

# **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION ELEMENT**

September 2017



## **Chisago County Comprehensive Plan 2017**

## **Intergovernmental Coordination & Communication**

In order to provide the most effective and efficient infrastructure, ensure compatible land uses with adjacent jurisdictions and enhance natural and cultural resources, it is necessary to coordinate levels of service between the county, various townships and cities. Partnerships should be fostered between the County with its townships and cities and with state and federal agencies. Maintaining and improving intergovernmental coordination is essential for the county. This applies to other governmental entities as well as those within the overall government structure.

Many of the issues that have been raised throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process have included some aspect of the need for better communication and coordination between governmental jurisdictions, county departments as well as with county residents. This section will identify goals and policies to aid in assisting the process of creating better intergovernmental coordination and communication.

### **Federal Government**

The federal government has impacts on Chisago County. The most important function of the Federal government involves the provision and funding of a number of services. These federally supported services include the Soil and Water Conservation District, Farm Services Agency, Army Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service. In addition, the Federal government supports many public programs that provide assistance to the county both directly and indirectly. Some of these programs are: Revenue-Sharing; REAP (Rural Energy for America Program) and AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

### **State Government**

The state government is the main governing body of the county and its local units. The state issues all privileges and authority to counties and municipalities. The state legislature is the body that passed county enabling legislation. This legislation provides guidelines for county and municipal ordinances. Two important pieces of this legislation affecting Chisago County are the State Enabling Legislation for county planning and zoning and the Shoreland Management Act, which were enacted in 1959 and 1969, respectively. The State owns a significant amount of land in the County mainly in the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area, Janet Johnson Wildlife Management Area, Wild River State Park and Interstate Park; along with land in Aquatic Management Areas, Wildlife Management Areas (AMA's and WMA's) and some smaller parcels.

### **County Government**

The county government is administered by five commissioners from their respective districts. The county government acts as an administrative arm of the state. It enacts ordinances that fit within the state guidelines. Chisago County administers many different programs - some mandated by the federal and state governments and others that are granted through enabling legislation.

### **City & Township Government**

Within Chisago County, there are ten incorporated cities and nine townships. Each of the incorporated cities has their own planning and zoning regulations. In the southern portion of the county, many of the infrastructure issues are the same and some infrastructure items are being consolidated or being conducted on a joint effort; such as, a joint wastewater treatment facility, police services and library services. (See Infrastructure Element for more details.) Of the nine townships, only one township currently has its own comprehensive plan and zoning regulations, the township of Lent. This township has developed a zoning ordinance pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 394.33 (Town Powers) that is consistent with (and must not be inconsistent with or less restrictive than) the County zoning regulations currently in place. A brief summary of the ten incorporated municipalities and nine townships of Chisago County are listed below.

### **Incorporated Municipalities of Chisago County:**

**Note: All 2016 population estimates are from the Minnesota State Demographic Center**

#### **Center City**

Center City has been the county seat since 1875. Its name refers to its central location between Chisago City and Taylors Falls. It is the state's oldest continuously inhabited Swedish settlement. The first post office was named Centre City in 1858, then Chisago Lake in 1863, then back to Centre City in 1877 until 1893 when the current "Center City" name/spelling was adopted. The village was not officially incorporated until 1903. The Chisago County Government center and jail are located in Center City. In 2000 the population of Center City was 582 residents. By 2010, the population of Center City had grown to 628 residents and was estimated at 609 persons in 2016. Center City has a mayor elect and four council members. A planning commission advises the council on planning and zoning related matters. Center City last updated its Comprehensive Plan in October 2009.

#### **Chisago City**

Chisago City was first platted for village lot development in 1855 and was incorporated in 1906. It served as the county seat from 1865 to 1875. Chisago City is located on Minnesota Highway 8, just ten miles east of Interstate Highway 35 and only 35 miles northeast of Minneapolis-St. Paul in the Chisago Lakes Area of Chisago County. The city had a population of 2,622 in the year 2000. The city recently expanded its residential and commercial properties. Lakes and scenic park areas surround the entire city. In 2005, after a contested annexation case, approximately 5,000 acres from the former Wyoming Township was annexed into the city of Chisago City. After the annexation occurred, the population of Chisago City grew to 4,967 in 2010 and was estimated at 5,272 in 2016.

