AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
   (At the beginning of each Committee of the Whole Work Session meeting, the floor will be open to solicit public comments. Public comments will be limited to two (2) minutes for each person, subject to the discretion of the County Board Chairperson)

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES: Julie Runkel
   A. Comprehensive Plan Update

III. ADJOURN (The Board may meet as a group for lunch)

SPECIAL NEEDS: If you require special services to attend or participate in a public meeting, please call the County’s Administration Office at 507.332.6101 or e-mail slangevin@co.rice.mn.us. TDD users can call 507.332.6248. Please call 24 hours before the meeting, if possible.
AGENDA DATE: July 17, 2018

REQUEST BY: Julie Runkel, Environmental Services

STATE ITEM OF BUSINESS:
Comprehensive Plan Update

BACKGROUND:
The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee will continue discussion on the Economic Development section of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. Draft goals and objectives have been developed based on the survey feedback of the Steering Committee and are attached for review at the meeting. Also attached is a preliminary draft of the Land Use chapter of the comprehensive plan for committee review. We will also have some preliminary discussion on future land use mapping to be contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

COUNTY BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:
Reviewed with additional material provided: ✓ Approved
County Administrator
Economic Development

Goals and Strategies Outline

Goal 1: Maintain and strengthen economic diversity.

- **Strategy 1:** Support the establishment and maintenance of housing, transportation, communication, and utility systems which support and foster quality development.

- **Strategy 2:** Provide an adequate supply of vacant, development-ready land for commercial and industrial use.

- **Strategy 3:** Encourage the development of infrastructure to promote telecommuting and E-business in Rice County.

- **Strategy 4:** Increase the number of small firms within the region by fostering local entrepreneurship.

- **Strategy 5:** Promote and foster historical, ecological and agricultural tourism as a suitable and appropriate form of economic development.

Goal 2: Build a highly skilled, flexible workforce.

- **Strategy 1:** Cooperate with local educational institutions to coordinate training/skill requirements to meet the needs of local employers.

- **Strategy 2:** Cooperate with business, educational institutions, community organizations, and government to provide information to local businesses.

- **Strategy 3:** Improve transportation connections between residential communities and work sites.

- **Strategy 4:** Promote and encourage a healthy living environment to attract skilled workers.

Goal 3: Retain and expand existing local businesses.

- **Strategy 1:** Encourage access to economic incentives for quality job creation and/or tax base enhancement.

- **Strategy 2:** Cooperate with business, educational institutions, community organizations, and government to provide information to local businesses.

- **Strategy 3:** Encourage existing neighborhood employers to grow “in place,” keeping jobs close to where people live.

- **Strategy 4:** Support downtown revitalization and neighborhood business development in the cities.
• **Strategy 5:** Recruit businesses that utilize the by-products of other businesses.
3.0 Land Use

3.1 Introduction

The use of land and the pattern of development affect everything from the location and expansion of roads and central utilities to the state of agriculture, the provision of emergency services, the protection of natural resources, and the intangible qualities that constitute “rural character.” That is why Land Use is an imperative element in a Comprehensive Plan (The Plan).

The Land Use section of The Plan is intended to provide the framework that will guide County policies, priorities and investments. This section will help guide the County’s actions in the areas of sustainable growth, economic development, active lifestyles, transportation, and agricultural and natural resource protection.

Rice County is located in a transitional area of Minnesota between south-central and southeastern Minnesota. The location has contributed to diverse land uses and development patterns. The County is predominately rural in nature with a total land area of roughly 496 square miles (329,914 acres). In 2000, approximately 59% was comprised of agricultural land; 19% grass, shrub, or wetland; 10% forested; 9% urban; and the remaining 3% was water. For more information on Rice County’s land use, see the Land Map and Land Cover documents in the FIG.

3.2 Goals, Strategies and Action Items

The following goals and strategies are general statements that focus on the land use issues identified through the planning process. Goals are broadly worded, while strategies are actions that can be taken to achieve a goal. The action items are related to the goals and strategies, but are more specific and detailed. Many of the goals for 2040 are the same or similar to those of the 2002 plan, but have been updated to address...
progress toward the goals and improved understanding of the relationship between land use and natural resources.

3.2.1 Growth and Development

**Goal 1. Support and Encourage Orderly Growth and Development.**

**Strategy 1.** Support land use planning, which encourages orderly growth and sustainable development and redevelopment.

