

# Olmsted County General Land Use Plan



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OLMSTED COUNTY  
GENERAL LAND USE PLAN

This document is a supplement  
updating portions of the  
1995 Olmsted County  
General Land Use Plan.

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This comprehensive planning document has been prepared for Olmsted  
County by the Olmsted County Planning Advisory Commission and the  
Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In 1978, Olmsted County adopted its first comprehensive Land Use Plan, which provided the basis for the comprehensive amendments to the *Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance* adopted in 1983, the detailed Land Use Plans for the urban service areas identified in the Plan, as well as day-to-day decision making on a variety of land use and related issues.

The 1995 Olmsted County General Land Use Plan (the 1995 Plan) updated and modified the 1978 Plan. New data were gathered describing the physical, economic, and demographic changes in Olmsted County. Policies were updated to reflect these changes and new issues, and a new model for determining appropriate land use was developed (the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System, or CLUES model).

The 1995 Plan and the CLUES model have been revised three times since 1995, chiefly reflecting changes in the approach to suburban residential development reducing the relative importance of contiguity and proximity to employment centers as factors influencing suburban style residential development. Changes were made to the Plan map and the CLUES model in 2000, 2003, and 2006.

Since 2006, the County has been working with City of Rochester and TCPA township representatives to address changes in approach related to other aspects of the Land Use Plan. Three issues have been identified:

- the mechanisms for designating suburban residential land;
- the types and locations of appropriate rural business uses; and
- the types of interim development that should be accommodated and the standards that should apply to interim development. (Interim development is development in urban service areas beyond the immediate service limits of municipal services but providing for ultimate urban intensity of development and ultimate connection to urban services.)

This document presents those policy changes and the Future Land Use Plan Map as an updated guide to the County's land use decisions.

### **COUNTY PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Olmsted County is granted authority under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 394, to prepare and adopt by ordinance a comprehensive Plan for the purpose of "promoting the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community." The Plan is a part of Olmsted County's comprehensive Plan, defined in Minnesota Statutes 394.22, Subd. 9, as

the policies, statements, goals, and interrelated plans for private and public land and water use, transportation, and community facilities including recommendations for plan execution, documented in texts, ordinances, and maps, which constitute the guide for the future development of the county or any portion of the county.

Elements of Olmsted County's Comprehensive Plan that affect the future development of the County include the Long Range Transportation Plan (prepared and adopted in

cooperation with the Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments), the Comprehensive Water Management Plan, the Land Use Plan, and the Housing Plan. Along with other public facilities plans and capital improvement programs and county policy statements covering the use and management of land and related resources, they form the Comprehensive Plan for Olmsted County.

### ***SCOPE OF THE LAND USE PLAN***

The geographic scope of this Land Use Plan covers all parts of the county, both cities and townships. However, because the planning and zoning powers of cities are independent of county planning, the scope of this Plan as it applies to direct guidance to zoning and subdivision regulations covers only the unincorporated areas of the county. While Rochester's expected status as a city of the first class will affect the creation of sewer districts and potentially the infrastructure activities of jurisdictions in the vicinity of Rochester, it does not appear that first class city status will significantly affect the operation of the County Comprehensive Plan, elements of the Plan (such as this Land Use Plan), or the related official controls that implement the Plan. The Plan does not specifically address state or federal land use related policies except to recognize their local impacts and implementation requirements. The Plan does address public and private land use, physical development, and land management decisions. While this Land Use Plan does not address public services and facilities in detail, detailed planning for public services such as schools and roads can rely on and help to carry out the Plan's objectives.

### ***PLANNING FOR 2040***

Detailed employment, population, housing, and land use projections have been developed for the county and its jurisdictions in five-year increments through 2040. The projections used to establish the need for additional lands for urban and suburban development are based on forecasts from a variety of economic and demographic data sources. They are also based on assumptions about trends in development, especially the density of residential development. Our projections and assumptions will change as the community grows. The Plan will therefore be a dynamic document, adjusted to reflect changes in population or land use projections and assumptions or policy. The amendment section of the Plan explains in detail the opportunities for monitoring and responding to change in the community and the process for Land Use Plan amendment.

### ***REASONS FOR PLANNING***

Planning provides for a more organized and informed decision-making process. The Plan does this by

- identifying the interests that the County considers important to the "health, safety, and welfare" of the County;
- establishing the basis for official controls and other methods of implementation;
- committing the Planning Advisory Commission and the County Board of Commissioners to abide by or amend the policies reflected in the text and map in making day-to-day land use decisions.



Planning is conducted to create a desired product: a highly livable community for current and future residents. Planning at the county level helps the community to resolve competing land use, development, and resource claims. Effective planning provides opportunities to choose the future of the community.

In order for comprehensive land use planning to be effective, the community must strike a balance between the competing claims of present and future residents; of various, sometimes conflicting private interests in land use; of different public interests in land use; and of the costs and benefits of changes in land use, management, and development.

The community must carefully consider the fiscal, environmental, energy consumption, public service and infrastructure, and land resource impacts of land use decisions. A Land Use Plan guides the community in its attempt to balance the consequences of change. Decisions made today in that Plan and implementation measures must reflect informed predictions of future conditions regarding

- the population and employment growth of the community, and the resulting demand for land for these uses, most of which will occur on private land uses;
- decisions on the size and location of public facilities and public utilities; and
- the protection of natural resources and the environment.

A Land Use Plan is implemented through a number of regulatory and non-regulatory tools. One set of tools consists of local police powers activities, including zoning, subdivision, and related ordinances. These ordinances, at a minimum, address public and private nuisances. Investment in public facilities and services is another tool. For instance, the extension of water and sewer facilities and the timing of road improvements can be used to accomplish the purposes agreed to in the Land Use Plan. Effective planning results in the wise use of the land and related resources available to the community.

### **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

The terms used in this Land Use Plan are intended to have their customary dictionary definition. However, terms which are defined in the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance are intended to have the ordinance definition apply in this Land Use Plan. In addition, the following terms and phrases have the meaning given them below:

**Access management:** The process and requirements applying to the approval of driveway and intersection location and design, providing for safe and orderly ingress and egress to a property. These are provided for by ordinance in Olmsted County.

**Basic sector industry:** “[A]ctivities which produce and distribute goods and services for export to firms and individuals outside a defined [local] economic area...”<sup>1</sup> In Olmsted County, basic sector industries include chiefly health care, manufacturing (especially electronics and food and kindred products manufacturing), agriculture, and lodging.

**City:** A statutory or home rule charter city as defined in Minnesota Statutes.

**City of the First Class:** As defined in Minnesota Statute (MS 410.01), a City that has attained a population of 100,000 or more.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapin, F. Stuart. Urban Land Use Planning. University of Illinois Press. 1970. p.137.

**Conservation Easement:** "Conservation easement" means a nonpossessory interest of a holder in real property imposing limitations or affirmative obligations the purposes of which include retaining or protecting natural, scenic, or open-space values of real property, assuring its availability for agricultural, forest, recreational, or open-space use, protecting natural resources, maintaining or enhancing air or water quality, or preserving the historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of real property (Minnesota Statutes 84C.01).

**Environmental Corridor:** In October, 1977, the Olmsted County Board adopted a policy promoting acquisition and protection of environmental corridors, defining environmental corridors as "... areas of land predominantly along river areas which are significant for historical, environmental, or recreational reasons. This land is to be used for preservation or passive recreation and should be established through public dedication, acquisition, easement, or common open space provisions..." For purposes of this Land Use Plan, the term "environmental corridors" applies only to such easements or other similar lands. Environmental corridors have been acquired along Bear Creek as well as the Zumbro River.

**Farm:** As defined by the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance, "a lot used for agricultural or horticultural uses and comprised of either at least eighty (80) acres or two (2) contiguous and undivided quarter-quarter sections in the A 1 Agricultural Zoning District, or being at least thirty five (35) acres in size in the other Zoning Districts..." As defined by the US Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, "a place with estimated (or expected) annual sales of agricultural products of at least \$1,000."

**Forestry:** The management of forestland and woodlots chiefly for the production of products derived from trees (Christmas trees, wood and wood byproducts, maple syrup, and so on), usually or sometimes chiefly with related benefits in terms of wildlife habitat, recreation, landscape and ecosystem protection, biodiversity management, watershed management and carbon sequestration.

**Infill development:** Development or redevelopment of a relatively small parcel or set of parcels surrounded by other developed land, including for example development of a vacant parcel abutted by existing commercial development.

**Joint Powers:** Provisions of Minnesota Statute enabling jurisdictions to collaborate to perform governmental functions as a coordinated enterprise under the management of a joint powers board made up of representatives of participating jurisdictions.

**Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4):** A federally mandated stormwater management and permitting system administered in Minnesota through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, requiring affected local governments to manage the rate, volume, and hydrograph of runoff.

**ROCOG (Rochester – Olmsted Council of Governments):** A Joint Powers Board created in 1971 to carry out federally required transportation and related land use planning as a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

**Strip commercial development:** Commercial development along a street or highway generally characterized by multiple access points, the absence of shared parking and loading areas, the use of public streets for movements between and among adjacent

uses, and a high ratio of edge area (where conflicts with abutting uses occur) to parcel area.

**Sustainable:** Characterizing a pattern of resource management that meets human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations. In the case of economic activities, the term "sustainable" characterizes businesses (such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, and so on) carried out in such a way as to maintain the long term prosperity of the enterprise while at the same time avoiding degradation of the environmental resources relied upon or the ecosystem of which the enterprise is a part.

**Sustainable Development:** "Sustainable development' means development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (MS 4A.07)

**TCPA (Township Cooperative Planning Association):** A Joint Powers Board created in 1997 to implement land use planning and zoning in member townships.

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## CHAPTER TWO: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The update of the 1995 Olmsted County General Land Use Plan involved many segments of the Olmsted County population. Citizens, developers, interest groups, township representatives, small cities' officials, and other local government bodies were contacted from the very beginning of the planning process in order to ensure that the Plan would address the concerns of our community. The details of two sets of surveys and of meetings providing input to the 1995 Plan are included in Appendix E of the 1995 Plan document. The details of the special Suburban Concerns Task Force created in 1993 to address issues related to existing and future suburban development are reported in Appendix B of the 1995 Plan document.

The direct public involvement processes related to the 2009 Plan Update have been much less extensive than those leading to the 1995 Plan. Given the repeated efforts since 1995 to refine the CLUES model, the ongoing discussions and other forums airing issues with aspects of the Plan, and the long-standing desire of the County Board to resolve disagreements over the Plan in a way that addresses the concerns of rural and suburban townships as well as growing urban centers, the focus of involvement efforts has been with representatives of the elected officials of the various local governments in the County.

County staff and other County officials met with township and city officials on a number of occasions, including presentations to meetings of elected officials, working sessions with a subcommittee of the Planning Advisory Commission, the County Board, and township and Rochester officials, and other meetings. The results of these meetings and the subsequent public hearing testimony are reflected in this updated document.

The Olmsted County Planning Advisory Commission (PAC) began discussing the draft Plan beginning in September 2009. Several changes have been made in the Plan addressing PAC's discussion of comments received by the PAC and the draft text. In addition, Planning staff met with township officers on several occasions and met with staff and elected officials of small cities as requested. The PAC's review of the Plan concluded following a public hearing held on November 4, 2010. The County Board's review of the Plan began on March 8, 2011.

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## CHAPTER THREE: LAND USE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

Chapter Three is the critical section of this Plan for land use decision-making purposes. The policies, locational criteria, and map presented in this chapter will guide the Planning Advisory Commission and County Board of Commissioners in their land use related decisions, including not only the consideration of Land Use Plan amendments, but also the development of amendments to the *Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance* and other regulations intended to carry out this Plan.

### ***POLICIES OF THE 1978 PLAN***

Olmsted County adopted its first Land Use Plan (the General Land Use Plan for the Olmsted County Area) in 1978. The 1978 Land Use Plan policies, founded on the growth management guidelines adopted by the County in 1977, established the basis for the land use decisions that have been made since then. The reasoning used in that Plan is still relevant and applicable to the issues that the community confronts today.

The 1978 Plan had four major themes guiding the development of the Plan map and the various implementation strategies, including

- concentrating development,
- protecting agriculture,
- protecting the natural environment, and
- providing for a wide range of choice in residential location.

The first theme, concentrating development, is a strategy designed to accomplish the goals of conserving agricultural land uses, reducing the costs of public services and facilities, protecting natural resources and the natural environment, reducing energy consumption, and providing for an efficient land use pattern.

The 1978 Plan worked well over the period from 1978 to 1995. Compared to the decade preceding adoption of that Plan, a much higher percentage of residential development took place relying on urban services. In addition, the strategies for protecting the ability of urban service areas to expand succeeded. Agriculture and related industries remained an important part of the local economy. Environmental corridors were acquired as public park land and as part of a number of plats following adoption of the Plan.

However, the 1978 Plan had a number of shortcomings. The policy guidance in the document assumed an “all or nothing” approach to considering the merits of a proposed amendment, as opposed to a more judgmental approach reflecting degrees of suitability for a proposed use. In practice, this made it difficult to consider Plan amendments in a consistent fashion in comparison with other similar land areas and to consider the cumulative impacts of such changes.

Secondly, the land area of the Rochester Urban Service Area depended on providing water and sewer services to older subdivisions in the surrounding townships. While this happened to a certain extent, sewer extension to and through those older subdivisions did not take place. This constrained the expansion of the sewer system in those directions blocked by older subdivisions.

Nevertheless, the 1978 Plan provided a successful tool for growth management. For this reason, the 1995 Plan and this 2009 Plan Update document build on the growth management philosophy of that Plan, rather than establish a drastically different perspective.

### **POLICIES OF THE 1995 PLAN**

The 1995 Plan included two major categories of land use — Urbanizing Areas and Resource Protection Areas, based on the premise that those areas that develop for residential or other urban purposes should ultimately become part of an integrated Urbanizing Area, while those areas not best suited for such uses should be protected for resource related uses. This notion guided the development of policies leading to the Future Land Use Plan Map. The land use policies that appeared in the 1995 Plan were organized under these two basic land use categories.

The 1995 Plan identified the following as key Community Values for Planning in Olmsted County. These remain guiding principles in the 2009 Plan Update:

**Beauty** — We should recognize and protect the natural beauty and diversity and the built heritage of Olmsted County. New development should preserve and augment those qualities.

**Efficiency** — We should develop our land use and infrastructure systems in a cost effective and fiscally sound way, reducing the cost of government services.

**Accessibility** — We should make community decisions in an open, fair, and democratic way, so that all citizens have access to and can participate in decisions.

**Competition** — The community should provide incentives through the market system to promote community goals and should promote the global competitiveness of area farms and businesses.

**Habitability** — We should minimize risks to human health from environmental contamination. We should develop safe and secure neighborhoods and communities.

**Equity** — We should ensure that the benefits, costs, and impacts of land use decisions apply fairly to all citizens of the community.

**Sustainability** — We should moderate the demands we make on the environment so that we protect the ability of the environment to provide for the needs of future generations.

### **PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

The Land Use Plan addresses these key community values while providing for wide latitude in private property decisions consistent with these values. The 1995 Plan and the 2009 Plan Update are intended to lead to a sustainable development pattern that will accomplish the following objectives.

- 1. Wisely use the energy resources, urban systems, and land area of Olmsted County by concentrating urban and suburban development and by creating an orderly pattern of development (*sustainable and efficient*).**



- **Energy Resources:** Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Energy resources are key resources to consider in planning for sustainable development. Sprawling development increases the amount of travel and related energy consumption per household far beyond the level that would result from the same population growth in more compact development.
- **Urban Systems:** The county, city, and townships should maintain public facilities and services at the level necessary to meet community needs. In light of the limited financial resources for public infrastructure, communities should direct development so as to realize the maximum benefit possible from existing infrastructure and service investments.
- **Orderly Development:** Modern communities cannot function without adequate transportation, utilities, communications, waste treatment, parks, schools and other facilities and services. In order for the community to accommodate growth, the public and private sectors must continue to provide community infrastructure and services in a timely and cost-effective manner coordinated with land use decisions and community needs. The orderly development of land must focus on the timing, location, and density of development and the overall pattern of land use in the county. This Plan encourages contiguous development in order to make the extension of development related services efficient and economical and to minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses. A compact settlement pattern, as opposed to sprawl and leapfrog development, minimizes the costs of public facilities and services such as sewer and water systems, public utilities, and road construction. A compact settlement pattern also minimizes the cost per household of public services such as road maintenance, snow removal, school transportation, police and fire protection, and mail delivery.

Orderly development also means that adjacent uses are compatible with one another. This Plan strives to reduce nuisances resulting from mixing incompatible land uses, thereby protecting community (public and private sector) investments and property values. Planning for orderly development reflects the historic community development patterns, capital investment, and the natural resources and environmental constraints that exist in the county.

**2. Encourage practices and technologies that maximize efficiency of resource use and minimize waste (*sustainable, habitable, and efficient*).**

- Settlement patterns and economic activity exploit natural resources, import products, and export waste and products. A sustainable community must work to minimize the non-renewable resources that are exploited or imported and the waste that is exported. The management of renewable resources should maintain resource uses without long-term declines in productivity. The challenge for non-renewable resources is to use such materials so that at the end of the useful product life, the material becomes a resource for a future use. The challenge for energy resources is to convert from fossil fuels to renewable energy supplies, and to convert from energy-intensive development to energy-conserving land uses and modes of transportation.

3. **Preserve the natural and cultural resources that provide a “sense of place” for the county (*beautiful and sustainable*).**
  - Olmsted County contains human-made and natural physical features that distinguish it from other communities. Such features may include historic, geologic, hydrologic, biological or ecological features combined in a landscape that the community recognizes as significant. The community should encourage the preservation of features that provide historic, cultural, and landscape identity as an important part of our quality of life.
4. **Ensure that growth pays for itself; incorporate long-term costs and benefits into the community decision-making process (*sustainable, competitive, equitable, and efficient*).**
  - In order for market forces to work in favor of efficient, sustainable private development, with a minimum of public regulation, growth must pay for itself. This does not mean that development costs should not be amortized, but only that public sector investments should not subsidize new development with tax dollars from older areas. Secondly, the costs of development borne by its consumers should include the full social and environmental cost of the development. Finally, public entities should manage public investment and regulate land use in order to properly manage growth.
  - Community decision making must take account of the long term impacts of changes in land use and other resource use. The county, cities, and townships should organize their decision-making processes so that decisions reflect their cumulative impacts.
5. **Conserve and restore natural resources, including agricultural resources, and protect the ecological systems of the natural environment and economic uses of those resources (*sustainable, habitable, and competitive*).**
  - **Conservation:** Land should be considered not only as a commodity, as in the historic economic sense, but also as an ecological system that includes land, water, air, and communities of plants and animals. The diversity of our area’s ecological systems guarantees their health. That diversity should be maintained and enhanced.

