



2025 Goal Setting & Strategic Planning



Lake Elmo Community Room
3880 Laverne Avenue
Lake Elmo, MN 55042
January 15 & 16, 2025

Photo credit: Leo A Daly and Tom Grady Photography



2025 Strategic Planning Agenda

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

5pm-8pm

Invitees:

Mayor & Council; City Administrator, Department Heads, Assistants, City Clerk, Communications Coordinator, Planning Commission (Thomas Rehkamp) Parks Commission (Ellen Esch), EDA (Tony Manzara), Special Projects (Clark Schroeder)

Consultants – Engineer (Jack Griffin, Nate Stanley, Chad Isakson), Public Safety (Ty Jacobson), Legal (Sarah Sonsalla), IT (Holly LaRochelle & Pete Bauer)

- Introductions and background (10 minutes)
- Develop Vision and Core Strategies (30 minutes)
- Brainstorm Strategic Objectives to support Core Strategies (45 minutes)
- Identify Organizational Values (25 minutes)
- Discuss Roles and Responsibilities (25 minutes)
- Presentations (45 minutes)
 - Clark Schroeder, Special Projects
 - Metro I-NET staff
 - Commissions (Parks, Planning, EDA)
 - What has your commission talked about the last year
 - 3 challenges facing your commission

Thursday, January 16, 2025

5pm-8pm

Invitees:

Mayor & Council; City Administrator, Department Heads, Assistants, City Clerk, Communications Coordinator
Consultants – Engineer (Jack Griffin, Nate Stanley, Chad Isakson), Public Safety (Ty Jacobson), Legal (Sarah Sonsalla)

- Review progress from Session 1, present drafts of work (20 minutes)
- Department Head Presentations (10 minutes each)
 - Where do we spend our time and resources?
 - What could we do if we had more time or resources?
 - What opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years
 - Plans that guide our work
- Brainstorm additional strengths, challenges, threats, and opportunities (45 minutes)
- Develop short-term goals and prioritize (45 minutes)
- Flex time as needed to finish any other components (20 minutes)
- Summary and Conclusion



City of Lake Elmo Strategic Planning Session January 15-16, 2025

Objectives



Two Sessions

Presentation of ideas and perspectives

Facilitated discussions

- Long-Term Vision
- Short-term Goals
- Organizational Performance



Develop 2025 Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning Process

Keys to Success

Everyone is involved

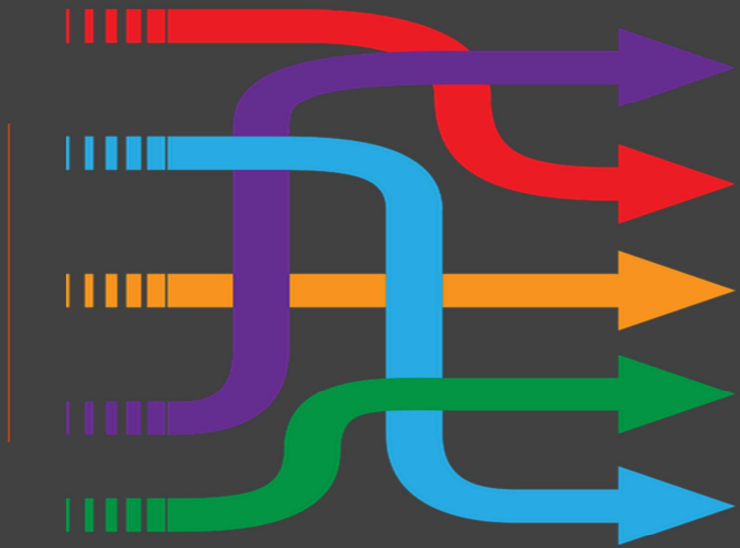
Quantity (and quality) of ideas is good

Disagreement is healthy - respectful dialogue

Focus on ideas, policies, projects, and practices

Have fun with the process

Where do you
want to go?



Where do you
want to go?

Strategic Plan Fundamentals

- ◆ What do you dream for your City and Organization?
 - ◆ Reactionary vs. Intentionality
 - ◆ Have a Vision
 - ◆ Vision Statement, Core Strategies, Strategic Objectives
- ◆ What can you do today to work towards that?
 - ◆ Where are you at today?
 - ◆ What is realistic and will start you towards your Vision
 - ◆ SWOT Analysis, Short-Term Goals
- ◆ How does your Organization get there?
 - ◆ Shared understanding amongst all stakeholders
 - ◆ How are you going to perform?
 - ◆ Roles & Responsibilities, Organizational Values, Mission

Development of Vision Elements

Core Strategies Strategic Objectives

Creating Core Strategies

- ◇ Key Elements of the Vision
- ◇ External and Internal

Defining Vision through Strategic Objectives

- ◇ Provide detail and additional definition
- ◇ Helps with understanding and direction

Development of Vision Elements

Core Strategies Strategic Objectives

Example (from another City):

Core Strategy

Balanced growth and thriving local economy

- ◆ Continued support of existing businesses and their needs while seeking new business development.
- ◆ Well-balanced commercial, industrial, and residential development.
- ◆ Thoughtful zoning to meet desire for balanced growth.
- ◆ Be proactive and flexible in community planning.

Pre-Session Input

What challenge has the City encountered in recent years that it has done a particularly good job of addressing?

When you think of Lake Elmo in 2050, what are 3-5 characteristics or qualities that you hope will define the community?

When you think of Lake Elmo in 2050, what are 3-5 characteristics or qualities that you hope will define the city as an organization?

When you think of the commitment the City of Lake Elmo has to the community, pick up to three values below that you believe are the most important to the organization.

Small Town
Atmosphere and
Character

Quality of Life

Community
Spirit and
Inclusivity

Recreational
Opportunities
and Open Spaces

Sustainable and
Managed
Development

Vibrancy and
accessibility

Strategic and
Forward-
Thinking
Governance

Transparent and
Ethical
Leadership

Excellence in
Services and
Community
Support

Core Strategies (Draft/Suggestions)

Developing Core Strategies and Strategic Objectives

1. Are the themes accurate?
2. Develop a preferred Core Strategy statement.
3. Develop 3-5 Strategic Objectives to support each Core Strategy statement
 - ◇ Supporting statements
 - ◇ Define elements necessary to accomplish Core Strategy
4. Review and Develop Draft Vision document

Organizational Performance

- ◆ Mission Statement
- ◆ Organizational Values
- ◆ Roles and Responsibilities

Mission Statement

The mission of the City of Lake Elmo is to provide planned, quality public services consistent with the City's character in a fiscally responsible manner in partnership with our community.

Organizational Values

How do you expect the organization and team members to perform?

What is your commitment to the community?

Are they easily remembered and able to be integrated into organization?

Organizational Values

Current Organizational Values

- ◆ Ethics and Integrity
- ◆ Visionary Leadership and Planning
- ◆ Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Services
- ◆ Fiscal Responsibility
- ◆ Open and Honest Communication
- ◆ Respect for the Individual
- ◆ Community Engagement
- ◆ Professionalism
- ◆ Accountability

Most Common Advance Responses

- ◆ Transparent
- ◆ Continuous Improvement
- ◆ Customer Service
- ◆ Community Engagement
- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Trusted
- ◆ Respectful
- ◆ Stewardship
- ◆ Sustainable
- ◆ Responsive

Good Governance

Organizational Performance



Different
perspectives working
together



Unification of
purpose



Development of
trust



Aligning resources
with priorities



Clarity between
fundamentally
different roles

Roles and Responsibilities

City Council

Governance, Policy,
Leadership, Direction

City Staff

Execution,
Implementation,
Expertise, Information



2025 Environmental Assessment

- ◇ **Within the organization, the “City Team”** - the people, structure, resources, policy, and all things internal
- ◇ **Within the community and community culture** - all of the non-physical attributes, actions, and things happening with stakeholders, institutions, and community
- ◇ **Within the physical features of the community** - the infrastructure, physical attributes, development, and business
- ◇ **City services and activities** - the services the City provides, the City as a business, and economic climate

2025 Environmental Assessment

1. Where is your City/Organizational momentum present?
2. What are you doing well?
3. What challenges are you facing or see coming?
4. What are you doing that you shouldn't be doing?
5. What aren't you doing that you should be doing?
6. What trends/opportunities you see coming?

Development of Short-Term Goals

Review all previous discussion and work from both sessions

Identify and brainstorm what the City can do to address needs, advance strategies, and build upon areas of momentum

Goals should be SMART:

- ◆ Specific – clear, concise, and well-defined
- ◆ Measurable – able to establish progress and success
- ◆ Achievable – realistic and attainable considering constraints
- ◆ Relevant – align with Core Strategies
- ◆ Time-bound – focus on 1-3 year horizon

Summary

Strategic Plan Report

Council final review and approval

Integrate into organization actions

Communicate

Revisit, assess, and refine

Advance Responses

Purpose: Prior to the January 15-16, 2025, Strategic Planning sessions, participants were asked to provide input regarding four questions that will provide a starting point for discussion and creation of outcomes. Responses from all participants are listed below each question. This document will serve as a resource for preparation and participation in the planning sessions.

Q1: What challenge has the City encountered in recent years that it has done a particularly good job of addressing?

- Change of leadership at the top level
- Being persistent with the legal challenges related to the water issues AND participating in community growth events
- Water supply and contamination
- PFAS water treatment
- Improving the level of civility - the atmosphere at City meetings is so much better now. And current City staff (many are recent hires) seem to be living up to these improved standards of public service.
- I think that the City has done a good job of dealing with staff turnover and retention. When I first started working with the City, there was a revolving door with staff coming and going. Now they seem to stick around longer. They also seem happier. I think that has to do with the city council getting along better which results in a lot less dysfunction for everyone involved (including me).
- Past high turnover.
- Increasing staffing within city departments to meet the demands of current and future city growth.
- Growing the City government as the city grows.
- Residential growth
- maintaining its sewer and water system, improving pavement conditions, adding parks-amenities and replacing playgrounds, vehicle/equipment replacement
- Responding to development opportunities and delivering supporting infrastructure
- Bringing consistency and stability in city lead infrastructure projects.
- Addition of new infrastructure
- Incremental improvements to staff and financial management to address fast-growing community.
- Managed growth
- Water, growth, opposition to growth, image.
- Services and recourses as population continues to grow.
- I don't feel I've been here long enough to provide feedback on this question.

Q2: When you think of Lake Elmo in 2050, what are 3-5 characteristics or qualities that you hope will define the community?

- small town character, quality amenities, interconnectedness
- Great recreational opportunities, safe, happy residents, and new businesses.
- Walkable, small town feel, friendly
- Quaint, Quiet, Destination
- Welcome and incorporate new residents and businesses in a deliberate, planned manner to create community spirit and a sense of belonging. Maintain a small town atmosphere even if bordered by densely packed urbanized housing and big-box business districts in neighboring cities. Two good themes are planned open-space developments and a calm traffic street system that does not need 8-phase traffic lights at every second intersection. A pleasant and safe place to live.
- Resilient, stable, vibrant, and urban and rural character
- High quality of life regarding schools, recreational activities, and walkable neighborhoods.
- Excellent and reliable city services, top tier place to live and work, is a community that people want to be a part of.
- Unique, Traditional development, High quality of life
- Safe, stable, healthy
- continued rural setting, great nature parks, lakes and trails- so recreation close to bigger city shopping and dining
- vibrant Village Area business district; quality neighborhoods; pedestrian friendly
- Clean drinking water, managed development, and a clear vision of what the community wants to look like.
- Desirable community, preservation of nature, full service city, safe
- Financially sustainable, debt-free,
- Rural, small town, smart
- Livability, Accessibility, Opportunity, Charm
- Maintain a small community feel.
- Sustainable - Inclusive - Small Town Feel
- open space, community-oriented, connected

Q3: When you think of Lake Elmo in 2050, what are 3-5 characteristics or qualities that you hope will define the city as an organization?

- Forward thinking, issue anticipation, responsive to residents, resilient infrastructure, and pleasant interactions.
- fiscally responsible, open, great services
- competent, build from within, example for other cities, a place worth choosing
- Organized, Community, Giving
- Affirm and celebrate City Staff and Employees who are doing a good job, and quickly dismiss the ones who make it difficult for co-workers and the public. Provide raises commensurate with skills and work output levels to retain good employees. Maintain affordable tax levels through a prudent spending plan. Maintain a strong police presence to provide a safe environment for all. Is willing to consider "outside the box" solutions to unique local opportunities and problems
- Stable, harmonious, strong
- Trustworthy, ethical, transparent.
- The City of Lake Elmo is viewed as a city that is well-managed, well-planned and is viewed by our residents and peer cities as a model city.
- Great place to work, efficient, forward thinking
- Cohesive, knowledgeable, trustworthy, professional
- adaptable, accommodating, reactive, caring, passionate,
- Continuous improvement; Excellence; Collaborative
- Staff stability, strong leaders, and continued improvement in policies and procedures.
- Sustainable fiscally and environmentally, full service city with excellent responsiveness to community, forward thinking and strategic
- Stable, Innovative,
- Organized, professional, committed
- Public Safety. Trust. Respected.
- Responsive, flexible, and adaptable.
- Transparent- Diverse - Efficient
- transparent, honest, sustainable, well-funded, proactive

Q4: When you think of the commitment the City of Lake Elmo has to the community, pick up to three values below that you believe are the most important to the organization.

- Community Engagement, Professional, Stewardship
- Continuous Improvement, Customer Service, Transparent
- Collaborative, Continuous Improvement, Respectful
- Accountable, Collaborative, Excellence, Integrity, Innovative, Professional, Respectful, Sustainable, Trusted, Well-being
- Customer Service, Integrity, Stewardship
- Community Engagement, Professional, Transparent
- Adaptable, Community Engagement, Resilient
- Customer Service, Professional, Transparent
- Customer Service, Responsiveness, Trusted
- Adaptable, Innovative, Trusted
- Professional, Transparent, Trusted
- Continuous Improvement, Creative, Customer Service, Efficiency, Passionate, Respectful, Responsible, Responsiveness, Sustainable, Trusted
- Accountable, Responsiveness, Transparent
- Community Engagement, Continuous Improvement, Leadership
- Continuous Improvement, Sustainable, Transparent
- Continuous Improvement, Stewardship, Transparent
- Accountable, Community Engagement, Respectful, Transparent
- Accessible, Community Engagement, Continuous Improvement, Customer Service, Efficiency, Inclusive, Professional, Respectful, Responsible, Transparent, Trusted
- Adaptable, Flexible, Responsiveness
- Collaborative, Customer Service, Transparent
- Healthy, Sustainable, Stewardship

Long-Term Vision / Core Strategy Draft

Purpose: Use the advanced responses to search for themes and common responses that identify key pillars of the long-term vision. By clustering the advanced responses we can see where the priorities emerge for the future of the City/organization.

Session Activity: In small groups, discuss and develop these three things:

1. Reach consensus on the clustering, with or without modifications
2. Identify a preferred strategy statement (draft strategy areas are listed below by topic - develop a brief statement to make a topic into a strategy statement)
3. Develop 3-5 strategic objectives (sub-goals) within each cluster that help define what that strategy statement might be. The strategic objectives will explain in summary the details of the strategy statement.
 - For example, “Fostering a small-town, safe community” might be supported by “Providing high quality and well-supported public safety services,” “Encouraging programs, policies, and activities focused around preserving small-town charm,” etc.
 - Some examples are provided below

Suggested Core Strategy areas based on Advanced Responses

- 1. Small Town Atmosphere and Character**
 - a. Maintaining a quaint, quiet, and friendly small-town feel.
 - b. Balancing growth while preserving the rural and traditional development charm.
- 2. Quality of Life**
 - a. Focus on safety, stability, and healthy living.
 - b. High-quality schools, reliable city services, and recreational opportunities.
- 3. Community Spirit and Inclusivity**
 - a. Welcoming new residents and businesses to foster belonging and connection.
 - b. Strengthening community-oriented values and a sense of interconnectedness.
- 4. Recreational Opportunities and Open Spaces**
 - a. Abundant nature parks, trails, lakes, and green spaces.
 - b. Promoting walkable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and vibrant community areas.
- 5. Sustainable and Managed Development**
 - a. Planned growth with a focus on managed infrastructure and open space preservation.
 - b. Financial sustainability and maintaining affordability through prudent planning.
- 6. Vibrancy and Accessibility**
 - a. Vibrant village business districts with local opportunities.
 - b. Accessibility to urban amenities while retaining the charm of rural living.
- 7. Strategic and Forward-Thinking Governance**
 - a. Proactive issue anticipation, innovation, and adaptability.

- b. Long-term planning with a focus on sustainability (fiscal and environmental).
 - c. Stable leadership and cohesive teams.
 - d. Efficient operations, fiscal responsibility, and recognition as a model city.
- 8. Transparent and Ethical Leadership**
 - a. Trustworthy, transparent, and ethical decision-making.
 - b. Open communication and strong public engagement.
- 9. Excellence in Services and Community Support**
 - a. High-quality, responsive city services.
 - b. Strong focus on public safety, community well-being, and employee recognition.

City of Lake Elmo

2023-2024 Strategic Planning and Goal Setting Report

PROCESS

On January 24, 2023, the Lake Elmo City Council and Staff Leadership Team convened its biennial goal setting and strategic planning session to review progress on previous goals and establish new targets for the organization in 2023-2024.

The process built upon the strategic planning foundations established in previous years and focused primarily on examining the present status of the City and organization to develop a workplan for Council and staff consistent with the Mission and Values Statements. The participants engaged in discussion around a series of questions to examine the areas of strength and weakness, along with potential impacts and opportunities on the horizon. This report will reaffirm the Mission and Values Statement established in previous strategic planning processes and recap the goals as outlined for 2023-2024.

The City Council will now consider the results of the session through the process of adopting its 2023-2024 Strategic Plan. This report contains a summary of the session and outlines the outcomes in the form of a work plan to guide the City moving forward.

MISSION AND VALUES STATEMENTS

The mission statement is the first part of the organizational statement that addresses the manner in which the City will conduct its business. The process of working towards the vision and core strategies is important work and it is the mission that outlines how the City will perform its operations. It is a commitment to the community and statement of clarity for staff regarding the method in which the organization seeks to act.

Lake Elmo Mission Statement

**The mission of the City of Lake Elmo is to provide planned, quality public services
in a fiscally responsible manner in partnership with our community.**

Supporting the Mission of the City, previous strategic planning sessions resulted in the development and adoption of organizational values statements. These statements are adopted values that affirm the manner in which the City expects to perform and identify its long-term priorities.

The following values are fundamental to the City of Lake Elmo's success and the fulfillment of our mission:

Ethics and Integrity – We believe that ethics and integrity are the foundation of public trust and confidence and that all meaningful relationships are built on these values.

Visionary Leadership and Planning – We believe that the very essence of leadership is to be visionary and innovative while planning for the future.

Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Services – We believe that service to our residents is our reason for being and commit to delivering services in a professional, cost-effective, and efficient manner.

Fiscal Responsibility – We believe that fiscal responsibility and prudent stewardship of public funds, both short-term and long-term, are essential for citizen confidence in government.

Open and Honest Communication – We believe that open and honest communication is paramount for an involved citizenry and fosters a positive working environment for employees.

Respect for the Individual – We believe that citizens we serve are to be treated with the utmost respect and deserve the best treatment the City can provide.

Community Engagement – We believe that creating and fostering a community with engaged, active, and informed stakeholders is necessary for a healthy city.

Professionalism – We believe that continuous improvement and innovation is the mark of a professional organization and we are committed to applying this principle to the services we offer and development of employees.

Accountability - We believe in decision-making processes that are based on facts, data, and the prioritization of community interests above the individual.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

One of the primary activities of the session was conducting an environmental scan of the City and organization. This activity is designed to consider the present state of the community from a variety of perspectives. In a large group setting, participants were asked to consider its strengths, challenges, areas where the City has momentum, and explore trends and issues that face the City in the coming years. The scan provided the basis for the group's efforts later in the work session to develop the goals that will guide the organization in the coming years.

In its first assessment activity, the group was asked to consider all of the things that identify as strengths of Lake Elmo, both as a City and the organization itself. Participants were encouraged to think of projects, services, actions, and policies. After discussing the strengths, participants turned their attention towards reviewing City and organizational areas that need improvement. These items are areas that presently challenge the organization and City. The third assessment area of discussion was around the actions that are presently underway that provide for organizational momentum. The group brainstormed areas where the City had opportunities based on current conditions and actions.

Following the assessment of its strengths, challenges and areas of momentum, the group moved on to the final brainstorming activity - anticipating emerging trends or issues that may impact the City. Forecasting potential external changes or impacts is a key step in the process to help leadership anticipate pressures and opportunities that may arise. To guide this process, the participants followed a STEP model of analysis, thinking about trends and external impacts in the areas of socio-cultural, technical, economical, and political. Thinking about the ongoing opportunities and challenges in each of these areas provides a variety of important perspectives for the City in the coming years.