Chisago City adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 2002 and updated it in 2006 due to the addition of the nearly 5,000 acres added to the city's jurisdiction. Chisago City has a mayor-council form of government. The city council consists of a mayor and four council members, who are elected at large. The mayor and the council members serve four-year terms. A city administrator is responsible for the administration of policies and carrying out of city council directives. A planning commission advises the City Council on planning and zoning issues and a park board makes recommendations to the Council on park related items. An Economic Development Authority (EDA) was created to establish a strong economic environment for the City to support existing businesses and encourage the establishment of new businesses. The EDA recommends policies supportive of economic growth to the council.

### **Harris**

Harris is a relatively small quiet rural community. It has a large land base of 12,800 acres and a relatively small population. Much of the City is in agricultural or open space uses and is largely undeveloped at this time. The City of Harris is located in northern Chisago County and has Interstate 35 running through it.

Harris is one of the oldest established communities in Chisago County. The Harris area first settled during the latter half of the 1850's when homesteaders of mainly Swedish origin migrated into northern Chisago County. In 1873, the first plat for the town site of Harris was filed with the County. A small settlement sprang up along the railroad line and took its name in honor of Philip S. Harris, a prominent officer of the early St. Paul and Duluth Railroad. On July 22, 1884 the Town of Harris was incorporated. It initially included 24 square miles of territory. Three years later, Harris was officially incorporated as a village with 20 square miles and four sections were returned to the jurisdiction of Sunrise Township.

Harris has a mayor and four council members and a City Clerk. In the 2000 census Harris had a population of 1,121 residents. The 2010 Census showed 1,132 residents in Harris and in 2016, the State estimated the population at 1,133 persons. The City approved the most recent Comprehensive Plan for Harris in 1999 and they are currently working on an update to the Comprehensive Plan that the City expects to finish in 2017.

### **Lindstrom**

Incorporated in 1894, the City of Lindstrom serves as the center of the Chisago Lakes area with its many recreational opportunities. Within close proximity to the Twin Cities Metro, Lindstrom has retained its small town character, with a special emphasis on Swedish heritage. The City is working to increase quality commercial development, while at the same time preserving the small town atmosphere. The 2000 census estimated the population of Lindstrom at 3,015 people. By 2010, the population of Lindstrom had grown to 4,442 and in 2016, the estimated population of Lindstrom was 4,503.

Although not incorporated until 1894, the initial settlement of the area around Lindstrom took place during the early and mid 1850's. At that time, the similarity of the area's

topography to that of the Swedish countryside brought Scandinavian homesteaders up the St. Croix River from Stillwater. They moved inland from Taylors Falls and Franconia to the greater Chisago Lakes area. The construction of a branch rail line by the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad through the Chisago Lakes communities in the 1880s helped speed area development. Within a few short years the Chisago Lakes Area grew with new resorts, seasonal cabins and the necessary supporting businesses.

Many of the area's residents are descendents of those original Scandinavian settlers and they continue to take pride in their Swedish heritage. A statue of the trilogy's fictional main characters, Karl Oskar and his wife Kristina, stands in the center of Lindstrom as a tribute to those early men and women who set an example for the conscientious, hard working descendents who still populate the area.

Lindstrom has a mayor with four council members and a full time administrator. In 2000, the City of Lindstrom and the township of Chisago Lakes participated in a joint planning process from which the city adopted a comprehensive plan in 2001. Due to the rapid increase in population and increasing demand for development, the city updated its comprehensive plan in 2005. The City is now in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan that should be finished in 2017.