One of the significant threats to ecologically sound resource uses in the county is the conversion of resource related uses to other purposes. Conversion directly and permanently diminishes the resource; once a decision is made to develop a piece of land for urban or suburban purposes, it is not feasible to convert it back to a productive natural resource use. Another threat to sound resource use is excessive exploitation. Conservation involves managing renewable resources so that their rates of replenishment are not exceeded.

- **Environmental Protection:** Protecting environmental quality benefits the citizens of the community and the environmental systems that support the community's quality of life. This is particularly true of water and air, which are the major media receiving pollutants from human-influenced activities. Area residents should be protected from pollutants that threaten their health. Area governments, residents, and businesses should work to prevent pollution at its source, rather

than remove it at its outlet, in order not to transfer pollutants to another system or geographic area.

- **Agricultural Resources:** Olmsted County's climate, soils, topography, and vegetation provide the basis for highly productive agriculture. In fact, the soils of Olmsted County include some of the most productive in the world. National and global demands for agricultural products for food, fuel, and fiber will certainly increase in response to population growth and pressure on global agricultural resources. Olmsted County needs to protect the best of its agricultural resources from being permanently removed from agriculture for the foreseeable future.
  - **Conserving Resource-Based (Especially Agricultural) Uses:** Resource related activities are a basic cultural and economic element in the community and are the most extensive land use in the county. Dispersed residential and some commercial land uses disrupt many resource oriented activities such as forestry, gravel pits, rock quarries, and especially agriculture. Agriculture is affected directly by complaints about agricultural operations from non-farm uses and indirectly by the fact that non-farm development affects the price of agricultural land and the future investment plans of land owners.
6. **Encourage the development of affordable housing and provide for a reasonable range of choice in housing and lifestyles (*habitable and equitable*).**
- Housing is a basic need and makes up a significant portion of the developed lands in the county. All income levels should have access to the broadest possible range of choice in housing. Individuals and families have different needs for housing and should have a reasonable choice of type and location. There should be an adequate supply of affordable housing.
7. **Encourage the creation of economic opportunities in an equitable fashion for all citizens (*competitive and equitable*).**
- Opportunities must be provided for residents to live, work, profit, and thrive. Economic opportunities must continue to be created principally by the private sector with the support of cost-effective public services. This means that economic development should be directed to areas where essential public services can be provided in an environmentally sound and cost-effective manner. While private property rights are a protected and important part of our economic system and individual economic opportunities and decisions, the community must weigh these rights with those factors that are in the interest of the larger community.
  - Economic opportunity must be provided to all individuals in the community. Creating an equitable community for all citizens is necessary for a livable community.
8. **Seek methods for implementing community policy that are cost-effective, that link costs to benefitting properties, and that accomplish public goals while accommodating private interests (*competitive, efficient, and accessible*).**
- The community has multiple priorities and limited resources available to implement them. These limitations affect the opportunities available for dealing with land use related issues and problems, making it necessary and desirable to

seek ways to meet multiple goals cooperatively. An example is cluster development near Decorah Edge sites, which accommodates private development interests while protecting edge support areas and their related public benefits. Changes in land use present an opportunity to find ways to correct pre-existing problems, such as improving management of access, correcting environmental hazards, and so on, while addressing development needs.

**9. Cooperate with local jurisdictions within and adjacent to Olmsted County in the development and implementation of the Plan (*accessible*).**

- Land use, environmental, natural resource, and related issues cross political jurisdiction boundaries. In recognition of this fact, the 2009 Plan Update has been developed cooperatively. The ongoing planning process should continue to encourage cooperation. Examples of such cooperation include the Township Cooperative Planning Association (TCPA), the Rochester Olmsted Council of Governments, cooperative agreements between townships and Olmsted County coordinating zoning enforcement, and the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department.

**10. Respond to land use and resource management issues in a flexible and proactive way (*accessible and efficient*).**

- The planning activities of local jurisdictions must be able to identify and deal with land use related issues before they become expensive problems for the community. The governmental entities in the county need to develop natural resource plans, housing plans and programs, community development programs, capital improvement programs, orderly annexation agreements, and other public action plans in advance of development pressure in order to avoid undue delay for the private sector and undue cost for public facilities.

**11. Sustainable communities (*sustainable and efficient*)**

- The need to maintain sustainable human communities should be paramount in land use planning decisions. Changes in fossil fuel availability and affordability, weather, food habits, and other significant social, cultural and economic patterns need to be addressed by responsible land use decisions.

### ***LAND USE PLAN POLICIES***

The following policies are based on the community values and planning principles listed above. The policies identify how the County will accommodate the demands for the area's limited land resources, while protecting the public interest in the long term use and management of those lands. The policies are grouped into three areas:

- **Land Use Policies**, which provide the basis for the Land Use Plan designations, the locational criteria, the scoring system, and the Future Land Use Plan Map
- **Land Development Policies**, which provide the basis for future zoning and subdivision ordinance amendments addressing the processes and standards applied to urban, suburban, and rural non-farm development

- **Resource Management Policies**, which provide the basis for programs addressing land use issues related to natural resources including agricultural lands

The 2009 Plan Update organizes these policies as they apply to three major land use areas in Olmsted County: Urban Service Areas, Suburban Development Areas, and Resource Protection Areas. For each of these areas there are Land Use Policies and Land Development Policies that apply. Replacing the Urbanizing Area concept with two designations, Urban Service Areas and Suburban Development Areas, recognizes the following realities:

1. Development in locations intended ultimately to connect to urban services is handled as interim development within the urban service area.
2. Suburban development that is not interim development is of a very long term nature, requiring that it be planned to be capable of treating sewage with on-site treatment systems for the foreseeable future.
3. Changes to the policies and Land Use Plan Map made since adoption of the 1995 Plan, reflected in the CLUES model, have reduced (but not eliminated) the significance of contiguity to other suburban development and proximity to employment centers as criteria for suburban development suitability. As a result, some areas that have the character of suburban development are unlikely to become contiguous to "urbanizing areas" in the foreseeable future.

Various policies in this Plan address land use issues within the urban service areas but outside the municipal limits of the cities. The Future Land Use Plan Map does not address detailed land uses within the urban service areas. That issue will be addressed as the cities update their own Land Use Plans. However, the County has authority for land use decisions outside existing city limits. The policies, locational criteria, and land use descriptions included in detailed urban service area plans will be reviewed and considered for adoption by the County so that the County and involved cities and townships can make coordinated land use decisions.

### **LOCATIONAL CRITERIA**

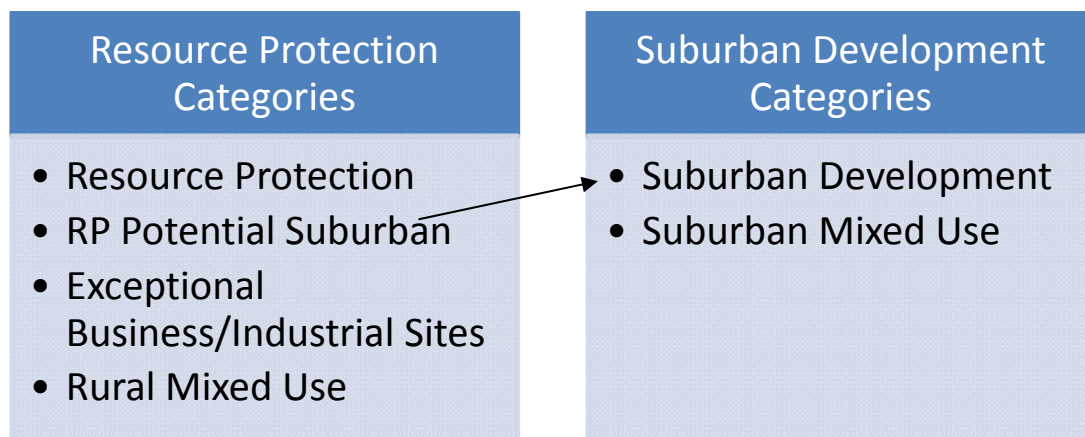
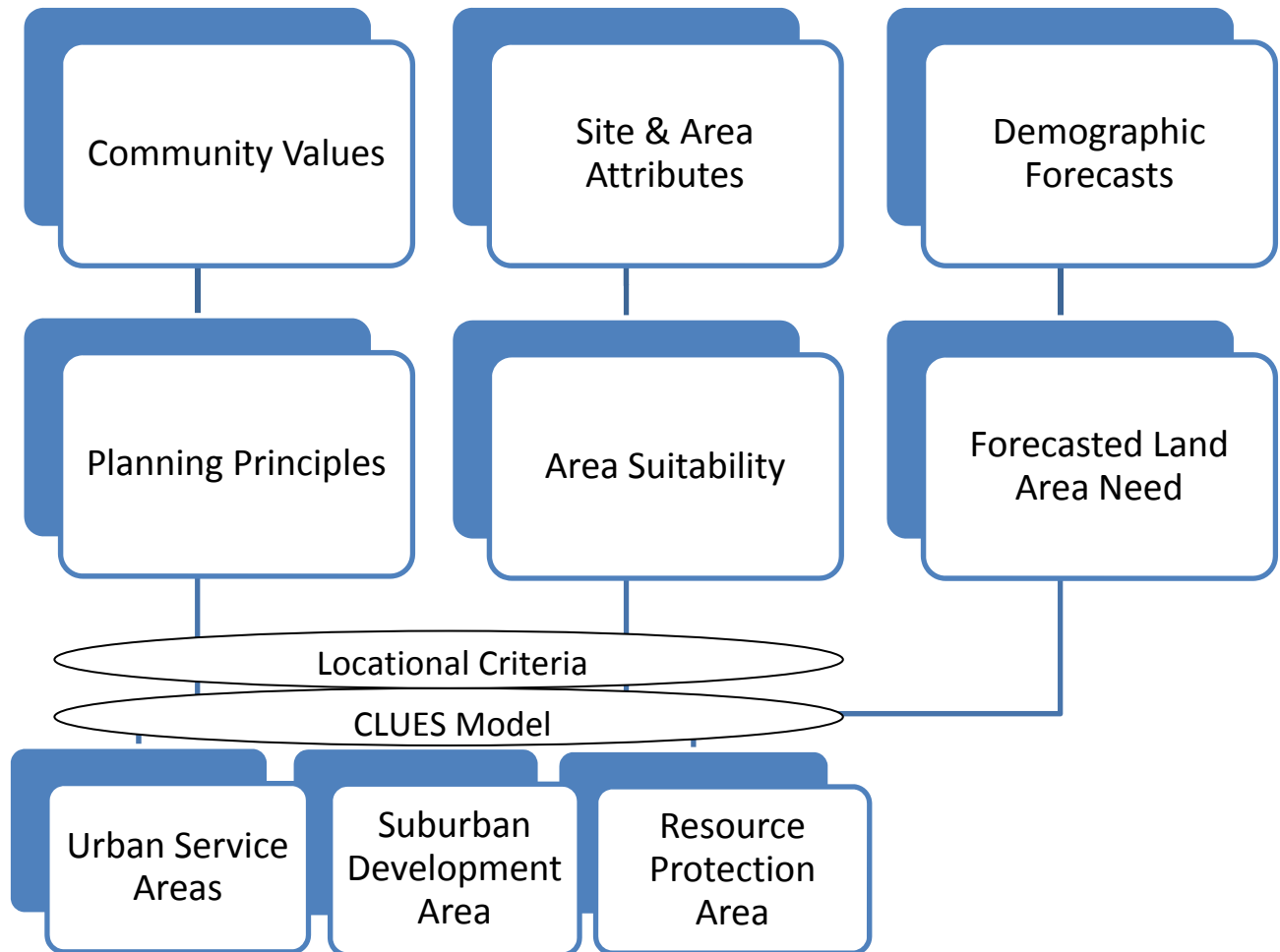
"Locational criteria" are characteristics of sites and areas used to determine where the Land Use Plan land use categories should be mapped. The locational criteria are based on the principles, policies, and land use descriptions. These criteria allow for area-wide and location-specific analysis as part of the designation of the Future Land Use Plan Map and the analysis of specific proposals for future changes in land use. The criteria have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System model developed for the purpose of objectively identifying land use on the future land use map.

The locational criteria are intended to be used together in a judgmental process that reflects the overall appropriateness of an area for a particular use designation. The 1978 Land Use Plan is based on an all-or-nothing approach in which an area must meet certain thresholds for all of the criteria in order to be classified in a particular designation. The judgmental system of locational criteria used in the development of

this Plan reflects all of the criteria, but (usually) no single criterion can determine the designation of an area.

Each of the major land use designations is mapped according to the locational criteria described in the section describing the use designation.

## DEVELOPING THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP



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## CHAPTER 4: URBAN SERVICE AREA

### ***USE DESIGNATION***

Urban service areas consist of municipalities and additional developed and undeveloped land area around each municipality needed to accommodate development over the next 25 to 50 years. Centralized sanitary sewer and water systems, storm sewer systems, integrated comprehensive transportation systems, public parks, and school sites should ultimately be provided in these areas. Uses accommodated in this use category include urban development, interim development, and resource uses consistent with long-term urban density development, such as limited non-farm residences or hobby farms, public or private parks, sand and gravel extraction activities, wildlife or forest management, and continuing agricultural activities. Such uses should be consistent with the detailed urban service area Land Use Plan.

The intent of this designation is to (1) delineate the best areas for urban growth until the year 2040, (2) accommodate uses and development patterns compatible with future urban growth, and (3) allow for the continuation of agricultural and other resource uses.

### ***URBAN SERVICE AREA LAND USE POLICIES***

1. **Urban Service Area Identification:** The Plan identifies Urban Service Areas based on the following characteristics:
  - \* projected growth in population and employment and the related need for land for development
  - \* location needs of land uses
  - \* compatibility of land uses with surrounding land uses
  - \* availability, capacity, and service territories of planned urban services and infrastructure
  - \* land suitability based on natural features (flood plain, soils, slopes, elevation, and presence of sensitive environmental features)
  - \* suitability for resource uses
  - \* the related community land use and infrastructure policies
  - \* accessibility (quality of connections to regional transportation networks and to other parts of urban service areas)
  - \* proximity to employment centers
  - \* areas of existing development relying on onsite sewage treatment that are in need of urban services
2. **Orderly Development:** Development should result in a compact, contiguous settlement pattern. Adjacent uses should be compatible in terms of intensity of use, traffic generation, hours of activity, noise sensitivity, and open space requirements. Low density urban residential development is considered to be generally compatible with contiguous suburban style development. However, in areas where the urban development is contiguous with suburban style development and there are legitimate concerns with infrastructure capacity, zoning authorities are encouraged to reduce the density of adjacent urban development. Centralized

municipal style urban services and systems will be provided only within the Urban Service Areas, consistent with infrastructure and related land use policies.

3. **Integrated Development:** Regulations should encourage the integration of compatible land uses in neighborhoods within urban service areas, including varied housing styles in different price and unit size ranges but with similar ranges of density. Mixtures of housing styles and price ranges will lead to neighborhoods integrated by age, race, and income. Mixtures of compatible residential and non-residential uses will lead to reduced energy use for transportation purposes by reducing trip lengths, reducing demand for auto travel, and fostering greater opportunities for transit use and non-motorized travel. Urban service areas should provide for a variety and mix of urban residential densities, prices, types, styles, patterns, and locations. The detailed urban service area plans should provide for integrating residential areas with commercial and industrial areas, public institutions, and other uses in order to minimize the need for motor vehicle travel and to provide residential areas and business centers with a wide range of choice in mode of travel. Where detailed urban service area Land Use Plans are not yet prepared, Land Use Plan decisions should be based on adopted locational criteria for major use categories and mixed use development.
4. **Commercial Development:** Commercial land uses that are characterized by high levels of employment, trip generation, customer traffic, and urban service needs should be located within urban service areas. A few rural locations with exceptional attributes, such as access to an interchange along Interstate 90, for example, may also be appropriate for these commercial uses. The section on rural commercial business uses spells out locational characteristics appropriate for urban commercial uses in rural locations and the detailed land use map identifies such locations. Detailed plans for urban service areas should provide for urban commercial uses primarily in clusters that serve defined neighborhood, community, or regional markets.
  - **Strip Commercial Development:** Strip commercial development (commercial development characterized by orientation to a street frontage and significantly greater site frontage than site depth) frequently causes transportation problems and land use conflicts. In general, new strip commercial development should not be permitted. However, infill parcels in existing strip commercial development could be permitted for low impact or neighborhood oriented uses, where consistent with access management and traffic impact policies. Where such development currently exists, problems associated with poorly integrated accesses and land use conflicts should be corrected prior to or concurrently with infill development. Where it is possible to distribute such costs, the costs of such corrections should be borne by the benefited area and not just the infill parcel. Land development regulations should require that strip commercial development mitigate or avoid traffic and land use impacts.
  - **Commercial Growth:** Several factors need to be reviewed when considering the expansion of existing commercial areas or the development of new areas, including

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- \* the current availability of commercial land within the urban service area and other areas identified for commercial development ;
  - \* the suitability of the proposed site (based on the locational critical for commercial uses) in comparison with existing undeveloped areas identified for commercial development and in comparison with undeveloped areas elsewhere in the urban service area designated for non-commercial purposes; and
  - \* the adequacy of transportation facilities to provide effective accessibility, capacity and mobility by multiple modes, for commercial growth, maintaining reasonable service for existing and projected travel demand.
5. **Industrial Development:** Urban industrial land uses (industrial uses with significant sewer service needs or high levels of employment, trip generation, or heavy vehicle traffic) should locate primarily in urban service areas, except in locations identified on the Plan map with exceptional attributes (such as access to an interchange along Interstate 90, for example). The section on rural business uses spells out locational characteristics appropriate for urban industrial uses in rural locations and the detailed map identifies locations for such uses. Urban industrial uses should be located where adequate utilities are in place, centralized sewer and water are available or programmed with sufficient capacity, and sufficient functional and structural transportation capacity is available or is programmed for both person and goods movement. Industries with a significant potential for groundwater contamination should locate outside wellhead protection areas. Detailed urban service area Land Use Plans should reserve sites that have excellent access for freight shipment by rail, air, and freeway for industrial use.
6. **Adequate Land Area:** The Land Use Plan is a growth management plan intended to provide for orderly and compact development. Large lot or other land intensive development within urban service areas is generally inconsistent with this goal unless it provides for future higher density development. The land area within urban service areas should be adequate to accommodate projected employment and housing growth and to prevent land price increases deriving from scarcity of urban land supply, but should not be excessive. For growth management reasons and to prevent sprawl, projected employment and population growth over the planning period should determine the size of urban service areas. Except for pockets of unserviceable land or land developed prior to annexation, all urban service areas should be feasible to serve with municipal facilities.