The results of the environmental scan have been provided as an appendix to this report.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

The primary focus of the 2023-2024 goal setting session was to develop a short-term goals platform and workplan to guide the organization in the coming years. Participants were offered the opportunity to present draft goals that addressed any of the following objectives - previous goals that had yet to be fully accomplished, goals to address weaknesses, opportunities, or potential impacts discussed during the assessment process, or other goals that individual members viewed to be important for the City. The process encouraged the brainstorming of SMART goals - specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (1-3 years) - and objectives that would support the core strategies and vision.

Following the brainstorming process, a prioritization process was used to develop the following list of high priority and priority goals. Participants were given the ability to choose a limited number of brainstormed goals as their top priorities. As each participant's choices were collected, the draft goals were bunched into three categories. The categories and prioritization followed these guidelines:

- High Priority Goals - goals that were identified by a majority of the Council as top priority and also received support from City Staff.
- Priority Goals - goals that fell short of a Council majority but were identified as a top priority by at least two members of the Council and multiple members participating in the session or two or more staff members.
- Other Goals - goals that did not have an initial priority ranking by more than one member. (Included as an appendix to the report.)

Proposed 2023-2024 Short-Term Goals

High Priority

1. **Update the Water Supply Plan - reflect new PFAS findings, strive to have one additional well, develop policy(ies) related to clean water and water management, and reduce irrigation/peak levels of community usage**
2. **Develop a comprehensive financial and management plan for parks - facilities, land, amenities and uses - to guide prioritization and decision-making**
3. **Explore ways to increase non-property tax revenues, including consideration of franchise fees**
4. **Develop a sustainable approach to execute the work of the Commissions - increase public participation and community engagement in decision-making**
5. **Finance and implement dashboards - implement a 5-year operation plan by department**

Priority

6. **Produce and take action on RFP to develop 180 acres of City land**
7. **Complete Pavement Management Plan**
8. **Move into and become fully-functional in City Center (including Washington County Sheriff's Department)**
9. **Establish vision/goal for a multi-use community space**

NEXT STEPS

The next step in the goal setting process is to work within each of these short-term goals to develop action plans and the establishment of benchmarks to measure progress. One of the discussion items during the workshop involved the identification of measurables, or benchmarks, to effectively evaluate the City's accomplishment of each goal. Developing measurable outcomes for each goal will also help in the development of action plans to reach the desired outcome. The goals should then be revisited from time-to-time as an accountability measure for both the Council and staff.

Additionally, finding ways to integrate the goals into the organizational processes also helps to develop success. Building on the methods in which Lake Elmo has been successful in the past is recommended, along with exploring new methods of keeping the goals on the forefront of the leadership team's efforts. It was an honor to assist your team in the process of establishing its Strategic Plan for the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Kern
Facilitator

Appendix

City of Lake Elmo 2023 Strategic Planning and Goal Setting Report

Environmental Assessment Outcomes

Strengths	Challenges
Quality staff and director-level personnel	Staffing and tight job market
Council - diverse backgrounds allowing for better decision-making	Hard to fill volunteers spots (Commissions, etc.)
Organization is less volatile and focused	Water, water, water
Knowledge set amongst staff	Supply chain issues, ripples it causes
Staff/Council have become more flexible in decision-making	Increased costs for goods, products
New Lake Elmo Connect group	Public expectation of services, amenities (coming from larger communities)
More positive community action, engagements	Culture challenge - differences/conflict between service expectations, taxes, etc.
Big strides in use of tech for community engagement	Culture challenge - workforce, volunteering, pay expectations
Infrastructure, investments have been made with growth	Keeping up with demand, usage for fields
Basic services providing space for activities	Prioritizing goals/vision in Comprehensive Plan
Population, people are looking to be involved	Financing compared to goals/demands
Community resources - affluence and positive traits	Traditional finance policies not working
Low tax rate	Channeling resources
Good financial position	Building relationships with other institutions
Parks, Park Reserve	Economic impacts (inflation) on development, City
Good, strong public safety commitment	Attracting commercial development
Directors, staff working together well	Community expectations v. Financial impacts, not having that community conversation
Growing professionalism	Getting to learn, operate City Center
Communication between Council & Staff	Fire Paid-on-call working through issues with FT staff
	Growth, increasing cost of Public Safety
	County Cost Participation - increased costs

Trends, Challenges, Opportunities	Momentum
Remote work - both impacts on the workforce and employer considerations	I-94 Commercial interest
PFAS Regulations - Feds start regulating (?)	Water Tower going up
Cultural changes in families, such as screen time and changes in ways of interaction	Work with legislators, engaged (water issues, etc.)
Changes in laws - Cannabis, impacts of law changes	Public perception, council positive action
Economic impacts - recession possibility	Connect Lake Elmo group
Increasing reliance on Emergency Services - people staying in the community as they age	EDA - Community Development role
Development/Growth/Density changes PS actions	Working through natural growing pains
Changes in laws - employment, paid leave	People and groups are increasing what they invest
White Bear Lake water issue	Council support for adding new positions, equipment, materials
PFAS funding (?)	Staff proposing only community-beneficial things
Aging facilities/infrastructure	Utilizing technology, doing more with less
How we use technology	Program audits at Department level
Security-related to technology	Available land
Swings in housing development patterns/demand for type	
Changes in how the public communicates	
Decrease in cable subscribers - Cable Commission, impacts on operations, cost	
Changes in energy regulations	

CC	S	Short-Term Goal
5	4	Update water supply plan - reflect new PFAS findings, strive to have one additional well, develop policy/ies related to clean water/water management, reduce irrigation and reduce levels of peak community usage
5	3	Develop a comprehensive financial and management plan for parks - facilities, land, amenities, uses - to guide prioritization/decision-making
3	2	Explore ways to increase non-property tax revenues, including consideration of franchise fees
3	0	Develop a sustainable approach to execute the work of Commissions - increase public participation, community engagement in decision-making
3	0	Finance and implement dashboards and implement 5-year operational plan by department
2	2	Produce RFP and develop 180 acres of City land
2	3	Complete Pavement Management Plan
2	3	Move into and become fully functional in City Center - City and Washington County
2	0	Establish vision/goal for a multi-use community space
1	0	Review/Update Utility Management Plan, including cost/schedule of replacement of utilities
1	1	Update Assessment Policy
1	2	Utilize technology to streamline building/fire permitting, embrace electronic filing
1	0	Improve connectivity of existing trails and identify areas where development isn't likely to connect within the MUSA area
0	0	Develop alternative fuel system for vehicles
0	2	Assess and plan to meet Public Safety needs - Police, Fire, EMS
0	4	Actively pursue commercial and industrial development along I-94 corridor

The City of Lake Elmo Mission and Values

MISSION

“Commitment to the Community”, or mission statement: “The mission of the City of Lake Elmo is to provide planned, quality public services consistent with the City’s character in a fiscally responsible manner in partnership with our community.”

VALUES

Organizational values are an important statement of the norms expected at all levels. In local government, effective governance requires that members of the City Council conduct actions in a manner consistent with agreed upon values. Additionally, every day City staff members are expected to perform at a high level on behalf of the community stakeholders. A successful integration of organizational values requires that employees know and understand what behaviors are expected. Some organizations go as far as to make organizational values part of Council and staff training and development.

Nine guiding “WE BELIEVE” values that will direct its service, both internally and externally to the community: Lake Elmo’s Core Values of Service are:

Ethics and Integrity – We believe that ethics and integrity are the foundation of public trust and confidence and that all meaningful relationships are built on these values.

Visionary Leadership and Planning – We believe that the very essence of leadership is to be visionary and innovative while planning for the future.

Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Services – We believe that service to our residents is our reason for being and commit to delivering services in a professional, cost-effective, and efficient manner.

Fiscal Responsibility – We believe that fiscal responsibility and prudent stewardship of public funds, both short-term and long-term, are essential for citizen confidence in government.

Open and Honest Communication – We believe that open and honest communication is paramount for an involved citizenry and fosters a positive working environment for employees.

Respect for the Individual – We believe that citizens we serve are to be treated with the utmost respect and deserve the best treatment the City can provide.

Community Engagement – We believe that creating and fostering a community with engaged, active, and informed stakeholders is necessary for a healthy city.

Professionalism – We believe that continuous improvement and innovation is the mark of a professional organization and we are committed to applying this principle to the services we offer and development of employees.

Accountability - We believe in decision-making processes that are based on facts, data, and the prioritization of community interests above the individual.



Special Project Manager Clark Schroeder

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
JANUARY 15TH , 2025

1

White Bear Lake Water Allocation Issue

The White Bear Lake Comprehensive workgroup met 5 time during the year. This workgroup will be developing a comprehensive plans to ensure communities in the White Bear Lake area have access to sufficient safe drinking water to allow for municipal growth while simultaneously ensuring the sustainability of surface water and groundwater resources to supply the needs of future generations.

The plan must: Evaluate methods for conserving and recharging groundwater in the area. Strategies can be converting water supplies from ground water to surface water, reusing water, increase groundwater recharging and other ways to reduce ground water use.

2

White Bear Lake Water Allocation Issue

In 2024 we reviewed past water studies for the east metro, and made recommendations to study and update various ones. The group evaluated, reviewed, and brainstormed various ideas to stabilize the lake levels at the same time allowing for continued growth in the east Metro.

We worked with the MET council to project possible city water service population in Lake Elmo for 2050 and at total buildout of the city.

[Workgroup website](#)

3

White Bear Lake Water Allocation Issue

Looking forward to 2025

The WBL group will study St Paul surface water capacities, project 1007 mitigation projects, DNR ground water modeling as it affects WBL, and water conservation strategies.

4

White Bear Lake Litigation

In 2012, a lawsuit filed against the DNR claimed the DNR allowed communities and businesses in the White Bear Lake area to use too much groundwater. The lawsuit claimed groundwater use led to unacceptably low lake levels. A timeline of this litigation is [HERE](#)

5

White Bear Lake Litigation

The city, along with other east metro cities are currenting in litigation with the DNR, and the WBL homeowners association. Kennedy & Graven handles our court appearances and briefs.

6

White Bear Lake Litigation

Lake Elmo and other cities are appealing various portions of the ALJ's decision from the spring of 2024. This appeal process is pending with the court of appeals. The briefs have been going back and forth during 4th quarter of 2024 and are due by end of the year. Oral argument most likely will happen in 1st quarter of 2025.

At the same time, there was a hearing regarding the associations' request to have Judge Marrinan "correct" Administrative Law Judge Lipman's ruling on the residential irrigation ban condition. Judge Marrinan did set aside this issue till the court of appeals case has been ruled on. No date to revisit this yet.

Looking forward to 2025, the city might have to respond to further litigation around this issue, and/or develop a plan for an enforceable 75/90 goal.

7

3M Priority 1 Government working Group

This working group will identify and recommend projects to the MPCA and DNR for funding from the 850 million dollar 3M settlement.

We met 3 times in 2024.

8

3M Priority 1 Government working Group

Concerns for 2025 are getting approvals for our treatment plants, and transitioning to the 2007 3M consent decree and what if any affect the on cities utility funds.

9

Looking into the future

In the next few years, as we conclude WBL litigation, finish the WBL comprehensive study report in 2027, and continue with PFAS mitigation efforts, it is likely that the city will need to concentrate on water conservation and reuse.

Efforts will include:

- low irrigation lawns/landscape
- irrigation limits
- stormwater reuse
- homestead water conservation

The city might also be involved with conversion to surface water from St Paul if the WBL study group recommends such a move to support WBL.

10



Better Together!

Mission: To provide Metro-INET members with high-quality IT support services

Vision: Metro-INET is the best choice for local government IT support services in Minnesota.

Values: Collaboration, Relevancy, Service



Who We Are

We're a **collaborative** of local government agencies that **shares IT services**.

Our members

...are mostly small and medium cities in the metro, like Lake Elmo

...govern Metro-INET

...share IT staff and IT services

...share costs



Benefits of Membership

Less expensive than private IT Services.

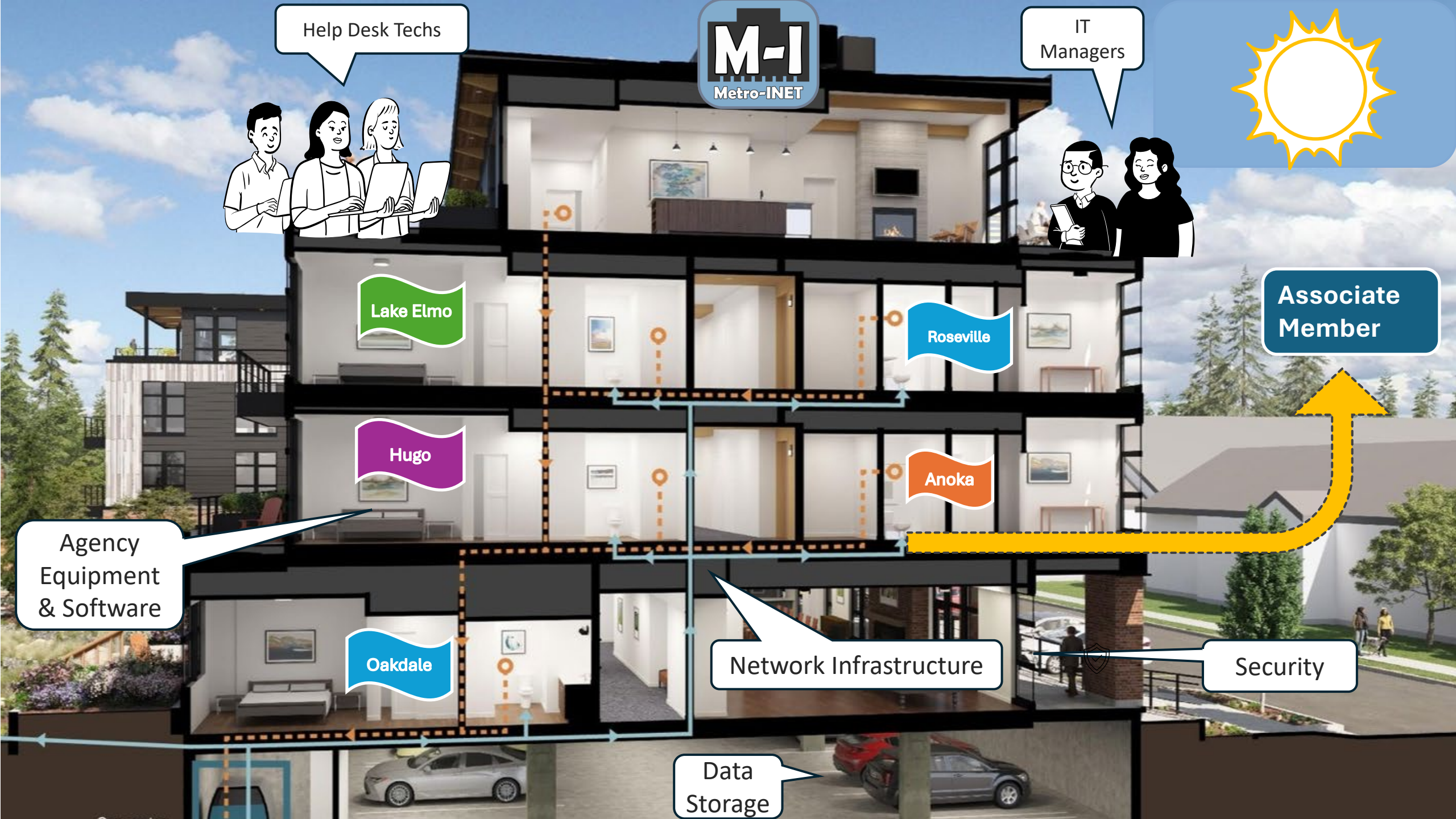
Enables members to access **higher quality** and **more secure** IT services than they could on their own.

Full services are **tailored to cities**, and include:

- a private, secure network
- Microsoft Office business software
- data storage and application hosting
- phone services
- Service Desk, providing computer management and end user support

Typical City
"Pleasantville"







By the Numbers

1999 Roseville IT Dept. started sharing service, with Mounds View

2021 became an independent entity (JPA)

33 Full Members

9 Associate Members

2,000 + user accounts

140 + buildings

16,000 + tickets in 2024

26 employees

99% satisfaction rating on tickets

\$5.68M budget in 2024





Our Focus: Last 3 years

- Transform into an independent entity from Roseville
- Increase Cyber Security
- Attract and retain top talent
- Improve sustainability of business operations
- Provide excellent customer service



Lake Elmo's IT Service Support in 2024





Lake Elmo By the Numbers

Services we provide Lake Elmo:

Network connectivity, phone system, replacing computers, and troubleshooting computer, phone and user account issues.

How we support you:

You pay a flat rate per unit, not per call, unlike many private Managed Service Providers (MSP).

Just like your internal IT Department, we partner with 3rd party vendors (not all the expertise is in-house)



Lake Elmo IT Projects

2023

Moved to new city hall

Current and upcoming:

