



To: City of Lonsdale's Comprehensive Plan Committee
 From: Jo Foust, Municipal Development Group, Inc.
 Date: November 13, 2015
 Re: Kick off workshop for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan

We are pleased to be working with the Lonsdale's Comprehensive Planning Committee, community and staff on the update of the City's Comprehensive Plan! We look forward to facilitating the process.

As a part of the initial meeting, there are several items we would like to review, as follows:

1. An overview of the Comprehensive Plan, the proposed process and schedule for completion.
2. **Community Input.** A Community Survey is proposed in order to obtain input on the vision for the community as well as various chapters of the Plan. Enclosed is a DRAFT resident survey which would be available for completion on-line or in paper form. The Committee's input on the questions to include is requested.

A **Visioning Session** is also proposed to obtain input early in the process. The Committee is asked to identify possible dates and locations for the meeting.

3. **Chapter 1 – Introduction.** Enclosed is a DRAFT copy of Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan, which is the introduction. A brief overview of this chapter and its contents will be provided at the meeting. Please note, input received through the interview process, on-line resident survey and community visioning meeting will be incorporated into the final two pages of this chapter, once those activities are completed.
4. **Chapter 2 – Community History and Vision.** Enclosed is a DRAFT copy of Chapter 2. This will be reviewed at the meeting as well.

Action:

I will be present at the November 19, 2015 meeting to discuss these items and seek the Committee's input.

Lonsdale Comprehensive Plan Schedule

| Activities and/or Meetings | Timeline | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. | March | April | May | June | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|------|-------|------|
| 1 Meeting with City Staff to review plan components & process | 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 PC Meeting Meeting #1: Introduction | 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 Visioning Session | 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 On-Line Survey | 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 PC Meeting #2: Demographics | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 PC Meeting #2: Natural Resources | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 Meeting with EDA/Chamber | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 PC Meeting #3: Economy & Employment | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 Meeting with Park Bd | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 PC Meeting #4: Parks, Trails & Rec. | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 PC Meeting #5: Land Use | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 PC Meeting #6: Growth Management | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 PC Meeting #7: Transportation | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 PC Meeting #7: Utilities | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 PC Meeting #8: Housing | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 PC Meeting #9: Implementation | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 Prepare Draft Plan Documents | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 PC Meeting #10 Open House/Public Hearing | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 Council action/adoption | 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is a document which establishes guidelines for the future growth and redevelopment of the city. This plan guides development through the year 2040. It is an all-inclusive document which includes the following elements:

- History and vision of the community
- Physical profile
- Demographic trends & assumptions
- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- * Transportation
- * Parks, Trails & Recreation
- * Community Facilities
- * Public Utilities
- * Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan establishes guidelines to implement the City's vision for the future. It should be used as a policy to guide decisions about the (re)development of the community. The plan should be reviewed and updated as necessary.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The City of Lonsdale prepared a Comprehensive Plan in 1996, with updates to the land use chapter in 2002 and a complete Comprehensive Plan update in 2005. Similar to metropolitan communities, which are required to update their plans every ten (10) years, the City of Lonsdale is proactively addressing future needs and incorporating changes and studies which have occurred over the past decade. A summary of the studies and data utilized to prepare the 2040 Comprehensive Plan follows:

2010 Census.

Information on population, demographics, housing and employment, from the 2010 Census has been incorporated into the various chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

MN State Demographer Projections

The Minnesota State Demographer's population estimates and projections to the year 2040, for Rice County, have been incorporated into the Demographics Chapter.

Building Permit Records, 2005-2015

Historical building construction, including new home construction and commercial/industrial construction, from City building permits, is incorporated into the Housing and Land Use Chapters.

Rice County Housing Study, 2012

Rice County engaged the services of Community Partners Research, Inc. in 2012, to identify the housing needs in Rice County. The Study incorporates 2010 US Census data and includes recommendations for housing for each of the communities, including Lonsdale.

City of Lonsdale, Master Park and Open Space Plan, 2007

The City of Lonsdale prepared a Master Park and Open Space Plan in 2007. Information from this plan has been incorporated into the Parks, Trails and Open Space Chapter.

City of Lonsdale Utility Plans.

The following studies and plans were reviewed and incorporated into the 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

- Bio-Solids Study
- Lift Station Study
- NE Sewer Plan
- SW Sewer Plan
- Updated CIP Area No. 5 – Phase II Feasibility Study

Transportation Plan, 2006

WSB & Associates prepared a Transportation Plan for the City of Lonsdale in 2006. The information is included in the Transportation Chapter.