### **URBAN SERVICE AREA LAND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

Land development in urban service areas should occur where public facilities are adequate to handle the development, either through development agreements providing for concurrent construction of the facilities, through phasing of the development in accordance with facility availability, or through directing development to areas with sufficient capacity to serve the intended development. All urban service area development should be carried out in accordance with an approved general

development plan, except in relatively rare circumstances related to infill development on small parcels.

1. **Efficient Site Design:** Land development regulations should encourage residential and non-residential site design that protects the features and natural functions of the landscape, minimizes the life-cycle costs of future public services and facilities, and encourages the use of alternatives to the private automobile. To minimize the need for travel and to maximize the feasibility of efficient modes of travel such as transit, bicycling, carpooling, and walking, land development regulations should encourage mixed use development in urban service areas.
2. **Infill Development:** Land development regulations should encourage infill development of residential, commercial, and industrial areas located within urban service areas in order to make more efficient use of existing public infrastructure and developable land. Communities should implement this policy through land development standards, public investment in services and facilities, and public assistance or incentives to the private sector. Additional higher density residential development should be encouraged in older large lot developments in urban service areas when public water and sewer systems become available.
3. **Public Facilities and Services Planning:** Cities should develop sustainable, fiscally sound phasing plans for systems of public facilities and services consistent with their urban service area boundaries. The public facilities should include centralized sewer and water systems; multi-modal transportation facilities including an appropriate mix of transit, bicycle, pedestrian and auto/truck facilities; public park land; and storm water management systems. The sewer and water plans should be firm enough to provide predictability for long range planning by the public and private sectors, yet sufficiently flexible to respond to changed conditions. Planning for the expansion of water and sewer systems should address both the environmental problems presented by existing development on small lots relying on ISTS and needs related to population and employment growth.
4. **Paying for Growth:** New development should provide proportional financial support for community facilities to the extent that the development increases the need for such facilities. Financial support should apply to park land, storm water management, water and sanitary sewer systems, and transportation (pedestrian and vehicular). Requirements should be consistent with the normal requirements for City development and should include land dedication, on-site improvements and contribution to off-site improvements.
5. **Traffic Impact:** Proposed land uses involving a significant change in the amount or type of traffic should be carefully reviewed for traffic generation, conflict, and safety. The process for reviewing Land Use Plan changes, zone changes, and general development plans should include a system for detailed review of traffic impacts caused by land use change and for managing access. The review should meet the requirements of the County or Township ordinances and the requirements of the applicable City ordinances.
6. **Capital Improvement Planning:** The County should integrate land use planning and capital improvements programming decisions. Land use decisions should consider existing and future public infrastructure impacts and needs, especially impacts on

roads. Capital improvements programming should recognize the current and projected needs of planned land use.

7. **Neighborhood Livability:** Financial and regulatory policies should support programs to maintain the number and quality of housing units and stabilize or improve the livability of neighborhoods. Such programs could include building or renovating housing units; helping neighborhoods to organize crime prevention programs; and making public investments in parks, landscaping on public property, lighting, etc.
8. **Environmental Concerns:**
  - **Alternative Energy Use:** Regulations should allow for the use of on-site alternative energy generation in residential, commercial, and industrial areas, consistent with safety considerations. Land use regulations should encourage the development of alternative residential development and housing designs that use alternative heating, cooling, and electrical generation technologies.
  - **Environmental Impact:** Where urban and suburban development patterns and individual development proposals cannot avoid areas with significant natural features, development should be designed to minimize adverse impacts.
  - **Groundwater Protection:** Land use designations and best management practices should be used to protect wellhead protection areas and other sensitive hydro-geologic areas from land uses that may cause groundwater pollution.
  - **Open Space Provision and Environmental Protection:** Encourage the dedication of land, money in lieu of land to be used for acquiring land or easements, or conservation easements for the purpose of providing open space and protecting sensitive environmental areas or significant natural features.
  - **Runoff Control:** Surface water runoff from industrial, commercial, and residential land uses should be controlled. Generally, the rate, volume, and hydrograph of the runoff from the area to be developed should meet pre-development levels. Accelerated erosion should not occur.
9. **Historic Preservation:** Sites and buildings which exhibit a significant historical or architectural heritage should be preserved through historic preservation regulations, public acquisition, or easements where appropriate.
10. **Intergovernmental Cooperation:** The county, township, and affected city governments should cooperate in planning for urban, suburban, and interim development areas. General development plans should be developed that identify drainage, street, and open space systems covering the areas zoned for these development types.
11. **Compatibility:** The impact of urban development, especially commercial and industrial development, on surrounding land uses, natural systems, and public facilities should be managed in order to address impacts on and compatibility with adjacent land uses, for example from noise and light emissions, signage, landscaping, and so on.

**INTERIM DEVELOPMENT:**

Areas within Urban Service Areas may rely on individual or community sewage treatment systems as an interim measure, provided the ability to serve the sub-watershed of the affected area with municipal services is not compromised and that the affected city and township reach agreement on multi-parcel service area orderly annexation agreements (see section below on Orderly Annexation Agreements)). Such agreements should apply to service territories reflecting the geographic area logically related to the provision of future urban services, such as a sub-watershed identified as the service territory of a planned sewer interceptor. Interim urban development must assure eventual connection to a centralized sewer and water system and must provide for future urban infrastructure, through requirements for special development approaches such as the following:

- the installation of sewer and water facilities on-site at the time of development, for example, relying on shared wells and community drainfields
- the establishment of an escrow or similar account to pay for future infrastructure costs
- agreements for sewer and water service hookup and other infrastructure needs related to pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular transportation, stormwater management, and parkland supply.
- clustering buildable lots to minimize costs and provide flexibility for future development
- platting arrangements and zoning requirements to allow for future lot splits
- arrangements providing for the township's infrastructure maintenance needs;
- site planning that is approved through a general development plan that includes city and township review; zoning approval would depend on GDP approval.

There are three types of interim development with three associated time periods. All three types should require GDP approval.

1. Residential interim development is limited to areas within the urban service area, where there is agreement that the property will not be required to connect to municipal water and sewer services within 10 years of development.
2. Interim land-intensive non-residential development with relatively low requirements for water use, sewage treatment, and customer and employee traffic (having few employees and customers on-site at a time and requiring large amounts of land area, such as a lumberyard or a motor freight business) is limited to areas within the urban service area, where there is agreement that the site will not be required to connect to municipal water and sewer services within 6 years of development. Such uses should not preclude eventual high-value business uses from using prime commercial locations. For this reason, zoning controls should set limits on maximum building size, maximum impervious surface ratio, and floor area ratio consistent with future higher, more intensive uses of urban commercial locations.

3. Other non-residential development (with levels of employment or customers typical of urban areas or urban fringes, such as a convenience store) is limited to areas where there is agreement that the development will connect to and pay charges for services and that services will be provided within 10 years of development.

In all three types of development, zoning approval will depend on general development plan approval, occurring concurrently with preliminary plat approval. The location of such uses shall be consistent with the relevant urban service area Land Use Plan. Where detailed Land Use Plans for the urban service area in question are not available, the location of such uses should reflect the locational criteria in the Land Use Plan text. If the relevant urban service area Land Use Plan text does not incorporate locational criteria, then development of any kind shall follow the locational criteria for similar uses in the Rochester Urban Service Area Land Use Plan.

### ***LOCATIONAL CRITERIA FOR URBAN SERVICE AREAS***

These designations depend on criteria related to centralized sewer and water systems provided by the municipalities.

1. **Urban Services Availability:** Land included in an urban service area must be part of a sub-watershed identified in municipal wastewater and water planning as an area that can be provided services within approximately 25 to 50 years of the adoption of the Land Use Plan.
2. **Development Pattern:** Existing small-lot residential development, commercial uses, and industrial uses in close proximity to sewerage area but relying on on-site sewage treatment are likely to be included in the urban service area due to the need for connection to a centralized wastewater system.
3. **Prime Industrial Land:** Areas that are very well suited for industrial development, due to proximity to rail, freeway, and airport facilities and level terrain, are likely to be included in urban service areas.
4. **Development Suitability:** Areas adjacent to sewerage areas that are relatively easy to develop based on elevation, soil depth, slope, and ownership are more likely to be included in the urban service area.

### ***ORDERLY ANNEXATION AGREEMENTS***

The County encourages orderly annexation agreements to be developed concurrently with amendments adding to urban service areas. While Orderly Annexation Agreements are negotiated between townships and cities, and the County is not a party to these negotiations, the County sees such agreements as an important tool whereby townships and cities can collaborate to meet their own needs while furthering the goals of the Land Use Plan. Nevertheless, if the affected City and Township cannot reach agreement, the County retains land use planning authority, and has the latitude to make zoning and Land Use Plan decisions independent of these negotiations, consistent with County Land Use Plan goals of limiting sprawl; encouraging compact,

orderly, energy-efficient, and sustainable development; ensuring that the designated urban service area is consistent with projected land area needs; and protecting the extension of urban services into the affected sub-watershed areas.

Inclusion in an area covered by an Orderly Annexation Agreement is a necessary precondition for interim development, because it indicates that local governing bodies are committed to the orderly extension of urban services into the area covered by the agreement.

The following are recommended standard considerations for inclusion in such agreements. There are additional matters pertaining to such agreements that are not listed; those listed address only the land use issues of importance to the County:

1. The area subject to the agreement should entail the complete area of a realistic and cost-effective sewer sub-watershed identified in the sewage collection system planning of the respective city.
2. The area covered by an Orderly Annexation Agreement should include only lands mapped as Urban Service Area. Areas included in an Orderly Annexation Area generally should not be designated on the Land Use Plan as Suburban Development Area or Resource Protection Area, except where the agreement extends beyond the fifty year urban service area.
3. Once a predetermined proportion of the sewer sub-watershed is developed, the balance of the sub-watershed may be annexed and served.
4. Any land developed as interim development prior to annexation in the area covered by the Agreement should be subject to the following requirements:
  - a. General development plan requirements of the township, county, and city all apply.
  - b. The development plan should provide for eventual development at an urban density and intensity of use comparable to at least the lowest density residential zoning district mapped in the city's zoning ordinance. The plan should preserve the ability to achieve such an intensity by such means as cluster development and the establishment of interim open space within lots and as outlots.
  - c. The County encourages each city, in cooperation with abutting townships, to develop a model agreement and accompanying development agreements that specify arrangements for development charges and dedication requirements and that identify the proportion of sub-watershed development that will trigger annexation of the balance of the sub-watershed.
5. The ability of landowners to conduct resource-related uses should be maintained, with the exception that constraints applying generally to new resource uses in close proximity to cities, interim development, or urban development should apply within areas covered by Orderly Annexation Agreements.



## CHAPTER 5: SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA

### **USE DESIGNATION**

Suburban development areas consist of large-lot residential development and very low density cluster-style residential development. New commercial and industrial uses are compatible with this designation only where suitable sites are mapped in the detailed Land Use Plan maps. The long-term predominant use of these areas is intended to be very low-density residential development (3.5 acres per lot average density) relying for the indefinite future on on-site sewage treatment and private water supplies. However, short-term temporary uses may include crop production, animal husbandry not involving new feedlots, forest management, other agricultural uses, and sand and gravel operations.

### **SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA LAND USE POLICIES**

It is the policy of this Plan to provide for a wide range of choice in residential location and lifestyle, including large lot and/or very low density development. Consistent with this policy, it is the intent of the Plan to provide for a supply of land available for large lot/very low density suburban development meeting the demand for such development over the time span of the Plan.

1. **Use of the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System (CLUES) Model:** The CLUES model has been developed and will be used as one of the guides to identify and evaluate the potential for suburban development.

The CLUES Model is intended as a guide to the County Board's judgment on land use matters, and not as a substitute for the Board's judgment. The model is revised from time to time to better reflect the Board's judgment as Board land use policies evolve. A description of the modeling process used to identify and evaluate land use areas appears in Appendix A of this document.

2. **Identifying the Resource Protection – Potential Suburban and Suburban Development Areas:** The CLUES model will be used to identify two areas: an area identified for suburban large lot development in the near term and a larger "resource protection - potential suburban" area, of which a portion may undergo eventual transition from current resource use to suburban development. Identifying this larger area may deter resource-related investment within the area identified. On the other hand, identifying a "resource protection - potential suburban" area may encourage resource investment in parts of the resource protection area that are not so identified.

The steps to accomplish this are as follows:

- From the resource protection – potential suburban area, on an annual basis, up to 200 acres of land will be identified for suburban large lot/very low density development, through a process that is coupled with general development plan (GDP) approval. Since at present a GDP is consistently required only within urban service areas, this will entail amending zoning and subdivision ordinances to require GDP approval for development proposals that

ultimately involve Land Use Plan changes, zone changes, and subdivision plats, and to establish an expiration period for GDP approval.

- The supply of land in the suburban development designation should be managed to reflect general market conditions, with a cap on the aggregate accumulation of 320 acres available in any given year.
- Change from the “resource protection - potential suburban” classification to the “suburban development” Land Use Plan classification, and the accompanying change in zoning, would occur concurrently with preliminary plat approval, following GDP approval.
- If the areas identified in this way are not platted within the expiration period for GDP approval, the GDP approval will expire, the area will remain in the “resource area - potential suburban” land use classification, and the area will remain in a resource protection zoning classification.

Addressing suburban land supply as an annual allotment may broaden land purchase options, reduce risk, and reduce delay in development approval, increasing the effective supply of suburban land and thereby reducing the price of suburban land. If this reduced price is passed on to homebuyers, there will be an improvement in affordability. If this does not occur, a further amendment to the Land Use Plan should address affordable housing in suburban areas, such as expansions of areas zoned in the rural services district.

3. **Adequate Land Area:** The Land Use Plan is a growth management plan intended to provide for orderly and compact development. For growth management reasons and to prevent sprawl, projected demand for large lot development over the planning period should determine the size of suburban development areas.

There are areas in the Resource Protection – Potential Suburban Area that already exceed resource protection densities through metes and bounds lot splits. Further development in the vicinity of these areas should be handled only through the Land Use Plan amendment and general development plan process, identifying a planned future density, circulation system changes (if any), and future lot patterns. The lots accounted for in these areas should be considered as part of the annual suburban development allotment.

4. **Mixed Use Areas:** Small neighborhood – oriented commercial uses such as are accommodated in existing mixed use areas in the County may also be accommodated as neighborhood businesses in the suburban development area on sites with appropriate site characteristics. Such characteristics include
- a. Location at an intersection with a street serving a significant area beyond the immediate neighborhood.
  - b. Topography and intersection design conducive to safe access.
  - c. Avoidance of flood plains, wetlands and Decorah Edge support areas, areas with sinkholes, steep slopes, native vegetation, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
  - d. Compatibility with adjoining development, including, for example, residential development and open space uses.

The sites designated for such development are shown on the detailed Land Use Plan maps. Three such areas of historical settlement, Chester, Marion, and Sleepers' Corner, are identified on the detailed Plan maps and are currently zoned as Rural Service Districts.

### ***SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA LAND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES:***

1. **Cluster Development:** Suburban densities averaging 3 or more acres per unit can be accomplished either through conventional large lot development designs or through cluster designs. Where there are sensitive sites in particular, suburban development should consider cluster development concepts consistent with a low overall density, to accomplish protection of sensitive environmental areas and reduced infrastructure costs. County land development ordinances should provide for protection of sensitive environmental areas whether or not cluster designs are applied, and should provide incentives to encourage the application of cluster approaches.

Cluster development is permitted as a form of development in the Decorah Edge Overlay Zone, without the requirement for rezoning to a "special district." Outside the Decorah Edge Overlay Zone, the mechanism for cluster development has been the special district. Since special districts by definition are unique districts, reliance on this approach has not resulted in consistent standards for compactness, open space preservation, reduction of road length and area, and other desired attributes of cluster development. Zoning and subdivision ordinances should be revised to set forth such standards so that cluster development can be accommodated consistently and in such a way as to protect the amenity features that attract suburban residents to suburban locations.

2. **Efficient Site Design:** Land development regulations should encourage site design that protects the features and natural functions of the landscape, minimizes the life-cycle costs of future public services and facilities, and encourages the use of alternatives to the private automobile.
3. **Efficient Use of Suburban Area:** Except in some cases for infill development, because land suited for suburban development is limited in area, development of land identified for suburban development requires a general development plan prior to approval, to ensure that the incremental effect of lot splits does not interfere with long term orderly development of suburban development areas.
4. **Infill Development:** As is reflected in the locational criteria for suburban development (specifically criteria 5 and 8), infill development of undeveloped areas abutted by existing suburban development should be encouraged in order to make more efficient use of existing public infrastructure and developable land and to limit the area of conflict between residential and resource uses.
5. **Paying for Growth:** New development should provide proportional financial support for community facilities to the extent that the development increases the need for such facilities.

6. **Traffic Impact:** Proposed land uses involving a significant change in the amount or type of traffic should be carefully reviewed for traffic generation, conflict, and safety. The process for reviewing Land Use Plan changes, zone changes, and general development plans should include detailed review of traffic impacts caused by land use change and should provide for management of access.
7. **Capital Improvement Planning:** Road authorities should integrate land use planning and capital improvements programming decisions. Land use decisions should consider existing and future public infrastructure impacts and needs, especially impacts on roads. Capital improvements programming should recognize the current and projected needs of planned land use.
8. **Runoff Control:** Surface water runoff from industrial, commercial, and residential land uses should be controlled. Generally, the rate of runoff, the volume, and hydrograph of the runoff from the developed area should meet its native vegetation level. Accelerated erosion should not occur. Regulations relating to runoff control should meet or exceed the requirements of abutting Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permittees.
9. **Historic Preservation:** Suburban development including or adjacent to sites and buildings which exhibit a significant historical or architectural heritage should provide for their preservation through historic preservation regulations, public acquisition, or easements where appropriate.
10. **Intergovernmental Cooperation:** The county, township, and affected city governments should cooperate in planning for urban, suburban, and interim development areas. General development plans should be developed that identify drainage, street, and open space systems covering the areas zoned for these development types.

### ***SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES***

1. **Environmental Concerns:**
  - **Alternative Energy Use:** Regulations should allow for the use of on-site alternative energy generation in suburban development areas, consistent with safety considerations. Land use regulations should encourage development and housing designs that use alternative heating, cooling, and electrical generation technologies.
  - **Environmental Impact:** Where suburban development patterns and individual development proposals incorporate areas with significant natural features, development should be designed to preserve such areas and minimize adverse impacts.
  - **Groundwater Protection:** Land use designations and best management practices should be used to protect wellhead protection areas and other sensitive hydro-geologic areas from land uses that may cause groundwater pollution. Because development in the suburban development area is expected to rely on private wells and on-site sewage treatment for decades, if not

permanently, such development should provide for mechanisms to ensure that treatment and dilution of effluent is sufficient to provide for the long-term safety of potable water supplies in the development and adjoining areas. Such mechanisms can include advanced designs with nitrate removal or reduced density of development to provide adequate dilution. Maintenance of land area in native vegetation should be encouraged for reasons of runoff control, water conservation, and groundwater quality.

