

IMPLEMENTATION

September 2017



Chisago County Comprehensive Plan 2017

Introduction

In many ways, formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is the first step in the planning process, rather than the last, because it establishes policy directions for the county, describing its objectives and methods to achieve them. The challenge often comes in translating a Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals and policies into the day-to-day operations and actions of the government. Each chapter or element of this Plan has goals and policies for each element of the Comprehensive Plan. Without continuing action to implement and update the Plan, County efforts will have little lasting impact. In other words, effective implementation is the difference between having a good plan on paper and having a great County on the ground.

The County should not forget the important ideas it has included in the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan is a vision for the County's future. It is the collective will and dreams of its citizens. It is the duty of the County to find ways to give the Comprehensive Plan life that will keep it true to the vision and to maintain its integrity.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the actions and initiatives Chisago County should undertake to implement the Land Use Plan and the related elements of the Comprehensive Plan. These are the steps the County should take to put into action this Plan. The emphasis is on the relationship between the County's land use and environmental regulations and the policies and land use categories of the Plan. The County's Environmental Services Department administers these regulations and they have the primary responsibility for proposing the necessary changes and implementing the recommendations in this Element.

Implementation Tools

The following provides a general overview of some of the specific tools available to county governments when they implement comprehensive plans. Some or all of these tools may be applicable for Chisago County.

Primary Tools

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Capital improvement programming is a financial planning process used by local governments to prioritize their investments in public infrastructure. The infrastructure includes items such as highways and streets, water and sewer facilities, parks, trails and public buildings. Typically, agencies develop capital improvement programs every one or two years and list out potential projects and costs over a five-year period. Recommended projects developed in a comprehensive plan should be incorporated into the County's CIP. Thus, the CIP process represents a primary means of identifying projects and resources the County needs to implement strategic elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Official Mapping

Minnesota State Statutes authorizes local governments the ability to adopt official maps after the adoption of transportation and public facilities plan. An official map is a map that

shows areas in the community where the County has determined there is a need for land for future streets or road widening, parks and other public facilities.

The primary purposes of official mapping is to:

- 1) Communicate with property owners, developers, and citizens where these lands are located and;
- 2) Prevent or forestall the construction of buildings or other private improvements on the designated lands.

The official mapping is designed to save the public expense of paying for buildings and improvements in such designated corridors.

To adopt an official map, the County must work through the process established in the state law. This includes a review of the map by the Planning Commission and a public hearing held by the County Board. Property owners and citizens alike should be a part of the official mapping process.

Subdivision and Zoning Controls

One of the primary methods of implementing the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan is through the County's land use and development regulation. Minnesota Statutes state that zoning changes should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. While zoning has received the most emphasis in the past as a means to implement Comprehensive Plans, subdivision regulations are just as important of a tool. Subdivision regulations are intended to guide the platting and development of land and ensure that adequate public facilities are constructed or provided with the development. Subdivision regulations prescribe standards for site design, lot and block design, street and utility improvements (including extensions), rights-of-way (for roads and trails) and easements, etc. In summary, subdivision regulations ensure that the costs of public improvements as created by a proposed development are borne by the developer and subsequent landowners rather than by the County or City.

Local jurisdictions design, enact and use Zoning Ordinances to control land uses. They consist of a zoning map and supporting ordinance text. The zoning map divides the community into zoning districts and the text describes regulations for the use of land within those districts. Zoning regulations typically include a list of the uses that are permitted, conditional and/or interim, lot sizes, setbacks, density standards, etc. They also can include design controls on the maintenance and upkeep of property. As required by State law and as is stated in the purpose section of the Zoning Ordinance, the County enacts all standards and requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to protect the health, safety and welfare of residents and property owners.

Review and Revision

Comprehensive planning is a continuous process and thus the County should monitor and update the Plan when necessary. The Planning Commission and the County Board should carefully review proposed changes to the Plan and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If the County finds that changes to the Comprehensive Plan are appropriate, the County should formally add them to the Plan by

legal amendment. In addition, the County should seek to review the entire Comprehensive Plan every five years and make changes where necessary to ensure that it is an up-to-date expression of the goals, policies and intentions of Chisago County. In addition, periodic or annual reviews of Plan elements or chapters is a good exercise for staff and the Planning Commission.

Implementation Steps

The updates to the Comprehensive Plan and the County development regulations require the County Board and the County staff to consider how to coordinate the work programs. One way to frame this dialogue is to propose an annual work plan, conduct a budget analysis and a review of the County CIP with the prioritization of needed Plan elements. In addition, a review of potential partners and potential public engagement and interest in County projects and activities would be helpful.

Upon adoption of the 2017 revision of the Comprehensive Plan, County Staff will set about reviewing and recommending changes to the County's regulations to help meet the goals and policies in the Plan. A sampling of the Documents the County should revise and update include:

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Shoreland Management Ordinance
- County Right-of-Way Ordinance
- Transfer-of-Development Rights (TDR) Ordinance

In addition, Staff may be drafting new ordinances and/or amendments for consideration by the Planning Commission and County Board, as unforeseen but emerging land use, planning or subdivision issues or needs arise. Priority projects identified through a work plan and as directed by the County Board may require adjustment to commence work on emerging trends such as those listed below or those yet to be identified. County staff expects a work plan to include studies of or updates to the:

- Rural Retail Tourism Ordinance
- Commercial Recreation Ordinance
- Agricultural Protection
- Zoning and Plan Consistency
- Protection of future transportation corridors
- Housing Mix
- Cluster Development
- Natural Resource Protection
- Park and Recreation Area Protection