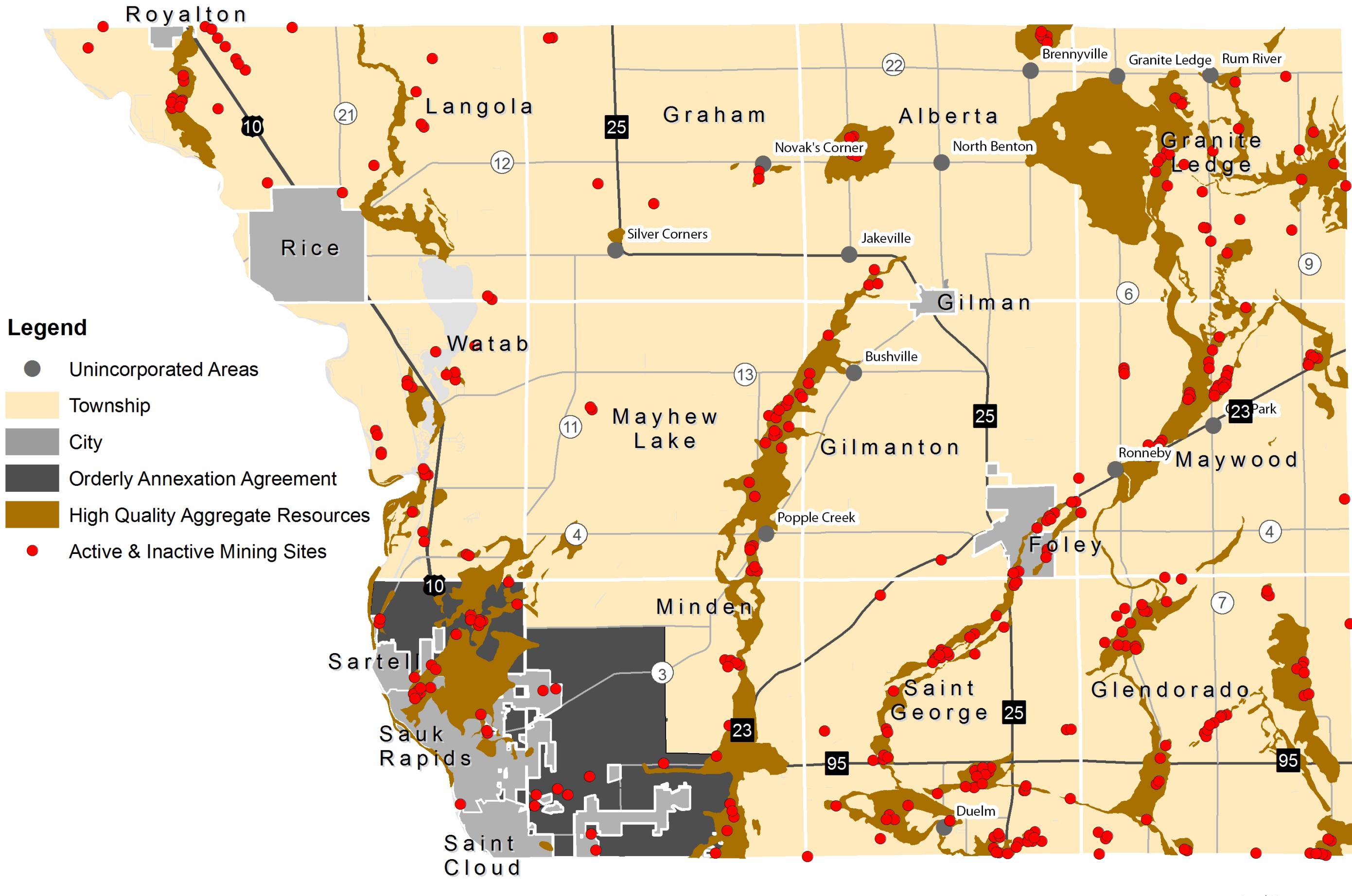


Figure 4.5. Aggregate Resources & Mining Areas



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Benton County has a total of eight quarry pits and 336 gravel pits (sand, gravel, and/or crushed stone) that have been or are currently being mined (see Figure 4.5). Pit and quarry locations have been gathered from several different sources through the Minnesota Geological survey records. The pits and quarries range in size from less than one acre to greater than 50 acres and may be active, inactive, depleted, or reclaimed. The aggregate quality of the pits varies.