### **North Branch**

North Branch is named for the north branch of the Sunrise River. The village was platted in 1870 when the railroad through the area was finished and incorporated in 1881. Also known as the "hub of the potato belt", 527 rail cars of potatoes were shipped from the local station in the fall of 1911. In 1901, Branch Township was split off from the village; it was reunited with the village in 1994. The current City of North Branch was formed in 1994 from the consolidated cities of Branch and North Branch. The total land area of North Branch after consolidation became 36 square miles.

The City of North Branch has a mayor-council form of government and a city administrator, as well as full-time planning, building inspections and public works staff. The city also has a park board and an economic development authority. On January 3, 2017, the City Council decided to study the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Commission. In June 2017, the city reformed its Planning Commission deciding they will meet monthly to handle planning related matters. A comprehensive plan was adopted in 1995 after the cities merged and this plan was updated in 2003 and in 2009. In the year 2000, North Branch had a population of 8,023. In 2010, the US Census counted 10,125 residents in North Branch and the state estimated the population in 2016 at 10,469 residents.

### **Rush City**

Rush City, located in northern Chisago County, is approximately 4 miles west of the Wisconsin border and is about 55 miles north of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area with Interstate 35 running through the city. Rush City now occupies an area of approximately 3,950 acres. This increase in land area is due to recent annexations of property from the surrounding townships into the City.

The original settlement of Rush City was known as Rushseba and was located on the Government Road a few miles east of the present-day City. The original settlement included a flour mill, stagecoach stop and a sawmill. Logging was a main industry in the area and later agriculture. Potato crops were one of the main industries in Rush City. The first school opened in 1856 and the first post office in 1859. In 1869, the railroad was built and the town moved to the present-day location. The City became a municipal corporation in 1873 and a statutory city in 1974.

The population of Rush City in 2000 was 2,102 residents. In 2010, Rush City, according to the Census, had 3,079 residents and in 2016 the State estimated the population at 3,072 residents. Rush City has a mayor-council form of government and a full-time city administrator. The city has an economic development authority of its own. Rush City adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1967 which was then updated in 1980 and 1997. The city most recently updated their Comprehensive Plan in 2009.

### **Shafer**

Shafer is a city in transition from rural to urban in nature and was rapidly growing. The city is situated along both sides of US Trunk Highway 8 approximately six miles west of the Wisconsin border. The city of Shafer was first settled by Swedes in 1853 and called Taylors Falls. It was renamed in 1873 for Jacob Shafer who as early as 1847 cut hay in the local meadows. The village was settled and its first post office established in 1881 when the railroad arrived. As many as six trains a day passed through the village in its prime. The city was incorporated in 1922 and originally developed because of the influence of the now abandoned railroad branch line that extended east-west through the community.

The 2000 census indicated that the city of Shafer had a population of 343 residents. By 2010, the population of Shafer had grown to 1,045 and in 2016 it was estimated at 1,050 residents. The City now occupies approximately 810 acres of which about 75% is developed with urban uses. Due to the amount of wetlands within the city limits, 107 acres remain within the corporate limits to accommodate most types of future land uses. The City of Shafer has a mayor-council form of government and a planning commission that makes recommendations to the council on planning and zoning related issues. Shafer adopted a comprehensive plan in 1999 which was revised in 2002 and 2012. The City is expecting to update their Comprehensive Plan in 2017.

### **Stacy**

The city of Stacy is located along the Interstate 35 corridor on the western edge of Chisago County. Stacy was originally called Middle Branch for its location near the middle of the bank of the Sunrise River; it was renamed in honor of Dr. Stacy B Collins, an early resident, when the railroad came through. The post office was established in 1873. The village was not incorporated until 1923.

Stacy has a mayor-council form of government. In 2000, the population of Stacy was 1,322 residents whereas the 2010 Census counted 1,456 persons in Stacy. For 2016, the State estimated Stacy's population at 1,505. Stacy revised its comprehensive plan in July of 1997 and adopted the most recent version on August 10, 2016.

