



## Background DRAFT Vision Statement

May 5, 2016, 6:00 pm  
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee  
Rice County Environmental Services  
Nicole Peterson, Planning Supervisor  
[www.co.rice.mn.us/comprehensive-plan](http://www.co.rice.mn.us/comprehensive-plan)

### Vision Statement Description and Draft Sources

The vision statement for the comprehensive plan is a long-range, visionary description of Rice County's future. It communicates core values and aspirations for both current residents and future generations. Staff has drafted proposed vision statement language using 4 major sources including: Public comments from community forums, components list/table of contents, existing Rice County documents, and example vision statements from neighboring counties. A description of the sources and methods used to draft the vision statements is provided below.

### Public comment research method

In drafting the vision statements, Staff condensed and combined the information provided in the public comment summary. The information was condensed across questions and similar categories were combined. The information below was used to draft the vision statements.

**Small town feel with accessible urban amenities** - Preservation: Ability to preserve rural landscape, and small town feel

**Natural Resources:** Lakes, rivers, open space, diverse landscape - Water Quality: Desire cleaner lakes, streams, waterbodies, protective buffers or strips - Greenways: Recreation, wildlife corridors connecting cities and rural parks - Water & Air Quality: Improve and protect water quality (ground and surface) and air quality - Preservation: Ability to preserve natural corridors, agriculture, rural landscape - Natural Resources: Improve quality of our lakes & streams, Measure and protect ground water/surface water, Encourage rather than discourage renewable energy, Utilize best management practices for soil conservation

**Parks & Recreation:** Parks, trails, activities, Preserve parks and encourage outdoor recreation

**Agriculture:** Rural character, farming community, farmers market - Agriculture: Preserve rural character, Help older generation farmers transition farmland - Preservation: Ability to preserve agriculture - Agriculture: Help protect, preserve and restore ag land and farm businesses, support new farmers including small scale, organic farms

**Economy:** Diverse job opportunities, local shops - Business: Locally-owned sustainable cooperative businesses, farms, employment opportunities - Economic development: Creating local jobs and tax base, retain community wealth, dignified employment for low income and young people, solutions to increasing poverty - Economic Development: Nurture responsible business development, Attract businesses that pay a fair wage, Create cooperative business models, Promote businesses off 35, Don't overspend budgets, Invest in technology, Keep things local through market research and partnerships,

**Finance-Tax:** Funding projects, balance tax base to maintain infrastructure and ease tax burden, keep cost of living low and quality of life high

**Culture and Education:** Diverse education opportunities, history, music, theater, Participation & continued encouragement of community events Education: training for future jobs, quality schools, survival programs for at-risk youth, Leverage colleges for community good, Demographics [Later in presentation – ‘Population Shifts’, could be diversity – age, culture, income]: Cultural diversity and population growth, attracting and retaining young people - Diversity: Welcome diverse cultures, practice cultural justice and sensitivity - Youth: Engage & educate youth to encourage them to stay and be more involved

**People:** Family, friendly people, caring, youth involvement

**Quality of Life:** Sense of community - Community: Sense of safety and comfort, healthy environment

**Transportation Systems:** Walkable, bikeable cities, biking county-wide, multi-modal interconnection, well-maintained roads, commuter rail, transit - Transportation: Public transit, biking, multi-modal, maintain roads and bridges - Transportation: Building up county & township roads for safety, Completing trail systems with focus on the trail physical activity benefits and economic opportunities, Positive & purposeful development along 60/35 corridor, Limit roundabouts, Plan for airport expansion and improvements, Develop transportation plan to accommodate future growth