Aggregate resources in the region, particularly in the Twins Cities is rapidly diminishing. Benton County recognizes these trends and the growing demand for mining operations in the area. There is a desire to preserve these resources for local economic development initiatives and public works projects. Accessing these resources locally can reduce the costs for local construction projects, compared to shipping resources from outside of the region. In an effort to preserve these resources, Benton County should consider the following policies:

- Locally source aggregate resources for construction projects, such as county roadway improvements or other public works initiatives.
- As part of the development review process, applicants should demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County that their project does not impact future access to aggregate resources.

Examples of State and County Regulations

Shoreland Protection Area: Land within 1,000 feet of specified lakes or within 300 feet of designated streams in Benton County is protected under the County's Shoreland District Management regulations. Those lakes and streams are illustrated on the County's Official Protected Waters and Wetlands Map generated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (see Figure 4.3). Regulations vary according to the classification of each lake or stream. Lakes classified as Natural Environment are: Bible Duck Slough, Donovan, Mayhew, Pularskis and Vicki. Lakes classified as Recreational Development are: Little Rock and the Little Rock Channel and Flowage. All rivers and streams are classified as Forested, Transition, Agricultural, Urban or Tributary.

Regulations also address land use, lot size, setback from the water, building elevation, grading and filling, tree and shrub removal, docks, natural resource protection and related matters. Shoreland regulations supplement and modify the "base" zoning.

Floodplain Management Area: The Floodplain Management Areas are not shown on the Land Use Plan map but are illustrated by the federal Flood Insurance Rate Study map (see Figure 4.4), which has been adopted as a supplement to the County zoning map.

The regulations of the Flood Plain District are the same as those of the model flood plain district developed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in conformance with the Flood Plain Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 104. Included are regulations on land use, parcel size, flood proofing, building elevation and floodwater obstructions.

Commercial Centers/Nodes

The work of business retention and attraction is critical to the local economy in Benton County, driving growth of the local tax base and expanding the employment opportunities, services, and amenities that residents depend on and desire. Benton County aspires to bring new opportunities, businesses, and economic vibrancy to the community in the next 20 years. These initiatives are reflected in the Benton Economic Partnership's 2019 Strategic Plan. The 2040 Land Use Plan has identified areas in the unincorporated areas that are suitable for commercial and industrial uses. These areas are reflected in Figure 4.2 as Town Centers, Rural Service Centers and Highway Commercial.



Images of Town Centers in Benton County

Town Centers

Town Centers capture small housing and business nodes (e.g., commercial establishment or two, a church, and a handful of residences). These locations are usually at the crossroads of two major roadways that are not incorporated. Historically, these locations have provided rural parts of the county access to goods and services. The number of businesses today may be relatively small, but can range from implement stores, storage facilities, restaurants/bars, and religious institutions. Smaller subdivisions and single-family residential homes are also common land uses in these areas.

Some of the larger Town Centers include Duelm, Oak Park, Mayhew, and Brennyville. Although incorporation is not anticipated, there may be opportunities to allow limited development in and around these centers. For example, Benton County allows for a variety of home occupied businesses through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Typical home businesses in the county include "cottage" type industries or services, ranging from woodworking, cabinetry, contractor yards, small repair shops, seamstresses and beauty salons. As these businesses prosper, they may outgrow the home business and seek to expand their services by relocating. CUP's who choose to expand should be encouraged to locate in and around Town Centers. Clustering businesses at key nodes can help generate stronger economic prosperity for rural parts of the county, while providing a centralized location for commerce.

Rural Service Centers

The Rural Service Centers are similar to the Town Centers; however, they do not have the historical context as an unincorporated Town Center. The Rural Service Centers are primarily located at nodes where state highways intersect. The Rural Service Centers should continue to grow with housing and businesses. The pattern of land use should be similar to these centers' historic character; that is, a mixture of residential and non-residential development on compact lots. Housing should also be permitted in the Rural Service Centers on parcels large enough to meet all Benton County requirements for on-site wastewater disposal systems and individual water wells.

Highway Commercial

Commercial and industrial land uses make up a relatively small part of the county's land area. Suitable locations for commercial or industrial development have been located outside the incorporated areas. These areas are principally located along the Highway 10 corridor. Development is typically unsewered and either provide goods and services to the surrounding agricultural community or to the traveling public. Residential development is typically prohibited in these areas.

The feasibility to develop along the highway may be challenging from a transportation and environmental perspective. These challenges include limited roadway access, wetland constraints, and the ability to address sewer and water needs.