Community development ArcGIS

New cloud permit online system

City website redesign



Lake Elmo By the Numbers

2008 joined Metro-INET

60+ user accounts

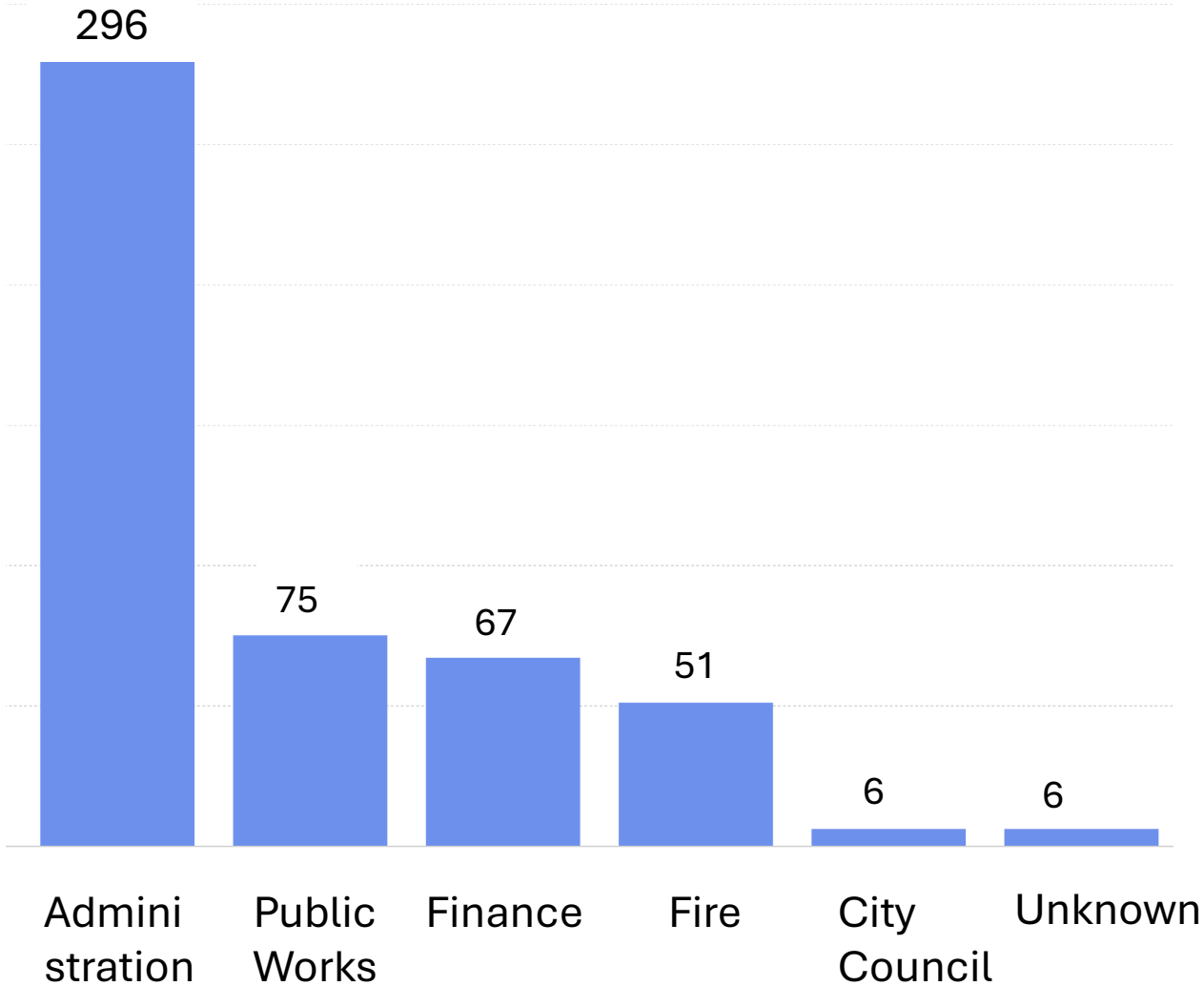
45 + computers

500 + tickets in 2024

99% satisfaction rating on tickets

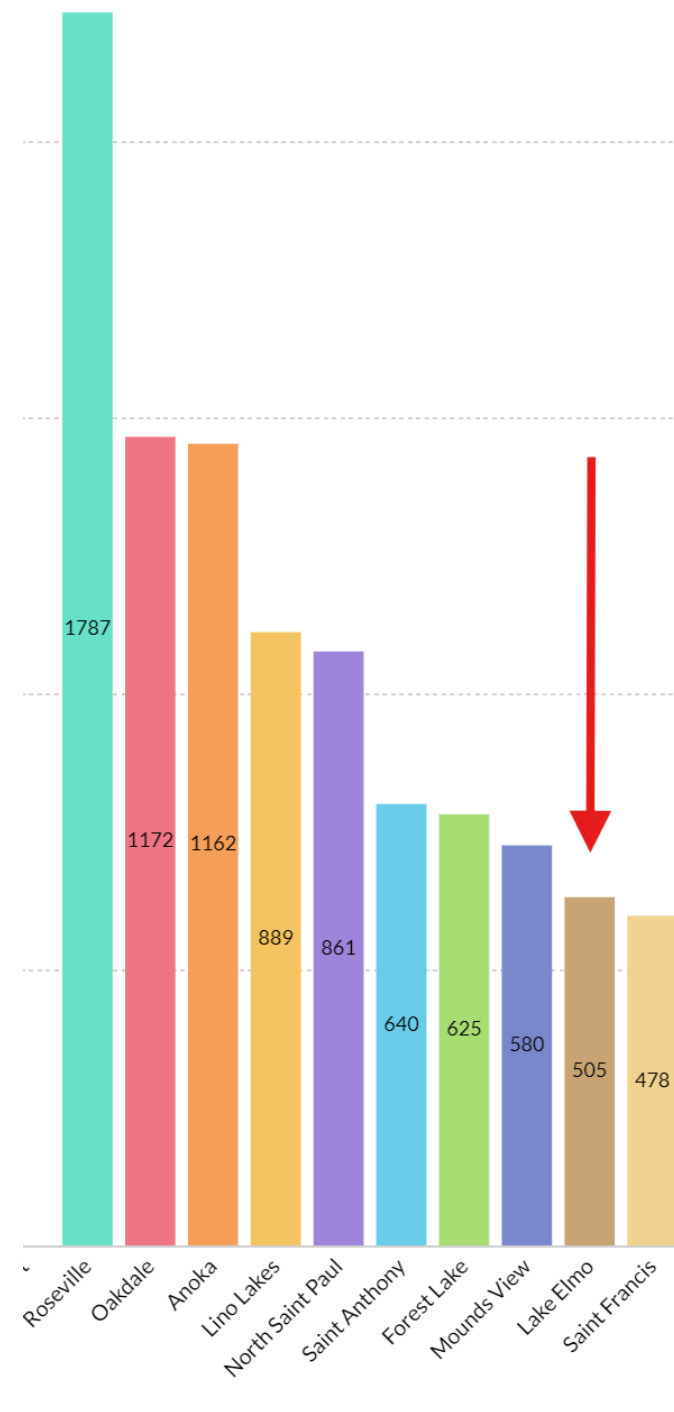
4% reopen rate

Tickets by Department, Lake Elmo 2024

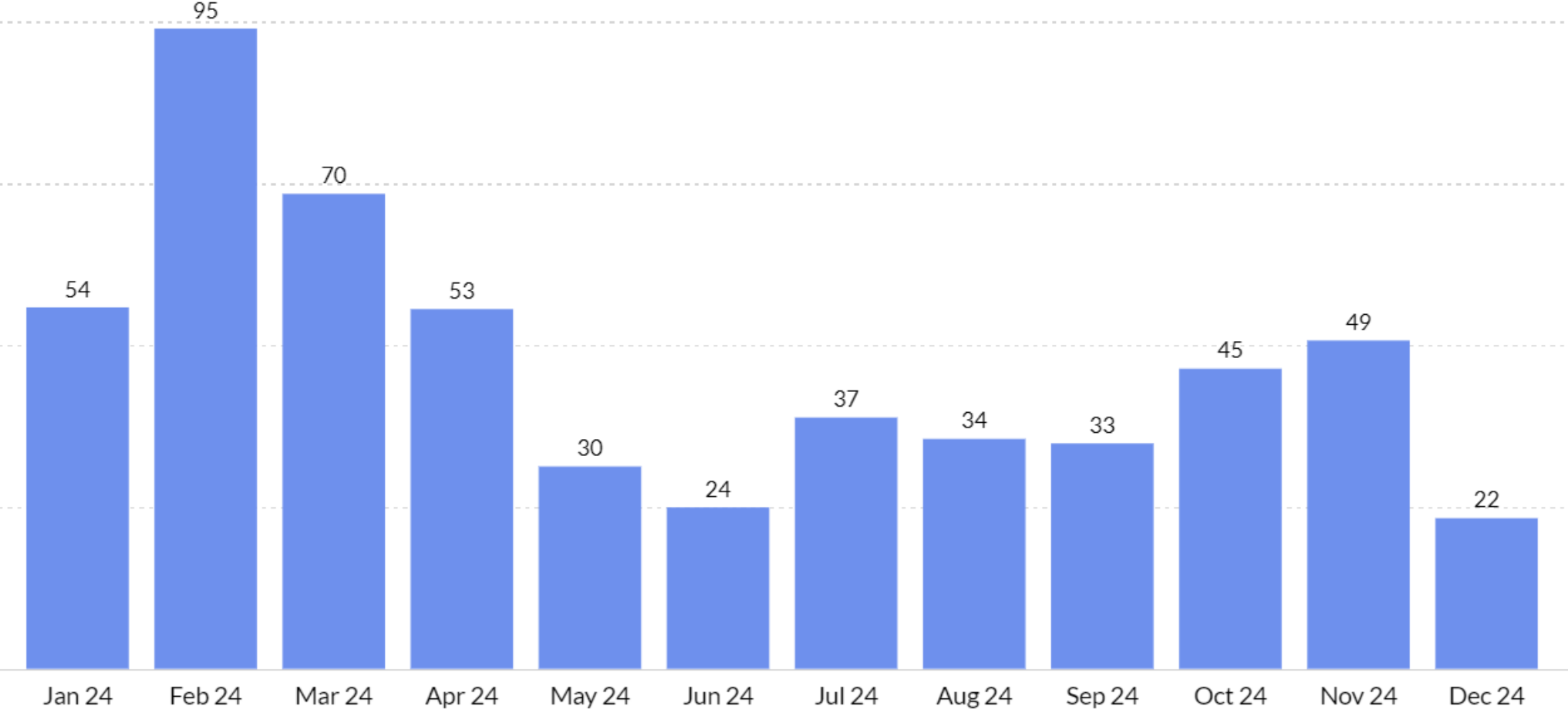


Tickets, Lake Elmo 2024

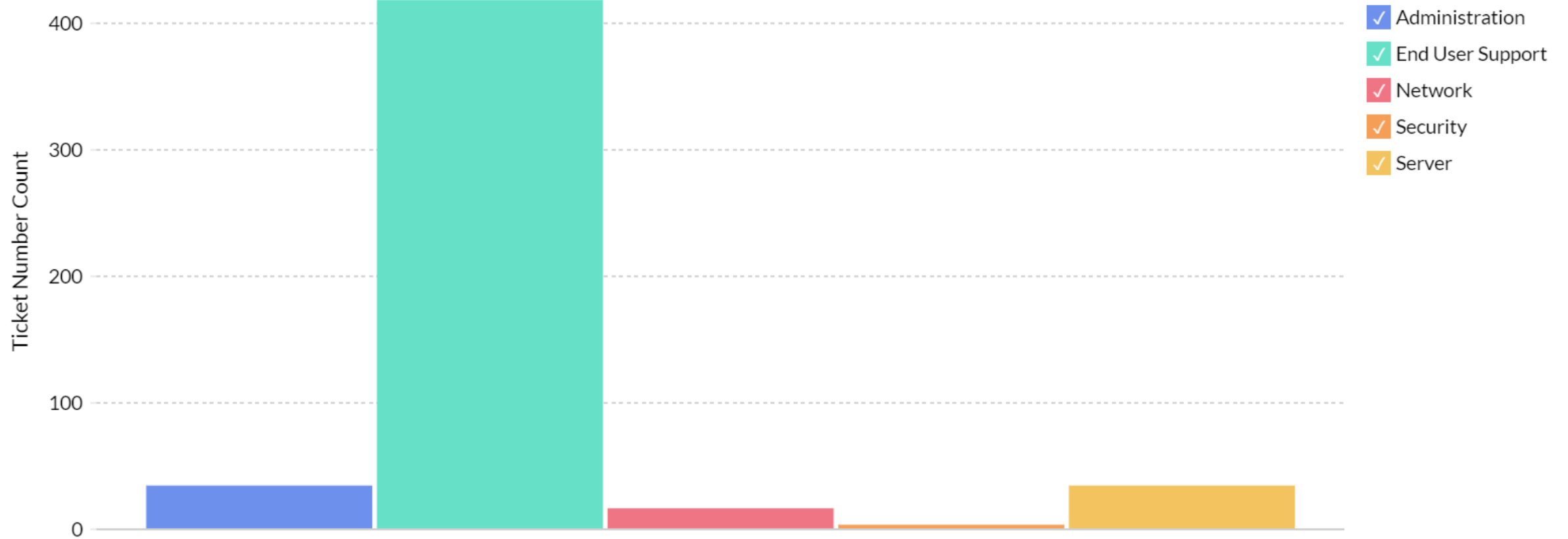
In the top 10 for
ticket volume,
out of 42 member
agencies



Support Hours Logged by month, Lake Elmo 2024



Tickets by Category, 2024



The future: Organizational Goals



Strategic Directions

1. Increasing value of services and efficiency through standardization and automation
2. Develop long-range financial plans for service delivery and membership costs
3. IT Staff Development
4. Board Development & Member Engagement

What do we see coming in the next 1-5 years?



Opportunities

- Partnering closer in the early planning stage of IT projects leads to better results: secure, supported & stable systems that are on time and in budget.
- Knowledge sharing and project sharing between members on software and other IT needs.
- Bring on additional members, and new revenue.

What do we see coming in the next 1-5 years?



Challenges

- Diverse needs and requirements of our 33 members of various sizes
- Speed of IT change
- Increasing risks, from economy & workforce
- Increased in cyberattacks, and time it takes to respond to and recover (IT staff time, but also member time & disruption to your business)
- IT Vendors: Increased and unpredictable cost. Lowered customer service: Long delays in support, or no response, or incorrect information or guidance.

For more info / contact us



Visit our IT Support Site at

<https://metroinet.sharepoint.com/sites/Support>

Or follow the shortcut on your desktop





DEPARTMENT REPORTS

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSIONS

JANUARY 15 & 16, 2025

1

Public Works



2

PUBLIC WORKS

Where do we spend our time and resources?

- Tree Maintenance-20%
- Street Maintenance-17%
- Park Maintenance-20%
- Stormwater Maintenance-13%
- Sewer & Water Maintenance-30%

3

PUBLIC WORKS

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- Continue improving maintenance plans vs reacting more often to failures
- Allow more time to preparing and reviewing to ensure accuracy and completeness of documents/plans/reports
- Search and apply for grant opportunities
- Utilize technology
- Improve administrative processes
- Improve customer service

4

PUBLIC WORKS

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

- Resident expectations
- Increased demands on water system
- Staffing-The need for divisionalizing to obtain field staff experts that can lead projects and repairs from start to finish

5

PUBLIC WORKS

Plans that guide our work

- Parks Master Plan 2024
- APWA Best Practices
- Parks Commission Work plan
- Other organizations: Tree City USA, DNR, MDH, MPCA, etc.
- CIP schedule
- City strategic plan

6

Community Development



7

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Where do we
spend our time
and resources?

- Q&A about land use applications and building permits with residents, contractors, developers, and other stakeholders
- Working with developers on projects and answering city code/process questions
- Processing and reviewing applications
- Coordinating between departments and stakeholders
 - Land use applications
 - Building permits
- Developer liaison with engineering, landscape architect, and legal
- Cloud permit implementation
- Building - Plan and Permit review
- Building inspections
- Code enforcement

8

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- Sustainability/climate resiliency projects - Goldleaf
- Longer-term planning projects (Comp Plan, Old Village, OP-PUD, Parks)
- Economic development work, grants (Fire Station, 180 Acres)
- Parks projects and create a Parks/Rec/Parkways (tree fund, landscaping warranties, Pinwheel funding) staffing plan
- Update the website and create new forms and guides
- GIS projects (Projections with Finance)
- More time creating SOPs so we can be more efficient and build a strong base. Spend more time in Parks.
- Dedicate more time to Cloud Permit during the winter/spring transition so that everything goes smoothly
- Land Use Apps & Commercial Review
- Building could spend more time working with Planning & Fire on code/ordinance updates

9

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

Opportunities

- Create better systems for the department and city to provide more time for impactful work for the city
 - Grant opportunities
 - Environmental projects – Goldleaf, waste reduction
 - Addressing Community Development needs through engagement opportunities
 - Small business programs – EDA
 - Recreational opportunities/initiatives – Parks
- Implementation of Cloud Permit across departments (Fire & Engineering)
- Fully transition to Cloud Permit for building, planning, and code enforcement which will lead to more efficient and defined processes
- Creating videos for undeveloped sites (a lot of time is spent having the same conversation with developers)
- City 180 Acres, Old Fire Stations (City Assets), Comp Plan Phasing (able to make revisions)

Building

- Adding staff
- Getting staff trained & certifications in Mechanical & Plumbing
- Getting open inspections in Permit Work cleared up and using Cloud Permit predominantly
- Creating a Level I (residential inspection certificate, limited) & Level II Building Inspector
- Adding Level I Inspector with only requiring a Limited Building Official License or Intern opportunity and applying for a MN Department of Labor Grant
- Implementing new State Building Codes
- State Certification to do State Projects (Schools, Hospitals, Medical Offices - John)

10

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

Challenges

- Create better systems for the department and city to provide more time for impactful work for the city
- Implementation of Cloud Permit across departments
- Communication among staff between across departments (building, planning, engineering, etc.) need stronger alignment of the team and vision
- Comp Plan Update (lots of staff time and \$), Phasing/Infrastructure Locations (complaints from developers), Water Appropriations with increasing development/demand

Building

- Hiring – other communities can offer more and/or competition
- Not enough of a pool of Certified Inspectors because of retirements
- Construction slow down due to material costs and interest rates
- Be involved in future plans to understand permit type and amounts to be better prepared to budget staff time

11

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Plans that guide our work

- Comp Plan - Projects
 - OP-PUD (2024)
 - Village Area Study (2024 & 2025)
 - Bike Trails
- Parks Master Plan – Developer requirements/payment in lieu

12

Finance



13

FINANCE

Where do we
spend our time
and resources?

Major Financial Management functions include

- Utility Billing
 - Accounts Payable
 - Accounts Receivable
 - Special Assessments
 - Escrow
- Payroll
- Budgeting
- Fixed Asset Management
- Long-Term Financial Planning
- Cash Management
 - Bonding
 - Bank Reconciliations
- Annual Audits
- Internal Customer Service

14

FINANCE

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- Resilience / Efficiency Planning - Process Improvements, Documentation, Cross-Training
- Long-Term Financial Planning / Better multi-year Budgeting
- Continued development of Fixed Asset database / CIP
- WAC/SAC/WCC/SCC fee study

15

FINANCE

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

- Opportunities
 - We're currently highly subsidized by development, which presents an opportunity to slowly grow our reserves while still maintaining a tax rate lower than most cities providing similar services.
 - Finance has strong staff members who can grow in their roles.
 - New Revenue Streams – Street Light Utility, Franchise Fees
 - CIP Prioritization-In conjunction with Engineering
 - Document long term financial strategies
- Challenges
 - Transitions create more work, so balancing current workload while also improving processes (implementing new software) will be difficult.
 - New Federal Policies may impact our costs, financial risks, interest rates, etc.
 - High Debt
 - Cybersecurity

16

FINANCE

Plans that guide
our work

- Continue maintaining Infrastructure CIP that supports the Comp Plan.
- Continued Long-Term Financial Planning

17

18

Fire Department



19

FIRE

Where do we
spend our time
and resources?

- Incident Response
- Development/Plan Review
- Commercial Inspections
- Training
- County / Regional partnerships
 - East Metro Public Safety Training Facility
 - Washington County Emergency Communications Response Center
 - Washington County Fire Chiefs Association
 - FIT, Secretary / Treasurer
 - Washington County Emergency Management Council
 - Ramsey County Firefighter Training Academy
- Project closeout / facility maintenance (Fire Chief)

20

FIRE

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- Emergency management – City / County / Community Events – Fire Chief
- Public education / Community risk reduction – All staff (Chiefs – planning)
- Long term / strategic planning - Chiefs
- Training – All Staff
 - Continue to evaluate and improve our training program.
 - Dive team, technical rescue, EV / Battery fires
 - Continue to advance our training and methods
- Staff development – Fire Chief
- Grant writing – Chiefs

21

FIRE

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

- Opportunities
 - Response Profile and City Coverage
 - Does our current coverage model provide effective response capability vs. projected and/or planned growth and development (south of 10th Street).
 - What are the markers the city and department use to explore a south station?
 - Would need to include law enforcement and EMS
- Challenges
 - Updated federal OSHA Standard
 - Increased demands on resources
 - Increasing costs
 - POC model allows for varying levels of staff experience and response capabilities
 - POC model requires a large amount of management and oversight – how many staff is feasible?

22

FIRE

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

- Staffing
 - Shift Staffing / shift minimums
 - Crew size: 4 firefighters on-duty (career and POC)
 - Shift minimum of 3 on-duty firefighters
 - Shift minimum of 2 career staff
 - Increased call volume / Overlapping Incidents
 - Crew size of 4 would allow for a split crew to manage minor incidents without the reliance on callback personnel.
 - Career Captain – 3 additional career positions.
 - Bring our total of career shift firefighters to 9.
 - Increase in calls / overlapping call
 - Population Growth
 - Responsible for administrative and operational functions pertaining to shifts at the direction of a chief officer and after typical business hours and on weekends. Improvement to the chain of command.
 - Designated city authority in the absence of a chief officer.
 - SAFER Grant
 - Explore the sharing other city administrative staff (billing clerk, deputy clerk, etc.) to assist with the increasing administrative functions of the department.
- Increased responsibilities in EMS care and coverage
- Increase in the frequency of complex incidents: structure fires, vehicle crashes and incidents in multi-story buildings

23

FIRE

Plans that guide our work

- 2019 FD Organization Audit
- NFPA Standards
- SOG's, SOP's

24

Public Safety-Washington County Sheriff



25

SHERIFF

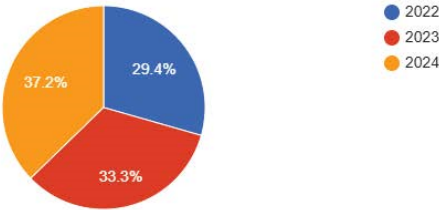
Where do we spend our time and resources?

- Our patrol deputies spend their time on responding to calls for service, traffic enforcement, investigating crimes, and community engagement. Below are the number of calls for service we have received in Lake Elmo over the past 3 years. As it shows the calls continue to rise each year.

Year	Count
2022	8329
2023	9436
2024	10542



Breakdown by Year

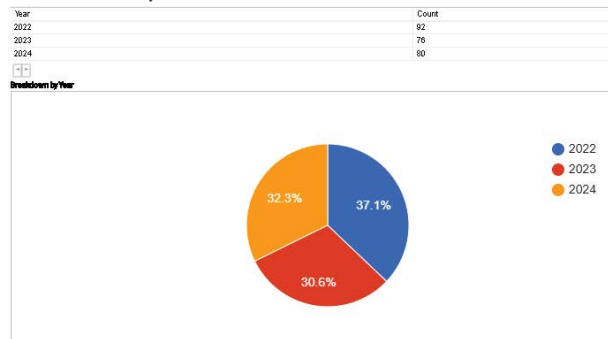


26

SHERIFF

Where do we spend our time and resources?

- Over the next 1-5 years the city will likely continue to grow with population and businesses. Our current calls for service have been increasing by approximately 1000 each year and I don't see that slowing down. I also anticipate our calls for service involving persons in crisis to continue to rise. There has been a trend of increasing needs from public safety and fire for persons in crisis.



27

SHERIFF

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- The sheriff's office is starting a community impact unit in January of 2025. This unit will address issues such as quality of life concerns and traffic issues. I hope to have our Lake Elmo contract deputies work closely with this unit to address these issues in the city of Lake Elmo.
- If we had more time deputies would have the ability to attend more trainings which could be beneficial to how they respond to, investigate, and approach issues in the city. They could also spend more time on specific issues in the city when it comes to quality of life or traffic related concerns.