### **Taylors Falls**

Taylors Falls is located on the eastern edge of Chisago County nestled on the banks of the St. Croix River. Taylors Falls played a key role in the early settlement of the county as a logging town and a steamboat landing. The city served as the county seat from 1851 to 1865. The largest log jam ever recorded in Minnesota occurred here in June 1886 on the St. Croix River and stretched for two miles. Today tourism is the major industry of the city, as many of the historical resources still exist in the city as well as nearby Interstate State Park.

Taylors Falls has a mayor-council form of government, a planning commission, park commission, heritage preservation commission and an economic development commission. The population of Taylors Falls in 2000 was 951 residents and by 2010, the population had grown to 976 residents. In 2016, the State estimated the population of Taylors Falls at 1,011 residents. The city completed an update of its comprehensive plan in January 2008.

### **Wyoming**

The city of Wyoming is located in southwestern Chisago County along the Interstate 35 corridor approximately 30 miles north of the Twin Cities. The city contains a significant portion of the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area. Wyoming derived its name from Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania. A colony of German and Dutch families from that region originally settled here in 1855. One of the early settlers, Lucius Trombler built a three story hotel that was the first stop north of St. Paul on both the stage coach and railroad lines. The village was platted in 1869, after the completion of the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad. Ten years later a branch railroad line was built from Wyoming to Taylors Falls that operated until 1948.

The city of Wyoming has a mayor-council form of government, a full time city administrator, a planning commission, parks and recreation board and economic development authority. In the 2000 the census count for the city was 3,048 residents. The city of Wyoming's comprehensive plan was adopted 2000, was updated in January 2009 and a new update began in 2016. With the 2005 boundary changes and new development, the population of Wyoming grew to 7,791 in 2010 and was estimated by the State at 7,906 residents in 2016.

**CHISAGO COUNTY POPULATION INFORMATION**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2016</b>
Chisago County	41,101	53,887	54,766
Center City	582	628	609
Chisago City	2,622	4,967	5,272
Harris	1,121	1,132	1,133
Lindstrom	3,015	4,442	4,503
North Branch	8,023	10,125	10,469
Rush City	2,102	3,079	3,072
Shafer	343	1,045	1,050
Stacy	1,278	1,456	1,505
Taylors Falls	951	976	1,011
Wyoming	3,048	7,791	7,906
City Total	23,085	35,641	36,530

Sources: Years 2000 and 2010 – US Census; 2016 – Minnesota State Demographers Estimate

## **Townships of Chisago County**

There are nine townships in Chisago County:

Amador	Franconia	Rushseba
Chisago Lake	Lent	Shafer
Fish Lake	Nessel	Sunrise

Townships are the original form of local government in Minnesota, established as part of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which created the State of Minnesota. The term Township generally refers to organized but unincorporated communities governed by a local board of supervisors and created to provide services to their residents.

Current townships are actually the result of Article 12, Section 3 of the State Constitution and Minnesota Statute Chapter 379 that governs the creation of new townships. The boundaries of townships reflect mergers, annexations into cities and the organization of new townships in smaller but more densely populated areas of counties. Townships have historically been viewed as rural areas with agriculture as their primary industry.

Township powers are derived from State Statutes – primarily Chapters 365 – 368. Townships must comply with State mandates and on some issues the township can be ordered to do things by the county of, in the case of planning and zoning, must be consistent with or more restrictive than county regulations. The type of services provided by townships in Minnesota vary from community to community. These range from road maintenance, volunteer fire department services, park and recreation services and cemeteries. Joint powers arrangement and service contracts also are popular ways for townships to provide services intended to benefit township residents and protect the public's health, safety and welfare.

### **Amador Township**

The St. Croix River forms the township boundary on the north and east. Amador Township was organized October 11, 1859. The township of Amador contains a small unincorporated village of Almelund, founded by John Almquist that is located along Minnesota State Highway 95. Northern States Power Company (now known as Xcel Energy) once owned many acres of land in Amador Township that is now a part of the Wild River State Park. Amador Township does have its own fire hall. Today Amador Township is primarily home to farms and country homes. Wild Mountain Recreation Area, a prominent regional recreation destination, also is located in Amador Township. The US Census showed the population of Amador at 885 residents in 2010 and the State Demographic Office estimated their population at 893 in 2016.