**Planning, Government, Implementing Regulations:** Effective planning across jurisdictional boundaries, well-planned development - Government: Sensible, practical negotiation, Informed, strong leaders & citizens, push back Metro-centric state government - Planning and Implementing Regulations: buffers, soil erosion ordinance, low impact development, long term plans for growth, septic compliance, transitional county zoning, user-friendly, good comp plan focused on infrastructure and smart gov, serving an aging population - Government Practices and Partnerships: Build upon & improve Comprehensive Plan, Clear zoning and best land use practices, Greater collaboration between government units, Develop/encourage strategic partnerships between existing organizations, Give fair and balanced voice to all communities and townships, Challenge schools, ag, industries to use expertise toward solutions,

**Community Design:** Rural Design: Agriculture, open farm country, fields, animals, permaculture, crops, Urban Design: Less urban sprawl, more densely developed cities with same footprint, buffers

**Housing:** Clusters of homes, accessible housing, more houses, scattered housing

**Sustainable development:** Limit sprawl, balancing land use for ag & business development, Transition of energy production and ownership - Renewable Energy Production: Solar energy-farms, windmills, sustainable energy - Climate Change: Planning & transitioning for climate change (extreme weather events)

**Technology:** Computer interconnectedness and infrastructure

**Food systems and production:** Education, local control of new food energy systems

**Build upon existing assets, Learn from our past**

### **First Draft Public Comment**

*As Rice County moves into the future, we wish to build on our community assets and learn from our past. We wish to preserve the small town feel of our cities and the rural, agrarian character of our community. We strive to preserve and enhance our natural resources including: Open space, lakes, streams, rivers, air, wildlife corridors, ground water, soil, and renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. We wish to preserve and enhance our parks and recreational opportunities.*

*Rice County strives to sustain existing agriculture and businesses, and enhance our economy by creating local jobs and tax base. We nurture responsible business development. We strive to provide dignified employment opportunities for all people regardless of their age, income, or race. We wish to retain community wealth and invest responsibly. We strive to sustain a healthy local economy by fostering partnerships and continuing market research.*

*Rice County values a strong sense of community and a high quality of life with diverse education and cultural opportunities. We wish to keep the cost of living low and the quality of life high. We foster a safe, healthy, caring, friendly community. We strive to preserve and enhance diverse education opportunities and cultural resources such as: history, music, and theater. We encourage continued participation in community events. We wish to have quality schools, youth programs, training for future jobs, and leveraging colleges for community good. We welcome diverse cultures and practice cultural justice and cultural sensitivity. We strive to engage and educate youth and encourage them to stay and be more involved.*

*Rice County strives to sustain a safe, multi-modal, interconnected transportation system. We strive to provide walkable, bikeable cities with biking opportunities county-wide. We wish to have well-maintained highways, local roads and bridges. We strive to preserve and enhance mass transit systems such as bus rapid transit or rail. We wish to enjoy a complete trail system with focus on physical activity benefits and economic opportunities. We strive to provide positive and purposeful development along highway corridors. We encourage airport expansion and improvements. We strive to develop a transportation plan to accommodate future growth.*

*Rice County strives to provide effective planning across jurisdictional boundaries and well-planned development. We wish to practice sensible, practical negotiation among all stakeholders. We strive to be informed, strong leaders and citizens. We foster good community planning through implementation of adopted regulations and encourage compliance. We strive to develop user-friendly, clear practices and regulations. We wish to develop and encourage strategic partnerships between existing organizations, and give fair and balanced voice to all communities and townships. We challenge our government, schools, agriculture, and industries to use their expertise toward community solutions.*

*Rice County encourages good community design with recognition of our diverse landscape. We foster good rural design through preservation and enhancement of agriculture, open farm country, fields, animals, permaculture, and crops. We foster good urban design with consideration of urban sprawl, density and buffers. We strive to provide a variety of housing opportunities. We wish to have sustainable development; balancing land use for agriculture and business development and mindful of climate change and extreme weather events. We foster renewable energy production such as solar and wind. We strive for enhanced technology through computer interconnectedness and infrastructure. We wish to be informed about food systems and production through education and research of new food energy systems.*

## **Components List/ Table of Contents research method**

Staff developed the vision statements using the language from the adopted components list (April 19, 2016 Steering Committee meeting). The following components list or table of contents was used to draft the vision statements.