- **Environmental Corridors and Environmental Protection:** Subdivision ordinances should require the dedication of land, money in lieu of land to be used for acquiring land or easements, or conservation easements for the purpose of providing trails and other open space and protecting sensitive environmental areas or significant natural features.

### ***LOCATIONAL CRITERIA FOR SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS:***

Areas outside urban service areas are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area if they have the following characteristics:

1. **Proximity and Access:** Sites in proximity to major employment centers with adequate and safe accessibility to the existing network of improved highways are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
2. **Site Attractiveness:** Areas having attractive settings for residential development, based on terrain, vegetation, and landscape features such as shoreland and steep slopes are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
3. **Unsuitability for Resource Uses:** Locations with low suitability of the site and surrounding area for resource-oriented uses are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
4. **Development Limitations:** Areas with few development limitations based on soils, topography, other physical features are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
5. **Orderly Development:** Areas with an orderly development pattern (compatible to adjacent land uses and generally contiguous to existing development and which would not impact the long term extension of public utilities in the urban service area of any abutting City) are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
6. **Environmental Sensitivity:** Areas with a high susceptibility to groundwater contamination, based on the county's geologic atlas, and areas of environmental sensitivity for other reasons, such as very steep slopes, flood prone and landslide prone areas, and areas of undisturbed native vegetation, are less likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
7. **Land Use Compatibility:** Areas separated from incompatible land uses are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.

8. **Non-Farm Development:** Areas with significant non-farm development at densities higher than one unit per 20 acres are more likely to be included in the Suburban Development Area.
9. **Proximity to Airports:** Locations within the area covered by airport zoning districts associated with the Rochester International Airport and similar locations with airport-related noise or safety concerns are generally excluded from the Suburban Development Area.

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## CHAPTER 6: RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA POLICIES

### *USE DESIGNATION*

The Resource Protection Area includes areas intended for exclusive resource related use; areas intended primarily for agriculture and other resource uses, with limited rural residential development; recreational commercial and other resource related business uses; limited land intensive commercial and industrial uses; limited urban commercial and industrial uses in locations with exceptional access and other site characteristics; and natural resource areas.

### **RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA LAND USE POLICIES**

1. **Resource Protection Area Identification:** The Resource Protection Area has been identified based in part on the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System model described in Appendix A of this document. The uses accommodated within the Resource Protection Area are primarily intended to provide for and protect resource-related uses. A wide range of resource-related uses are accommodated in this area, including public and private parks and wildlife management areas, aggregate mining, farming, forestry, and similar uses. Inclusion in this designation can be based either on suitability for any one of these uses, or a relative lack of suitability for the Suburban Development or Urban Service Area designations.
2. **Conserving Agriculture:** Agricultural land uses (soil resources, agricultural investment, and land use and ownership patterns) should be protected from interference caused by incompatible non-farm development. The County Zoning Ordinance should reserve areas of the county with the best agricultural characteristics primarily for agricultural and related natural resource activities. Opportunities for agricultural investments should be protected so that economically viable farms can be created, sustained, and expanded. This can be accomplished by limiting the location, amount, and density of non-farm development in areas of the county best suited for agricultural use; regulating the splitting of large parcels of historically agricultural lands; and encouraging diversified or non-conventional farm operations that may use cropland, pasture, and woodland resources.

Very large feedlot operations should be restricted to sites where public roads are adequate and where land use and environmental impacts can be minimized.

3. **Residential Development:** Non-farm residential uses in the Resource Protection Area should be accommodated only in accordance with the following policies:
  - Subdivision ordinances should provide for plats in areas of the county designated as Resource Protection Area, including those with a mix of non-farm and farm size parcels and uses, only where it can be shown that the impact on abutting uses, the need for public road area, and the impact on prime agricultural land can be reduced through the use of platting as compared to metes and bound subdivision approaches.
  - In the Resource Protection Area, odor, dust, and noise producing activities, such as rock quarries, wind turbines, grain drying, pesticide and fertilizer storage and

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distribution facilities, and feedlots are consistent with the intent of the Plan and have priority over non-farm uses, as long as those resource uses comply with existing environmental standards.

- The density of non-farm development should be controlled through restrictions on the number and density of non-farm sized lots allowed in resource protection area zoning districts. The County should explore zoning ordinance amendments that would provide for farm related lot splits where conservation easements guarantee the use of the newly created parcel for farming (including farm residences). Such easements would accommodate parcels not meeting the current land-area based definitions of “farm,” and would therefore
  - Allow for mortgage loans for farm-related dwellings on separate parcels;
  - Provide for easier entry into farming for farm operations not needing or for farm operators not able to acquire current farm-sized parcels; and
  - Through the easement approach, assure that the parcel was not in conflict with the underlying intent to protect the area for long-term agricultural use.
- Properties considered potentially suited for suburban residential development will be identified based in part on the CLUES model. Once a property has been mapped as “Resource Protection – Potential Suburban,” the owner can apply for designation as Suburban Development, as described in Chapter 5.

#### **4. Commercial Development:**

- a. Small commercial uses such as are accommodated in existing mixed use areas in the County may also be accommodated as infill sites in other areas of the County. Such areas are shown on the detailed Land Use Plan maps.
- b. Zoning ordinances should accommodate limited larger urban-style commercial uses on rural sites with exceptional site characteristics. Such characteristics include
  1. Exceptional access, including
    - locations along existing or planned freeways where access will be provided by an interchange and not an at-grade intersection, or
    - at non-freeway intersection locations where total approach traffic volumes exceed 3,000 vehicles per day with a minimum approach volume on any leg of at least 1,000 ADT, and where it can be demonstrated that the traffic generated by the proposed use will not create a high risk access condition, as determined using the methodology spelled out in the MNDOT Access Management Manual.
  2. Topography and intersection design conducive to safe access, without documented crash risk problems.
  3. Avoidance of wetlands, steep slopes, native vegetation, and other environmentally sensitive areas.



4. Compatibility with adjoining development, including, for example, residential development, park and open space uses and resource uses with odor, noise, or dust emissions.
5. Consistency with long term orderly development of urban areas.

The sites designated for such development are shown on the detailed Land Use Plan maps.

- c. With the exception of infill sites (4a) or on sites with exceptional access characteristics (4b), commercial uses in the Resource Protection Area should be limited to those that are closely related to natural resources or that are land intensive and have relatively low requirements for sewage treatment and customer and employee traffic . Such land intensive-low service-requirement or resource-oriented uses include commercial uses that supply farms with materials or equipment, commercial uses that sell directly to the consumer from farms (such as orchards or nurseries with sales operations), commercial uses that directly rely on natural resources in other ways, such as sand and gravel sales and recreational commercial uses, and commercial uses that are characterized by low numbers and numbers per acre of employees and customers on-site, and that may be served by on-site sewage treatment.
- d. Recreational commercial uses are limited to those uses with special needs for large areas of open space related to scenic or other natural areas, especially where such needs cannot typically be accommodated in urban service areas. Sites for such uses should have exceptional resource characteristics. Recreational commercial uses should locate in sites consistent with goals of
  1. preserving the natural environment and the scenic beauty of the area;
  2. avoiding a major, permanent conversion of agricultural and forest land with highly productive soils to non-farm uses;
  3. conserving energy; and
  4. avoiding undue public expenditures, such as for road improvements and public safety.

## 5. Industrial Development

Except infill sites or sites with exceptional access characteristics, industrial uses in the Resource Protection Area should be limited to those that are closely related to natural resources or that are land intensive and have low requirements for public services and infrastructure. Such land intensive-low-services or resource-oriented uses include industrial uses that directly rely on natural resources, such as sand and gravel extraction, and industrial uses that are characterized by low employment numbers and low numbers per acre of employees on-site, and that may be served by on-site sewage treatment.

The location of rural industrial development sites should be carefully reviewed to ensure that future industrial development does not create incompatibilities with parts of the resource protection- potential suburban considered highly suitable based on the CLUES model.

- a. Land Intensive – Low Service Needs: Zoning ordinances should accommodate industrial uses with relatively low requirements for sewage treatment and which generate low levels of customer and employee traffic, such as cabinet shops, transmission repair shops, welding shops, and similar uses, in resource protection areas where safe, adequate access can be provided, neighboring uses are compatible, and environmental impacts and site constraints are minimal.
- b. Resource-related Industrial Uses: Zoning ordinances should accommodate resource related industrial uses, such as sawmills, aggregate mining and related paving material production, wind energy production, livestock breeding facilities, and so on, in resource protection areas where safe, adequate access can be provided, neighboring uses are compatible, and environmental impacts and site constraints are minimal. Sites suitable for intensive resource related industrial uses should have excellent access characteristics, with safe, adequate access to the year-round ten ton road network. Direct rail access is also desirable for intensive resource related industrial uses.
- c. Other Intensive Industrial Development: Zoning ordinances should accommodate limited larger intensive industrial uses on rural sites with exceptional site characteristics. Such characteristics include
  - i. Exceptional access, including location at an interchange along a limited access highway or equivalent and location along a rail corridor, and where it can be demonstrated that the traffic generated by the proposed use will not create a high risk access condition, as determined using the methodology spelled out in the MNDOT Access Management Manual.
  - ii. Avoidance of wetlands, steep slopes, native vegetation, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
  - iii. Compatibility with adjoining development, including, for example, residential development and park and open space uses and other uses sensitive to odor, noise, or dust emissions.

The sites identified as potentially suited for such development will be shown on detailed Land Use Plan maps following Land Use Plan map amendments. Potential uses identified for such sites should be spelled out in Zoning Ordinances and should exclude uses characterized by very high levels of customer traffic and employment and by high demand for services conventionally supplied in urban areas.

6. **Other Development Requiring Extensive Land Area:** Some land uses (such as wind energy development and bio-fuels production, airports, landfills, rock quarries, and sand and gravel pits) may need extensive land areas and buffer areas due to odor, noise, dust, related environmental impacts, or potential safety problems. These uses must usually locate outside urban areas where their locational requirements are met. Such uses should be separated from existing or planned residential areas. New residences should not be located near these uses.
7. **Communication Towers and Utilities:** The location of communication towers, high voltage power transmission lines, petroleum/natural gas pipelines, and other similar special uses should be controlled to the extent allowable to minimize potential

aesthetic and other public health or welfare impacts including property impacts. Where available, communications facilities should share towers in order to minimize the need for scattered locations and resulting impacts.

- 8. Rural Mixed Use Areas:** A few historic rural communities are identified in the detailed Land Use Plan maps as rural mixed use areas. These include the areas known as, Douglas, Genoa, High Forest, Pleasant Grove, Potsdam, Rock Dell, Salem Corners, Simpson, and Viola. These areas are mapped as Rural Service Districts in the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance. Growth of Rural Service Centers should be guided by a general development plan for that neighborhood that designates areas for residential and non-residential growth. Any proposals to establish new rural service centers or expand an existing rural service center should be evaluated in terms of consistency with the overall intent of the Resource Protection Area, with the principle of accommodating infill development, and with a general development plan for the area.

### ***RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA DEVELOPMENT POLICIES***

- 1. Public Services:** The level of public services (county and township) provided in the Resource Protection Area, should reflect the needs of resource uses rather than the needs of non-farm dwellers.
- 2. Non-Farm Development:** Non-farm parcels in the Resource Protection Area should be permitted only at a very low density and in such locations as to cause minimal impact on surrounding resource and resource related business land uses. When new non-farm lots are created, they should be located such that farm fields are not divided by the non-farm parcel or by access roads or driveways. Provisions for access should not remove highly productive soils from potential agricultural use. Standards for non-farm parcels should minimize impacts on feedlots and other agricultural investments, impacts on other resource investments, and direct impacts resulting from removing resources from resource uses.
- 3. Commercial and Industrial Development:** Resource-oriented commercial or industrial uses that generate odors, noise, dust, fire and explosive hazards, electrical interference, or air pollutants should maintain an adequate separation from existing or planned residential areas. Industrial performance standards should be applied where industrial activities are not regulated by state or federal permitting systems.
- 4. Sensitive Environmental Areas:** The following areas should be protected and their development should be discouraged:
  - areas prone to hazardous environmental conditions including floodplains, sinkhole concentrations, and steep or unstable slopes
  - areas sensitive to human impacts, including areas prone to groundwater pollution, soils with severe limitations to development, public waters, wetlands, blufflands, and areas of relatively undisturbed native vegetation
  - areas that may present an unacceptable risk to human health due to present or past pollution.

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**LOCATIONAL CRITERIA FOR RESOURCE PROTECTION AREAS:**

Areas are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area if they have the following characteristics:

1. **Soil Resource:** Olmsted County soils have been ranked by Crop Productivity Index (CPI) on a scale of 0 to 100, with higher scoring soils generally having higher crop yields and lower management costs. Generally, the higher the CPI of a site (averaged with its surrounding area), the more likely the site will qualify for the Resource Protection Area designation. Soils rated high for pasture land and forestry are also more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area.
2. **Aggregate Resource:** The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has released draft maps of important bedrock and sand and gravel aggregate resources in Olmsted County. Final maps will be available by late October, 2009. Because aggregate resources are rare, have high transportation costs, and are an important resource for construction, sites with high aggregate resource potential are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area.
3. **Wind Energy Potential:** In a study completed in 1994 (validated subsequently by site-specific meteorological studies), sites with high potential for wind energy production were identified based on land cover, land uses, elevation and topography, and proximity to transmission lines. The study has been updated to reflect changes since 1994 in land cover. Sites with high wind energy potential are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area.
4. **Farm Size or Parcel Size:** Conventional farming in Olmsted County usually requires extensive land holdings. The average size of farms based on agricultural census records is 241 acres. Larger parcels of land (on average 40 acres or larger) are generally necessary, but not a requirement, for efficient farming operations and for the continuation of agriculture over the long term. Concentrations of large parcels indicate active agricultural activities and are more likely to be placed in the Resource Protection Area.
5. **Existing Resource Investment:** The major resource investments considered in this Land Use Plan are pit and quarry operations, building investments, feedlots, conservation measures such as terraces, forest, and land investment as measured by parcel and farm size. Areas of the county with concentrations of pits or quarries, feedlots, large farm holdings, mature forest, or higher levels of investment in buildings or conservation are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area.
6. **Existing Land Use:** Areas of existing agricultural land uses that are not impacted by relatively high concentrations of incompatible non-farm residential and commercial land uses are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area.
7. **Proximity to Existing or Planned Public Lands and Facilities:** Existing or planned public facilities such as the airport, sanitary landfills, or public utility uses such as wind farms or electrical substations are generally incompatible with residential development. Therefore, adjacent areas are more likely to be included in the Resource Protection Area. County parks, state forests, state forest land, scientific and natural areas, reservoir sites, designated future park land, planned environmental corridors and trails, environmental education areas, and wildlife management areas are

significant resource uses and are generally more compatible with agricultural uses than urban or suburban uses; therefore, these resource areas are also located in the Resource Protection Area.

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## CHAPTER 7: MAJOR POLICY ISSUES

### **GENERAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

The following resource management policies apply throughout the County regardless of Land Use Plan designation.

1. **Environmental Corridors:** The county, city, and affected state agencies should create systems of environmental corridors in the urban, suburban, and rural areas of the county. Environmental corridors should be considered in floodplain areas, shoreland areas, wetlands, areas of unique habitat for flora or fauna, wildlife corridors, and bluff areas within shorelands. Especially along river or stream corridors where there is a potential for passive recreation, environmental corridors should provide for public access trails providing connections between river or stream accesses. The subdivision ordinance should require subdivisions affecting such areas to dedicate land or easements as a condition of plat or lot split approval. The acquisition of land and easements should be focused on these areas, especially where there is a possibility to provide for future trails or to connect large tracts of natural habitat in good condition, particularly state natural resource lands and natural resource oriented county and city parks.
2. **Ecosystem Protection:** Critical areas should be managed so as to protect natural ecosystems. Critical areas include river, stream, and lake shorelands; wetlands (especially groundwater-fed wetlands); trout streams; public waters; wildlife management areas and similar sites; natural resource oriented parks; reservoir sites; habitat for significant fauna and flora and areas of relatively undisturbed native vegetation; important scenic areas; Decorah Edge support areas; and steep slopes and bluff lands.
3. **Resource Conservation:** Land development ordinances should promote conserving resources, including soil, water, energy, and geologic resources.
  - **Geologic Resources:** Geologic resources, including sand, gravel, and rock, dictate the location of extraction facilities. Where feasible, sites with excellent geologic resources should be preserved for such uses. Where such sites are in the path of development, development phasing should provide for resource extraction prior to development. The operations and site plans of such facilities should address the control of water pollution sources, noise and dust, storage and disposal of waste, impact on surrounding lands, and impact on surface and groundwater. Ordinances regulating sand and gravel pits and rock quarries should require reclamation plans that address restoration and future use of the site.
  - **Groundwater Protection:** The water quality and the sustainable yield of aquifers used or potentially usable for drinking water supply should be protected. They are currently at risk from a number of sources, including but not limited to spills, wells that provide a conduit for contamination of aquifers, and nutrients and long-lasting chemicals applied to the land surface. The following strategies should be pursued to prevent groundwater pollution:

- encouraging best management practices for urban, suburban, and resource uses;
  - providing for recharge of aquifers with water that can meet drinking water standards at the point where it enters lower aquifers;
  - addressing areas with failing on-site treatment systems through programs to replace failing systems or by extending public sewer and water to serve such areas;
  - acquiring conservation easements and other easements in areas critical to maintaining groundwater quality, such as Decorah Edge and Till Edge wetlands and related features;
  - preserving or restoring habitats with deep-rooted vegetation (such as forests and native grasslands) in areas of focused recharge or high risk of groundwater contamination, such as areas around sinkholes and in wetlands and “losing” segments of streams associated with focused recharge of lower aquifers; and
  - designating and managing wellhead protection areas.
- **Shoreland Management:** Shoreland areas should be managed so as to minimize the destruction of existing vegetation, soil erosion from shoreland sites, contamination of rivers or streams from runoff from abutting uses, and stream-bank erosion. In general, permanent vegetative buffers should be maintained along rivers or streams in order to take up nutrients from field runoff and to filter out sediments and agricultural chemicals before they enter the stream. Given the karst topography of much of our area, surface waters readily recharge groundwater, so keeping chemicals associated with land uses out of surface waters protects both our rivers or streams and our drinking water.
  - **Flood Plain Management:** Since 1980, Rochester and Olmsted County have adopted flood plain management zoning controls going beyond the minimum standards recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Local regulations go beyond minimum requirements in two areas: (1) reducing downstream flood impacts by restricting loss of storage in any part of the 100 year flood plain and (2) maintaining pre-flood control flood plain boundaries in the breach zones downstream of flood control project reservoirs. Considering the evidence of increased frequency of severe weather events,<sup>2</sup> these local regulations should be maintained.
  - **Surface Waters:** Olmsted County is fortunate to have a number of rivers and streams, many of which once were coldwater fishery streams. Because the trout streams in Olmsted County are fed by springs draining calcium-rich aquifers, they contain a high level of calcium, a key mineral supporting fish populations. As a result, Olmsted County trout streams have been among the most productive

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<sup>2</sup> Evidence of higher rainfall intensities for constant time periods and higher frequencies for the same level of severity for storm events, based on increased density of rainfall records, improved statistical modeling, and a longer rainfall record, is reported in “Precipitation Design Values: Are They Adequate?” Richard H. Skaggs and Kenneth A. Blumenfeld, Winter 2006 CURA Reporter; <http://www.cura.umn.edu/reporter/06-Wint/Skaggs&Blumenfeld.pdf>. NOAA draws the same conclusions, based on higher record density, longer record periods, and a different improved statistical model, as reported at [http://www.epa.gov/nrmrl/wswrd/wqm/wrap/pdf/workshop/A3\\_Bonnin.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/nrmrl/wswrd/wqm/wrap/pdf/workshop/A3_Bonnin.pdf).



sport fisheries in the state. As a result of the impaired status of some potential trout streams, however, there are only four designated trout streams remaining in Olmsted County<sup>3</sup>.