Safe Routes to School Plan, 2015

Tri-City United worked with Region 9 Development Commission on a Safe Routes to School Plan in 2015, which included the cities of Lonsdale, Montgomery and Le Center. Findings and recommendations of the Plan are included in the Transportation Chapter.

Downtown Master Streetscape Plan, 2007

Yaggy Colby Associates assisted the City with the development of a Downtown Streetscape Master Plan in 2007. The concepts have been incorporated into the Economy and Employment Chapter.

Streetscape Plan, 2013

In 2013, WSB & Associates assisted the City with the development of optional streetscape designs and cost estimates. This information is incorporated into the Economy and Employment Chapter.

Rice County Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Rice County was in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan at the same time as Lonsdale. Information relevant to the community was reviewed as a part of the City's Comp Plan update.

SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan encompasses twelve (12) general categories of information:

1. This **Introduction** includes the planning framework, the scope of the plan, the process for completing the plan and participants in the process.
2. **Community History, Community Character and Vision for the Future**- This chapter provides historical information on the city, the character of the community and the vision for the future growth and (re) development. It includes a vision statement, guiding principles and general community goals and strategies that set forth standards for land use and growth management.
3. A review of the **Natural Resources** in the community indicate the geographical nature of the community in terms of a regional context along with an evaluation of the physical aspects of the City such as water resources, topographical elements and physical barriers to development.

4. **Demographic and Social Characteristics and Trends** contains historic and projected population information as it relates to growth, age characteristics, education, occupation, and income levels.
5. The **Economic Development Chapter** includes a review of various economic statistics, a review of the EDA and economic development policy statements relative to the commercial and industrial districts. Business trends and employment projections are included which assist in identifying the amount of commercial and industrial land to plan for in the land use chapter.
6. The **Parks, Trails and Recreation Chapter** includes an inventory of existing park and recreational amenities in the city, an analysis of future needs and policies relating to the future parks, trails and other recreational offerings in the city and adjacent areas.
7. The **Transportation Chapter** includes information on the current transportation system, categorizes the current street system, addresses local, regional and state transportation plans which impact the city, and establishes access management policies as well as overall transportation policies for future transportation planning.
8. The **Utilities Chapter** includes an overview of sanitary sewer, water and surface water utilities as they relate to the city's ability to service current and future growth area and capital improvements required to support growth.
9. The **Housing Chapter** evaluates the current housing stock, evaluates housing trends, reviews land use options and establishes housing objectives and policies to meet future housing needs.
10. The chapter on **Municipal or Administrative Buildings and Public Services** includes information relating to government and educational facilities.
11. **The Land Use Chapter** inventories existing land uses, identify potential infill or redevelopment areas and evaluates future land uses. This chapter also discusses the **Municipal Boundary Expansion** and defines a growth area outside of the current municipal limits in which future growth is anticipated, and where the city is able to service growth with future utilities. This chapter also includes policies for boundary expansion or annexation.
12. Finally, the **Implementation Chapter** describes and summarizes local controls pertaining to land use; the subdivision of land, Capital Improvement Planning, orderly annexation and implementation strategies.

PLANNING PROCESS

This Plan evolved through a participatory process that included:

- **Community survey-** An on-line and paper community survey was available November through December, 2015. ___ responses or ___% of occupied households in the City responded;

- **Public meetings**, including:
 - A **community visioning session** held ____, 2015 and
 - An open house and public hearing held on October ____, 2016.
- **Focus Group Meetings with City Committees** including the:
 - EDA and Chamber of Commerce and
 - Park Board
- **City staff, consultant/engineer** participation.
- **Nine Workshop Meetings** with a Comprehensive Planning Committee (Planning Commission with representatives from the EDA and Park Board) from November, 2015 to September, 2016.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

The development of the Comprehensive Plan is the result of the input of many participants including citizens, staff, elected officials, citizen commissions, the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. The list of participants follows:

City Council:

Tim Rud, Mayor
 Kevin Kodada
 Cindy Furrer
 Joe Daleiden
 Scott Pelava

Economic Development Authority:

Cindy Furrer, President/Council Rep.
 Fritz Duban
 Randall Rivers
 Jason Ruppert
 Debbie Zellner, Vice President
 Laura Prigge
 Joe Daleiden

Planning Commission:

