



Comprehensive Plan—2016

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that provides direction in making land use, development, and other long-range planning decisions in the county. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan update begins with a civic engagement process in which all community members – citizens, landowners, townships, cities, agencies – are encouraged to participate in developing a shared vision of the county's future. This vision lays the groundwork for a plan with broad goals, policies, and action plans that will guide planning decisions in the future.

Is this the first Comprehensive Plan for Rice County?

No. Rice County first developed a Policy Plan in 1967 and again in 1982. In 1992, in response to *Minnesota Statute 394.23*, the first Rice County Comprehensive Plan was developed and then updated in 2002.

What has happened since the 2002 Comprehensive Plan?

Rice County has been actively working on other planning documents since the 2002 Comprehensive Plan. These include: a major Zoning Ordinance update (2004); improved Geographic Information System (GIS); revised Solid Waste Ordinance (2005); adoption of the Transportation Plan (2006); County Economic Development Department established (2007); updated Water Plan (2010 & 2015), revised Feedlot Ordinance (2010); All Hazard Mitigation Plan (2011); Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan (2012); Housing study (2012); and a revised Floodplain Management Ordinance (2012).

Why is updating the Comprehensive Plan important?

The Comprehensive Plan contains components relating to economic development, land use, agricultural/natural resource preservation, infrastructure and resource development, housing, recreational opportunities, cultural/historic preservation, and other issues of community development. It contains implementation strategies in the form of goals and objectives to achieve the collaborative vision of the county's future, and serves as a guide for development decisions over the next ten to twenty years.

What happens next?

A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee comprised of the Rice County Board of Commissioners and Rice County Planning Commission members will oversee the development of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update. Throughout the planning and drafting of the updated Comprehensive Plan, county leaders will continually seek feedback from citizens regarding their ideas and visions for the future of the county through a variety of means including: community forums, surveys, focus groups, small group meetings, open houses, and other stakeholder and public meetings.

How Can I Stay Informed?

Information on the project will be available online and through social and traditional media outlets. For more information and/or to provide input:

- Visit the Rice County Comprehensive Plan webpage: <http://www.co.rice.mn.us/comprehensive-plan>;
- Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/RCCompPlan2016/;
- Sign up for email updates: rcplanningzoning@co.rice.mn.us; or
- Call Rice County Environmental Services at 507-332-6113.

We welcome your thoughts, comments, concerns and input. The future of Rice County depends on you!