### **Comprehensive Plan Table of Contents**

1. Introduction
  - Acknowledgments, Purpose, Vision, Process, Demographics
2. Cultural Resources
  - History, Diverse Cultures, Libraries, Events
3. Education
  - Educational Facilities Inventory, Workforce Development
4. Economic Development

- Agriculture, Business and Industry, Recreation and Tourism
- 5. Land Use
  - Urban Expansion, Growth Management
- 6. Transportation
  - Existing Multi-modal System (Transit, Roads, Rail, Air, Trails), Planned Improvements
- 7. Natural Resources
  - Water, Soil and Air Quality
- 8. Housing and Livable Communities Design
  - Life-cycle Housing, Housing Options (Style, Location, Income, Age and Ability)
- 9. Parks, Recreation and Open Space
  - Parks, Trails, Open Space Preservation
- 10. Utilities, Infrastructure and Energy
  - Energy, Water supply, Waste-water, Storm-water, Capital Improvements
- 11. Intergovernmental Cooperation
  - Partnerships and Collaboration with Cities, Townships, and Neighboring Counties
- 12. Implementation

### Existing Rice County documents research method

Staff reviewed the following existing Rice County documents to draft the vision statements:

1. 2002 Rice County Comprehensive Plan & Fundamental Inventory Guide 2002
2. Rice County Parks & Open Space Plan, 2011-2021 – no stated vision
3. Rice County All Hazard Mitigation Plan, March 2012 – *Vision: Rice County will work with surrounding communities and local emergency responders to create a proactive and results-oriented all-hazard mitigation plan that will make the county and region a safer and more sustainable place to live by protecting and enhancing the resources of the county as they relate to potential future hazards.*
4. 2025 Rice County Transportation Plan May 2006 – no stated vision
5. Rice County Local Water Management Plan - Jan 2010-Dec 2014 – *Mission statement: The Mission of the Fourth Generation 2009-2014 Rice County Water Management Plan (which fulfills the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 103B.304 – 103B.355) is to protect , preserve, and manage the natural surface water and groundwater systems within Rice County.*

### County vision examples research method

#### LeSueur County

[http://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/departments/environmental\\_services/planning\\_and\\_zoning/index.php](http://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/departments/environmental_services/planning_and_zoning/index.php) - none in comp land use plan or goals & objectives doc. Did find purpose below:

- *Expand the capacity of County Government to analyze local and regional conditions and needs in order to respond effectively to the problems and opportunities facing the County;*
- *Define the County's environmental, social, and economic goals;*
- *Record the County's policies and standards for the maintenance and improvement of existing development and the location and characteristics of future development;*
- *Provide citizens with opportunities to participate in setting goals and determining policies and standards for future development;*
- *Foster coordination of community development and environmental protection activities among local, regional, state, and federal agencies;*

- *Guide and coordinate the many actions and day-to-day decisions for local government that are necessary to developing and protecting the community; and*
- *Provide decision makers, County residents, and land developers with a forum for resolving conflicts among competing interests and values.*

## **Waseca County**

<http://mn-wasecacounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=246>

*The “Waseca County Vision 2025” was developed through the Community Visioning meetings, Citizen Attitudes Survey, Waseca County staff interviews and the Comprehensive Planning Task Force. Four Key Principles and ten vision statements.*

### *Four Key Principles*

#### *Strategic Vision for Change*

*Our vision for change is a comprehensive plan for revitalization. It is a means to analyze the full local context and the linkages to the larger region. It builds on the County’s assets and coordinates its response to its needs -- such as public safety, human and social services, and environmental protection. It integrates economic, physical, environmental, community, and human development in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion so that families and communities can work together and thrive. It also sets real goals and performance benchmarks for measuring progress and establishes a framework for assessing how new experience and knowledge can be incorporated on an on-going basis into a successful plan.*