28

SHERIFF

Opportunities or
challenges that
we see coming in
1-5 years

- The challenges I see for the future are recruiting and retentions of deputies and having the proper resources to deal with the rising demand for mental health services.

29

30

Engineering



31

ENGINEERING

Where do we
spend our time
and resources?

- Implementing private development infrastructure design, and construction oversight.
- Implementing CIP infrastructure projects: planning, design, and construction oversight.
- Tracking the status of private development projects and updating developers and city staff.
- Development Agreements, policies and processes.

32

ENGINEERING

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- More time is needed on master infrastructure planning. However, city guidance and policy updates are needed or confirmation of existing policies.
- A master sanitary sewer plan update is needed and confirmation of ultimate MUSA.
- A Transportation Plan update is needed. Access management plans are needed along key corridors.
- More time is needed to establish/confirm private development plan review and development agreement practices and policies (inter department collaboration is required).

33

ENGINEERING

What could we do if we had more time or resources?

- Comp Plan updates are an ideal opportunity to obtain council and community policy and guidance on growth and development, ultimate MUSA boundary.
- Comp Plan updates are an ideal opportunity to update master sewer plan and transportation plan.
- With more time/resources, the department heads could collaborate on the development review process improvement and city design standards.

34

ENGINEERING

Opportunities or challenges that we see coming in 1-5 years

- Sustainable drinking water supply from both a resource and regulatory perspective.
- Sanitary sewer capacity limitations for expanded MUSA boundaries and changes in land use.

35

ENGINEERING

Plans that guide our work

- Infrastructure system design and build-out is based on master infrastructure plans (Sanitary Sewer, Water System, Transportation, Surface/Storm Water) to support the overall Comp Plan. Updated plans and policies are needed due to changing City policies over the past decade that have not been comprehensively addressed.

36

Administration



37

ADMINISTRATION

Where do we
spend our time
and resources?

- City Administrator
 - Implementation of City Council vision and goals
 - Supervise and manage day to day operations of all city departments
- Human Resources
- City Clerk
 - Elections
 - City Council Administration
 - Licensing
- Technology
- Interdepartmental support

38

ADMINISTRATION

What could we do
if we had more
time or
resources?

- Internal process improvements
 - Agenda & packet creation
 - Online forms
 - Cross training opportunities
- Enhanced customer service
 - Virtual city hall-more online options (new website)
 - Increase digital records available to public (Laserfiche)
- Employee engagement
 - Workplace experience survey
 - Internal communications-Sharepoint site
 - Internal newsletter
 - Training
- External communications
 - Strategic Communications Plan
 - New website
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - Social Media
 - Comms support for all departments

39

ADMINISTRATION

Opportunities or
challenges that
we see coming in
1-5 years

- Recruitment and retention of staff
- Succession Planning
- Increased expectations for sustainability and climate action.
 - Recycling grant-more opportunities for waste reduction and recycling
- MN Paid leave law goes into effect in 2026
 - Additional cost to city
- Increased cybersecurity threats
 - Increased planning & training
- Aligning communication resources to support council goals
 - New Communications Coordinator in 2025

40

ADMINISTRATION

Plans that guide
our work

- City ordinances & Federal & State laws
- Administration Department Audit
- Class and Compensation study 2022
- City Strategic Plan



2025 Parks Commission Strategic Work Plan

The City of Lake Elmo Park Commission has affirmed their overall goals to be:

- 1) Ensure that our parks and trail system are constructed / maintained.
- 2) Provide an expansive system of parks, trails, and open space with recreational amenities that will attract more users to the parks and visitors to the city.
- 3) Create a safe and enjoyable environment in all our parks.
- 4) Serve as a reviewing body to make sure the “open space” character development is preserved in new developments.

With the broader priorities defined, the 2025 Park Commission Strategic Work Plan has been broken down into three segments: Project and Development; Maintenance & Refurbishing and other Park Initiatives.

- Priority Levels (PL) are determined on a 1-5 scale with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest. This will serve as a guide to what tasks serve as a higher priority to staff and work allocation.
- Status is also indicated in order to better manage goals and objectives.

Key

Status	C – Complete IP – In Progress
PL	Priority Level (1-5 with 1 being the highest priority)

Planning / Project and Development	PL	Status
Planning and Policy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington County Central Greenway Trail Plan - Assist Washington County when necessary for planning and funding opportunities 	1	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline options for additional Parking at Sun Fish Lake Park 	2	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional parking options for Pebble Park 	3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klies Park Playset Replacement 	2	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridge Park Playground Replacement 	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ried Park Parking Lot Reconstruction/ Expansion 	1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and Review Park Reservation Policy 	2	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline Park options at new Northstar Development Park - Explore trail connectivity options to Sunfish Lake Park 	2	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and Develop 2026 Lions Park updates: Playground/Courts 	4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide concept plan for Ridge Park 	2	
Maintenance & Refurbishing		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks Needs Assessment 	3	Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asphalt trail Maintenance - Inspections, crack filling and inspections 	3	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground and Park Inspections 	3	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove infected Ash Trees from City Parks 	4	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline future park recommendations following 2024 PMP 	2	
Additional Park Initiatives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a joint Parks Commission / City Council work session 	2	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Tree Planting 	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee efforts of buckthorn removal and Sally Manzara Nature Center 	4	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new Parks Page on city site 	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline options for park signage and wayfinding 	2	
Finance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Capital Improvement Plan 	1	Annual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Budget Updates as needed 	4	IP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline the need for a Parks Superintendent staffing following 2024 Parks Master Plan recommendation 	2	

2025 Planning Commission Work Plan

Reviewed by the Planning Commission: 11/13/2024

Joint Workshop Review: 2/11/25

Reviewed by the City Council: 2/18/2025



Key

Status	C – Complete IP – In Progress
PL	Priority Level (1-5 with 1 being the highest priority)

Project and Description	PL	Status
Code Amendments		
• Process the housekeeping amendments identified by City Staff in 2024.	2	
• Review MN Cannabis regulations and add zoning/licensing requirements	3	IP
• Review the Old Village Area Zoning and Future Land Use Maps in response to the Old Village Study Conducted in 2024	4	
Comprehensive Plan Amendments		
• Planning Commission complete their annual review of City Capital Improvement Plan for consistency with Comprehensive Plan.	2	
Other Planning Initiatives		
• Provide annual training to Planning Commission.	2	
• Hold annual joint Planning Commission City Council work session.	2	2/11/25
• Promote sustainability through the Gold Leaf, B3 and GreenSteps programs	4	
• Implement an interactive city map for residents	2	
Ongoing Planning Activities		
• Zoning Code Amendments – as amendments are requested.	1	
• Comprehensive Plan Amendments – as amendments are requested.	1	
• Zoning Map Amendments – as amendments are requested.	1	

2025 Lake Elmo EDA

Economic Development Work Plan



Lake Elmo EDA Mission

The Lake Elmo Economic Development Authority (EDA) is committed to preserving and enhancing our community by creating an attractive business climate and listening to businesses and residents to prepare for the economy of tomorrow.

Goals

1. Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction (BREA)
 - Prioritize retention of current businesses and create a favorable environment to attract new development
2. Collaboration and Partnership
 - Engage with regional organizations, Washington County, Chambers of commerce, etc.
3. Community Centered Development
 - Align development with community needs and encourage public participation
4. Sustainable Growth
 - Encourage responsible development that balances economic, environmental, and social factors

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide implementation of EDA action items and the assist Lake Elmo staff when making decisions.

Action Items

Project and Description	Deliverable/Action Item	Timeline
City Property Planning		
Assist City staff and City Council with marketing efforts for city owned properties:	Issue an RFP for Old Fire Station and Public Works Building including exploring brownfield grants for any environmental clean up necessary	1 st Quarter
	Create a plan to develop the City owned 180 acres to issue an RFP. Work with the Urban Land Institute and/or commercial real estate brokers and/or consultants. Consider funding a study on the area.	2 nd /3 rd Quarter
	Issue an RFP for the City owned 180 acres	4 th Quarter
Enhancing Lake Elmo's Communication Efforts for Economic Development		
Participate in City efforts to improve marketing materials. Continuing efforts to highlight local businesses.	Collaborating with new communications coordinator to make effective website/social updates	2 nd Quarter
	Adding content to The Fresh Newsletter	Year round
	Explore joining small business organizations (Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, etc.)	2 nd Quarter

2025 Lake Elmo EDA

Economic Development Work Plan



	Sharing business stories in Lake Elmo	Year round
Developing and Maintaining Relationships with Local Businesses		
Promote resources and tools for economic development to business partners and stakeholders	Keep materials and outreach materials updated. Previous examples in 2024 include Sign Guide, Community Development map and Community Development info on new projects	Year round
	Creating a city property viewer for zoning districts, shoreland classifications, etc.	Year round
	Compile a list of available resources for businesses - "Info to know for Small Businesses in LE" guide - Met Council guide (SAC and WAC)	Year round
	Engage with local chambers of commerce and business groups to distribute resources and promote workshops	Year round
Continuing investigation into 3M Priority 2 Grant Opportunity for Developing Solar on Landfill		
Submit letter of intent		1st Quarter/TBD

06

IMPLEMENTATION

This section will touch on the importance of establishing priorities for recommendation improvements, explore potential funding mechanisms and opportunities, and suggest a path to implementation moving forward. Public partners and local community groups - including residents, the local government, the school district, local businesses, developers, and other partnering agencies - must work together to fully realize the vision for Lake Elmo's parks, trails, and open space system.

SETTING PRIORITIES

Over the years, Lake Elmo has worked to align funding and mechanisms for land acquisition, facility additions and improvements, trail development, and operations and maintenance. Without a formal parks and recreation department in place, however, the city has been unable to develop an efficient process for prioritizing improvements and identifying potential funding resources. The city is in need of an adaptable and flexible framework to help guide the development, improvement, and projected maintenance of future park, trail, and open space assets.

The priorities in this plan are drawn from the improvement recommendations identified in the Chapter 5. They are organized into five key topic areas, including:

- **Parks**
- **Facilities**
- **Connectivity**
- **Open Space and Preserves**
- **Operations and Maintenance**

Many factors informed the prioritization of recommendations in this report, including community and stakeholder input, the availability of city resources (e.g., time, staff, funding, etc.), and alignment with past planning documents, among other factors. Depending on staff resources, funding, and need, some initiatives will be easier and faster to achieve, while others may warrant a long-term commitment to implement. This plan anticipates the cumulative improvements for the park and trail system will be completed in phases as funding is available and opportunities for public and private partners arise.

In the future, as city staff prepares to implement park and trail-related improvements, they should continue to keep residents involved/updated through social media outlets and the city website's "Park Notices" tab (Home > Departments > Parks > Park Notices).

The following pages include an implementation matrix which provides information about the improvement recommendations' priority levels and planning-level budget estimates. The general timelines for implementation for each priority level are as follows:

- **High Priority Level** = 1 - 3 years
- **Medium Priority Level** = 4 - 7 years
- **Low Priority Level** = 8+ years

Following the matrix is a compilation of funding resources for Lake Elmo to explore.

FIRST PRIORITY: PARKS DIRECTOR

As mentioned, Lake Elmo does not currently have a parks director to assist in the improvement and development of the city's park and trail system. **Adding this position is the most critical action the city can take toward improving their park and trail system as the future unfolds.** Without a dedicated parks director, the recommendations and implementation strategies discussed in this plan will be difficult to fulfill.

TABLE 6.1 | PRIORITY INITIATIVES & COST ESTIMATES

ACTIONS	PRIORITY LEVEL			COST RANGE	NOTES
	LOW	MED	HIGH		
PARKS					
INITIATIVE 1.1.1 Work to fill the park access gap in the southeast and north-central areas of the city when development occurs					
Accept the 5% land dedication in the rural north-central district of the city and develop a neighborhood park			●	\$400,000 to \$650,000	
Accept the 10% land dedication in the urban south eastern district of the city and develop a neighborhood park			●	\$500,000 to \$750,00	
INITIATIVE 1.2.2 Ensure every neighborhood park has a seating option, picnic table, bike rack, shade trees or structure, litter and recycling receptacle, and park identification sign					
Add seating to DeMontreville and Ridge Parks			●	\$1,500 to \$2,500	
Add picnic tables to Firefly, Kleis, and Ridge Parks			●	\$3,000 to \$4,500	
Add bike racks to DeMontreville, Hammes Park, Hidden Knoll Park, Firefly, Kleis, Pilot, Ridge, and Tana Ridge Park			●	\$8,000 to \$10,000	
Add shade trees (or a shade structure) to Ridge Park			●	\$800 to \$12,000	
Add park entry sign to Ridge Park			●	\$2,500 to \$3,200	
INITIATIVE 1.3.3 Explore the addition of a special use park in the form of a mini park in the Old Village					
Engage the community in a planning effort to study and identify potential park sites and opportunities in the Old Village			●	\$20,000 to \$30,000	
INITIATIVE 1.4.1 Combine Ivywood and Stonegate Parks and reclassify the combined park as a community park					
Develop a long-range plan for this new park, working with the community to evaluate the addition of off-street parking and additional recreational amenities			●	\$20,000 to \$35,000	

TABLE 6.1 CONT. | PRIORITY INITIATIVES

ACTIONS	PRIORITY LEVEL			COST RANGE	NOTES
	LOW	MED	HIGH		
INITIATIVE 1.4.3 Ensure every community park has a seating option, picnic table, bike rack, shade (trees or structure), trash and recycling receptacles, entry signage, informational kiosk, a drinking fountain, off-street parking, and shelter					
Add shelters to Reid and Tablyn Parks	●			\$140,000 to \$160,000	
Improve parking lot at Tablyn Park			●	\$70,000 to \$80,000	
Improve parking lot at Ridge Park		●		\$70,000 to \$80,000	
INITIATIVE 1.4.4 Develop Lions Park as Lake Elmo’s destination community park					
Develop a long-range plan for Lions Park that maximizes its functionality as a community gathering space			●	\$40,000 to \$50,000	
Renovate Lions Park - implement the long-range plan		●		\$650,000 to \$950,000	
INITIATIVE 1.5.1 Reclassify VFW Park from neighborhood to athletic park and support competitive and town ball play here					
Update parking lot (reorganize and pave)	●			\$80,000 to \$90,000	
Replace existing dugouts	●			\$35,000 to \$50,000	
INITIATIVE 1.5.2 Develop a new community athletic park to support baseball and softball (competitive and town ball for ages 9+)					
Complete a feasibility study to identify potential sites and high-level configurations and costs			●	\$18,000 to \$20,000	
Develop a long-range plan for this new park			●	\$18,000 to \$25,000	
Implement a new community athletic park		●		\$2,000,000 to \$5,500,000	Costs vary with level of development and acquisition prices

TABLE 6.1 CONT. | PRIORITY INITIATIVES

ACTIONS	PRIORITY LEVEL			COST RANGE	NOTES
	LOW	MED	HIGH		
FACILITIES					
INITIATIVE 2.1.1 Add special facilities to meet the needs of tweens, teens, and young adults (e.g., challenge-course facility, skate park, disc golf course, etc.)					
Add a challenge course facility at Reid or Pebble Park	●			\$250,000 to \$400,000	
Add a skate park at Tablyn or Ridge Park		●		\$150,000 to \$250,000	
Add a disc golf course at Ridge or Reid Park			●	\$25,000 to \$35,000	
Develop an outdoor fitness park at a community park		●		\$60,000 to \$70,000	
INITIATIVE 2.1.2 Provide additional court facilities in the SE area of the city					
Add an additional sand volleyball court, potentially in a future park		●		\$25,000 to \$35,000	
INITIATIVE 2.1.3 Provide additional field space in the SE area of the city					
Look to provide additional field space; engage with neighbors, clubs, and organizations to determine type and size of field (flex, lacrosse, football, soccer)			●	\$45,000 to \$60,000	Consider locating in a new Community Athletic Park
INITIATIVE 2.2.1 Provide a reservable shelter with potable water, electrical, and permanent restrooms					
Add a large shelter to Lions Park as part of future park renovation		●		\$400,000 to \$600,000	
INITIATIVE 2.2.3 Replace existing play features or add new features that are designed for a variety of age ranges					
Update playground at Pebble Park (community park)			●	\$120,000 to \$130,000	2024
Update playground at Demontreville Park (neighborhood park)			●	\$90,000 to \$100,000	2024
Update playground at Kleis Park (neighborhood park)			●	\$60,000 to \$70,000	2025
Update playground at Lions Park (destination community park)		●		\$230,000 to \$300,000	2026

TABLE 6.1 CONT. | PRIORITY INITIATIVES

ACTIONS	PRIORITY LEVEL			COST RANGE	NOTES
	LOW	MED	HIGH		
Update playground at Tablyn Park (community park)		●		\$120,000 to \$130,000	2026
Update playground at Ridge Park (neighborhood park)		●		\$90,000 to \$100,000	2026
Update playground at Stonegate Park (community park)		●		\$125,000 to \$135,000	2027
Update playground at Carriage Station Park (neighborhood park)	●			\$90,000 to \$100,000	2028
Update playground at Tana Ridge Park (neighborhood park)	●			\$90,000 to \$100,000	2030
Update playground at Hidden Knoll Park (neighborhood park)	●			\$90,000 to \$100,000	2032
Update playground at Reid Park (community park)	●			\$125,000 to \$135,000	2033
INITIATIVE 2.4.1 Add winter facilities and activities					
Add trail signage to support cross country skiing at DeMontreville Wildlife Park (natural area)			●	\$4,000 to \$6,000	
Add outdoor ice skating at a new park in the southeast part of the city	●			\$45,000 to \$200,000	Costs vary with level of development
INITIATIVE 2.6.1 Support the addition of a fishing pier in Sunfish Lake Park					
Add fishing pier at Sunfish Lake Park	●			\$150,000 to \$250,000	
CONNECTIVITY					
INITIATIVE 3.1.1 Address gaps identified in the Connectivity Recommendations + Search Corridors Map					
Central Greenway Regional Trail Development		●		\$500,000 to \$600,000	
Add trail along Manning, connecting Oak Land Middle School to Stillwater Blvd			●	\$1,000,000 to \$2,300,000	
Add trail on east side of Keats Avenue N		●		\$420,000 to \$600,000	
Address trail gap on 50th St N east of Lily Ave N			●	\$16,000 to \$30,000	
Add trail on south side of 43rd St N west of Lake Elmo Avenue			●	\$100,000 to \$225,000	
Add trail on south side of 50th Street N and 47th St N, west of Keats to Lily Ave N	●			\$625,000 to \$1,300,000	

TABLE 6.1 CONT. | PRIORITY INITIATIVES

ACTIONS	PRIORITY LEVEL			COST RANGE	NOTES
	LOW	MED	HIGH		
Add trail connection on south side of Julep Ave N to Tapestry Rd			●	\$150,000 to \$325,000	
Add trail on north side of 10th St. N from Manning to Inwood		●		\$1,200,000 to \$2,600,000	
OPEN SPACE + PRESERVES					
INITIATIVE 5.2.1 Develop a natural resource management plan for the open space preserves/natural areas			●		Work with volunteers currently engaged with this effort
INITIATIVE 5.3.4 Create and implement an invasive species management plan for the open space preserves/natural areas			●		Add a program manager to coordinate with volunteers currently engaged with this effort
INITIATIVE 5.4.1 Expand awareness of the open space preserves with mapping, wayfinding, and entry signage					
Update and/or add entry signs to the 6 open space preserves/natural areas	●			\$15,000 to \$20,000	
OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE					
INITIATIVE 7.3.1 Find opportunities to convert turf grass areas to more naturalized conditions					
Expand forested areas and/or establish micro forests		●		\$300 to \$500 / acre	
INITIATIVE 8.2.1 Create a dedicated Parks & Forestry department *					* FIRST PRIORITY
Hire a full time parks director			●	\$120,000 to \$165,000 / year	Estimate includes total compensation
Hire a full or part time forester			●	\$100,000 to \$150,000 / year	Estimate includes total compensation
INITIATIVE 4.2.1 Implement a snow removal plan for trails			●	\$50,000 to \$60,000 / year	Estimate varies based on approach (additional hire or contract service)
INITIATIVE 8.2.2 Add a program manager position to begin offering unique programming in parks and preserves		●		\$100,000 to \$150,000 / year	Estimate includes total compensation
TOTALS (excludes operations and maintenance costs)			●	\$2,719,000 to \$4,890,000 (high priority)	
		●		\$6,040,000 to \$11,950,000 (medium priority)	
	●			\$1,720,000 to \$2,885,000 (low priority)	

FUNDING RESOURCES

Securing additional funds to invest in Lake Elmo's park and recreation system is critical to future implementation and realizing Lake Elmo's vision for 2040. The city should explore and consider the following sources, mechanisms, and partners.