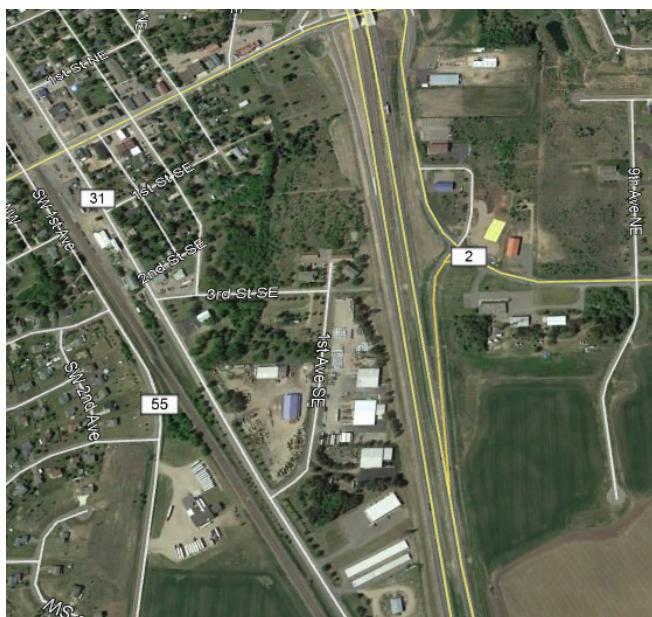
The following guiding principles should be used to promote development in a sustainable manner.

- **Clustering:** Businesses should be clustered together. Clustering development in this manner will help businesses support one another, providing successful and viable businesses.

- **Design:** Ensure a compatible design transition between commercial uses and residential or agriculture uses including retaining existing features of the landscape as defining elements of site design (fence rows, ditches, wetlands, woods) or incorporating greater setback and landscaping standards. All commercial or industrial development should be screened from the view of adjacent houses or farms.
- **Image:** Site design and building aesthetics along the corridor should promote a positive image of the community. This can be achieved through design principles (e.g., building materials and landscaping) that convey the corridor as an attractive place for visitors and prospective businesses.



Highway 10 near Royalton, MN



Highway 10 south of Rice, MN

- **Environment:** The proximity of new commercial development with the natural environment needs to be monitored. Appropriate mitigation strategies need to occur to avoid impacts to wetlands, open waters, natural species, etc.
- **Road Access:** Road access must conform to the access management requirements of Benton County and/or the Minnesota Department of Transportation.
- **Signage:** Sign restrictions (e.g., height, design and location) should be applied to mitigate negative visual impacts to the corridor.
- **Zoning:** Commercial or industrial development should be permitted in locations appropriately planned and zoned by Benton County, or in locations planned by a City, annexed to that City and rezoned appropriately.

Planning Areas

For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the County assumes a majority of the growth projected for the year 2040 and beyond (see Chapter 2) will occur within the cities or along their borders. Growth outside of the city limits have been identified in the 2040 Land Use Plan (see Figure 4.2) as Rural Residential Overlay, Orderly Annexation Areas, and Urban Growth Areas. The purpose and intent for each of these land use categories are described below.



Precedent examples of design elements (e.g., lighting, signage, and rain gardens) that can help portray a positive image of the community along a roadway corridor.

Rural Residential Overlay

Although agriculture remains the predominant County land use for the foreseeable future, there are locations that may not be appropriate for long-term farming. These include parts of Watab Township (e.g., along Highway 10 and around Little Rock Lake), Sauk Rapids Township, and the western one-third of Minden Township. These locations have the highest concentration of residential development in the non-urbanized portions of the county. These areas are not anticipated to be served by City water and sewer utilities, except where failing septic systems or contaminated private wells cause health concerns.

The overlay encompasses existing residential lots and platted subdivisions where the density is greater and services are nearby. Development in these areas typically range between 1 to 2.5 units per acre. Future land use patterns in the overlay should be within these density ranges. The density may exceed 2.5 units per acre if a connection to a public wastewater treatment facility is made. Future subdivisions should be able to demonstrate best practices and the latest in innovative technology to address on-site septic.



Urban Growth Areas

Over the years, cities have become more urbanized with more commercial development and higher density residential uses. As a result of these development pressures, some of the townships have seen changes to their borders with neighboring communities. These types of changes have made it harder for some of the townships to stand alone as rural communities as they once did, and in many respects still do. The need for land use planning is evident based on these changing environments. Good land use planning begins by recognizing areas of growth identified by a city and their planning documents (e.g., comprehensive plans or land use studies). At a minimum, the County's Comprehensive Plan must address these areas of growth as prescribed by Minnesota law (see page 16).