#### *Community-Based Partnerships*

*Our road to economic opportunity and community development starts with broad participation by all segments of the community. The residents themselves, however, are the most important elements of revitalization. Others may include the political and governmental leadership, community groups, health and social service groups, environmental groups, religious organizations, the private and nonprofit sectors, centers of learning, and other community institutions. Communities cannot succeed with public resources alone. Private and nonprofit support and involvements are critical to the success of a community seeking revitalization. Partners also must be created within and among the levels of government. Government departments and agencies on all levels must work together to ensure that relevant programs and resources can be used in a coordinated, flexible, and timely fashion to help implement the County’s strategic plan and that regulatory and other barriers to sustainable growth are removed.*

#### *Sustainable Community Development*

*Creation of jobs is the first critical step toward Waseca citizens creating a more vibrant community where human initiative, work, and stable families can flourish. However, economic development can be successful only when part of a coordinated and comprehensive strategy that includes physical development as well as human development. A community where streets are safe to walk, the air and water are clean, housing is secure, and human services are accessible and available, and where a vital civic spirit is nurtured by innovative design, is a community that can be a source of strength and hope to its residents. A community where learning is a commitment for life can foster the skills, habits of mind, and attitudes that will make work rewarding and families nurturing.*

### *Economic Opportunity*

*Our first priority in revitalizing communities is to create economic opportunities jobs and work - for all residents. The creation of jobs, both within the community and throughout the region, provides the foundation so residents can become economically self-sufficient and communities can revitalize themselves. Opportunities for entrepreneurial initiatives, small business expansion, and training for jobs that offer upward mobility are other key elements for providing economic opportunity and direction.*

### *The Ten Vision Statements*

- 1. Infrastructure Vision Statement: The Waseca County will plan for, construct and maintain quality infrastructure that is safe, affordable, environmentally sound, aesthetically pleasing and allows for managed growth.*
- 2. Transportation Vision Statement: Waseca County will have a transportation system that facilitates and strengthens its economic vitality and effectively moves people to and from required destinations.*
- 3. Sustainable Agriculture Vision Statement: In general, land should not be converted from those agricultural uses, which protect long-term resource productivity. Comprehensive landuse planning is necessary to ensure a balance of lands for all purposes. Two trends are of intense concern: the loss of productive agricultural land to urban, industrial, and other development and the conversion of marginal lands and underdeveloped areas to agricultural use.*
- 4. Technology Vision Statement: The Waseca County Community will encourage the development and maintenance of state-of-the-art telecommunications and Internet services that meet our citizens' needs and keeps our businesses competitive.*
- 5. Population Growth Vision Statement: Waseca County will strive for a planned growth in population while maintaining a unique quality of life.*
- 6. Integrated Services Vision Statement: Waseca County governmental jurisdictions will provide integrated services in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible.*
- 7. Economic Strength Vision Statement: Waseca County will be an economically sound and business-friendly community emphasizing the need to retain and expand current and new businesses as the base for economic strength and employment growth.*
- 8. Multicultural Population Vision Statement: Waseca County represents a multicultural population that will aspire to live and work together in harmony through public awareness and appreciation of cultural differences.*
- 9. Education Systems Vision Statement: Waseca County will continue to strive for and support world-class education systems that emphasize the importance of life-long learning.*
- 10. Positive Image Vision Statement: Waseca County will portray a strong positive image as a place to live, work, play and do business.*

## Steele County

[http://www.co.steele.mn.us/departments/planning\\_and\\_zoning/2007ComprehensivePlan.pdf](http://www.co.steele.mn.us/departments/planning_and_zoning/2007ComprehensivePlan.pdf)

No vision but Purpose and 'Overall goal'

*Purpose - The purpose of this Land Use Plan is to provide an objective study of Steele County's physical features, land use, population, natural resources, development trends and other factors in order to guide future decision making as it relates to land use.*

*Preparing, adopting, and maintaining a County Land Use Plan serves the following purposes:*