### **Chisago Lake Township**

The Town of Chisago Lake was first organized in July 1855 and included all of Township 33 and Township 34 of Range 20W and Township 33 and Township 34 of Range 21W. It was re-established with slightly different boundaries by an act of the Minnesota Territorial Legislature in 1858– the same year that Minnesota became a state. Originally, the township included three settlements. Those villages later incorporated, separated from the township, and become the municipalities of Center City, Chisago City and Lindström. Most of the history of the township is found in the history of these three cities.

The township is named for the Big Lake which it surrounds; thus the Chisago Lake (NOT Lakes) name. The Big Lake has since been divided into five smaller lakes as a result of railroad and highway infrastructure – North and South Center, North and South Lindstrom and Chisago Lake.

The town is governed by a Board of three Supervisors who are elected on a rotating year basis. The election is held in March usually just before the Annual Town meeting. The Board meets monthly. The first Board of Supervisors was Ephriam Ingalls, Frank Mobeck and Daniel Lindstrom and they were elected to office in 1858.

The US Census in 2010 counted 4,656 residents and the state estimated the population at 4,650 in 2016. Ki-Chi-Saga County Park and Moody Lake Park are located in the township as is the oldest cemetery in the Chisago County – Glader.

### **Fish Lake Township**

Fish Lake Township is named for its lake and the outflowing creek. The township was organized three years after the end of the Civil War in 1868, the same year Fish Lake separated from Sunrise Township. The township of Fish Lake contains a small unincorporated village of Stark, named after Lars Johan Stark, the postmaster that served from 1867 to 1875.

In 2010, the US Census counted 2,012 persons in Fish Lake Township and the State estimated the population at 2,016 persons in 2016.

### **Franconia Township**

Franconia Village was organized and platted in 1858 but not incorporated until 1887. The village was dissolved by the Legislature in 1897. Franconia Township was settled and named by Ansel Smith in 1852. Today Franconia Township contains regional and international destination attractions such as the Franconia Sculpture Garden and the world-renowned Hazelden Betty Ford substance abuse and addiction treatment center in the extreme northwest edge of the township. Franconia today is home to mostly commuters and small farmers.

The US Census reported 1,805 persons in Franconia Township in 2010 and the State Demographic Office estimated their 2016 population at 1,819 persons.

### **Lent Township**

The Township of Lent was originally a part of Wyoming Township until it was separated by action of Chisago County in 1870. However, representatives of the new town continued to meet with Wyoming until an organizational meeting in March 1882. An important portion of the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area (the northeast part with sections of the main channel of the Sunrise River) is located within Lent Township. The township is home to small businesses and people who commute to employment in the Twin Cities. On January 16, 2007, Lent Township exercised their Town Powers rights and responsibilities (as allowed by Minnesota Statutes 394.33) by taking over the writing and implementation of their Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. This also is the date of the townships most-recent Comprehensive Plan.

In 2010, the US Census reported 3,091 persons in Lent Township and by 2016 the State of Minnesota estimated the township population at 3,065 persons.

### **Nessel Township**

Nessel Township was named after its earliest pioneer Robert Nessel. The township was separated from Rushseba and organized in 1871. The township contains Rush Lake and the small unincorporated area on Rush Point. The US Census counted 1,951 persons in Nessel Township in 2010 and the State of Minnesota estimated their population at 1,937 in 2016.

### **Rushseba Township**

Rushseba is named for the Rush River and Rush Lake and after the Ojibwa name "seba" or "sippi" meaning river. The Township was organized in 1858. The St. Croix River forms the eastern boundary of the township. In 2010, the US Census reported 804 persons in Rusheba Township and in 2016 the State of Minnesota estimated the population at 792 people.

### **Shafer Township**

Organized first as Taylors Falls the name was changed to Shafer in 1873. The biggest spur to growth in the township's history was the arrival of the railroad in 1881. The Almelund Threshing Show grounds are located in Shafer Township. It is an annual festival that recreates scenes from early farm harvest days. The US Census counted 1,048 people in Shafer Township in 2010 and by 2016 the State of Minnesota estimated their population at 1,048 people.