The Urban Growth Areas have their origins dating back to the 1999 Benton County Comprehensive Plan. These areas were recognized as "Urban Transitional Areas." The 2006 Benton County Comprehensive Plan also identified "Urban Growth Areas" around the cities of Foley, Gilman, Rice and Royalton. During this plan's public involvement process, it became clear that the 2006 Urban Growth Areas may no longer reflect a city's growth projections (too much or too little) or aspirations to develop in that manner. Based on



Precedent examples of rural residential land uses

Minnesota State Statue (Urban Growth Areas)

The following are excerpts from Minnesota State Statue regarding Urban Growth Areas:

- **Minn. Stat. § 462.352 (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.
- **Minn. Stat. § 462.3535 (Subd. 1) General.** Each municipality is encouraged to prepare and implement a community-based comprehensive municipal plan.
- **Minn. Stat. § 462.3535 (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.
- **Minn. Stat. § 462.3535 (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.

those conversations, the urban growth boundaries were refined to both simplify and better-reflect community direction.

The Urban Growth Areas are now represented as illustrative boundaries (approximately a quarter-mile to a half-mile from existing city boundaries). This approach will help continue to manage growth in a sustainable manner, while working towards a more formalized process for creating a boundary at the parcel level. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the city and the townships to work together to better define those boundaries. It is the County's role to recognize these areas as part of the Land Use Plan and serve as a resource in future land use planning decisions.

Overall, it is important to recognize the Urban Growth Areas as part of the 2040 Land Use Plan. The boundaries help guide potential growth and prevent the encroachment of non-farm uses into agricultural lands. The boundaries can also be used to plan for the efficient extension of roads and public services. If and when development occurs, the Urban Growth Areas should be limited to very low densities (4 units per 40 acres).

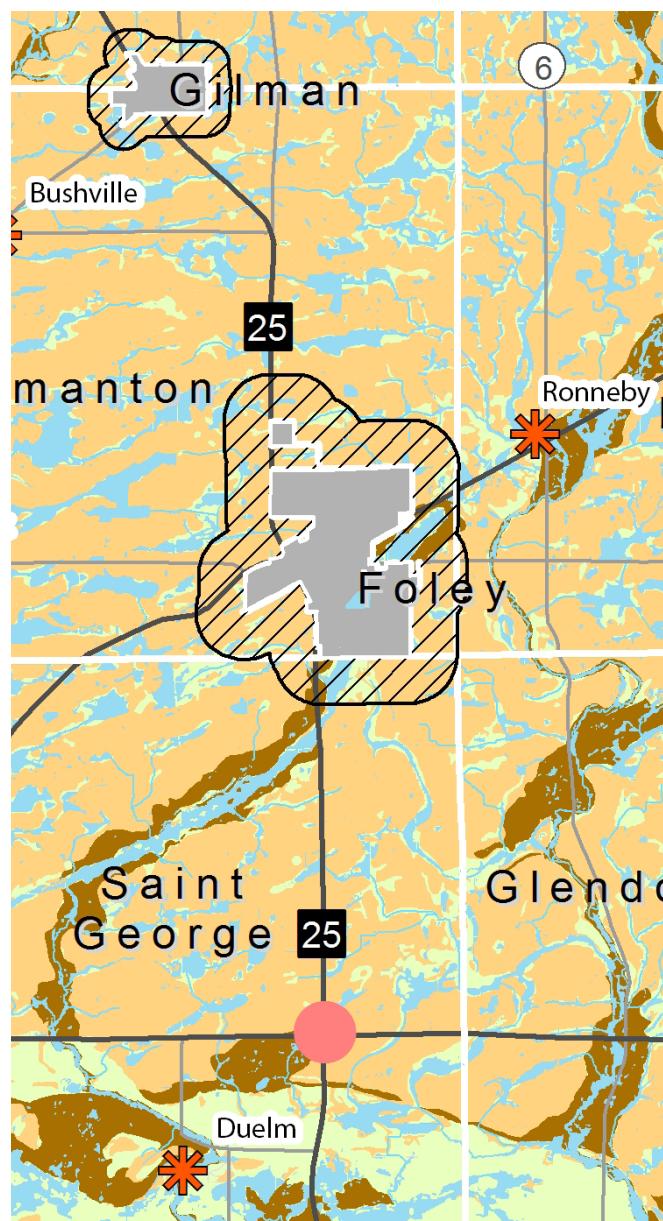
Development in the Urban Growth Areas should follow the following guiding principles:

- **Clustering:** Houses may be clustered onto smaller parcels than normally allowed if the subdivision layout and sewage systems are designed to easily accommodate a future annexation by the City and service by the City's sewer and water systems.
- **Collaboration:** Cities and Townships should work together to better define the urban growth boundaries.
- **Commercial and Industrial Uses:** Retail, service or industrial businesses may be allowed in the Urban Growth Area under these conditions:
 - If there is no City land use plan that addresses the location in question, under a Conditional

Use Permit issued by the County with the review of the nearby City.