Olmsted County's surface waters are important for other reasons as well, including natural habitat for aquatic plants and animals, wildlife corridors for animals and plant dispersal, and recreation. Land management practices in all land use designations should maintain these values and protect these habitats. Many of the Olmsted County surface waters evaluated so far by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency<sup>4</sup> have been shown to be impaired for at least one reason, with common factors including fecal coliform bacteria levels and turbidity. Streams with impairments occur in all of the land use types in Olmsted County. Of the streams that have been assessed as of July 2010, only three have not been identified as impaired, including the South Zumbro south of its confluence with Salem Creek and two tributaries of the Root River located in Dover and Elmira Townships. All three streams are located in resource protection areas. Factors that account for the unimpaired status of these streams should be identified and relevant practices should be encouraged.

Keeping sediments and other contaminants associated with land uses out of surface waters will entail maintaining vegetated buffer strips adjacent to surface waters; controlling tile line discharges into surface waters; addressing tiling, other discharges, and runoff impacts on stream channel erosion; and controlling urban and suburban runoff volume, rates of flow, and hydrographs (as mentioned above in Chapters 4 and 5 in the sections on land development policies).

## **AGRICULTURE**

### **Conserving Agricultural Land:**

Olmsted County's land area includes some of the best cropland in the nation, having a combination of adequate rainfall, deep prairie-derived organic matter, deep loess-derived soils with adequate available water capacity, and a growing season long enough for nationally important crops. Preserving the best of these soils for long term agricultural and horticultural use is in the long term interest of the county, state, and nation.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of these advantages, agriculture is one of the major basic sector industries in Olmsted County along with manufacturing and health care. The vast majority of agricultural products are exported from the county with income flowing into the county. In addition to its significance as a basic sector industry, agriculture supplies raw materials to other local and regional basic sector industries such as AMPI, Marigold, Seneca, Hormel, and others. The importance of agriculture as a basic sector industry will

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<sup>3</sup> According to the Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources, [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fishing/trout\\_streams/south\\_mn\\_maps.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fishing/trout_streams/south_mn_maps.html), accessed May 12, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/tmdl-maps.html> for maps of impaired waters.

<sup>5</sup> Some of Olmsted County's soils are also rated high for forestry. Because Olmsted County is near the northern edge of the natural range of many valuable hardwood species (notably Black Cherry and Black Walnut), trees grown in Olmsted County are slow-growing, resulting in tight grains highly desirable for furniture-making.

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likely be enhanced due to the potential of bio-fuels, especially cellulosic ethanol, as a transportation fuel. Cellulosic ethanol in particular has a high potential both to meet transportation fuel needs efficiently and to address greenhouse gas emissions, due to the ability of native grasses like switchgrass to produce biomass and to sequester carbon in the rooting zone.

Olmsted County agriculture's national significance is illustrated by the County's rank among counties in the U.S. in agricultural production. According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Olmsted County ranked in the top twenty percent of all US counties in the total value of agricultural products sold; the value of crops sold; the value of livestock and poultry and their products; and the value of grains, oilseeds, dried beans, and dried peas; vegetables; cattle and calves; and sheep, goats, and their products. Olmsted County's production ranked in the top ten percent of all counties nationwide in the value of milk and other dairy products from cows and in the value of other animals and animal products (other than cows, goats, sheep and pigs).<sup>6</sup>

The number of farms in Olmsted County has fluctuated over the period from 1987 to 2007, bottoming out at 1,270 in 1992 and totaling 1,384 in 2007. The Census of Agriculture definition of farm is "a place with estimated (or expected) annual sales of agricultural products of at least \$1,000." Included in Olmsted County's 2007 count of farms are 516 farms under 50 acres in size and another 272 farms of 50 to 90 acres in size, including land in multiple parcels. Half of Olmsted County's farm operations<sup>7</sup> are under 81 acres, but half of all farmland in Olmsted County is operated by 138 farm operators with 568 acres or more, representing 10% of all farm operators.

Farmland acreage remains high at 296,039 acres. This amounts to roughly 71% of the land area of Olmsted County. There are 363 farms of 220 acres or more in the County, but together they account for 55% of the total County land area. In terms of land area, agriculture is by far the most important land use in Olmsted County.

A viable agricultural economy includes agricultural support services. If the amount of agricultural land were to decrease substantially, support services would not have enough business to remain viable. If support service businesses close, farming in their service areas will become more difficult. Added to the other challenges of farming, this problem will discourage investment in agricultural enterprises.

Agriculture is heavily dependent on the land resource. While other industries can sometimes substitute other resources for scarce resources, it is difficult and usually environmentally costly for agriculture to replace lost land resources. Where prime agricultural lands are lost to urban and suburban development, marginal lands (such as wetlands or areas with shallower soils or more erosive soils or steep slopes) may be brought into production at greater economic, environmental, and energy costs.

Non-farm uses interfere with the use of agricultural land in the following ways:

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<sup>6</sup> Rankings for the values of "hogs and pigs" and "poultry" are likely to be high, but are not disclosed due to confidentiality limitations on disclosure. The Census of Agriculture suppresses data when there is a risk of disclosing information about individual producers. See page 9 of [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/New\\_Hampshire/nhappxa.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/New_Hampshire/nhappxa.pdf). Note that the reference to New Hampshire in the URL is from the source.

<sup>7</sup> A farm property that is rented in its entirety to another operator is not counted as a separate farm; the area of that farm property would be included in the total of land owned and rented by the renting operator. A farm property in which, for example, 200 acres is rented to another operator and 40 acres is managed by the owner would be counted as a 40-acre farm; the rented land would be counted as part of the renter's operation.

- Urban, suburban and non-farm rural development directly and permanently removes agricultural land including significant areas of prime soils from production.
- Suburban and non-farm rural residential development is sometimes incompatible with agricultural operations, potentially reducing the intensity and profitability of neighboring farm uses by deterring such uses as livestock operations.
- Development and speculation increase the price of agricultural lands.
- Suburban and especially non-farm rural development results in land ownership and parcel patterns that make it difficult to accumulate the land area needed for today's larger farms.

There have been 768 houses built on unplatted parcels under 20 acres in unincorporated areas since 1984 (the year following adoption of the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance). The parcels involved total 5,200 acres in area, an average lot size of 6.8 acres. Over the same time period, there have been 1,611 houses built on parcels in subdivisions in unincorporated areas, with a total land area in lots (excluding roads and common areas) of 4,620 acres, an average lot size of just under three acres. Finally, since 1984 there have been 17,083 residential structures built on parcels in cities, with 21,491 dwelling units, occupying a total land area in lots of 5,071 acres, an average land area used of 0.24 acres per dwelling unit. All of these figures include both new parcels and development on lots in existence as of 1984. The land area converted from vacant lots or farmland to sites with dwellings over this time period totals just under 15,000 acres. Other conversions of farmland area (for non-residential urban development, parkland, transportation, and other non-farm uses) bring the total up to approximately 24,000 acres of land area. Agricultural operations involve noise, odor, dust, farm chemical spraying, and farm equipment traffic on public roads that are not compatible with non-farm or suburban development. Modern farming techniques have increased the incompatibilities between farms and non-farm development. These impacts are a source of complaints by non-farm owners, to the extent that nuisance lawsuits have been brought against farming operations. The possibility of such complaints discourages additional investment on farms near non-farm residences. Decreasing farm investment could have far-reaching effects on the future of farming in some areas of the county.

According to studies throughout the United States, sprawl and scattered non-farm development affect not only the agricultural sector, but also urban and suburban areas. Development of farmlands causes the loss of public benefits provided by those lands, including flood absorption, air quality benefits especially from forest and other areas of permanent vegetation, water infiltration into the groundwater system, areas of plant and wildlife habitat, and open space. In addition, the reduction in compactness of development results in greater infrastructure costs per capita and greater energy costs for transportation.

As a practical matter, rural housing demand in the foreseeable future will require far less land area than the supply of farmland in Olmsted County. The State Demographer projects the number of households to increase by roughly 25,000 households between 2005 and 2035 (of which 65% will be headed by persons over 65 years of age, a group with low demand for large lot residences). Even at an average net density of one acre

per dwelling for these households, there will still be 221,000 acres of farmland in Olmsted County. Most current owners of farmland face the prospect of remaining farmland owners or of selling their land as farmland, not as development land. Out of a regard for the fact that most of our current farmland will continue to be used for farming, maintaining the profitability of farming should be a priority. For all of these reasons, agriculture and the agricultural economy should be protected.

### **MINIMIZING COSTS OF PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Studies by the Transportation Research Board Transit Cooperative Research Program; The American Farmland Trust; the Urban Land Institute; the states of Maine, New Jersey, Oregon, Florida, and Minnesota; and various local planning agencies have all indicated that concentrated development patterns have a number of public benefits, including reducing the total costs of public capital investment and services in comparison with "sprawl," defined as development characterized by very low density leapfrog development. These cost reductions can take several forms, including stabilizing or reducing the expected increases in costs for public services and facilities due to the growth of the community, or by increasing the efficiency of the existing public infrastructure.

The direct costs of sprawl are considerable for local communities and for regions. Communities that develop in an inefficient sprawl pattern may find that the costs of services increase faster than tax receipts or that service levels are reduced. Transportation systems are heavily affected by sprawl because it forces use of the car as the major mode of transportation. This places increased pressure on road systems resulting in higher costs to the public for more roads and increased maintenance.

Related to the cost of public services and infrastructure is the concept of "pay as you grow." When the full costs of development related to off-site infrastructure improvements are not paid by the development, existing rate-payers or taxpayers pay indirectly through increased taxes, fees, or reduced service levels. Reduced service manifests itself primarily through inadequate maintenance or operation of existing services and infrastructure, as revenues are diverted to support the off-site impacts of new growth rather than going towards maintenance of service levels within existing developed areas. The 1978 Plan and this Plan encourage local government to make sure that new growth pays the full costs of providing public services and infrastructure. A compact and contiguous settlement pattern ensures that even development on the fringes of the Urban Service Areas will incur a lower cost for public services and infrastructure.

### **CULTURAL RESOURCES:**

Olmsted County contains human-made and natural physical features that are significant to the history and character of the County, some of which distinguish it from other communities. Such features may include historic, geologic, hydrologic, biological or ecological features combined in a landscape that the community recognizes as significant. The community should encourage the preservation of features that provide historic, cultural, and landscape identity as an important part of our quality of life. Such

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encouragement could include avoidance (routing major infrastructure investments so as to avoid cultural resource conflicts) or strategies like the reuse of a creamery as a restaurant.

Because the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with Olmsted County and the City of Rochester, completed a County Biological Survey in the early 1990s, planning for major infrastructure projects can be carried out so as to avoid concentrations of undisturbed habitat and rare or endangered plant or animal species. A similar resource inventory is needed for cultural resources. The work completed for rural areas of Olmsted County through the efforts of Professor Robert Douglas of Gustavus Adolphus College<sup>8</sup> provides a basis for developing such an inventory. A list of the sites identified in this study is presented in Appendix C of this document.

### **LAND USE RELATED POLICIES FOR ACQUIRING AND DEVELOPING PARK AND RECREATIONAL AREAS OFFERED TO THE COUNTY**

Blufflands, limestone outcroppings, wooded hillsides, prairies, historic structures, and the undulating stream network connecting our natural and cultural landscape create a unique sense of place and draw Olmsted County residents and visitors to explore the outdoors. Parks and recreational areas that preserve these features offer physical and mental health benefits to those who actively enjoy them. These lands, however, also benefit the environmental and economic health of the region as a whole; they filter pollutants from our air and water, control erosion, control flood waters, and draw business investment and tourist dollars to our economy. Parks support our present and must be sustained for our future.

Olmsted County is one of the fastest growing areas of the state and is a regional destination for visitors to Southeast Minnesota. When preparing for residential and economic development, we must also plan for the environmental and cultural infrastructure that is needed to support this growth, while maintaining the quality of life that draws people to our area in the first place. We need to account for the changing needs of our aging population and accommodate a new generation of recreational activities. The acquisition and development of public park and recreational areas is one means of providing this infrastructure, ensuring its access for members of all age, social, and economic components of our community.

As public budgets tighten and competition increases for outside funding pools, it behooves Olmsted County to create a vision for its park and recreation system and formally adopt implementation guidelines that will help staff and decision makers maximize the benefits the community reaps from investment in these lands as acquisition is warranted and funding is available. The County Parks Commission has begun this task with the adoption of the Olmsted County Parks Commission Planning Guidelines and Values document. Building upon policies adopted in parks and trails plans developed for Greater Minnesota and the state as a whole <sup>(9)</sup>, the County's Parks Commission formulated parks and recreation strategies for local implementation.

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<sup>8</sup> [A Field Guide to Historic Sites in Olmsted County](http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/departments/planning/index.asp), Robert Douglas, April, 2010. Information about individual sites can be found at <http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/departments/planning/index.asp>.

<sup>9</sup>The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Parks and Trails Legacy Plan: Parks and Trails of State and Regional Significance, A 25-year long range plan for Minnesota, 2011-2034 (February 2011). Also, The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Coalition's Greater MN Regional Park and Trails Strategic Plan (January 2013)

It is the intent of the Olmsted County General Land Use Plan to promote consistent execution of these strategies by

- Incorporating the Parks Commission's land use-related policies, as stated below, into the Plan's stated intent to protect natural and cultural resources,
- Identifying demographic conditions and trends that indicate when additional lands or uses will be needed for the County's parks and recreational areas system,
- Consolidating policies that specify those physical and geographical features considered to be desirable by both State and local entities for inclusion in regional parks and recreational areas,
- Identifying data sets that will map land characteristics most suited to achieving these objectives, and
- Facilitating the County's procurement of outside funding to assist regional park and recreational area projects by demonstrating that long term goals and strategies have been deliberated and formally adopted.

This identification will also make staff and decision makers aware when these high priority lands may be under residential or economic development pressures and evaluate development proposals accordingly.

#### **Land Use-Related Policies for Acquiring and Developing Park and Recreational Areas**

- Prioritize outcome-based planning to improve natural resources, including consideration of those listed by State and/or Federal agencies, when found to be of significant value.
- Prioritize preservation of viewshed areas surrounding Olmsted County Parks when making zoning and land purchase recommendations and decisions.
- Prioritize acquisition of properties with special natural resources or historically significant structures.
- Provide opportunities for people of all abilities and ethnicities to get outdoors and interact in sustainable ways with nature.
- Place high value on preserving historical aspects of buildings and other features.
- Plan corridors to connect to other natural resources in the area.
- When acquiring new public land, consider acquisition of properties that would create access to current parks where feasible.
- Continue to use projected population figures to drive planning for future park needs and purchases.

#### **Land Use and Other Related Data for Site Evaluation**

As funding becomes available, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other databases will be very useful in locating those lands that best meet the policies for acquiring and developing park and recreational areas. These data sets include:

- The Olmsted County Biological Survey
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Statewide Ecological Patches and Connections
- The natural resource components of the CLUES Model (see Appendix A)

- The National Historic Register and A Field Guide to Historic Sites in Olmsted County (see Appendix C)
- LiDAR data to identify features such as steep slopes, viewsheds, and possible trail routes
- Public waters and trout streams
- US Census data and population/employment projections from the State Demographer's Office and the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department
- Flood plains and wetlands
- City limits boundaries and address points to identify population centers and clusters
- Transportation systems data

As State and local GIS offices update and add pertinent data to their systems, this information should be added to this site evaluation process.

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## **CHAPTER EIGHT: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP**

### ***FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF OLMSTED COUNTY***

Land use decisions in this Plan are based on the key community values, principles, policies, locational criteria, and major land use descriptions. The *Future Land Use Map* is a geographic representation of the policies, land use categories, and locational criteria. A Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System model (computer model) was developed based on the US Department of Agriculture's Land Evaluation and Site Assessment System (LESA) to apply the policies and locational criteria in an objective manner that logically and consistently compares lands throughout the county. New land use maps can be produced with the model whenever changes in policy, land use, or public facilities occur after the adoption of this Plan.

The Future Land Use Map will be used to guide County decisions on

- the application of policy to particular areas of the county;
- Land Use Plan amendments;
- the designation of zoning districts and related requirements under the county zoning ordinance;
- the requirements of land subdivision; and
- County review of capital improvements, services, and service levels.

### ***COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE EVALUATION SYSTEM MODEL***

A three-part computer model, referred to as the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System (CLUES), was formulated to evaluate existing characteristics of Olmsted County and help decision makers guide growth to the most suitable areas of the county while avoiding or minimizing the impacts of development. The CLUES Model is only one tool for determining development potential, not the only tool. The CLUES Model is intended as a guide to the County Board's judgment on land use matters, and not as a substitute for the Board's judgment. In order to understand the methods and detailed data used to develop the Future Land Use Plan Map the reader should refer to Appendix A of this document.