Dave Dols, Chair
 Joe Kodada, Vice Chair
 Jim Freid
 Ben Sticha
 John Duban
 Scott Pelava, Ex-officio (Council Representative)
 Joe Erickson, Ex-officio (City Administrator)
 Benjamin Baker, Secretary (City Planner)

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:

Kevin Kodada, Chair/Council Representative
 Jeanette Utecht, Vice Chair
 Shelly Narum
 Laura Carpentier
 Benjamin Baker, Secretary/City Planner

Other:

Citizens of Lonsdale

Township Officials

City Staff

Chamber of Commerce

Local Developers

Municipal Development Group, Inc, Planning Consultants

City Engineer - WSB Inc., Transportation Planners

Chapter 2 – COMMUNITY HISTORY & VISION FOR THE FUTURE

In order to plan for the future, it is important to understand the history of a community and what lead to its current development. This Chapter provides a history of the city, describes its regional setting, incorporates the communities' vision for the future and establishes guiding principles and goals to accomplish the vision.

HISTORY

In the late 1800's the settlement of Trondhjem was established by farmers. In the 1890's the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company started their plans for a rail line from Farmington, Minnesota in Dakota County to Wells, Minnesota in Blue Earth County. In 1901 the railway company purchased 80 acres of land. A railway depot was built and soon growth followed.



In 1902, 80 acres were purchased by the Milwaukee Land Company and a village was platted. An article appearing in the *Montgomery Messenger* stated on July 16, 1902 a grand opening of the town of Lonsdale was held with lots being auctioned off at prices from \$100.00 to \$400.00 each. Many of the first residents were former Veseli residents that placed many of their homes on skids and pulled to Lonsdale by steam tractors. As the town quickly established with many settlers from Czechoslovakian and Norwegian decent, discussion for incorporation occurred. On July 1, 1903, the Village of Lonsdale was incorporated on with a vote of 24 in favor and no one opposed.

From the initial population of 84 persons in 1903, the City grew to 541 persons by 1960. Since then, the City's population has experienced much faster growth. During the 1970s, the City doubled to 1,160 persons. The 2010 Census reported a population of 3,674, with the MN State Demographer estimating a 2014 population of 3,821.

Early businesses in Lonsdale included a saloon, hotel, livery, grain elevators, blacksmith shop and harness shop. The Trondhjem Church, which was constructed in 1878. The Lonsdale school house was erected in 1908.



Trondhjem Church, Built 1878



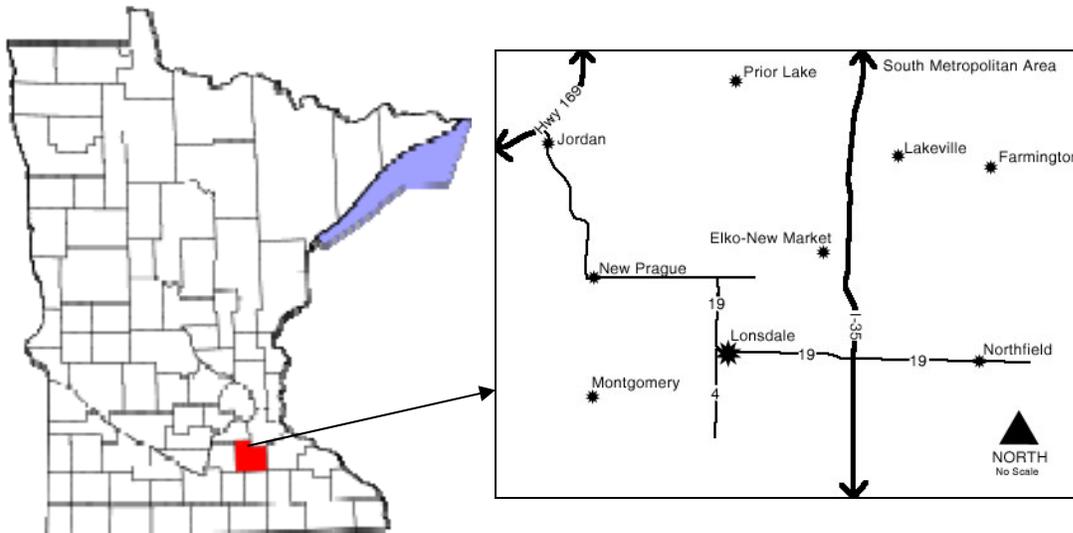
Historic Main Street, 1910s

Along with a growth in population, Lonsdale's business community has also grown. According to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development 2014 reports, Lonsdale had 74 businesses providing 414 jobs.