TABLE 6.3 | FUNDING RESOURCES

FUNDING		
OPTION	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
General Funds	A city's general fund is the main operating account that covers basic operating costs such as planning, police and fire services, and street and park maintenance	Money collected by the city in taxes, fines, fees, and revenues
Dedicated Tax Levy	City's can hold a referendum to levy a dedicated tax for a specific purpose. In the case of parks and recreation, the tax can fund operations, maintenance, and capital improvement projects	Property taxes
Bonding	Borrowing obligations that incur interest and require repayment at a specific date. These are typically issued to pay for larger capital projects	Annual appropriation bonds, tax abatement bonds, and revenue bonds
Local Option Sales Tax	Minnesota Statute gives cities the authority to levy a local sales tax by an election process for specific capital improvements	Sales tax addition
State Aid	Funds available to pedestrian and bicycle improvements on state aid roadways (key county highways), most beneficial during construction or reconstruction projects	State of Minnesota
Park and Trail Dedication	Land or cash in-lieu of land from new subdivision developments that must be used for new equipment or park facilities	Developers
Partnerships	Partnerships with private and/or other public entities can be in many forms, including funding, design, operations and maintenance agreements, etc.	Public or private organizations, clubs, agencies, governments, etc.
Donations	Gifts of cash, equipment, labor or others from private individuals or groups	Individuals, businesses, groups, etc..

TABLE 6.3 CONT. | FUNDING RESOURCES

FUNDING		
GRANT	DESCRIPTION OF GRANT	AGENCY
AARP Community Challenge Grant	Small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages	AARP
America Walks Community Change Grants	Awards stipends to communities for projects related to creating healthy, active, and engaged places to live, work, and play	Foundation
American Trails Trail Fund	Assists the trails community with funding to support maintenance, research, and stewardship training needs	Foundation
Bridge Investment Program	Provides funding for communities to replace, rehabilitate, and preserve bridge infrastructure	U.S. Department of Transportation
Invasive Species Eradication Funding Opportunity	Provides funding for projects that seek to eradicate invasive species (part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)	U.S. Department of the Interior/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Clean Water Funding	Provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while providing low-cost labor to eligible applicants	Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)
Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant	Provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program	Provides funding to restore, protect, or enhance prairies, wetlands, forests, or habitat for fish, game or wildlife in Minnesota	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund	Aims to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources	Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)
Federal Recreation Trail Program	Provides funding to encourage the maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Fields for Kids	Provides financial support to improve baseball and/or softball facilities for youth in the Upper Midwest and Southwest Florida	Minnesota Twins Community Fund
Fishing Pier and Shore Fishing Area Program	Joint Power Agreement with the DNR for installation, operations and maintenance	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)

TABLE 6.3 CONT. | FUNDING RESOURCES

GRANT NAME	DESCRIPTION OF GRANT	AGENCY
Local Trail Connections Program	Provides funding to promote short trail connections between where people live and significant public resources	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Minnesota Festival Support Grant Program	Provides arts experiences through festivals celebrating arts, building community, and exposure to diverse art forms	Other - Minnesota
Natural and Scenic Area Grants	Provides funding to increase, protect, and enhance natural and scenic areas	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
No Child Left Inside	Aims to support and increase efforts to expand programming that connects youth to the outdoors	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Our Town Grant Program	Supports projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes	National Endowment for the Arts
Outdoor Recreation Grant Program	Provides funding to increase and enhance outdoor recreation facilities in local and community parks throughout the state	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
Parks and Trail Legacy Grant Program	Provides funding for parks and trails of regional significance outside of the seven county metropolitan area	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program	Provides funding that supports bicycle infrastructure projects and targeted advocacy initiatives that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to ride	Other - Minnesota
The Rapid Response Fund	Provides financial resources to assess and support response actions for quick containment or eradication of newly detected species	National Park Service
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	Supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation	National Park Service
Rural Initiative Grant Fund Program	Provides funding to encourage collective and involved endeavors among citizens in rural communities	Foundation
Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grants/Safe Routes to School Planning Assistance Grants	Provides funding for the development and implementation of infrastructure projects which enable students to walk and bicycle to and from schools	Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT)
State Park Road Account Program	Provides funding to assist local governments in improving access to public recreation facilities	Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT)