### ***URBAN SERVICE AREAS***

The urban service areas on the associated maps represent for the most part either approved orderly annexation areas (OAA's) or areas that have been agreed upon between the affected townships and cities. The exception is the urban service area for the City of Eyota, where Eyota Township and the City of Eyota are still in the process of negotiating an OAA.

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## **CHAPTER NINE: LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS AND LONG-TERM MONITORING**

The Olmsted County General Land Use Plan (Plan) is a dynamic document that will be adjusted when changes in population or employment projections, major land use, or land use policy make amendments necessary. Such amendments to the Land Use Plan must be made in a consistent, orderly way that recognizes the long-term impacts to the community. This section of the Plan outlines a program to carry out Plan amendments and to track changes in the factors that have been used to determine land use map designations and Plan policies.

There are four processes covered in this section, including site-specific map amendments, text amendments, periodic Plan reviews and updates, and Land Use Plan monitoring.

### ***SITE-SPECIFIC MAP AMENDMENTS***

Site-specific amendments to the Future Land Use Plan Map may be initiated by

- the property owner of the parcel that is proposed for change, with the exception of changes to the “Resource Protection – Potential Suburban” designation,
- the Olmsted County Board of Commissioners,
- the Olmsted County Planning Advisory Commission,
- a township board, generally for properties under multiple ownership within its jurisdiction,
- a city council, generally for properties under multiple ownership, for changes in the lands included in an urban service area abutting the city limits or for changes in detailed urban Land Use Plan designation within the currently adopted urban service area as shown on the County Future Land Use Plan Map, or
- staff of the Rochester Olmsted Planning Department, when it receives notice of a township or city Plan that reflects a change in the adopted Future Land Use Plan Map.

Private parties may not initiate Land Use Plan text amendments and may initiate Plan map amendments only for properties that they own.

When initiated by a private party, the Plan map amendment process requires the submittal of a completed application form that provides basic information about the site and the proposed change, the township recommendation, and a processing fee.

All Land Use Plan amendments will entail the following:

- a staff report and recommendation to be provided at the public hearing;
- a public hearing conducted by the Planning Advisory Commission in accordance with state law, at which the Commission will consider the staff report, referral agency comments, comments from township boards and affected cities, and public input, and will make a recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners; and

- a public hearing conducted by the County Board of Commissioners in accordance with state law, following which the Board will reach its decision.

Proposed map amendments must be compared to the land use policies and locational criteria for the requested land use category. In addition, the analysis of proposed map amendments will address the following questions:

- Was a mistake made in the data used or in the application of the data at the time the Plan was adopted?
- Have conditions of land use, land subdivision, ownership, or growth in the community changed the character of the site and surrounding area?
- Have policies related to the proposal changed since the Plan was adopted?
- Is there an unanticipated shortage of land available for the proposed use?
- Is the land under consideration as suited or better suited for the proposed use than other lands now designated for the proposed use, and are those lands now properly designated according to the land use policies? (This analysis will be based in part on the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System model.)
- Is the proposed amendment consistent with the policies of the Plan (recognizing that those values must be addressed and balanced in land use decisions)? Specifically, how does the proposed amendment address the key community values and planning principles listed in Chapter 3?
- Is there an alternative to the proposed change that better meets the intent of the Plan (a different use designation or a smaller land area, for example)?

Future Land Use Plan Map amendments will be evaluated based on the cumulative impacts of similar amendments.

### ***ANNUAL PLAN MAP AMENDMENT REVIEW***

This Plan establishes new policies on Land Use Plan amendments based on the County's experience with Land Use Plan amendments between 1978 and 1995. Land use principles and policies in this Plan encourage a proactive decision-making process that identifies the best lands for various uses, in particular, suburban development. In order to implement those policies this Plan establishes an annual process of review based on market demand for land and on the application of the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System model. Each year the Planning Advisory Commission will review the development trends for residential development and determine if additional lands will be needed in the "Resource Protection – Potential Suburban" designation to determine the need for additional suburban development land, as described above in Chapter 5. The County Board of Commissioners may amend the Future Land Use Plan Map after conducting a hearing.

### ***PERIODIC REVIEWS AND UPDATES OF THE PLAN***

This Land Use Plan will be reviewed and updated every five years, in order to address the changing needs of the community brought about by employment, population, housing growth, and other influences affecting land use, public services and facilities, and the environment. The County will use an abbreviated planning process including

- a review of the changes that have occurred, new issues, and the effectiveness of the Plan and implementation measures;
- a request for public input;
- data analysis and policy review of changes, issues, and public comments;
- draft policy and map changes based on the review and public comments;
- a process involving townships and cities seeking their input on changes to be considered; and
- public meetings, required public hearings, and final adoption of a revised Plan.

### ***LAND USE PLAN MONITORING***

The Planning Advisory Commission will submit an annual report to the County Board, widely distributed to local units of government. The intent of the report is to assure that County land use decisions are consistent and reflect updated data. The annual report will provide information to the County Board on development activity and land use issues and will provide information that should be used to develop the County capital improvements program, County budget, and other planning efforts that address County facilities and service levels. The annual report should be of sufficient detail and scope to use in the evaluation of proposed Land Use Plan amendments. The report should include changes in population, number of plats, number of housing units built, development density, commercial and industrial building by size, agricultural land developed or otherwise removed from agricultural uses, number and location of non-farm lot splits, other local or state planning or regulatory changes that occurred during the previous year, and other land use or resource related issues.

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## APPENDIX A: COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE EVALUATION SYSTEM MODEL

The Future Land Use Plan Map was developed using a computer model referred to as the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System (CLUES). The original model was developed using EPPL7 GIS software developed by the Minnesota Land Management Information Center, and to a much lesser extent ARC/INFO and ArcView, based on the US Department of Agriculture's Land Evaluation and Site Assessment System (LESA). This model has been updated using ESRI's ArcGIS software. The purpose of the model is to apply land use policies and locational criteria in an objective manner that logically and consistently compares lands throughout the county. New land use maps can be produced with the model where changes in policy, land use, or public facilities occur after the adoption of the Plan.



### COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Figure A-1: Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation System Model

The model helps decision-makers guide growth to the most suitable areas of the county while avoiding or minimizing the impacts of urban development on non-urban uses. The model derives separate scores for resource use suitability, natural resource needs, and suburban residential potential (very low density residential development on wells and septic systems). These scores are combined to determine the relative suitability of sites outside urban service areas for the Resource Protection and Suburban Development

land use designations. Urban service areas are mapped based on an evaluation applied on a subwatershed by subwatershed basis.

### **RESOURCE SUITABILITY SCORE**

The Resource Suitability Score represents the value of land areas for resource uses based not only on the value of current resource investments in the land, but also on the land's potential for future resource productivity. The score is a weighted sum of the Actual and Potential Resource Investment Scores. Weight was also given to the value of having large parcels of land used for intensive resource use.

#### RESOURCE SUITABILITY

Figure A-2: Resource Suitability

#### **Actual Resource Investment Score (50% Weight)**

The Actual Resource Investment Score accounts for the uses that are currently occurring on the land. It is derived by calculating the **maximum** of the following factors:

- 1. Agricultural and Forested Land Cover Score**



Lands designated as having an agricultural or wooded land cover in the current County land cover database receive an Ag/Forest Score of 100; all other lands are given a score of 0.

## **2. Feedlot Investment Score**

The density of total animal units found within 1/4 mile of every feedlot in the county is calculated using a database maintained by the Olmsted County Feedlot Technician. This data is averaged over an area with a one-mile circular radius in order to reduce the impact of small, isolated feedlots on the model and a logarithmic formula is applied to create a scoring scale from 0 to 100. The higher the Feedlot Investment Score, the more animal units are found in that area and therefore, the higher the area's feedlot investment.

## **3. Public Resource Investment Score**

Special resource lands in which public entities have made an investment are given a Public Resource Score of 100. This includes State Forest Management Areas, State Wildlife Management Areas, and rural County parks. All other lands are given a score of 0.

## **4. Mineral Extraction Investment Score**

The MnDNR's Aggregate Resource Maps are used to identify parcels that have an active mineral extraction operation on them. Those lands receive a Mineral Extraction Score of 100 and all others receive a score of 0.

## **Potential Resource Investment Score (50% Weight)**

The Potential Resource Investment Score accounts for the potential of the land to support resource investment uses. It is derived by calculating the **maximum** of the following factors:

### **1. Crop Productivity Index Score**

Replacing the Crop Equivalency Rating (CER), the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Crop Productivity Index (CPI) provides a relative ranking of soils based on their potential for intensive crop production. These scores were averaged over an 1/8-mile radius (the width of one ¼ section) in order to depict the general characteristics of an area. This index ranges from a score of 0 to 100, with the higher scores indicating a higher productivity potential.

### **2. Productive Forested Soils Score**

The potential productivity of soils for forestry uses is ranked by the Olmsted County Soil Survey. These scores were averaged over an 1/8-mile radius in order to depict the general characteristics of an area and set to a scale of 0-100, with the higher Forest Scores indicating a higher soil potential for forest production. Only those soils that currently have woods on them were selected.

### **3. Productive Pasture Soils Score**

The potential productivity of soils for pasture uses is ranked by the Olmsted County Soil Survey. These scores were averaged over an 1/8-mile radius in order to depict

the general characteristics of an area and set to a scale of 0-100, with the higher Pasture Scores indicating a higher soil potential for pasture support.

#### **4. Large Scale Wind Energy Potential Score**

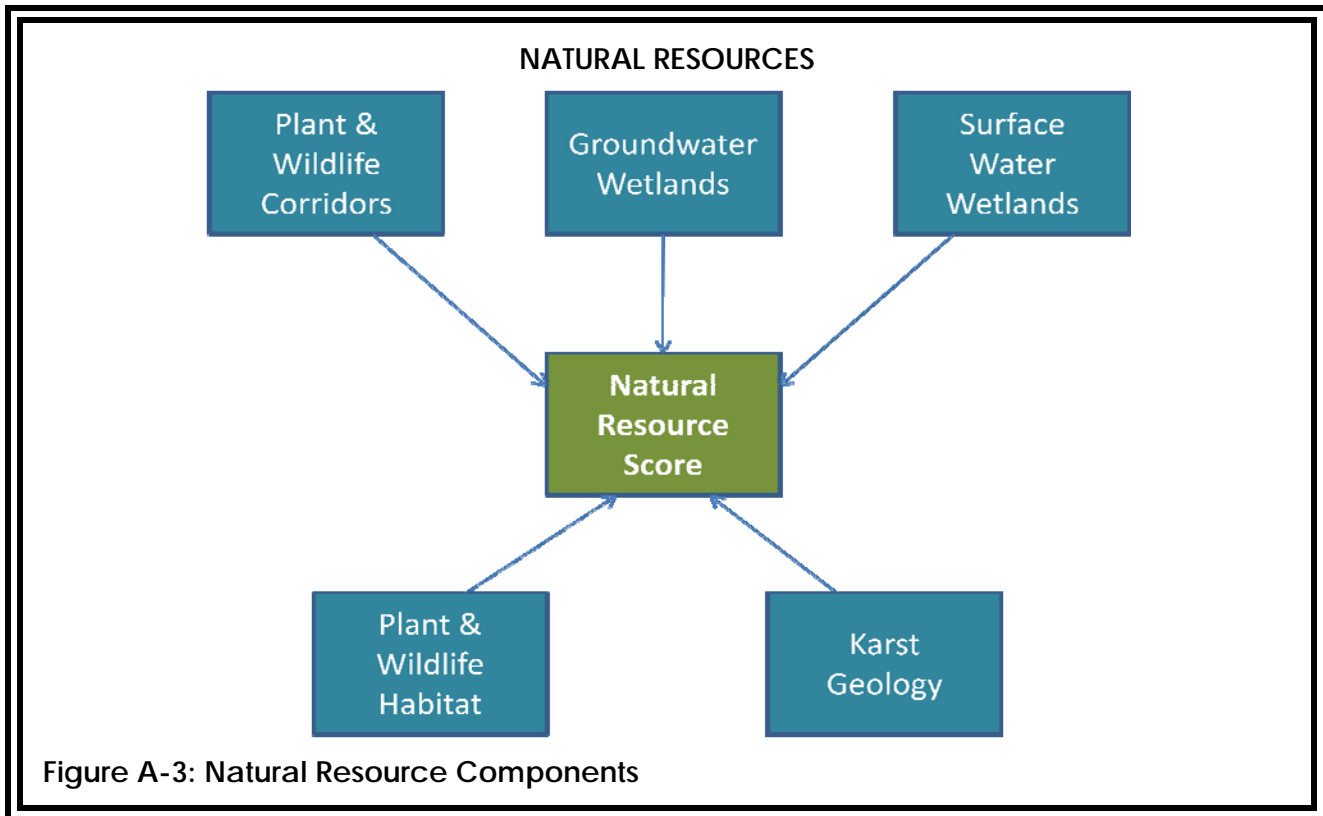
The 1995 Wind Energy Potential database was updated to account for the constraints posed by wooded areas and development not considered at that time. Areas considered to have significant potential for large scale wind energy production receive a score of 100. All other lands receive a Wind Score of 0.

#### **5. Aggregate Extraction Potential Score**

The MnDNR has recently completed databases that rate the suitability of lands for crushed rock and sand and gravel extraction. The suitability rankings are based on factors such as resource quality, deposit size, and overburden thickness. Those lands that have "Significant" potential for crushed rock or sand and gravel resources are given a Mineral Extraction Score of 100. All other lands receive a score of zero.

### ***NATURAL RESOURCE SCORE***

The Natural Resource Score reflects the value of environmentally significant features to our "green infrastructure", performing such functions as groundwater protection, stormwater control, flood control, erosion control, and critical habitat maintenance. This score ranges from 0 – 100 and is derived by calculating the **maximum** value of the following components:



#### 1. Plant and Wildlife Corridors Score

Shorelands, lands within 150' of non-public streams, and steep slopes (18+%) are given a Corridors Score of 100; all other lands receive a score of 0.

#### 2. Groundwater Wetlands Score

All combinations of soils that indicate the presence of fens or seeps, known fens, Decorah Edge support soils, and 50-foot buffers of known springs are given a Groundwater Wetlands Score of 100; all other lands receive a score of 0.

#### 3. Surface Water Wetlands Score

All wetlands delineated on the National Wetlands Inventory and wetland-related combinations of land cover and hydric soils not already scored 100 in the Groundwater Wetlands Score are given a Surface Water Wetlands Score of 100; all other lands receive a score of 0.

#### 4. Plant and Wildlife Habitat Score

Sensitive and unique lands designated on the Olmsted County Biological Survey, ¼-mile buffers from rare and endangered species, State Scientific and Natural Areas, and undisturbed land covers are given a Plant and Wildlife Habitat Score of 100; all other lands receive a score of 0.

#### 5. Karst Geology Score

Areas within 100 feet of a known sinkhole are given a score of 100. The Sinkhole Probability data from the Olmsted County Geologic Atlas is scaled from a score of 0

with areas of “No Sinkhole Probability” receiving a score of 0 ranging to a score of 100 for areas of “Karst Topography”. The **maximum** of these two scores results in the Karst Geology Score.

### ***SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT SCORE***

The Suburban Development Score is a weighted sum of site amenities and the energy and fiscal impact of developing the area on the community, provided the Incompatible Land Use Score = 100. An Incompatible Land Use Score of 0 is given to industrial sites, highway and railroad corridors, the Airport Zoning Districts, and areas within a buffer of 1/4 mile around feedlots, pits, and quarries. All other areas are given a score of 100.

Site amenities are modeled as a function of proximity to water bodies, varied terrain, and wooded vegetation, and separation from obnoxious influences such as feedlots and junkyards. The energy and fiscal impact of development is considered to be a function of the density of existing rural and suburban development and the proximity to major employment centers.

#### **Amenity Score (30% Weight)**

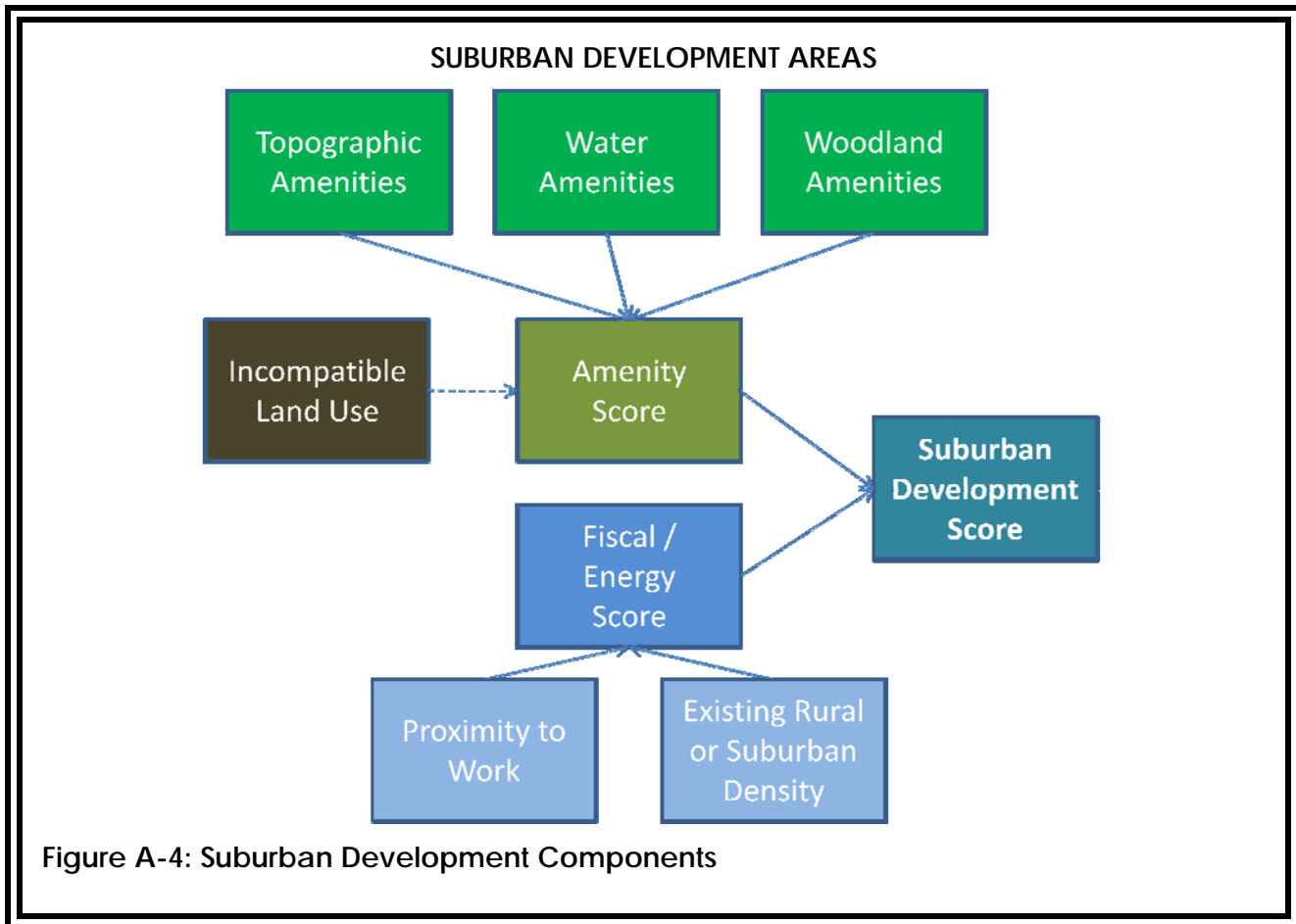
The Amenity Score is calculated by summing the following weighted scores, provided the site is not heavily influenced by incompatible land uses. If the summed score is less than 33 (indicating the lack of aesthetic amenities), the Amenity Score is assigned a value of 0. The weights were determined by responses to a 1993 survey of suburban Olmsted County residents, which asked what amenities features were important in their choice of residence.