- *Expand the capacity of County Government to analyze local and regional conditions and needs in order to respond effectively to the problems and opportunities facing the County;*
- *Define the County's environmental, social, and economic goals;*
- *Record the County's policies and standards for the maintenance and improvement of existing development and the location and characteristics of future development;*
- *Provide citizens with opportunities to participate in setting goals and determining policies and standards for future development;*
- *Foster coordination of community development and environmental protection activities among local, regional, state, and federal agencies;*
- *Guide and coordinate the many actions and day-to-day decisions for local government that are necessary to developing and protecting the community; and*
- *Provide decision makers, County land owners & residents, and land developers with a forum for resolving conflicts among competing interests and values.*

*OVERALL GOAL: To Guide the Growth and Development of Steele County so as to:*

1. *To protect, preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment and require development to take place in a manner, which makes wise use of Steele County's resources without degradation;*
2. *To make the most efficient and economical use of public funds and investments; and*
3. *To protect agricultural lands from encroachment by incompatible uses and provide assurance that such areas will remain agricultural in nature.*

## Dodge County

[http://www.co.dodge.mn.us/Government\\_and\\_Links/STRATEGICPLANUPDATE2013.pdf](http://www.co.dodge.mn.us/Government_and_Links/STRATEGICPLANUPDATE2013.pdf)

*Vision: Dodge County provides services the community and staff take pride in.*

*Mission: To efficiently operate within a budget while providing excellent service, maintaining a rural character, and preparing the county to operate effectively for years to come.*

## Goodhue County

<http://www.co.goodhue.mn.us/745/Comprehensive-Plan>

No stated vision – 2016 Draft Plan Elements below:

- Draft Element 1: Agriculture
- Draft Element 2: Natural Resources
- Draft Element 3: Housing
- Draft Element 4: Business and Industry
- Draft Element 5: Recreation and Tourism
- Draft Element 6: Cultural, Historic and Scenic Amenities
- Draft Element 7: Transportation
- Draft Element 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Draft Element 9: Public Utilities and Energy

## Dakota County

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/Planning/CompPlan/Pages/default.aspx>

No vision statement – 4 main topics with visions and 5 guiding principles below:

Guiding principles

1. Sustainability
2. Connectedness
3. Collaboration
4. Economic Vitality
5. Growing and Nurturing People

4 Topics and visions:

### **(1) Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation**

*Natural Resources - Lakes and rivers will be clean. Water quality will be significantly improved, with Dakota County waterbodies absent from the State impaired waters list. Multipurpose green corridors and open spaces will be created to reinforce green infrastructure, provide habitat, and improve water quality. Alternative energy sources will become more accessible.*

*Open Space - Open space will be protected and interconnected by green corridors to maximize healthy functioning of natural systems that benefit all Dakota County residents. This green infrastructure will be well organized to provide enjoyment to the greatest number of people and shape future growth. Infill, redevelopment, and increased density will be emphasized in urban areas so as to protect large tracts of open space and agricultural lands.*

*Recreation*

*Parks and trails will be easily accessible to residents. Interconnected greenways, trails, active parks, and passive parks will promote healthful outdoor activity with a variety of convenient recreation choices for residents.*

### **(2) Land Use, Growth, and Economic Development**

*The County will be a place with multipurpose green corridors, open spaces and parks. Each community will be walkable, bikeable, and everyone will have access to recreational amenities. The land use pattern will be balanced and mixed-use developments will be located throughout communities creating a strong sense of place and neighborhood. Planning efforts will be cross-jurisdictional and well coordinated. Growth in the county will continue but will occur in strategic locations with a more purposeful focus on infill and redevelopment in existing cities. Agricultural uses will be preserved and enhanced through greater crop diversity and community-based agricultural practices.*