FIGURE 3.8 | NEIGHBORHOOD PARK GAP MAP

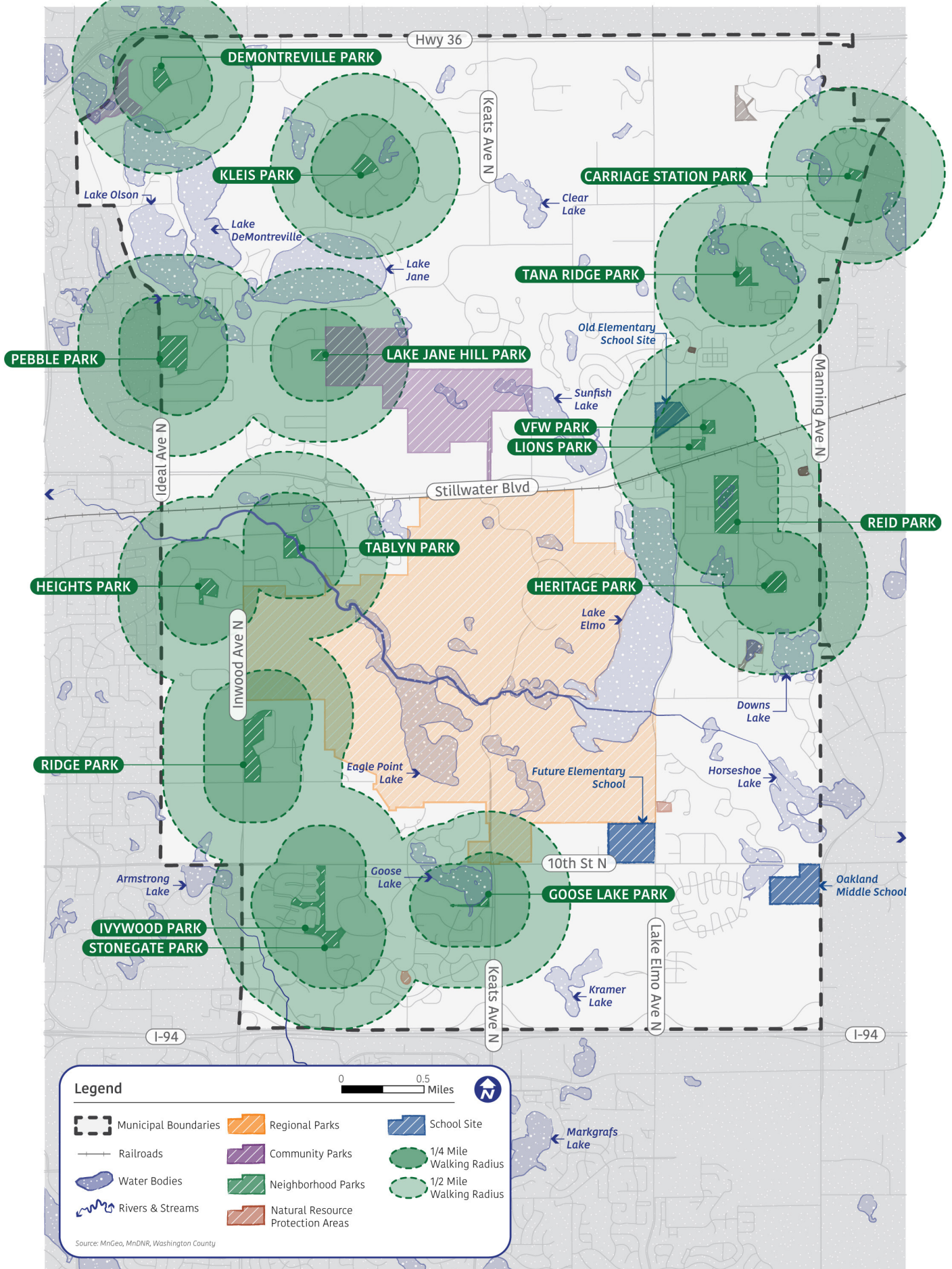


FIGURE 3.9 | COMMUNITY PARK GAP MAP

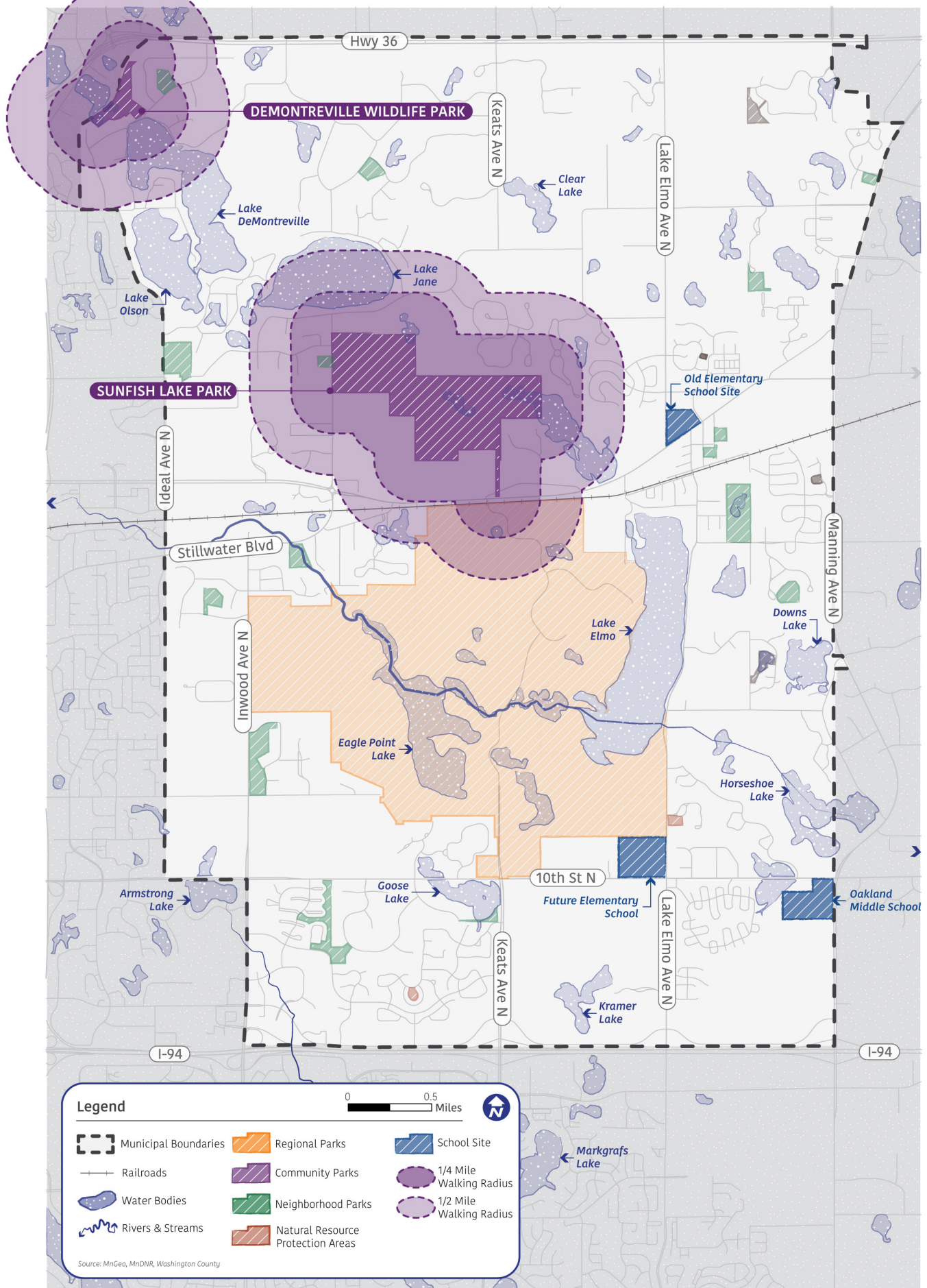


FIGURE 3.10 | REGIONAL PARK ACCESS MAP

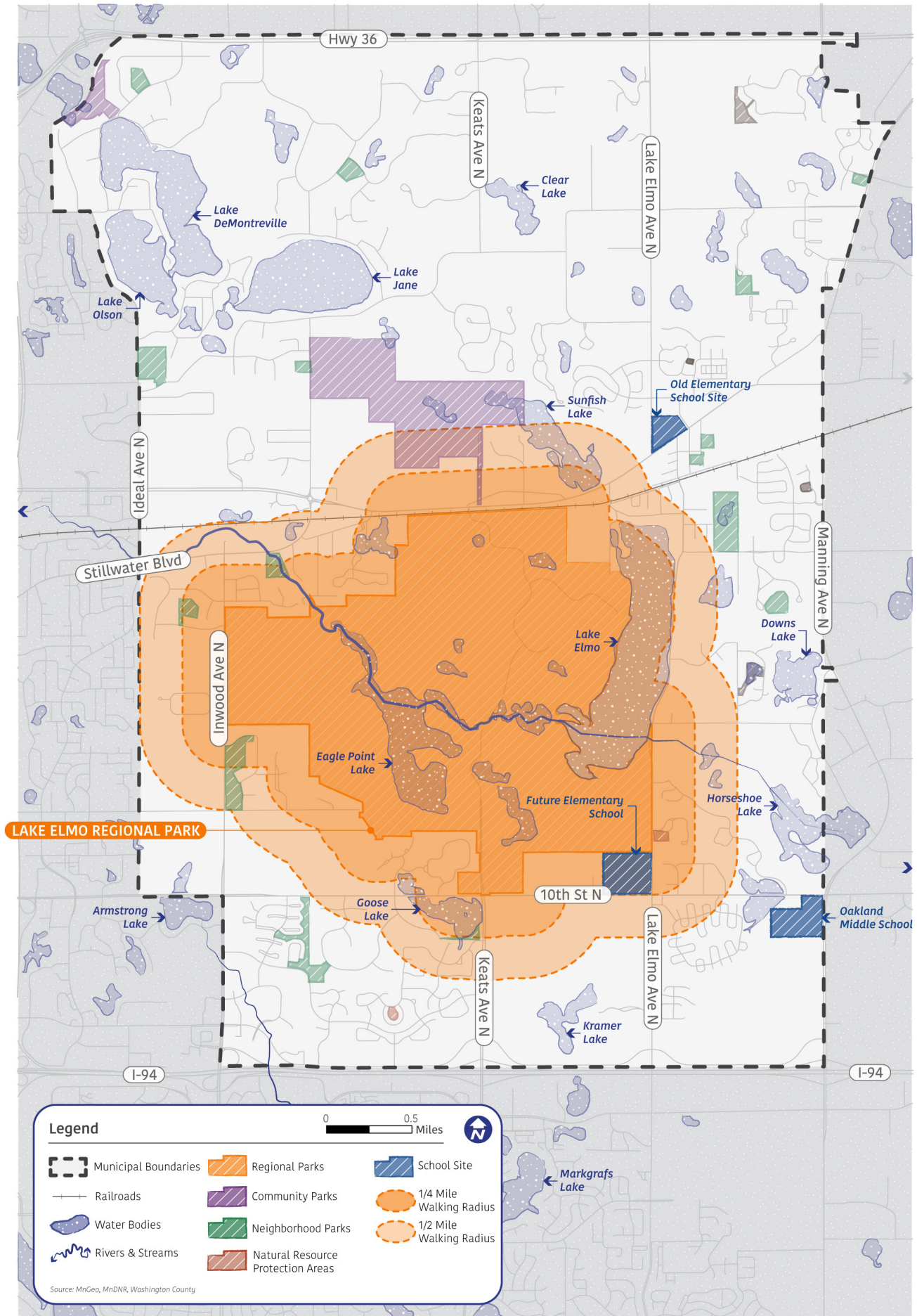


FIGURE 3.11 | NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA GAP MAP

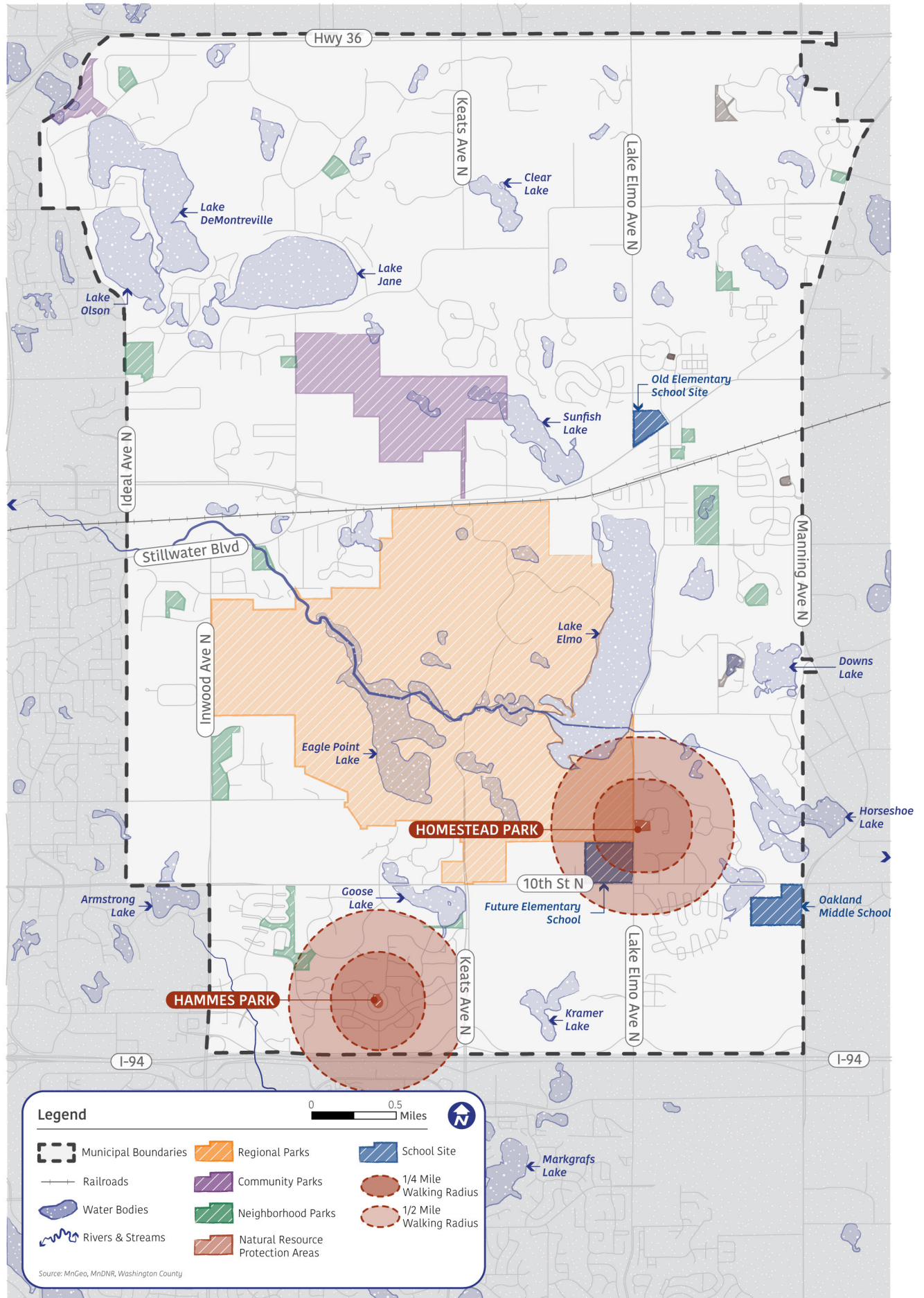


FIGURE 3.12 | PLAYGROUND GAP MAP

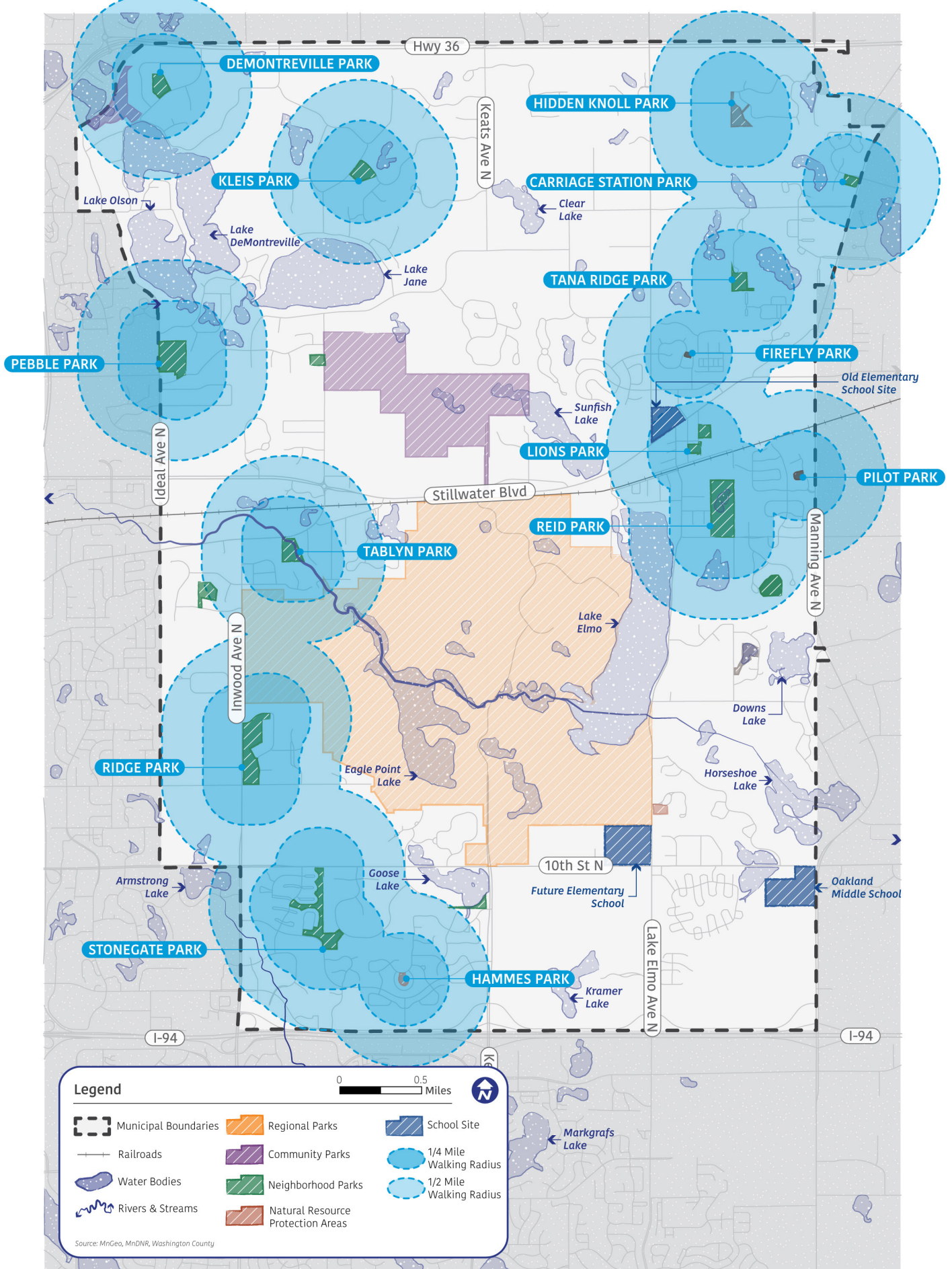
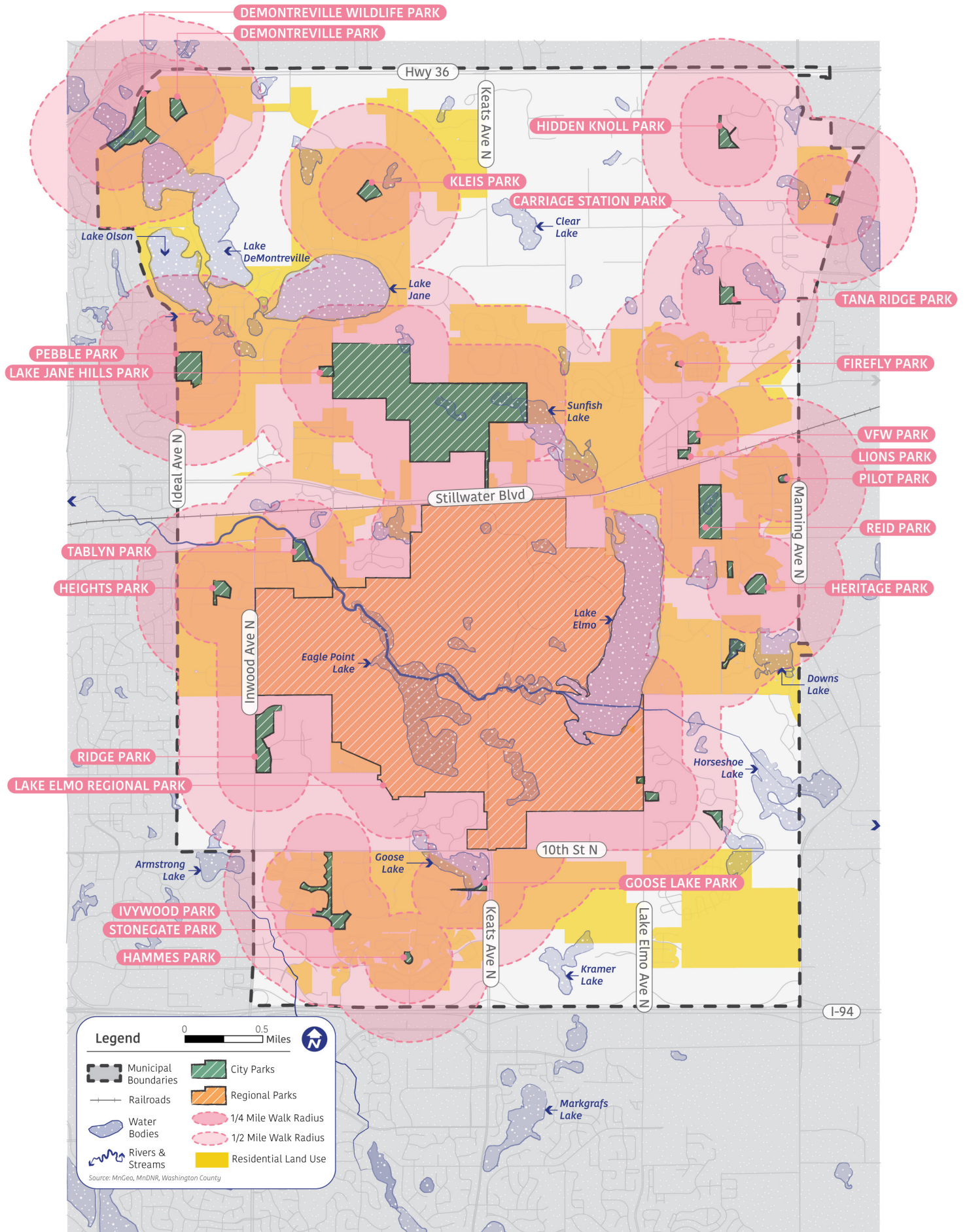


FIGURE 3.13 | ALL PARK DISTRIBUTION AND GAP ANALYSIS MAP





MEMORANDUM

Date: 8/14/2024

To: City Council, City of Lake Elmo

From: Nathan Fuerst, Consulting Planner

Subject: Village Area Vision – Workshop Discussion

Overview

In recognition of the significance of the Old Village area to Lake Elmo's economic vitality and overall identity, the City of Lake Elmo initiated a visioning study to ensure future development aligns with the City's objectives.

This discussion with the Council is a final step to the visioning process. Bolton and Menk staff will walk the Lake Elmo City Council through the following:

- Overview of the Project
- Summary of Public Engagement Efforts and Findings
- Summary of Policy Recommendations

Public Engagement to Date:

Public engagement creates an opportunity to understand viewpoints of community members and eventually serves as an important data point when making policy decisions. In June, project staff conducted public engagement efforts including a survey and two public open house events at City Hall. The draft Final Report appended to this memo includes an assessment of the quantitative and qualitative findings from the public engagement effort.

Policy Review to Date:

Staff reviewed applicable plans and policies guiding land use and development in Lake Elmo's Village Area. The previous Policy Review Memo is incorporated into the Final Report report. Recommendations in the last section of the report consider public feedback and the policy review.

Next Steps:

We will finalize the draft document for the city. It will be up to the Council and city staff to initiate any of the recommended policy changes an action item prior to, or after, rescinding the Moratorium.



City of Lake Elmo

Lake Elmo Village Vision Study

Report of Findings

August 2024

Submitted by:



Real People. Real Solutions.

Table of Contents

Village Vision Executive Summary	3
Public Engagement Review summary	3
Policy Review summary	3
Policy Recommendation summary	4
Public Engagement Review	5
Summary of Engagement Findings	5
Policy Review	7
Overview, Policies, and the Village Area.....	7
Zoning Ordinance	8
Lake Elmo Comprehensive Plan	11
Lake Elmo Design Guidelines	15
2007 Lake Elmo Village Area Master Plan.....	16
2021 Village Area AUAR	18
2013 Lake Elmo Branding and Theming Study.....	19
Heritage Preservation Commission.....	20
Policy Recommendations	21
Appendix	24
Appendix A – Open House and Survey Findings	
Appendix B – Open House Engagement Materials	
Appendix C – Full Survey Response Report	

Acknowledgements

The following Lake Elmo City Staff are thanked for their contributions to the Lake Elmo Village Vision Study, and to this report:

Ashley Monterusso, City Planner

Jason Stopa, Community Development Director

Sophia Jensen, City Planner

VILLAGE VISION STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Early in 2024, The City of Lake Elmo identified the need to enact a moratorium for development of the central corridors of the Old Village area. The intent of the moratorium was to pause new development while the city reviewed the plans and requirements for area development and redevelopment in the area.

In recognition of the significance of the Old Village area to Lake Elmo's economic and community identity, the City initiated a visioning study to ensure that future development aligns with the City's objectives. The moratorium period was used to solicit community feedback and to study the land use policies and guidance in the Village area. Through engagement with community members and local decision makers, the City intends to affirm existing policies that align with development expectations, and highlight policies that are not aligned. The intent of this Vision Study is therefore to identify recommendations for studies or policy changes needed to support the City in achieving its shared vision for the Old Village area.

Public Engagement Summary

Community Engagement provides a critical data point from which to make informed decisions about changes to the City's existing policies. The project team, consisting of City and Bolton & Menk staff, facilitated three engagement opportunities for residents, businesses owners, and area stakeholders to learn about and contribute to the Village Vision Study. A survey with over 20 questions was advertised widely in the community and made available to residents online and in paper formats. Sentiments from community members are broken down at length in the next section of this report, but are generalized as follows:

- Concern about connectivity and safety for those who walk and bike to and through the Village Area.
- Appreciation of the Village area's historic charm and small-town feel, and a desire for preservation of what makes the area special.
- Desire to support businesses and residents with new commercial and residential development that is complementary to the existing Village area.

Policy Review Summary

To understand what policy changes may be needed, a review of the existing policies guiding Village Area development was necessary. A review of the City's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, along with other planning documents or policies has provided an overview of how Lake Elmo regulates land use and development. Any approach to recommendations must consider the interconnected nature of these

plans and policies. A policy review along with considerations for future improvements were provided for the following:

- Zoning Code
- Comprehensive Plan
- Lake Elmo Design Guidelines
- 2007 Village Area Master Plan
- 2021 Village Area AUAR
- 2013 Lake Elmo Branding and Theming Study
- Lake Elmo Heritage Preservation Commission

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations for further action are suggested by this report. They are broken down into short term and long-term categories in order to identify what can reasonably be accomplished before (short term) and after (long term) the City's moratorium is rescinded or expires:

OLD VILLAGE AREA POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS		
TERM	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY
Short Term (0-1 year)		
<u>Review Land Uses already permitted in the V-MX</u>	Review permitted and conditional land uses in Section 105.12.780, Table 11-1, particularly for the Village Mixed Use zoning district.	High
<u>Review Lot Dimensions and Building Bulk Requirements</u>	Assess whether bulk standards required under the zoning ordinance are in alignment with the City's Design Standard Manual.	Medium
<u>Define the Village Area</u>	Create one definition of the Village Area and create subdistricts for smaller areas within.	Low
Long Term (1+ years)		
<u>Re-evaluate Future Land Use Areas</u>	Review the Future Land Use Categories used in the Village area against the mix of land uses desired by the community.	High
<u>Re-evaluate Zoning Guidance in the Old Village</u>	Review the zoning guidance in the Old Village area to create a more uniform and understandable approach to zoning.	High
<u>Infrastructure Review and Corridor Planning</u>	Identify the areas of concern for the City relating to long term improvements and infrastructure connections in the Village Area.	Medium
<u>Evaluate Plan Review Guidelines</u>	Determine the effectiveness of existing guidelines for development and redevelopment within the Village Area.	Low
<u>Visioning for the MUSA & Village Area</u>	Citywide level visioning exercises should take place to better understand how future Sewer extensions could impact the capacity of the Village Area for future growth.	Low

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

The City of Lake Elmo's Village Vision Study was designed to hear, organize, and elevate the voices and needs of community members and stakeholders. Community engagement ensures that land use policies and development will better align with the shared values and goals of Lake Elmo's residents and business community. When coalesced around a vision, the community can create a vibrant and cohesive Village Area. The City hosted several community engagement events and set up digital platforms to in a collaborative effort to inform the study. These include the following:

- Business Owner and Developer Open House
- Table at the Lake Elmo Dog Park Grand Opening
- Public Open House
- Comprehensive Digital and Paper Survey

In an effort to communicate to the community about the online survey and engagement events, the project team created a one page flyer and post card. The flyer was distributed to homeowners' associations (HOAs) serving residents in the Village Area. Post cards were mailed directly to residents and property owners in the village area not served by an HOA. The City used its website to provide information on the project and used its social media platforms and newsletters to inform the community about engagement opportunities.

This inclusive approach has resulted in a multifaceted understanding of the community's aspirations and concerns. The findings from these efforts, which will be detailed below, are instrumental in crafting recommendations for future policy changes and development guidelines within the Village area.

Summary of Engagement Findings

The comprehensive online survey and the three in-person engagement events were essential in identifying the values and preferences of residents to inform recommendations for the Village area. Key findings include the following:

CONNECTIVITY

- About 50% of respondents visit the Village daily. About 50% of all respondents use cars to travel to the Village when they do visit, because driving is the easiest way to get there.
- Improving walkability of the Village can improve revenues for existing businesses and attract new ones.
- The Old Village's central location is one of its key strengths; however, road safety concerns are a key weakness.
- Traffic speeds on Stillwater Boulevard and Lake Elmo Avenue are a concern.
- New bike/ped crossings are desired at:
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and 41st St N
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and 39th St N
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and Stillwater Blvd
 - Laverne Ave N and Stillwater Blvd
- Safer bicycle facilities are desired on Stillwater Blvd
- Future bike/ped facility connection recommendations:

- Facilities at Upper 33rd St N to 34th St (Easton Village) over the railroad private road.
- Facilities at 33rd St N to Stillwater Blvd

DEVELOPMENT

- Development should align with capital improvement plans (new road/parkway construction).
- Residents want a variety and diversification of new businesses and commercial use types allowed in new projects.
- Old Village Area residents desire development that is consistent with the area but are reluctant to support design standards for single family residential properties.

PREFERRED HOUSING TYPES

- For Single-Family Houses, residents prefer houses where the garages were side- or rear-loaded .
- For Townhouses, residents prefer classic, walk-in townhouses with garages that are rear-loaded.
- For Small-/Mid-sized Apartments, residents prefer three-story apartment buildings with more vibrant exterior materials with architectural interest.
- For Mid-/Large-sized Apartments, residents prefer modern four-story apartment with a smaller ground floor area than larger alternatives.

PREFERRED LAND USES

- Respondents prefer Single-Family attached (Townhouses) and Single-Family Detached houses for residential uses in the Village area.
- Outdoor recreation, parks, and open space are widely preferred. Communications facilities and religious institutions were least preferred by respondents in this category.
- A clear majority of respondents want sit-down “standard restaurants” and other places for “drinking and entertainment” in the village, but not locations with drive-throughs.
- Respondents would like to see most types of mercantile uses in the Village, except for shopping centers (malls or strip malls).
- More than half of respondents said they would like to see automobile maintenance services (auto repair garages) and gas stations.
- Overwhelmingly, however, nearly all respondents reported a preference not to see auto sales and storage lots in the Village area.

PLACEMAKING

- Small town character and quaint, charming aesthetics are key strengths of downtown.
- For the former Fire Hall and Parks Building site, residents would like to see some adaptive reuse that might include any or a combination of the following:
 - Eating & Drinking establishments
 - Community center
 - Family friendly establishments
 - Housing, including mixed use
 - Green spaces and parks
 - Recreational uses
 - Retail

POLICY REVIEW

Overview

This review is intended to summarize existing policies or plans that guide development and redevelopment in the Village Area. Considerations are provided that address the stated goals of the City and how these policies can better work together towards that vision.

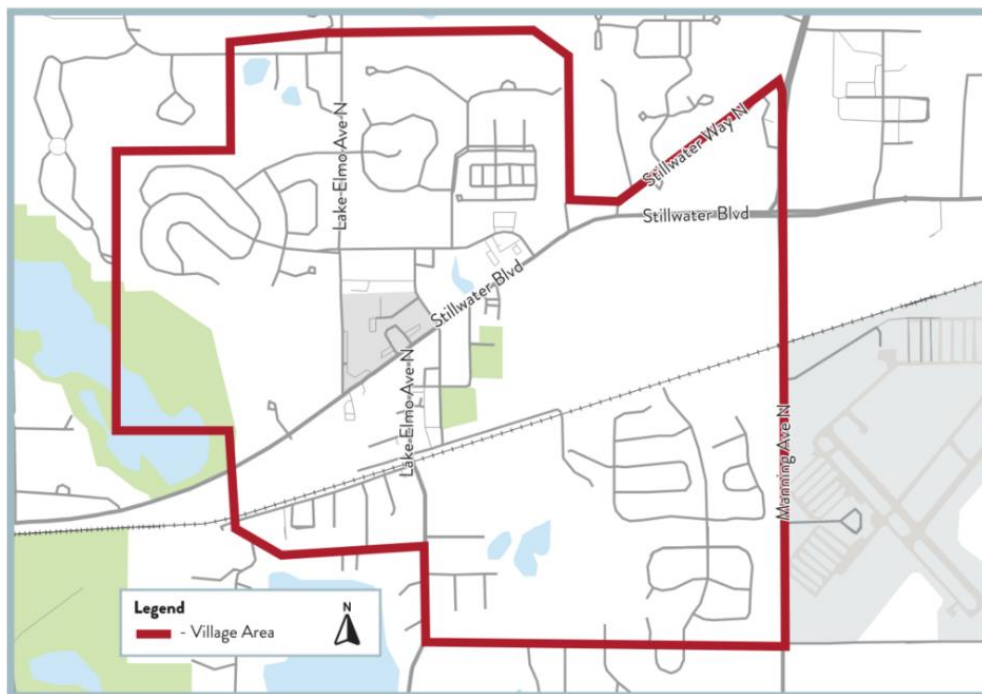
Village Area Policies

This section of the report summarizes the following:

1. Zoning Code
2. Comprehensive Plan
3. Lake Elmo Design Guidelines
4. 2007 Village Area Master Plan
5. 2021 Village Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR)
6. 2013 Lake Elmo Branding/Theming Study
7. Heritage Preservation Commission

The Village Area

The “Village Area” is delineated by different boundaries depending on which City policy document one might be reviewing. For the purpose of this policy review, the area in the image to the right generally defines the Village Area.



The Zoning Code

Purpose: To provide zoning regulations and be a tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and other guiding documents.

Regulatory Impact: Zoning ordinances are laws created and passed by the City to regulate land uses and development within the City's boundaries. Minnesota Cities are granted authority by State Statute and federal case law to control land use through zoning. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the specific land uses as well as lot provisions such as lot area, setbacks, and lot coverage. The ordinance also addresses site elements such as building design and materials, landscaping and screening, parking, and signage.

Zoning and the Village Area: The Zoning Code calls for 4 different Village land uses:

- V-LDR is low density residential 1.5 – 3.0 u/acre, meant for perimeter and buffer to adjacent low density uses
- V-MDR is medium density residential 3.01-8.0 u/acre, meant to bring people closer to Old Village amenities
- V-HDR is high density residential 8.01 u/acre -12 u/acre, meant to bring higher density and life cycle housing choose to Old Village Area. Non-residential uses on 1st floor.
- VMX is mixed use with commercial and public uses combined with higher density residential, 5-10 u/a, senior up to 16 u/acre, meant to establish vitality and intensity to support retail and service uses in the Old Village. Placement of buildings and pedestrian amenities are essential.

In addition, there is a significant amount of other zoning districts in the Village area:

- RS- Rural Single Family, are only for lots patted prior to 2005. No new lots can be created. The district allows for single family residential, parks and a variety of accessory uses.
- PF- Public Facilities are for parcels with parks, schools, or public facilities (city Hall and Fire Station sites).
- LDR- Low Density Residential is considered typical single family zoning district with city sewer and water. A large portion of the village area contains this land use.
- Commercial and Convenience Commercial and Medium Density Residential are in the NE corner of the area, just north of Stillwater Blvd which is currently the Holiday gas station and future Bridgewater Village commercial and medium density residential development.