##### **1. Slope Amenity Score (25% Weight)**

Sites whose elevation changes at least 100 feet within a 1000-foot distance and with slopes greater than or equal to 6 percent and less than 18 percent are given a Slope Amenity Score of 100; all other sites are given a score of 0.

##### **2. Wooded Amenity Score (50% Weight)**

Sites within a 1/8 mile radius of wooded areas are given a Wooded Amenity Score of 10 – 100, with the areas closest to wooded areas receiving the higher scores. All other areas receive a score of 0.



### 3. Water Amenity Score (25% Weight)

Sites within a 1/8 mile radius of public waters that are NOT designated as trout streams are given a Water Amenity Score of 10 – 100, with the areas closest to the water bodies receiving the higher scores. All other areas receive a score of 0.

### Fiscal/Energy Impacts (70% Weight)

The Fiscal/Energy Score is the sum of the following weighted scores, and ranges from 0 – 100.

#### 1. Rural and Suburban Residential Density Score (2/3 Weight)

The Residential Density Score measures the density of rural and suburban addresses in Olmsted County. This data is averaged over an area with a one-mile circular radius in order to reduce the impact of small, isolated residential pockets on the model. A scale from 0 to 100 is used to represent the proportional range in density. The higher the Residential Density Score, the more likely it is that existing residential development adversely impacts the ability to use adjacent lands for resource-related purposes.

#### 2. Proximity to Major Employment Centers Score (1/3 Weight)

Census data is used to determine the coefficient reflecting the relationship between the distance a commuter is from Olmsted County's major employment centers and

the proportion of commuters who come from that distance. The distance from all areas of the County to those employment centers is then calculated and multiplied by that coefficient. The final Proximity Score equals 100 minus the distance score. The higher the Proximity Score, the closer it is to major employment centers.

### ***URBAN SERVICE AREAS***

Staff has contacted small cities to determine their planned future urban service areas and has consulted with each city to discuss the relationship of projected employment and population growth with their forecasted land area need.

In the case of the City of Rochester, reflecting the policies linking orderly annexation agreements with interim development and urban service area expansions, Planning staff identified subwatersheds large enough to enable cost-effective sewer expansion and small enough to enable agreement on orderly annexation. Through a process of multiple meetings with affected townships and Rochester staff, the resulting map was refined, keeping in mind a realistic relationship between land area needs and projected growth. Factors influencing inclusion in the urban service area include transportation infrastructure, ease of sewer and other municipal service extension, potential for commercial or industrial development, compatibility with existing adjoining uses, and environmental constraints.

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**URBAN SERVICE AREA FEASIBILITY**

Figure A-5: Urban Service Area Feasibility

**COMPOSITE CLUES SCORE**

A comparative Composite Score is derived by first calculating the **maximum** of the Resource Suitability Score and the Natural Resource Score in order to rank the value of resource investment in and conservation of the County's undeveloped areas. This score is then doubled in order to set the basis for comparison with the area's suitability for suburban development. The Suburban Development Score is then subtracted to result in the 0 – 200 scale Composite Score.

The closer the final score is to 0, the more suitable the area is for suburban development. Scores closer to 200 are deemed more suitable for resource protection. An overlay of the Urban Service Areas, Suburban Development Areas, Orderly Annexation Agreement areas, public lands, city limits, and built parcels less than 10 acres in size is then imposed on these scores in order to indicate what land has been reserved for public uses, is intended for development, or has already been developed.

Based on population and land use projections, an amount of land equivalent to three times the projected land area needed for suburban-style development is calculated and mapped as "Resource Protection – Potential Suburban," from which the Suburban Development designation will be selected using the Plan amendment process described in Chapter 5 used. That land which is not designated for urban or suburban use is in the Resource Protection area.

A computer model cannot account for all factors used in making land use decisions; it is, however, a highly effective guide to decision making. The computer scores, for example, may indicate that a small pocket of land is highly appropriate for suburban development. If, however, that land is cut off from the rest of the suburban development area by a major highway, or it sits in the middle of a resource protection area, accepted planning practices dictate that that land should be designated as resource protection. It may also be the case that an island of land scores strongly for resource protection. If it is surrounded by suburban development area, however, that land may be more appropriately designated for suburban development. Finally, other County policies may also determine an area's designation.



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## APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY PROFILE

### **BACKGROUND**

Olmsted County has continued to see strong population growth in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, with a 13.7% rate of growth between 2000 and 2008 as compared to a statewide growth rate of 6.9%. Olmsted County's growth rate is comparable to past decades, which saw growth of 16.7% in the 1990's and 15.7% in the 1980's.

The City of Rochester is the main population center in Olmsted County, with approximately 72% of the countywide population. Rochester has experienced an increase in population of 19.4% between 2000 and 2008, also comparable to its growth rate in the 1990's (21.7%) and 1980's (22.1%). Rochester has the highest growth rate of large cities in the state. Rochester is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in the State of Minnesota after Minneapolis and St. Paul, with an estimated 2008 population of 102,437. The economy is built around basic sector industries of health care, high technology and agriculture. Major employers include the Mayo Medical Center, IBM-Rochester and Seneca Foods. The Mayo Clinic and IBM combined employ approximately 40,000 people in a local economy of approximately 100,000 persons.

For over 140 years, the city of Rochester has remained the regional center for industry and commerce in southeastern Minnesota and northwestern Iowa. Olmsted County draws a significant number of workers from surrounding counties, with approximately 20% of persons who work in Olmsted County commuting from residences outside of Olmsted County.

Olmsted County and the City of Rochester is an important regional retail center, accounting for approximately 50% of sales in the seven county area centered on Rochester. Businesses in the City of Rochester account for slightly more than 90% of the retail sales in the county.

The high level of job growth in the county, relatively short commuting times to jobs in Rochester, and local economic development initiatives have resulted in historically high levels of new housing starts in small cities near Rochester. Byron, Stewartville and Pine Island all have seen record levels of housing permits issued the last 10 years.

### **POPULATION TRENDS**

Table B-1 summarizes historic population growth trends for Olmsted County and the municipalities in the county. All cities have seen positive rates of growth, with Pine Island, Dover and Byron having the highest growth rates since 2000. All but four townships have experienced decreases in population since 2000. Factors contributing to township population decline include annexation, aging of the baby boom, net out-migration of young adults, and a general shift of population towards urban areas due to job opportunities.

Table B-1: Jurisdiction Population Trends

Jurisdiction	1980	2000	2008	Annual Growth Rate 1970-2008	Annual Growth Rate 2000-2008
Olmsted County	92,006	124,277	141,326	1.54%	1.62%
Rochester	57,890	85,806	102,437	2.06%	2.24%
Byron	1,715	3,500	4,800	3.74%	4.03%
Chatfield ( <i>Olmsted pt</i> )	895	1,137	1,202	1.06%	0.70%
Dover	312	438	604	2.39%	4.10%
Eyota	1,244	1,644	1,834	1.40%	1.38%
Oronoco	574	883	1,113	2.39%	2.94%
Pine Island ( <i>Olmsted pt</i> )	9	118	567	15.95%	21.68%
Stewartville	2,802	5,411	5,842	2.66%	0.96%
Chatfield (total)	2,055	2,394	2,562	0.79%	0.85%
Pine Island (total)	1,986	2,337	3,363	1.90%	4.65%
Cascade	2,384	3,434	3,154	1.00%	-1.06%
Dover	491	493	419	-0.56%	-2.01%
Elmira	408	370	365	-0.40%	-0.17%
Eyota	523	546	420	-0.78%	-3.23%
Farmington	626	579	487	-0.89%	-2.14%
Haverhill	1,295	1,636	1,645	0.86%	0.07%
High Forest	1,545	976	1,073	-1.29%	1.19%
Kalmar	1,209	1,337	1,155	-0.16%	-1.81%
Marion	5,299	6,492	4,617	-0.49%	-4.17%
New Haven	1,122	1,307	1,204	0.25%	-1.02%
Orion	602	666	597	-0.03%	-1.36%
Oronoco	1,696	2,221	2,354	1.18%	0.73%
Pleasant Grove	776	791	793	0.08%	0.03%
Quincy	435	409	330	-0.98%	-2.65%
Rochester	4,598	3,122	2,070	-2.81%	-5.01%
Rock Dell	706	683	639	-0.36%	-0.83%
Salem	1,153	1,105	1,076	-0.25%	-0.33%
Viola	574	636	529	-0.29%	-2.28%
All Townships	23,870	26,803	22,927	-0.14%	-1.93%

Table B-2 summarizes the geographic distribution of population change since 1980.

Table B-2: Summary of Population Trends

Jurisdiction Group	Population				1980's share of County Growth	1990's Share of County Growth	2000's Share of County Growth
	1980	1990	2000	2008			
<i>Small Cities</i>	8,674	10,529	13,131	15,962	13%	15%	17%
<i>Rochester</i>	57,890	70,745	85,806	102,437	89%	85%	98%
<i>Suburban Townships (Cascade, Haverhill, Marion, Oronoco, and Rochester)</i>	15,272	15,807	16,905	13,840	4%	6%	-18%
<i>Exurban Townships (High Forest, Kalmar, New Haven, and Salem)</i>	5,029	4,492	4,547	4,508	-4%	0%	-0%
<i>Rural Townships (all other)</i>	5,141	4,897	5,173	4,579	-2%	2%	-3%
<i>County Total</i>	92,006	106,470	124,277	141,326			

### POPULATION PROJECTIONS

By 2040 population in Olmsted County is projected to reach a level of 193,600, driven by continued strong employment growth. This projection tracks well with the projections of the Minnesota Demographic Center prepared in 2007, which project Olmsted County population to reach 189,130 by the year 2035. The projections by jurisdiction presented below do not reflect development of a sewer system to serve the City of Oronoco (which will increase the share of growth in Oronoco when it occurs), nor do they reflect the potential impact of full development of Elk Run.

Table B-3: ROCOG Population Projections

Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030	2040
Rochester	106,850	123,860	138,968	146,700
Byron	5,300	6,700	7,500	8,500
Chatfield	1,250	1,270	1,310	1,400
Dover	665	892	1,087	1,200
Eyota	1,925	2,203	2,445	2,700
Oronoco	1,180	1,250	1,400	1,500
Pine Island	700	1,784	2,296	3,100
Stewartville	6,100	6,545	7,034	7,600
	123,970	144,504	162,040	172,700
balance of Chatfield	1,275	1,290	1,311	1,400
balance of Pine Island	2,800	3,500	4,300	5,000
<b>TOTAL CITIES</b>	<b>128,045</b>	<b>149,294</b>	<b>167,651</b>	<b>179,100</b>
Suburban Townships	13,387	12,785	11,500	11,000
Exurban Twps	6,000	6,391	6,260	6,000
Rural Twps	4,773	4,300	4,100	3,900
<b>OLMSTED COUNTY</b>	<b>148,130</b>	<b>168,380</b>	<b>184,400</b>	<b>193,600</b>
Olmsted + Fringe Cities	152,205	172,770	189,511	200,000

## DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUES

Age Structure: The aging of the post-WWII baby boom will increase the numbers of persons over the age of 60 significantly in the next 25-30 years, with resulting changes in housing, land use, and transportation needs. For example, according to the 2000 Census, approximately 20% of the 65+ population had at least one disability. If this proportion stays constant, the population over 65 with at least one disability will more than triple, from 2,400 in 2000 to 7,800 in 2040.

Table B-4 summarizes projected changes anticipated through 2035 among different types of households. This information is again based on State Demographer's projections. Compared to an overall 64% growth in the number of households, the number of married couple households with children is only expected to increase by 6% while the number of married couple households without children (mostly empty-nesters) is projected to increase by 94%.

A significant increase in single person households is projected, both in the 65+ age group as well as among younger individuals.

Table B-4: Projected Change in Composition of Households 2005-2035

Household Type	2000	2010	2015	2035	2000 - 2035 % Change	Share of Growth
Married Couples with Children	13,365	13,810	13,600	14,160	5.90%	2.6%
Married Couples w/o Related Children	13,998	18,030	20,300	27,120	93.70%	43.0%
Other Families with Children	3,444	4,810	5,160	5,520	60.30%	6.8%
Other Families w/o Related Children	1,501	1,910	2,060	2,680	78.50%	3.9%
Nonfamily Households, Living Alone	12,358	16,240	17,980	24,510	98.30%	39.8%
Living Alone, 65+	3,656	4,620	5,390	11,140	204.70%	24.5%
Other Nonfamily Households	3,141	3,730	3,940	4,340	38.20%	3.9%
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>47,807</b>	<b>58,530</b>	<b>63,020</b>	<b>78,320</b>	<b>63.80%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The types of households most likely to rely on transit, to seek walkable neighborhoods, and to live in higher density housing (as opposed to large lot development) are projected to increase significantly, while household types historically associated with suburban lifestyles are projected to grow only slightly.

Net Migration: In response to the slowing of resident labor force growth related to the aging of the baby boom cohort, coupled with continued strong local employment growth, the labor force needs of area employers have been met by increased in-migration. This trend started in the 1980's, accelerated in the 1990's, and has continued in the 2000's. Net migration has accounted for 41% of total population growth since 2000, similar to the 1990's (40%) and substantially higher than the 1980's (26%). Migration has increased the share of the population in racial and ethnic minorities, more than doubling the minority share of population in the 1990's.

Net migration has both domestic and international sources. From 2000 through 2008, international migration accounted for 63% of net migration. International in-migration includes people at all levels of educational attainment, but lower income families comprise a significant share. The non-Hispanic white (majority) population of Olmsted

County grew by 10% between 2000 and 2008, accounting for roughly 70% of Olmsted County's population growth. Most majority population growth was made up of the excess of births over deaths (natural increase). Minority population grew by 40% between 2000 and 2008; minority growth, made up mostly of in-migration, accounted for roughly two-thirds of net migration.

International migrants, persons of color, and lower income households have tended to reside in the City of Rochester. The populations of all of these groups have increased faster than the overall population growth rate over the past decade.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Wage & salary employment growth in Olmsted County has grown steadily for the last 30+ years. Periods of significant growth occurred in the late 1980's and again in the late 1990's. Only three years (1982, 1994 and 2008) saw an absolute decline in the number of jobs in Olmsted County from the previous year.

Total non-farm employment reported for the first quarter of 2010 by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development placed Olmsted County employment at 102,008 jobs, which represents a decline of approximately 4.5% from the pre-recession levels of 2007, when average annual employment was at 106,883 jobs.

Table B-5 summarizes employment projections prepared by ROCOG for the Year 2040 by major economic sector in Olmsted County. The health services industry, anchored by the Mayo Medical Center, is anticipated to see significant growth, which in turn will generate growth in related industries such as lodging and in population based industries such as retail trade. A trend towards more self-employed individuals is expected to accelerate and count for a larger proportion of overall county level employment in the future.

Table B-5: Projected Employment by Sector

Sector	2001	Estimated 4th Qtr 2008 / 1st Qtr 2009	Projected 2035 Employment (2005 LRTP)	Projected 2040 Employment (2010 LRTP)
<b>Private Sector</b>				
Farm employment	1,787	1600	1,270	1,195
<b>Goods Producing</b>				
Agricultural Services / Forestry	101	188	100	100
Mining / Natural Resources	93	210	100	100
Construction	5,210	3,473	7,503	7,984
Manufacturing	12,641	9,898	13,305	13,472
<b>Services</b>				
Transportation warehousing & utilities	2,361	2,326	3,602	3,833
Information	1,080	1,419	1,648	1,754
Wholesale trade	1,763	1,966	2,473	2,599
Retail trade	12,110	10,340	16,985	17,851

Sector	2001	Estimated 4th Qtr 2008 / 1st Qtr 2009	Projected 2035 Employment (2005 LRTP)	Projected 2040 Employment (2010 LRTP)
Finance, insurance, and real estate	4,837	2,883	8,025	8,646
Health Services	32,364	38,507	53,685	57,834
Business Services	4,024	4,825	5,837	6,166
Lodging & restaurants	6,652	8,371	10,148	10,798
Other Services	10,949	8,062	16,425	17,434
Government enterprises	8,262	11,000	10,973	11,497
(Federal)	1,365	1,010	1,745	1,818
(State)	1,275	1,495	1,567	1,627
(Local)	5,622	8,495	7,661	8,052
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104,234</b>	<b>105,068</b>	<b>152,079</b>	<b>161,263</b>

Table B-6 highlights the changes that have been occurring in the local economy by primary employment sector (for non-farm wage and salary employment only<sup>9</sup>). The major changes involve the relative contribution of the manufacturing sector and the education / health sector to the local economy. The share of employment contributed by the education/health sector has risen by 10% since the year 2000, while manufacturing has dropped by approximately 6%. Similarly, wages generated by the education/health sector have risen by 15%, while the manufacturing share has dropped by 9%. With the expected continued growth of health services and evolution of the University of Minnesota-Rochester campus, it is anticipated that the education/health sector share of the economy will continue to expand as a share of overall economic activity.