- **Action Item 1:** Coordinate infrastructure expansion with development; and encourage development where the infrastructure is adequate to serve that growth.
- **Action Item 2:** Support the provision of joint services among jurisdictions.
- **Action Item 3:** Remain apprised of expected future urban growth areas.
- **Action Item 4:** Emphasize staging of development, avoiding a discontinuous and inefficient ‘leapfrog’ pattern.

**Strategy 2.** Encourage a diverse economic mix for Rice County by promoting existing assets and identifying new opportunities.

- **Action Item 1:** Create commercial/industrial zones to promote employment and generate tax base in Rice County.
- **Action Item 2:** Identify appropriate areas for commercial and industrial developments, including along the I-35 corridor.
- **Action Item 3:** Promote agriculture and associated businesses.
- **Action Item 4:** Identify and reserve areas with sand, gravel and aggregate deposits for extraction.

**Strategy 3.** Identify additional areas for mixed-use development and further support urban growth.

- **Action Item 1:** Continue to evaluate and implement urban growth zones where municipal infrastructure is likely to extend.
- **Action Item 2:** Continue to have zoning districts for the unincorporated villages to allow for mixed-use development encouraging the development of municipal type water and sewer services.

**Strategy 4.** Promote the opportunity to lead active and healthy lifestyles through the coordinated development of infrastructure or supporting programs that promote active lifestyles.

- **Action Item 1:** Develop connections between existing communities, parks and other destinations to promote safe and active options.
- **Action Item 2:** Create land use regulations to improve proximity to nutritious foods and support local wholesome food-related businesses and activities.

Over 92% of Rice County residents that participated in the community survey either agree or strongly agree that local food production is important to the future of Rice County.
Strategy 5. Support and further develop land use patterns that encourage alternative modes of transportation.

Action Item 1: Identify and map concentrations of compact residential and employment development that has potential to be served by transit.

Action Item 2: Identify existing land uses and travel corridors in the county that could be transformed into transit-friendly corridors.

Action Item 3: Encourage local planning for mixed land use areas in or adjacent to transit corridors.

Action Item 4: Continue to expand existing partnerships and look for new opportunities to collaborate on providing alternative modes of transportation.

3.2.2 Agriculture and Natural Resources

86% of community survey respondents either agree or strongly agree that preserving existing agricultural land should be a planning priority for Rice County.

Goal 2: Preserve Agricultural Land and Natural Resources.

Strategy 1. Minimize conflicts between agricultural, residential, and other uses.

Action Item 1: Adopt land use regulations that control density and development in agricultural and open spaces, to protect and preserve agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.

Action Item 2: Develop management methods for accommodating diverse types of agricultural activity.

Action Item 3: Allow complementary commercial or industrial uses.

Action Item 4: Protect and promote agriculture by preserving large tracts of land by encouraging clustering of rural residential development though use of transfer of development rights.

Action Item 5: Promote higher density housing development in cities and unincorporated villages that can provide municipal or municipal type water and sewer services rather than in the agricultural districts.

Strategy 2. Preserve, protect, and improve the surface and underground waters including, but not limited to, rivers, streams, lakes, groundwater and aquifer recharge areas.

Action Item 1: Encourage development to comply with wellhead protection zones.

Action Item 2: Develop and employ land use regulations and other techniques for natural resource...
protection, including transfer of development rights or density, and best management practices.

**Action Item 3:** Recognize the relationship between land use and water quality, and continue to support water quality improvements through land use plans and regulations.

**Action Item 4:** Encourage shoreland protection and restoration methods such as vegetative buffers.

**Action Item 5:** Continue to address wastewater treatment and water quality through watershed plans, funding opportunities and various collaborations and partnerships.

**Strategy 3.** In working through land development, the potential for air, water, and land contamination will be considered and minimized throughout the entire process.

**Action Item 1:** Encourage conservation design to preserve natural and scenic values.

**Action Item 2:** Support and implement state and federal regulations that pertain to environmental review.

**Action Item 3:** Define, by GIS overlay, and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and other open space by allowing only compatible land uses and development.

**Action Item 4:** Recognize that soil conditions may limit development potential.

**Action Item 5:** Coordinate with Local, State and Federal agencies and organizations to encourage landowners and tenants to implement and maintain good soil erosion and healthy soil practices.

### 3.3 Future Land Use Map

TBD

---

**Photo:** Cannon River Wilderness Area, Bridgewater Township. Taken by County staff.