The uses for the residential districts are straightforward, however the allowed or conditionally allowed uses of the Mixed-Use Village district may permit for undesirable uses. The district allows the following type of uses:

- Residential
- Public and Civic
- Commercial and Personal Service
- Food Service
- Retail Sales
- Auto type uses
- Recreation Uses

Most uses are conditional, including residential, while personal and business service type uses are permitted. Most accessory uses are also permitted. Several of the uses could have an outdoor component such as outdoor recreation, drive-up, or outdoor sales and storage lots.

The Zoning Ordinance does reference the Village Districts and has the following emphasis:

- Reference to the Design Guidelines
- Circulation and limited access on CSAH 14
- Screening of existing residential structures
- Sidewalk and trail connections, esp. from cul-de-sacs to nearest through streets
- Theming Study (2013) to be incorporated.

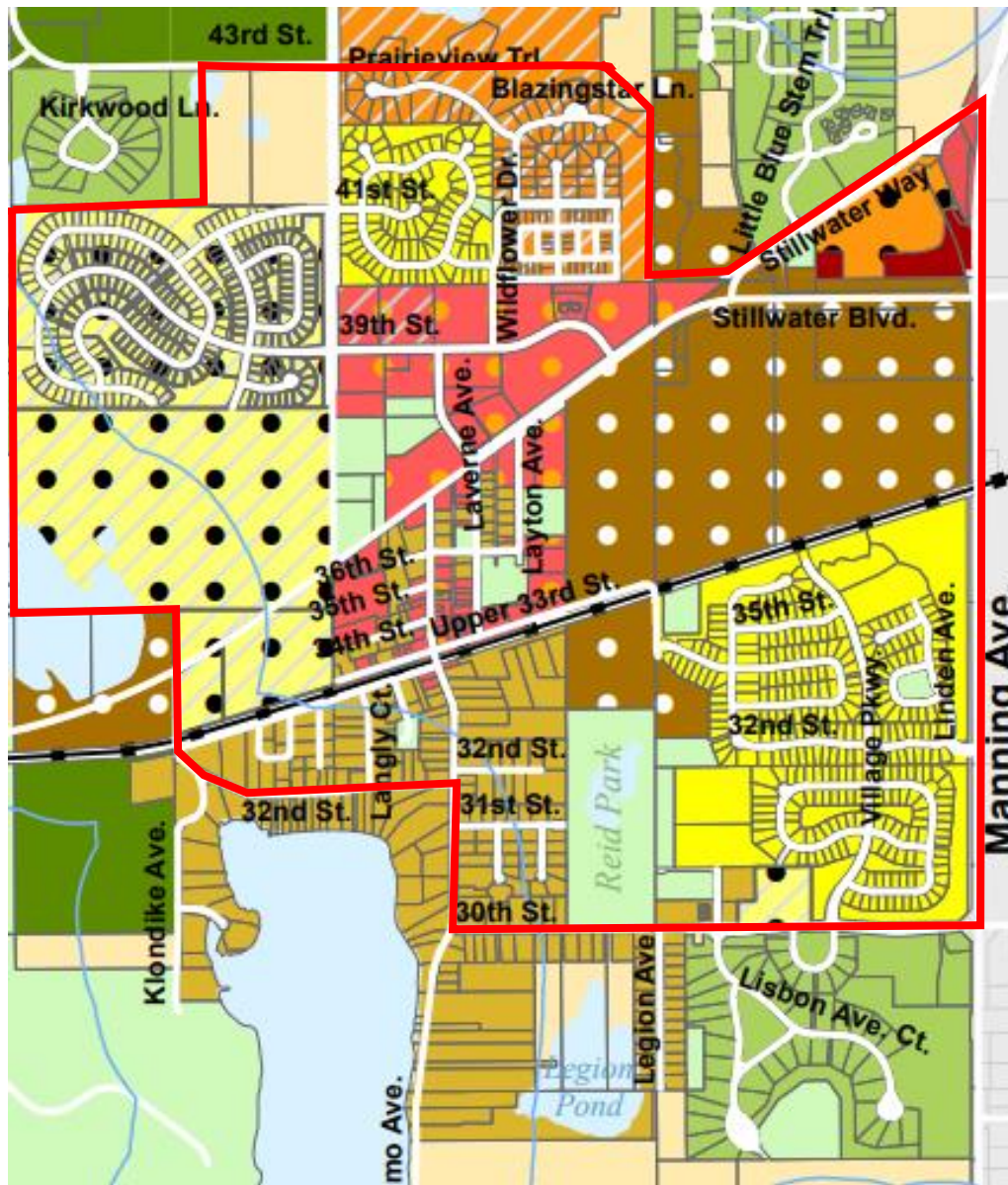
Other Zoning Considerations:

- The Shoreland Overlay covers approximately the westerly 1,000 feet of the area and is all zoned residential. Limits on development and impervious surface are a consideration.
- The Airport Overlay covers a the eastern part of the area. The airport is on the east side of Manning, outside the city limits. The overlay zoning and impacts are on the west side of Manning Avenue within the city limits. There are noise considerations and height limits in this area.

Considerations:

- Consolidating districts in the village area may streamline the zoning review process and could reduce confusion about land uses or performance standards in the Village Area.
- ADU's and mixed uses could be permitted where Rural Single Family is now the zoning district. Existing housing and uses could continue to be preserved.
- Consider defining the Village Area within the City Code or adopting a zoning map with that area delineated.
- The City would benefit from more review or discussion in the following areas:
 - Land uses permitted or conditionally permitted in the Village Area
 - Review and consideration of whether additional uses should be permitted
 - Understand existing performance standards in the districts affecting the Village area, and how they relate to the City's vision, comprehensive plan goals, or adopted Design Standards Manual
 - Determine if the Theming Study remains relevant or should be removed from the code

Lake Elmo Zoning Map – Village Area



Zoning Districts		
LDR - Low Density Residential	LC - Limited Commercial	A - Agricultural
MDR - Medium Density Residential	C - Commercial	PF - Public Facilities
HDR - High Density Residential	CC - Convenience Commercial	Water Body
R2 - One & Two-Family Residential	BP - Business Park	Closed Landfill
RS - Rural Single Family	MU-BP - Mixed-Use Business Park	Browns Creek
RE - Residential Estate	MU-C - Mixed-Use Commercial	South Washington
RR - Rural Residential	V-MX - Village Mixed Use	Valley Branch
RT - Rural Transitional	V-LDR - Village Low Density Residential	Shoreland Overlay District
OP - Open Space	V-MDR - Village Medium Density Residential	Hatching Represents Planned Unit Developments (PUD)
GCC - Golf Course Community	V-HDR - Village High Density Residential	

Lake Elmo Comprehensive Plan

Purpose: This document provides long-term guidance on land uses to ensure the efficient provision of public infrastructure in the City. In the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, municipalities are required to adopt comprehensive use plans every decade which guide development of land and public infrastructure. Metro area comprehensive plans must contain specific elements including land use, housing, transportation, water management, parks, etc. The planning horizon for Lake Elmo's 2040 Comprehensive Plan (hereafter the "2040 Plan") is from 2020 to 2040. The 2040 Plan was approved and adopted in November of 2019 after a considerable planning and community engagement process.

Regulatory Impact: The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is a legal document which, as required by state statute, is the guiding document for all development in Lake Elmo. Any development or redevelopment must comply with the Comp Plan. The City's zoning requirements must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Chapter.

Comp Plan and the Village Area: This review is broken down by certain elements of the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

Future Land Uses (Chapter 3) - Future Land Uses (see map on page 7) allowed in the Village Area include:

- Rural Single Family Sewered (0.1-2.0 du/acre) – previously unsewered but currently single-family land uses located within the Village Planning Area.
- Village Low Density Residential (1.5 – 3 du/acre) – single-family detached housing development
- Village Medium Density Residential (3.01 – 8 du/acre) – single-family detached, duplexes, and townhomes/villa housing types.
- Village High Density Residential (8.01 – 12 du/acre) – apartment buildings and multi-family dwellings.
- Village Mixed Use (5 – 10 du/acre) – Integrated commercial/business and residential uses provide development types that benefit from proximity to each other.
- Commercial – retail and service businesses primarily located in the MUSA. This excludes residential and industrial uses.
- Institutional - Schools, religious institutions, City hall, municipal buildings, libraries, and other institutional uses
- Public/Semi-Public - generally owned by the City or other agency, whose primary purpose is to support adjacent developments with stormwater management and other utilities.

MUSA Staging (Chapter 3) – The Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) boundary provides an indication of where sewer development can occur. This is broken down into phases by decade. Only two areas of the Village are in MUSA staging areas beyond the current decade. One area is the remaining Schiltgen farmstead parcel south of North Star, the other is just north of Easton Village. Those areas would require a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to develop sooner than 2035. (See Map on page 8)

Subdistricts (Chapters 2 & 3) – Chapter 3 of the 2040 Plan created the following subdistricts for the Village area:

- Civic District – area north of Stillwater Boulevard N.

- Old Village District – core of old village area centered around Lake Elmo Ave N.
- Elmo Station District – area East of Layton Ave N. and containing primarily undeveloped land.

There is no narrative in the 2040 Plan to provide a description of the subdistricts, but goals are articulated in Chapter 2, which envision the creation of specific zoning overlays to support or require certain types of development in each area. Land Use Goals 4 – 6 discuss the subdistricts.

Parks and Trails (Chapter 6) – The 2040 Plan contains guidance for the development of park and recreation facilities in the City.

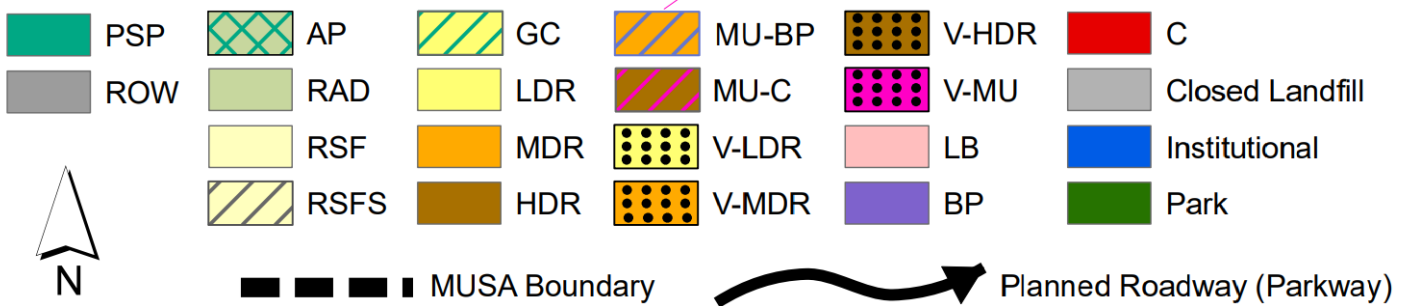
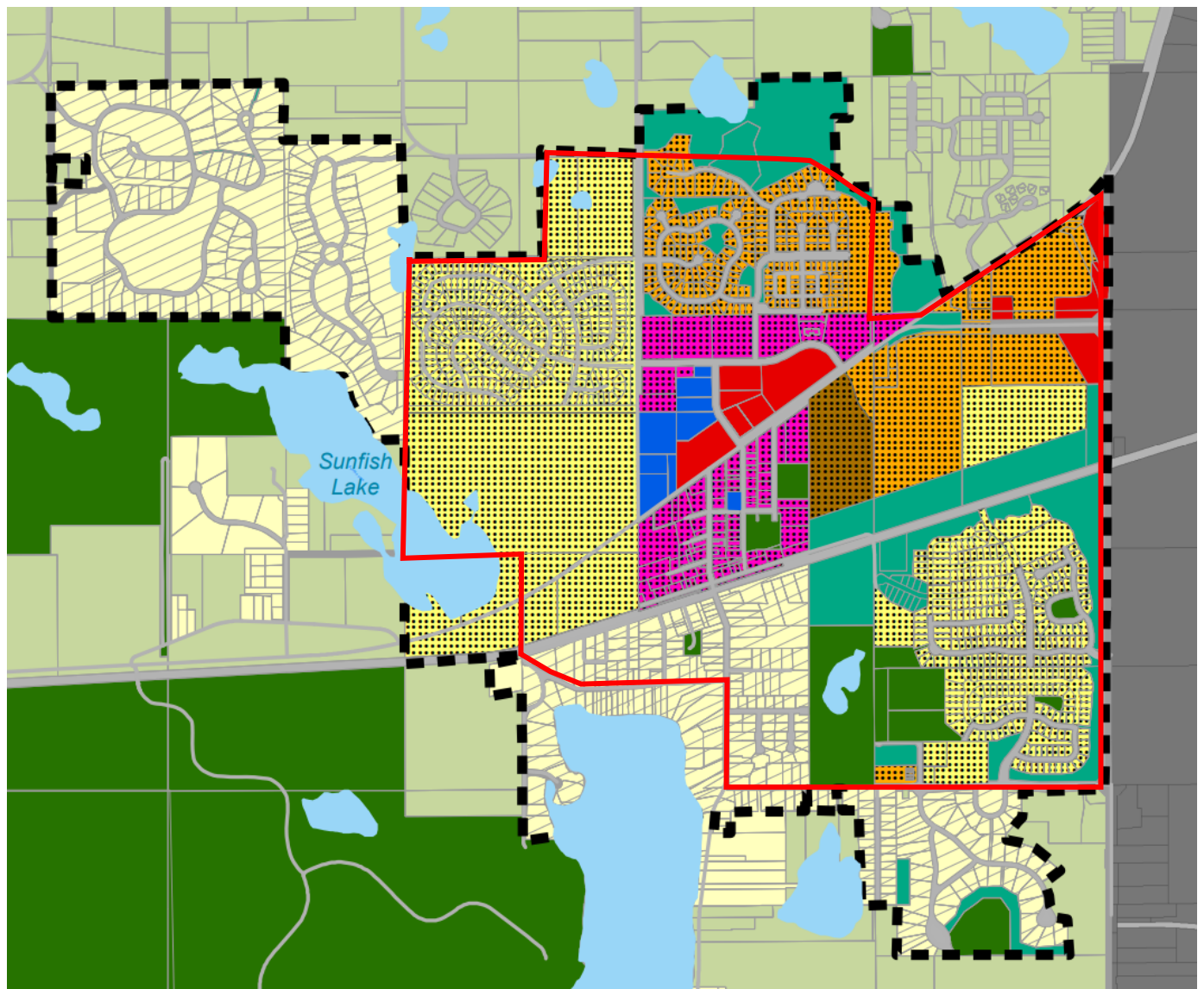
- Park Search Areas (Map 6-7) – contains a search area for a Community Park over the Village Planning Area. A community park in this area is defined as a park an area of 10-15 acres that would serve as a community gathering place and landmark.
- Trail Search Areas (Map 6-8) – contains existing facilities and search areas for new ones. A regional search corridor runs along Lake Elmo Ave. N. and Stillwater Blvd. N. for creation of a county facility. The map also contains search areas for local connections to/through the Village area and surrounding residential development. Village Parkway would contain a road and trail connection through undeveloped parcels to Easton Village.

Transportation (Chapter 7) – The 2040 Plan contains guidance on planned functional classifications for roadways serving or running through the Village planning area. Designations for Stillwater Boulevard North, Lake Elmo Avenue North, 39th Street North, and the future Village Parkway all impact the way those roadways function. The classification may impact ROW width needs, access spacing, alignment and traffic speeds, etc.

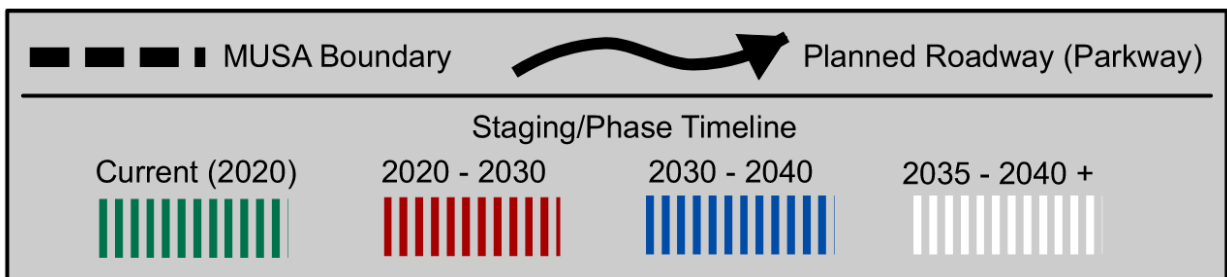
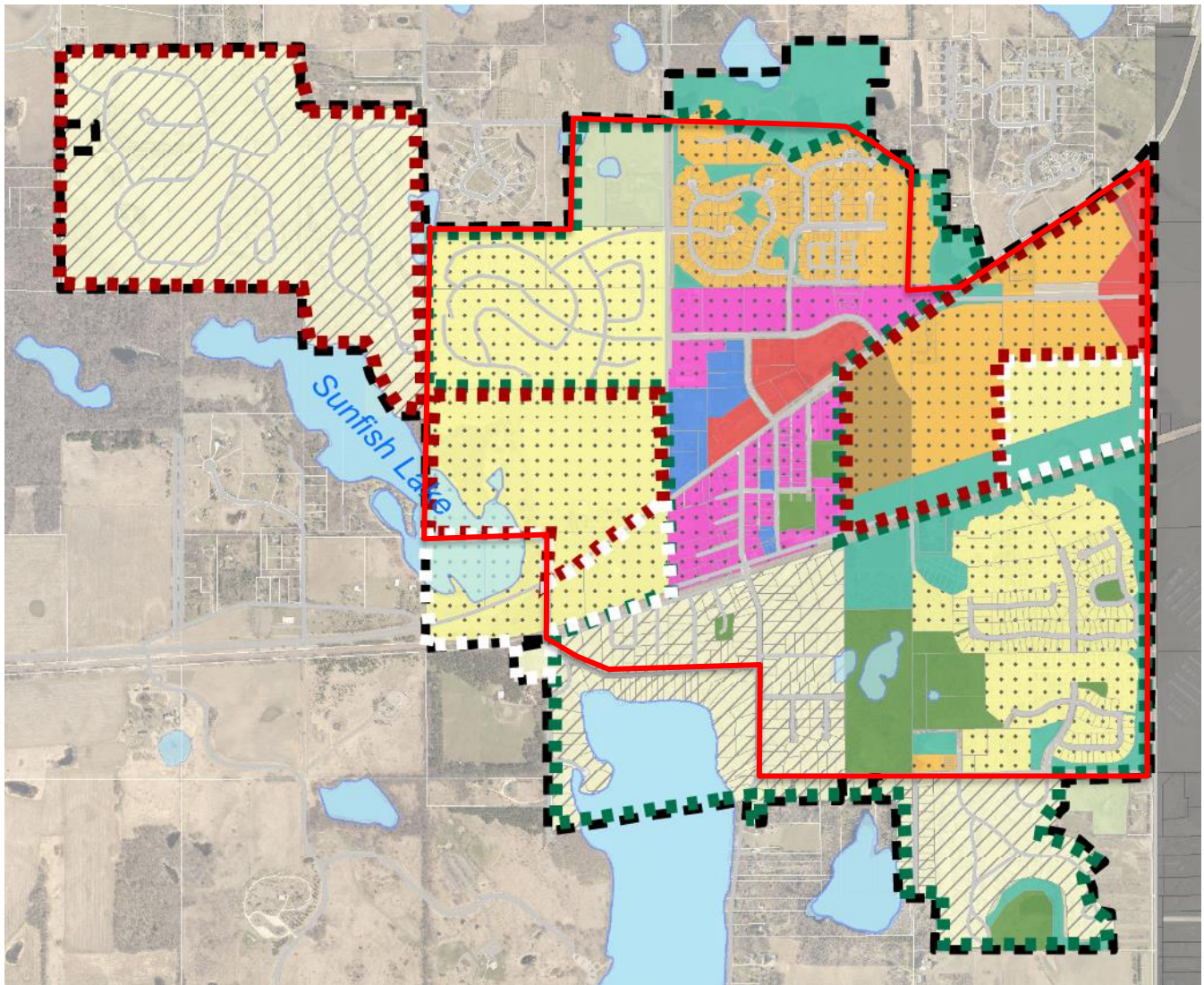
Considerations:

- Consider removing Public/Semi Public Designation until development is complete north of Union Pacific Railroad tracks.
- Reconsider split guidance of land north of Easton Village
- MUSA staging should be consistent across Village East to allow master planning.
- Reconsider Subdistricts and associated goals to realign with potential future development or redevelopment.
- Small Area Plan is needed to effectively plan land use guidance.

Lake Elmo Future Land Use Map – Village Area



Lake Elmo Future Land Use Map – Village Area



Lake Elmo Design Guidelines

Purpose: To ensure development of the Village area is high quality and meets the goals and principles of the City. Specifically, high quality site design and building materials, promote open space to support the existing character of the city, accommodate vehicles that respect pedestrian environment, utilize natural ecosystems (stormwater) in development, cohesion of development into the neighborhood and community, and to foster connections through theming to create unique community identity. The Design Guidelines and Standards were last revised in February 2022.