Table B-6: Employment Sector Shares

Employment Sector	Sector Share of Employment		Sector Share of Establishments		Sector Share of Total Wages	
	2000	2009	2000	2009	2000	2009
Resources and Mining	0%	0.2%	0.9%	1.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Construction	5%	3.8%	12.6%	12.9%	5.3%	4.0%
Manufacturing	15%	8.9%	3.5%	3.3%	22.1%	13.0%
Trade	16%	15.0%	25.8%	24.0%	10.8%	9.0%
Information	1%	1.5%	1.8%	2.2%	1.2%	1.4%
Finance	3%	2.7%	10.5%	10.5%	2.7%	2.5%
Business Services	6%	4.6%	12.9%	12.4%	5.6%	3.5%
Education / Health	38%	48.3%	8.9%	10.3%	43.6%	58.2%
Leisure / Hospitality	8%	9.0%	9.9%	10.8%	3.2%	2.8%
Other Services	3%	2.4%	11.7%	10.6%	1.6%	1.2%
Public Admin	4%	3.4%	1.5%	2.0%	3.9%	4.2%

<sup>9</sup> For information about farm employment and establishments, see Chapter 7.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR LAND USE**

Most of the projected population, household, and employment growth will take place in the urban service areas identified in the adopted Plans of the cities in Olmsted County. Using ratios of employment by sector to land area currently used for those employment sectors, it is clear that urban service areas have more than adequate land area to handle projected economic growth. Applying conservative assumptions to household growth, housing style, vacancy rates, and resulting land area demands, the same conclusion can be made for residential development. It is likely that some parts of identified urban service areas will in effect constitute reserves for urban growth beyond the period of this Plan (some of which may see interim development). The following tables show the ratios of planned land area to current population and employment related land area for each of the urban service areas in or partly in Olmsted County. Note that Oronoco's urban service area Plans are based on development of a municipal sewer system, drastically expanding Oronoco's business development potential. Small cities with relatively small employment and population bases can plan for modest increases in business-related or residential land area and yet end up with relatively high ratios of land area capacity to current development.

Table B-7: Planned Non-Residential Land Use in Urban Service Areas

Jurisdiction	commercial acres	commercial employment capacity (workers)	industrial acres	industrial employment capacity (workers)	total business capacity (workers)	Census 2000 workers	Growth Ratio
Byron	116	2,989	133	1,353	4,343	762	6.7
Chatfield	204	5,257	285	2,900	8,158	1,012	9.1
Dover	11	283	0	0	283	32	9.9
Eyota	154	3,969	186	1,893	5,862	398	15.7
Oronoco	340	8,762	0	0	8,762	162	55.1
Pine Island	1,917	49,404	0	0	49,404	1,010	49.9
Rochester	1,689	43,527	1,495	15,213	58,740	72,141	1.8
Stewartville	103	2,654	561	5,709	8,363	1,650	6.1
Total	4,534	116,847	2,660	27,068	143,915	77,167	2.9

Table B-8: Planned Residential Land Use in Urban Service Areas

Jurisdiction	Planned Residential Acres	Households at Planned Density	Population Capacity	2009 State Population Estimate	Growth Ratio	Projected Population	Growth Ratio
Byron	5,578	13,500	33,130	5,045	6.57	8,500	3.90
Chatfield	857	3,550	6,880	2,589	2.66	2,800	2.46
Dover	428	1,070	2,680	633	4.23	1,200	2.23
Eyota	1,010	2,940	6,380	1,875	3.40	2,700	2.36
Oronoco	2,497	6,240	15,606	1,147	13.61	1,500	10.40
Pine Island	3,884	9,700	22,300	3,384	6.59	8,100	2.75
Rochester	14,719	102,000	207,000	104,578	1.98	146,700	1.41
Stewartville	1,539	4,940	11,130	5,955	1.87	7,600	1.46
Total	30,512	143,940	305,106	125,206	2.44	179,100	1.70

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## APPENDIX C: CULTURAL RESOURCES

Olmsted County contains human-made and natural physical features that are significant to the history and character of the County, some of which distinguish it from other communities. Such features may include historic, geologic, hydrologic, biological or ecological features combined in a landscape that the community recognizes as significant. The community should encourage the preservation of features that provide historic, cultural, and landscape identity as an important part of our quality of life. Such encouragement could include avoidance (routing major infrastructure investments so as to avoid cultural resource conflicts) or strategies like the reuse of a creamery as a restaurant.

Analogous to the County Biological Survey completed in the early 1990s, a similar resource inventory is needed for cultural resources. The work completed for rural areas of Olmsted County through the efforts of Professor Robert Douglas of Gustavus Adolphus College<sup>10</sup> provides a basis for developing such an inventory. The basis for this effort was early county atlases, which were used to identify locations of significant agricultural, cultural, and business-related sites and structures in rural areas at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (with only a few exceptions, Dr. Douglas excluded residences and sites in cities). Dr. Douglas conducted extensive field work to determine the current fate of those sites and structures and adjoining areas. Following presentations at the Olmsted County Planning Advisory Commission and the annual meeting of the Olmsted County Township Officers Association, Dr. Douglas added to the compilation, following up on the suggestions of rural residents and elected officials who knew of additional significant sites.

There are two lists provided below: a list of structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places (also included in the 1995 Plan), and the list of sites identified through the work conducted by Dr. Douglas (some of which, in italics, are also on the National Register).

### **SITES ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

#### SMALL CITIES AND RURAL OLMSTED COUNTY

1. Bush, John G., House — Center Street, Dover
2. Eyota Cooperative Creamery — 222 Washington Avenue, S., Eyota
3. Frank's Ford Bridge — County Road 121 over South Branch Zumbro River, Oronoco Township
4. Krause, Christopher, Farmstead — CSAH 10 Sec. 27, Dover Township
5. Mayowood Historical District — County Highway 125, Rochester Township
6. Oronoco School — County Highway 18, Oronoco
7. Pleasant Grove Masonic Lodge — off CSAH 1, Pleasant Grove Township
8. St. Mary's Hospital Dairy Farm — County Highway 104, Cascade Township
9. Stoppel, George, Farm — County Highways 25 and 22, Rochester Township
10. White, Milo, House (Hazelwood) — 122 Burr Oak Street, Chatfield

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<sup>10</sup> *A Field Guide to Historic Sites in Olmsted County*, Robert Douglas, April, 2010. Information about individual sites can be found at <http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/departments/planning/index.asp>.

## CITY OF ROCHESTER

1. Former Avalon Hotel (now Avalon Music) — 301 North Broadway
2. Chateau Dodge Theatre (now Barnes & Noble Bookstore) — 15 1st Street SW
3. Chicago Great Western Depot (now Dos Amigos Restaurant) — 20 4th Street SE
4. Mayo, Dr. William J., House (Mayo Foundation House)— 701 4th Street SW
5. Plummer Building, Mayo Clinic — 110 and 115 2nd Avenue SW
6. Plummer House and Garden — 1091 Plummer Lane SW
7. Pierce House — 426 2nd Avenue SW
8. Rochester Armory — 121 North Broadway
9. Rochester Public Library (now Mayo Medical School)— 226 2nd Street SW
10. Toogood Barns (now Stone Barn Dentistry) — 615 16th Street SW
11. Whiting, Timothy A. House — 225 1st Avenue, NW (Central Park)

**SITES IN A FIELD GUIDE TO HISTORIC SITES IN OLMSTED COUNTY**

## Cascade Township

- *St. Mary's Hospital Historic Dairy Barn*. Located on Cty Rd 104, ½ mile south of US Hwy 14. Section 31.
- Pleasant Prairie Cemetery. Located on the Frontage Road, just south of its intersection with Cty. Rd 14. It can be seen to the left headed north of US 52. Section 4.
- Remains of Historic Feed Mill. Along the South Fork of the Zumbro River, near intersection of Cty Rd 133 and 55 St. NW. Section 11.

## Dover Township

- Dover School. Located in Dover, MN.
- Dover United Methodist Church. Located in Dover.
- Evergreen Cemetery. One-fourth mile west of Co. Rd. 10 on north side of 25 St. SE.
- School. Located on farmstead at northwest corner of Co. Rd. 10 and 10 St. SE.
- Wolf Mound (naturally occurring monadnock). One mile east of Co. Rd. 10 on south side of 15th St SE. On Bernard Wegman farm. Lat/Lon N 94 01 W 92 06 220.

## Elmira Township

- Elmira Church. Near the southwest corner of the intersection of Co. Rd. 30 and 60 St. SE.
- Historic Barns. Located on Co. Rd 30, a mile or so south of Elmira Church on the east side of the road.
- School. Five miles south of Dover on 170 Ave. SE; turn right onto 90 St SE; 1/2 mile on right (north side).
- School. On west side of Chatfield, heading west on MN Hwy 30; north side of the road.

## Eyota Township

- School House foundation. 2.5 miles west of MN Hwy 42 on north side of 30 St SE. Located on Kyle Kimery farm.

- Holy Redeemer Cemetery. 1.5 miles south of US 14 East on the west side of 110 Ave SE.
- Oak Grove Cemetery. Located on the east side of the road across from Holy Redeemer Cemetery.
- English Lutheran Cemetery. One mile west of Co. Rd. 7 on south side of Co. Rd. 129.
- Cline Cemetery. 0.25 miles west of Co. Rd. 7 on north side of 55 St SE.
- Site of Trout Spring Creamery. Co. Rd 7 south to 55 St SE. It is 1 ½ miles on the left. Dave Ward Farm.
- Stage Road Inn (?) Co. Rd 7 south to 55 St SE. 1 and ½ miles on the right. Mr. and Mrs. Greg Meyer farm.
- Historic Quarries. Co. Rd 7 south left for ½ mile on 60 St SE.
- Site of Ecker Grist Mill. Located in the Southeast corner of Chester Woods Park.
- Bear Creek Spring House. Co. Rd. 7 south (MN Hwy 42). Right onto 30 St SE. Near intersection with Co. Rd. 102.
- Historic Eyota Mural. On the side of the Higgins Custom Cabinetry building in downtown Eyota.

#### Farmington Township

- Zion (German) Evangelical Church Cemetery. Located on CSAH 21, 1/2 mile west of 70 Ave NE.
- Emmanuel Lutheran Church (MO Synod). In Potsdam, MN.
- Emmanuel Lutheran Church Cemetery. Located by the church in Potsdam.
- Abandoned Stores. In Potsdam.
- Restored School House. 1/2 mile north of Potsdam on CSAH 11.
- Round Barn. About 0.5 miles north of CSAH 14 (75 St NE) on 7th Avenue NE. N 44 7" W 92 20'.
- Old Smoke House or Spring House. Located on Gene Schnell Farmstead at the intersection of MN 247 & CSAH 11.
- Round Barn. Located just east of Potsdam on MN 247. N 44 10" 7" W 92 20'.
- Greenland Cemetery. Located at the junction of MN 247 and Co. Rd 128.
- School. Located ½ mile north of MN 247 on 50 Avenue NE.
- Farm Hill Cemetery. Just east of the junction of US 63 and 125 St NE.
- School. At junction of US 63 and 125 St NE.
- Ringe Creamery. Intersection of 40 Ave NE and CSAH 14 (75 St NE).
- Historic Granary. Located on the Blue Horizon Farm. 1/4 mile east of 40 Ave NE on CSAH 14 (75 St NE).

#### Haverhill Township

- Old School House. Located ¼ mile west of the intersection of 75 St NE and 40 Ave NE ; N 44 07 and W 92 24.
- Fitch Cemetery. Located ½ mile east of the intersection of 75 St NE and 40 Ave NE.
- Old School. Corner of 75 St NE and Hadley Valley Rd. NE.
- Haverhill Town Hall. Located near the junction of CSAH 11 and CSAH 2.
- Family Cemetery. Near intersection of CSAH 11 and CSAH 2. Just south of the Haverhill Town Hall.
- St. John's Evangelical Cemetery. Located on 65 St NE ½ mile west of CSAH 24.

## High Forest Township

- High Forest Cemetery. Located in the northeast part of the village of High Forest.
- High Forest Community Church. In High Forest.
- School. Located near the intersection of 95 St SW and 31 Ave SW. Near the end of the new runway of the Rochester Municipal Airport.
- Historic Bank Barn. Located 1 mile east of Stewartville on MN Hwy 30.
- Historic Barns. South of Stewartville, 0.25 miles west of TH 63 on CSAH 6.

## Kalmar Township

- Old (First Security) Town Bank (in Byron).
- Former City Hall (in Byron)
- Odd Fellows Lodge (in Byron)
- Byron Fire Station Number 1 (in Byron)
- Possible site of Byron Mill. Located near CSAH 5 west of the intersection with CR 105, at the confluence of Tompkins Creek and the South Branch Middle Fork of the Zumbro River.
- Helleckson Log House. Located in Oxbow Park.
- Site of the Post Town Community. Located at the intersection of CR. 103 and CR 105.
- Kalmar Town Hall. Located at the intersection of CSAH 3 and Town Hall Road.
- Mount Hope Cemetery. Located at the intersection of CSAH 4 and 70 Avenue NW.
- Douglas Trail. Located in the village of Douglas.

## Marion Township

- School. Located near Chester Heights, at the corner of C.R. 119 and 10th Street SE.
- Marion Town Hall. Located just north of the intersection of CSAH 36 (Marion Road) and CSAH 11.
- Marion Church of Christ, 5296 65th Ave SE, Rochester. In Marion across from the park.
- Marion Cemetery. Located on the east side of Marion.
- Historic water barrel. Located in the back of Marion Church of Christ.
- Predmore Lane sign. One-fourth mile north of TH 52 on 75th Avenue SE.
- Classic bank barn built of local limestone in 1879, now on the Schmidt farm.
- Log Cabin Motel & Grill, 2345 Marion Road SE, Rochester.

## New Haven Township

- Center Grove Cemetery. Located ¼ mile west of Douglas on CSAH 14.
- Historic Town of Genoa. Two miles west of Douglas on CSAH 14.
- Othello Cemetery. 1/4 mile west of the junction of CSAH 14 and 110 Ave NW.
- Old New Haven Town Hall. Near junction of CSAH 3 and CSAH 31.
- New Haven School. Located next to the Town Hall.
- St. Michael's Cemetery. Located at the intersection of 105 Street NW and C.R. 113.
- School. Old District 77. Located at the intersection of CSAH 5 and C.R. 113.

- School. Old District 80. 1/4 mile south of the junction of 125 St NW on New Haven Road NW.

## Orion Township

- Orion Center Cemetery. CSAH 7 intersection with Mill Creek Rd SE.
- Orion Township Hall. Located 500 feet north of Orion Center Cemetery.
- School foundation and well (plugged). CR 129 at the intersection of N. Branch Rd SE.
- Church (House). Cummingsville on N. Branch Rd SE.
- School. One mile southeast of Cummingsville on Mn Hwy 30 on north.
- School. Part of a house on corner of Mn Hwy 30 and 90 Ave SE.

## Oronoco Township

- Old *Oronoco School* (residence in City of Oronoco).
- New Oronoco School (Community Center in City of Oronoco).
- Presbyterian Church (in City of Oronoco).
- Old Mill Stone (in Allis Park in City of Oronoco).
- Historic Commercial Building (VFW Hall in City of Oronoco).
- Oronoco Cemetery. ½ mile east on CSAH 12 from Oronoco.
- *Frank's Ford Bridge*. At the end of C.R. 121 at the Zumbro River.
- Historic Barn. Near intersection of CSAH 14 (75th St NW) and 11 Ave NW.

## Pleasant Grove Township

- Marker for the Dubuque Trail (Walker's Stage Road). Located adjacent to Union Cemetery in village of Pleasant Grove.
- School. Located behind marker for the Dubuque Trail.
- Jerusalem Cemetery. Located south of I-90 on CSAH 20, ¼ mile east on 87th St. SE.
- St. Bridget's Catholic Church. Located on the north side of CSAH 20 east of the intersection of CSAH 16 and CSAH 20.
- St. Bridget's Cemetery. Located immediately east of St. Bridget's Church on the north side of CSAH 20.
- School. About 1.5 miles west of CSAH 1 on 93rd St. SE.
- Bank. Located in village of Simpson, immediately west of CSAH 1 on CSAH 20.
- Fairview Cemetery. Located at the southwest corner of the intersection of CSAH 12 and 75th St. SE.
- *Fugle's Mill*. Located on the west side of CSAH 1 south of the Root River bridge.
- Limestone Quarry. ¼ mile north of Fugle's Mill on west side of CSAH 1.
- Barn. Located across from Fugle's Mill on CSAH 1.
- Pleasant Grove School (now a residence). Located in the village of Pleasant Grove.
- Pleasant Grove Town Hall. Located in the village of Pleasant Grove.
- *Masonic Lodge #22*. Located in the village of Pleasant Grove.
- Union (Evergreen) Cemetery. Located east of the village of Pleasant Grove on the NW corner of the intersection of C.R. 139 and C.R. 140.

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### Quincy Township

- Round Barn. Located along C.R. 107 roughly 2,000 feet south of the bridge over the Middle Fork of the Whitewater River.
- Quincy Mill Site. Located across from the bridge over the Middle Fork of the Whitewater River on C.R. 152
- Little Valley Cemetery. Near junction of CSAH 2 and 163 Ave NE.
- Possible site of Little Valley Post Office. On a farmstead at the junction of CSAH 2 and 175 Ave NE.
- Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Located on 140 Ave NE 1/4 mile south of 75 St. NE.

### Rochester Township

- Donovan School.
- Pagenhart farmstead.
- Peters farmstead. South of Zumbro River on Bamber Valley Road SW.

### Rock Dell Township

- Rock Dell Township Hall. Located at the northwest corner of MN Hwy 30 and CSAH 3.
- Quarry. Located ½ mile east of Rock Dell on C.R. 126.
- Old Zumbro Creamery. In the village of Rock Dell.
- Log House. In the village of Rock Dell.
- Zion Cemetery. ½ mile south of the intersection of CSAH 3 and 60 St SW.
- East St. Olaf Lutheran Church. 6200 CSAH 3 SW.
- East St. Olaf Lutheran Cemetery. Across CSAH 3 from the church.
- John P. Tverberg Family Log Home. Located in the East St. Olaf Lutheran Church Cemetery.

### Salem Township

- South Zumbro Lutheran Church. Near the junction of CSAH 17 and 120 Ave SW.
- South Zumbro Cemetery. Located ½ mile west of CSAH 3 on CSAH 17.
- Riverside Cemetery. Located ½ mile south of the junction of CSAH 25 and CSAH 3.
- Separator Plant. It is now the Hiawatha Valley Farm Store. Located at the intersection of CSAH 25 and CSAH 3.
- Salem Corners Town Hall. Located at the intersection of CSAH 25 and CSAH 3.

### Viola Township

- St. Paul's United Church of Christ and Cemetery. Located ½ mile east of CSAH 7 on CSAH 9.
- Oak Hill Cemetery. Near junction of Mn Hwy 42 and 23 St NE.
- Viola Town Hall. In the town of Viola.
- Viola Gopher Count Historical Marker. In the Viola park.
- Viola Bible Church. In Viola.
- Viola Cooperative Creamery. 10500 Viola Rd NE
- School house. Near the ghost town of Corra at the junction of 97 Ave NE and CSAH 24.
- Possible site of Corra Post Office. Near intersection of 97 Ave NE and CSAH 24. Near the old school house.