### **Sunrise Township**

The Township of Sunrise contains the Sunrise River and the unincorporated village of Sunrise. The township was organized on October 26, 1858 and was much larger than it is now due to the fact that the original contained what is now the City of Harris, old Branch Township and the present township of Fish Lake. Wild River State Park follows the St. Croix River across Sunrise Township. The township remains home to residences and small farms. For 2010, the US Census reported 1,994 residents in Sunrise Township and the State of Minnesota estimated their population at 2,016 persons in 2016.

**Wyoming Township**

After annexation and consolidation actions in 2005, the land area of Wyoming Township was incorporated into the Cities of Wyoming, Chisago City and Stacy thus disbanding the township.

**CHISAGO COUNTY POPULATION INFORMATION**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2016</b>
Chisago County	41,101	53,887	54,766
Amador Township	744	885	893
Chisago Lake Township	3,276	4,656	4,650
Fish Lake Township	1,723	2,012	2,016
Franconia Township	1,128	1,805	1,819
Lent Township	1,992	3,091	3,065
Nessel Township	1,765	1,951	1,937
Rusheba Township	769	804	792
Shafer Township	646	1,048	1,048
Sunrise Township	1,594	1,994	2,016
Wyoming Township	4,379		
Township Total	17,713	18,246	18,236

Sources: Years 2000 and 2010 – US Census; 2016 – Minnesota State Demographers Estimate

## Intergovernmental Coordination Goals & Policies

**Goal: *Coordinate efforts between the County, municipalities, townships, State and Federal agencies to assure wise land use, effective and efficient infrastructure, appropriate economic development and the protection of natural resources.***

Policies:

1. Chisago County will work with townships and municipalities to encourage them to work together to construct urban growth areas and orderly annexation agreements.
2. The County encourages all municipalities to coordinate with bordering Towns and communities in following and implementing the provisions of Minnesota Statute 462.358, Subd. 1A. Authority., about subdivision planning to unincorporated territory within two miles of its limits. This study and planning would be to protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare and to help plan for the orderly extension of utilities and roads to the rural areas around a municipality.
3. Chisago County will research the opportunity to expand the Transfer of Development Rights program to make it a multi-jurisdictional, county-wide program.
4. Chisago County will coordinate joint meetings with city and township officials on land use and other planning issues.
5. Chisago County will continue the open planning process by soliciting input from townships, cities, special districts, surrounding counties and state agencies (when pertinent) on land use applications, ordinances and other planning and zoning matters. The County Planning Commission will recognize the comments of the township when considering land use requests.
6. Chisago County will encourage cities and townships exercising their land use planning or Town Powers rights and responsibilities to maintain and keep current their Comprehensive Plans and land use regulations. Best practices for Comprehensive Plans is for the jurisdiction to review and update them as needed – usually every 5- 10 years.

**Goal: *Chisago County will coordinate planning efforts between their own departments to ensure efficiency of resources and delivery of government services.***

Policies:

1. The County will use the Comprehensive Plan to link together the various plans of each County department into an overall coordinated system.
2. The County will encourage each department to coordinate resources and services to provide the most efficient, planned and cost-effective delivery of government services.

***Goal: Chisago County is committed to continuing a public participation process in planning activities by communicating with its residents and by creating the necessary climate to secure increased input from county residents.***

Policies:

1. Chisago County will strive for increased resident notification and input on policy issues.
2. Chisago County will develop an outreach strategy to inform citizens of land use educational opportunities.
3. Chisago County will conduct periodic public information meetings and strive to use the internet, electronic media and social media to update county citizens on county projects and developments.
4. Chisago County will use various forms of media to educate the public regarding land use issues and all planning efforts, such as newspapers, newsletters, direct mailings, social media and the County Website.

# Chisago County Potential Growth/Subdivision Control Areas