REGIONAL SETTING

Lonsdale is located approximately 45 miles south of Minneapolis and approximately six miles west of Interstate 35. State Highway 19 connects the City to Interstate 35 to the east and to the City of New Prague to the northwest. Lonsdale is also located in the northwest corner of Rice County. Rice County is on the fringe of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and has been experiencing increased pressure for growth in recent years.

Figure 2.1- Regional Setting



COMMUNITY VISION (VISION AND GOALS TO BE UPDATED FOLLOWING COMMUNITY SURVEY AND VISIONING SESSION)

The Community Vision is the heart of the Comprehensive Plan. It is designed to capture what the community wants to be in the future. It includes a vision statement and guiding principles and general community goals and strategies that set forth standards for transportation, economic development, housing, park and recreation, downtown, public services and facilities, and land use and growth management.

No system of land use designation can survive strong social and economic pressures to change. Therefore, it is appropriate that such systems be periodically reevaluated in light of changing social and economic conditions. Realizing that change is inevitable, these statements communicate the aspirations of the community regarding the type of living environment that its citizens strive to achieve. While external factors influencing land use will change, the vision statements, goals and strategies will continue to provide a longer range perspective from which to view proposed land use changes.

"Lonsdale - Growing to be a good small town."

The vision for the future of Lonsdale consists of community goals on the following:

- A desire for more public services
- A desire for more community activities
- A desire for more commercial choices
- A desire for more employment opportunities
- A desire to maintain a small town character

The City of Lonsdale is a growing small town that recognizes its strategic advantage of its small town atmosphere and good solid growth. Community input gathered through this Comprehensive Plan process indicated that the majority of the City's residents value the City's small town character and friendly atmosphere. The City prioritizes projects that promote community gathering and enhanced sense of identity and pride. The City wants to enhance its traditional downtown character while adding housing and new commercial industrial development, in other words: "Lonsdale - Growing to be a good small town."

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles identify broad directives that guide future growth or act as a filter that guides decision-making related to city growth through the life of this document. The guiding principles for the 2040 Lonsdale Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

- Enhance Lonsdale's high quality of life
- Plan orderly community development
- Maintain a sense of community and small town values
- Provide quality, basic municipal services
- Commitment to excellence
- Revitalize downtown
- Strong residential growth
- Encourage business & industrial growth
- Develop Parks, Trails and Open Space as a focal point of neighborhoods

GENERAL GOALS AND STRATEGIES

General Goal #1

Maximize Lonsdale's potential as a thriving center for business, industry, education and recreation, while maintaining and enhancing its livability and community character.

Strategies:

1. Promote the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Plan that effectively and efficiently plans for land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, economic development and environmental protection for Lonsdale and the immediately surrounding area.
2. Review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. Adhere to this Plan, which shall guide all zoning changes, as closely as possible to ensure consistent development policy.

3. Formulate and enforce city ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and general residential, commercial and industrial development requirements.
4. Continue to plan for land uses to support and enhance Lonsdale's downtown.
5. Continue to plan for land uses to support and enhance Lonsdale' ability to attract quality development, by providing adequate quality areas for new business development.
6. Participate in the State, Rice County, and surrounding townships' governmental processes regarding issues important to the city.
7. Protect both the general welfare and the individual choices of Lonsdale residents. Insure that decisions that are made by the community reflect the needs of current residents and business owners.
8. Continue to support the relationship between the City and the School Districts in efforts to address new development and its impact to enrollment and facilities.

General Goal #2

Promote community spirit and unity and enhance Lonsdale' character and identity.

Strategies:

1. Encourage volunteerism, participation in community activities and acceptance of community leadership positions.
2. Seek partnerships with coalitions and interest groups to share resources and energies in order to address community problems and opportunities.
3. Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision-making process.
4. Encourage increased interaction and communication between citizens of all ages, cultural heritages and incomes.
5. Continue to improve and enhance communication among the city, residents, businesses, civic groups and public agencies utilizing various media such as a city newsletter, local newspaper and the community web page.
6. Continue to improve connections between the city, and its business community through active participation in the local Chamber of Commerce and civic groups.
7. Encourage a variety of living, working and social experiences and opportunities within the community.
8. Protect and enhance important historical, cultural and natural resources as a means to maintain the integrity, heritage and local character of Lonsdale's natural and built environment.