- Consistency with the land use plan of the nearby city, or the land use plan and zoning of a joint City-County planning and zoning board (if applicable).

The Urban Growth Areas are represented as illustrative boundaries (approximately a quarter-mile to a half-mile from existing city boundaries).



- **Environmental Protection:** The subdivision must conform to the County regulations for the protection of wetlands, shorelands and floodplains.
- **Future Public Roads:** The subdivision must be able to easily provide public road access in the future to the portions of the tract not adjacent to the County or Township road.
- **Livestock:** No new feedlot or livestock operations should be allowed in the Urban Growth Area. This provision does not apply to the expansion of existing feedlot or livestock operations.
- **Long-Range Planning:** A new development should demonstrate how its proposal (e.g., subdivision) will eventually be incorporated into a City's long range plans, including street and utility system plans. This would occur when a development is achieving over 5 units per 40 acres.
- **Official Map:** The subdivision must be consistent with any Official Map of roads, utilities, drainage and parks (if such a map covers the area in question)
- **Parcel Size:** The County encourages development on smaller parcels in order to retain larger parcels intact for cultivation, minimize interference with farming, and reduce complaints about farm operations such as odors or machinery noise.
- **Private Sewage System:** Private, individual sewage treatment systems must meet the County's adopted requirements and state laws regulating Sanitary Sewer Treatment Systems (SSTS).
- **Public Utilities:** A subdivision should be able to economically and efficiently retrofit the site with City sewer and water lines.
- **Subdivisions:** A subdivision plat should indicate how the tract could be later resubdivided into city-size lots for utility service.

Orderly Annexation Areas

The Orderly Annexation Area applies to the property covered by an agreement between a city and a township (as well as the County) in which land will be annexed to the city in the future under specified conditions. Orderly annexation agreements are a legal tool that can help a township control, to some degree, when and how land is annexed. This proactive measure includes an agreement between both the city and township that stipulates the terms and conditions in the transition/annexation of land. Typical terms and conditions state the time, location, tax revenue, infrastructure and land uses associated with the property. This binding agreement has been a common practice by several communities in southwestern Benton County. Existing agreement and their boundaries are reflected in Figure 4.2. Please reference Minnesota State Statute 414 to learn more about the legal process for municipal boundaries adjustments.

The 2040 Land Use Plan does not promote or encourage annexation, but merely identifies best practices and policies to help facilitate growth in a sustainable manner. These best practices are discussed throughout this chapter.

An Urban Growth Boundary Approach

The following example is an approach a city or township may use to better define their growth boundaries at a parcel level.

Step 1: Prepare an estimate of population growth of the city and county over the next twenty years based on past trends. The population's estimates help identify the amount of land needed for new development of housing, commercial, industrial, and public spaces.

Step 2: Prepare an inventory of existing public facilities (e.g., sewer, water, roads, schools, and parks), their capacity, and projected needs. The projected needs should reflect any concurrency and adequate public facilities requirements. The estimate of future infrastructure should reflect anticipated development densities and realistic costs and financial ability to pay for new and upgraded public services.

Step 3: Prepare an estimate of the amount of buildable land needed for the next twenty year. This estimate should take into consideration development constraints, such as wetlands and topography. Other consideration should include physical or political barriers to the expansion of the growth boundary identified.

Step 4: Prepare a detailed map showing the growth boundary and the areas to include inside the boundary. A mapping exercise should be prepared to clearly demonstrate what parcel falls with-in or outside of the growth boundary.

Step 5: Develop a growth boundary agreement that documents the findings above. The findings should inform amendments to the city, township or county comprehensive plans and zoning maps; in addition to documenting the agreement on the location of the growth boundary. The agreement between the local governments should also describe the procedures for reviewing and updating the growth boundary, and state the urban services (e.g., public sewer and water) that will not be extended beyond the growth boundary.

Step 6: Agree to implement low-density agricultural or rural residential land uses outside of the growth boundary. This should be done by the local governments after the boundary agreement has been adopted (through resolutions). This will protect not only farm land, but also water supplies, wildlife habitat, and sensitive rural lands. Low-density zoning outside of the growth areas can ensure large residential and commercial developments do not leapfrog over the growth boundary, or hobby farms do not over run the agricultural areas.

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