*The County will have a diversity of housing options so everyone has the opportunity to stay in the community as they move through life cycles such as empty nesting and retirement. Reinvestment in existing homes and neighborhoods will be emphasized. New homes will be built to be healthier and utilize green building techniques. Renewable energy resources will be emphasized, waste reduced to zero, and overall quality of life in the county improved. Jobs will match households, and residents will be able to live and work in the County. Jobs at all levels, especially head of household jobs will be available throughout the community to help reduce commuting time and stress, ultimately contributing to the overall high quality of life in the County. Business and government will work together to create a strong community. Changing demographic trends will create a unique market that promotes economic development.*



### **(3) Transportation, Transit and Infrastructure**

#### *Transportation*

*People of all ages and income levels will be connected to jobs, services and shopping through a multi-model system that is affordable, attainable and reduces the dependency on automobiles. Land use planning and transportation planning will be a coordinated effort with stakeholders to create appealing development along corridors served by a variety of transportation modes.*

#### *Transit*

*Transit services will increase as growth continues in the county. Transit opportunities will be made available and affordable to all users along high-density, highly traveled corridors. A variety of funding sources will be employed to expand and support a more extensive and wide reaching transit system.*

#### *Infrastructure*

*Greater use of technology investment and integration with community design will result in less need to travel. New businesses will locate in the county that support teleworking and other practices that limit trips out of the county for business and work. Infrastructure (i.e. fiber optics) will be expanded across the county to provide all residents greater technology choices.*

### **(4) Health, Safety, Education and Human Services**

#### *Advisory Panel vision for Growing and Nurturing People*

*The Advisory Panel (see Page 5.1.3) created a year 2030 vision of what would make Dakota County an even greater place for its residents. The Advisory Panel did not restrict itself to fields in which the County works directly — its vision is intentionally broad. From this mind-set sprang a vision that focuses not on what the County delivers, but on what is best for its people regardless of the source. Goals, strategies and further refinement winnowed out parts of the vision that strayed from the County's roles.*

*The County will be a place where education is provided to all, with emphasis on early education, appropriate school year lengths and more rigorous studies across all cultural and language lines to truly prepare young people for their world. The County will be a place where affordable health care coverage and access to health care is available to all residents. Medical providers will provide services in more accessible places (such as doctors making house calls, or nurses in schools, libraries or parks) rather than limited to clinic buildings, to reach all populations, ages and income ranges. Prevention and wellness initiatives are a priority to support healthy life styles. Engender a "sense of community" by developing common spaces where people can connect. Collaboration and partnerships broadly and proactively address the needs of County residents.*

*The County will be a place with less crime and better coordination between providers across jurisdictional lines. Racial disparities will disappear from the criminal justice system. Improvements to the system will include creating alternate programs to incarceration, to reverse the trend of building more jails. The County will be a place where social services are a coordinated effort and partnership exists between government, individuals, communities and community agencies and religious organizations.*

## Scott County

<https://www.scottcountymn.gov/469/2030-Comprehensive-Plan>

Scott County's 2030 Vision is a long-range, big picture description of our desired future. It communicates core values, legacies, and aspirations for both current residents and future generations. The 2030 Vision is the core of this 2030 Plan Update, providing a framework for each element's goals, policies, and recommendations. Steps to achieve the 2030 Vision and address the 2030 Strategic Challenges are discussed in Chapter XII.

*The following is the 2030 Vision for Scott County as unanimously recommended by the Vision Advisory Committee in August 2006: 2030 Vision: In 2030, Scott County is a well-planned, safe, prosperous and fiscally responsible community built by citizens and businesses who value neighborhoods, education, families, health, and public safety, and who enjoy its natural beauty, rural character, and location in the region. In 2030, Scott County is recognized metro-wide as one of the best places to live, work, shop, and play in the Twin Cities because we have: prospered with a diversity of urban and rural lifestyle choices; respected and managed our natural and environmental resources; developed and maintained a safe, efficient, and comprehensive transportation and trail system; met the human and social service needs of our most important resource...our citizens and neighbors; diversified our economy; and secured a high quality of life for our citizens through leadership at the local, regional, state, and federal level.*