Regulatory Impact: The Design Guidelines are intended to influence how sites are developed. They cover the Village Area as well as the I-94 Corridor Area and is for parcels within the MUSA public utility service area. Sites are reviewed for compliance at the final stage of development review or building permit review. The guidelines terminology are primarily recommendations and not requirements. They are written with lots of “recommendations”, “may”, “should” verbiage opposed to “must” and “shall”. There are some required elements such as sidewalks, lighting, and signage. However, some of this language is subjective rather than prescriptive.

Design Guidelines and the Village Area: Only applies to *high density residential, commercial, business park and mixed uses*. The Zoning Ordinance references the design guidelines in the Village Districts in general, Mixed Use, Commercial, and Public/Quasi-Public districts (commercial uses). The guidelines address suggestions for:

- building placement
- streetscaping
- landscaping
- parking & delivery areas
- building design, mass/scale, roof, entries
- building materials
- lighting
- signage

Considerations:

- Identify the purpose of the design guidelines to ensure they still align with city goals.
- Certain sections or requirements may be seen as higher or lower priority. Issues directly tied to City goals could be codified in the zoning ordinance.
- Not all projects will reasonably meet all requirements in the design guidelines. Discussion is needed on the process for “good” projects to receive flexibility.
- Projects receiving PUD’s could be required to comply with some or all design requirements.

2007 Lake Elmo Village Area Master Plan

Purpose: This plan was created in 2007. The intent of the City's Village Area Master Plan (hereafter "2007 Master Plan") is to guide development of private land, and public infrastructure, along with revisions to applicable City Land Use guidance to allow the vision to materialize. The 2007 Master Plan created 13 principals to guide development and a conceptual vision for future development in the areas surrounding the "heart" of the Village.

Regulatory Impact: For Small Area or Master Plans to have regulatory impacts, they must be incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Ordinance. While the 2007 Master Plan may have influenced land use policies in both the City's adopted 2040 Plan and Zoning Ordinance, there are no references to this planning document. Therefore, it does not have a legally binding impact on development. The City's 2040 Plan has created subdistricts and associated Land Use goals which don't appear to either conflict with, or support, the 2007 Master Plan's vision.

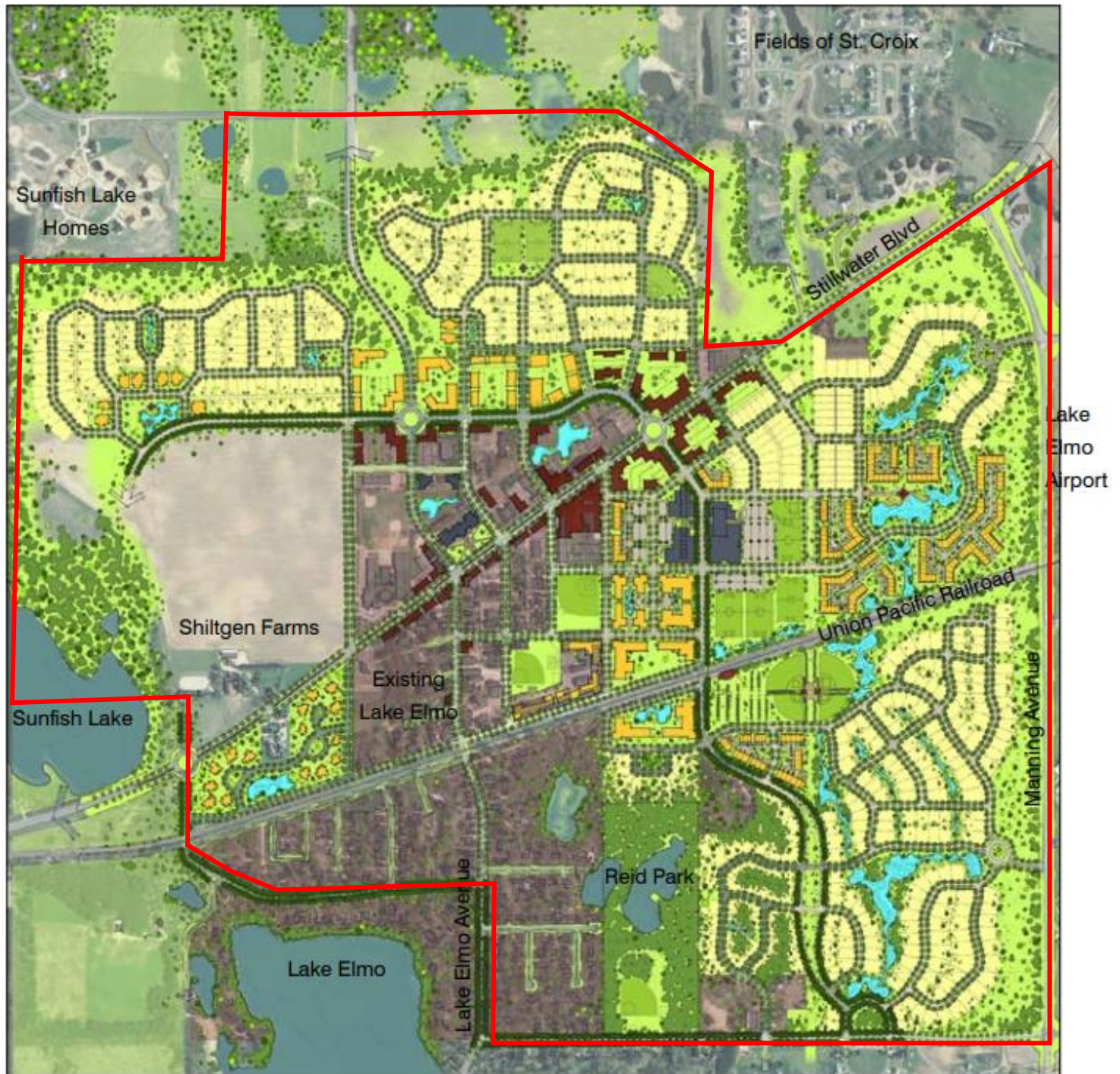
The 2007 Village Area Master Plan Elements: The plan is generally broken down into the following elements:

1. Background – which discusses guiding principles and a framework
2. The Master Plan – a layout of the vision, with focus on the different aspects such as parks and trails, public and green space, streets, blocks & parcels, land uses, housing types, and densities.
3. Master Plan Components – discusses higher level components of the plan such as the Stillwater Blvd. corridor, Lake Elmo Avenue corridor, Public Facilities, Greenbelt, Existing Development, and planned housing.
4. Village Character – discusses case studies from, Detroit Lakes, Litchfield, Cannon Falls, and Redwood Falls, MN, Cedarburg, WI, and Zeeland, MI. Nearly all examples are of rural town centers as opposed to town centers in metropolitan areas.
5. Utilities and other Infrastructure – discusses Sewer and water utilities, stormwater systems, and a street network with example road typologies.
6. Planning Process and Planning Tools – this section is incomplete in the version reviewed by staff.

Considerations:

- The location of roadway connections and alignment of key corridors such as Lake Elmo Avenue and the Village Parkway have changed since the 2007 Master Plan was created.
- County Access spacing requirements and planning along Stillwater Boulevard likely mean that the roadway connections envisioned by this plan are infeasible.
- Nearly all the single-family residential developments envisioned in the Village Area have now occurred. This means local roads, sidewalks, and trail connections are set in a variety of areas.
- Future Land Use guidance in the City's 2040 Plan is inconsistent with the development, primarily east of the existing Village Area's core.
- Park needs across the community have been evaluated and may have changed since 2007.

The Village Area Vision



2021 Village Area Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR)

Purpose: The purpose of an AUAR is to evaluate the potential environmental impacts within a large planning area and to ensure mitigation plans are effectively managed and implemented as development occurs. The Village Area Alternative Urban Areawide Review (2009 Village Area AUAR) comprises approximately 1,275 acres surrounding the City of Lake Elmo's historic downtown. This 2021 Update is prepared as an update and progress report to the 2009 Village Area AUAR and the subsequent 2016 Update. The analysis and information contained in this report provides an inventory of development to-date within the AUAR area and an update to relevant items or sections as needed and/or affected since the 2016 Update

Regulatory Impact: Per Minnesota Rules 4410.3610 Subpart 7, the City is required to update the 2009 Village AUAR every 5 years. The most recent update was in December 2021. Until the Village Area is fully developed, the City will need to update the AUAR to ensure that the review and mitigation plans are consistent with the known and planned development within the AUAR area. If the AUAR becomes expired prior to the complete buildout of the Village area, individual projects may be required to receive a formal environmental review under statutory thresholds. This would cause delays and expense for development to occur, and reviews would be completed on a piecemeal basis.

The 2021 Village Area AUAR: The update provided an opportunity to revisit the original 2009 document and subsequent 2016 update. Many areas of the review had no change from the 2009 AUAR and 2016 update. Areas of additional review included the following:

- Review of development scenarios
- Development timeline update
- Land use guidance updates
- Land cover type updates
- Water use
- Water quality – surface water runoff
- Water quality – wastewater
- Traffic
- Compatibility with plans

Considerations:

- The City should plan to update the AUAR by December 2026 in order to allow the AUAR to remain in effect until the complete buildout of the Village area. Several large parcel developments may otherwise trigger the need to complete environmental review.

2013 Lake Elmo Branding and Theming Study

Purpose: The Lake Elmo Branding and Theming Study seeks to establish a kit of parts that will create a strong visual identity for the gateways, streets, sidewalks and open spaces of Lake Elmo that reinforces the unique agricultural and open space heritage of the community.

Design Principles:

- Elements and furnishings will reflect a connection to the land through material and form.
- Elements and furnishings will be detailed and placed with a simplicity of purpose and function that pays tribute to the Lake Elmo agrarian heritage.
- Landscapes will reflect the native prairie, lakes and big woods that help define Lake Elmo as a special community within a metropolitan area.
- Elements and furnishings will be comfortable and functional.
- The Kit of Parts must have an authenticity that creates a memorable and lasting impression for visitors, residents and business owners.

Regulatory Impact: The City's Zoning Ordinance currently contains a reference that requires elements of the Lake Elmo Theming Study must be incorporated in to developments within the village districts where applicable. The City has design standards for the Village Parkway which will connect existing areas of the Village and with the current terminus in Easton Village. Buildout will be required with future development.

The 2013 Theming Study: The 2013 Theming study primarily focuses on the public right of way, and streetscape improvements that the City can implement, or require to be implemented, in existing or newly platted areas of the Village. The Theming Study generally touches on the following areas:

- Placement and Pattern in the Streetscape
 - Placement of lighting and trees in the streetscape
 - Creating a pattern in the streetscape
 - Maintenance and community commitment
- Streetscape requirements
 - Sidewalks
 - Parking
 - Corners and intersections
- Streetscape Components
- Street Furniture
- Implementation

Considerations:

- This document is not available online, it is recommended that it be added to the list of design standards on the City's website.
- The City should conduct plan reviews, particularly for newly proposed developments on the undeveloped east side of the current Village Area with this theming study in mind.
- A discussion by the City as to the relevancy and priority of theming may be helpful. Is this document still valid?

Heritage Preservation Commission

The City Code establishes a Heritage Preservation Commission to “engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation and to preserve and promote the city's historic resources”. This commission is tasked with several things. Specifically related to land use and interest in the Village Area, their causes is as follows:

1. To survey and recommend to the council the designation of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are of historical, architectural, archaeological, engineering, or cultural significance;
2. To recommend to the council rules governing construction, alteration, demolition, and use, including the review of building permits, and the adoption of other measures appropriate for the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of designated properties and areas;
3. To recommend to the council the acquisition by purchase, gift, or bequest of a fee or lesser interest, including preservation restrictions, in designated properties and adjacent or associated lands which are important for the preservations and use of the designated properties;
4. To recommend to the council the use of its powers of eminent domain to maintain or preserve designated properties and adjacent or associated lands;
5. To recommend to the council the granting of use variances to the zoning ordinance for the purpose of promoting historical preservation or continuity;
6. To participate in the conduct of land use planning processes by the review and comment on documents or actions relating to designated areas and on comprehensive plans; and
7. To recommend to the council the removal of blighting influences in designated areas, including signs, unsightly structures, and debris incompatible with the physical well-being of the areas.

There is currently no established commission. The commission stopped meeting with the onset of COVID restrictions in 2020 and has not been re-established.

Considerations:

- This commission could provide insights and recommendations on the Village Area. Is the Heritage Preservation Commission something that should be re-established to support the Village Area goals?
- Could this commission provide value in supporting the village area and uses and the experience while engaging residents serving on the commission? Or would this commission add a layer of bureaucracy, whose objectives could be addressed administratively or through other processes?

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This is an important time in the history of Lake Elmo's Village Area. Preceding this Study, significant work has been done throughout the last two decades to ensure that the Village Area develops in a manner consistent with the Community's vision. Community planning is a continuous process that reacts to changes and anticipates new issues.

The City's Interim Ordinance has allowed for a brief pause and review of the community's sentiment on the village area, along with the land use controls already in place to guide development. The following policy recommendations are broken into short and long term based on whether they can reasonably be done prior to (short term), or after (long term), the City rescinds its moratorium on new land uses. These recommendations are intended to guide ongoing review and discussion in a manner that will allow the City to further refine its plans and policies to achieve the community's vision for the Village Area.

OLD VILLAGE AREA POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	
DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY
Short Term (0-1 yrs)	
<u>Review Land Uses already permitted in the V-MX</u> Review permitted and conditional land uses in Section 105.12.780, Table 11-1, particularly for the Village Mixed Use zoning district.	High
1. Consider removing uses which are not complementary to the built form of the Old Village Area such as restaurants with drive throughs, or funeral homes and storage and sales lots due to public feedback and large unused surface parking areas.	
2. Consider allowing retail/shopping centers under certain square footages 'by right'.	
3. Consider limiting the use of Conditional Use Permits to accelerate establishment of acceptable uses and to prevent establishment of uses not fully in line with the community's vision.	
4. Consider how the City would review a proposed brewery, distillery, or other such specialized businesses which are desired by the community having specific licensing requirements.	
<u>Review Lot Dimensions and Building Bulk Requirements</u> Assess whether bulk standards required under the zoning ordinance are in alignment with the City's Design Standard Manual.	Medium
1. Re-evaluate minimum lot or unit areas to ensure that new development is consistent with the massing of pre-existing development in the old village area.	
2. Re-evaluate setbacks for buildings in V-MDR, V-HDR, and V-MX districts to ensure that developments are designed according to best practices identified in the City's design standard manual.	
<u>Define the Village Area</u> Create one definition of the Village Area and create subdistricts for smaller areas withing the Overall Village Area.	Low
1. Consider keeping the Old Village Area as is or extending to the west to include the undeveloped Schiltgen Farm property. Alternatively, a subdistrict called "West Village" could be created.	
2. Consider revising the Civic District or its goals anticipating future uses of the old City and School building sites.	

3. Consider revising the Elmo Station District to be an “East Village” subdistrict extending east to Manning Avenue.	
Long Term (1+ years)	
<u>Evaluate Future Land Use Areas</u> Review the Future Land Use Categories used in the Village area against the mix of land uses desired by the community	High
1. Consider reguiding parcels comprising the existing Civic District subdistrict to V-MU, with the exception of the City held properties.	
2. Consider reguiding the old Schiltgen Farmstead parcel south of Stillwater Boulevard to V-MDR	
3. Consider reguiding areas east of the Old Village as V-MU, and move V-HDR guidance further east.	
4. Commission a Village Master Plan to align future land uses with planned infrastructure connections	
<u>Evaluate Zoning Guidance in the Old Village</u> Review the zoning guidance in the Old Village area to create a more uniform and understandable approach to zoning.	
High	
1. Identify existing land uses and lot areas in a parcel level review of the Old Village.	
2. Consider uniform V-Mx zoning north of Upper 33 rd Street along the Lake Elmo Avenue corridor, and parcels east of that corridor within the Old Village subdistrict. An exception would be parcels with institutional land uses (recreation, religious institutions).	
3. Consider V-MDR zoning for other areas of the Old Village subdistrict where preservation of housing is a priority.	
<u>Infrastructure Review and Corridor Planning</u> Identify the areas of concern for the City relating to long term improvements and infrastructure connections in the Village Area.	
Medium	
1. Review planned roadway connections in undeveloped areas of the Village and plan for how necessary connections will be made, and by whom.	
2. Identify sidewalk and trail gaps in the Old Village area and determine whether such gaps will be addressed by future City projects or private development.	
3. Coordinate with Washington County to identify future county right of way needs and plans for corridor improvements along Stillwater Boulevard and Lake Elmo Avenue North.	
4. Commission a Village Master Plan to communicate City priorities on trails, intersection controls, and other improvements needed for desired mobility outcomes in the Village Area.	
<u>Evaluate Plan Review Guidelines</u> Determine the effectiveness of existing guidelines for development and redevelopment within the Village Area.	Low
1. Review Lake Elmo’s Design Guidelines ensure they still align with city goals for development in the Village Area. Consideration could be given to location within the Village Area.	
2. Confirm that the 2013 Branding and Theming study guidelines are still relevant and in alignment with City expectations for the Village Area.	
3. Identify the City’s need for the Heritage Preservation Commission, and consider removing requirements for one from City Code, modifying review requirements for projects, or attempt to re-initiate the Commission.	

<p><u>Visioning for the MUSA & Village Area</u></p> <p>Citywide level visioning exercises should take place to better understand how future Sewer extensions could impact the capacity of the Village Area for future growth.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>1. Identification of future growth areas to the West or North around the City's Village Core could create an additional need for area-wide planning.</p>	
<p>2. Planned expansion of any part of the City's MUSA Boundary should be reviewed for capacity impacts on existing areas that are planned for sewer, such as the Village Area.</p>	

APPENDIX

Appendix A – Open House and Survey Findings

Open Houses

Business Owner and Developer Open House

An open house for the business community and area developers was held on Thursday, June 13 at Lake Elmo City Hall. These groups were invited to the informal roundtable discussion that featured maps, preference-identifying activities, and overviews of the Village Vision study purpose.

Conversations gravitated toward issues of connectivity to and within the Village area, how future development feasibility, and placemaking improvements.

- **Connectivity**

- Improving walkability of the Village to improve revenues for existing businesses and to attract new ones.
- Bike/ped crossings at:
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and 41st St N
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and 39th St N
 - Lake Elmo Ave N and Stillwater Blvd
 - Laverne Ave N and Stillwater Blvd
- Safer bicycle facilities on Stillwater Blvd
- Future bike/ped trail recommendations
 - Facilities at Upper 33rd St N to 34th St (Easton Village) over the railroad private road.
 - Facilities at 33rd St N to Stillwater Blvd

- **Development Feasibility**

- Appropriateness/feasibility of individual parcels for different housing types.

- **Placemaking**

- Preservation of historical local businesses
- Maintaining downtown charm but allowing for compatible modern building types
- Leveraging the old creamery as a dominant/interest-site for an adaptive reuse project
- Beautification of Lake Elmo Ave

An estimated 25 individuals attended this event. See the Appendix A for records of the maps and information/activity boards shown to attendees.

Lake Elmo Dog Park Grand Opening

City staff facilitated a pop-up outreach display at the Grand Opening of the Lake Elmo Dog Park. This was in order to reach a wider audience regarding the village vision study. An estimated 40 or more residents, not including their furry companions, attended the event.



Staff explained the need for the Village Vision study, and engaged with residents to identify their preferences for the future of the area. Staff also advertised the upcoming Public Open house and the ongoing online survey.

Public comments were similar to those heard at both open houses. Residents indicated a desire to make shorter, more local, trips to shop for daily necessities. Several attendees expressed a desire to have improved trail connectivity to and from areas of the City not immediately near the Village Area, such as the Tri Lakes area.

Public Open House

Staff held the final open house at City Hall on Thursday, June 20 from 5 to 7pm. Like the previous engagement for businesses and developers, residents at the Public Open house were provided an overview of the study and preference-identifying activities via boards, and tabletop mapping exercises. Residents had a number of questions about the Village area and the current development moratorium within the Village boundary.

Like business owners, residents expressed concerns about connectivity and road safety issues traveling to the Village area. Key discussion points included, generally, connectivity, placemaking, and land uses.



- **Connectivity**
 - Residents value the walkability of the old village core but desire improvement to connectivity of sidewalks and trails in the village area.
 - Safer, marked crossings are desired at Stillwater Boulevard and Lake Elmo Avenue.
 - Concern about traffic speeds along Lake Elmo Avenue North and Stillwater Boulevard.
- **Placemaking**
 - Maintaining historic, small town, charm.
 - Strong desire to preserve the existing City ballfields and the Post Office.
 - Adding new areas of open space and opportunities for natural landscaping in boulevards or new developments.
 - Working to address underutilized commercial properties as strategic opportunities for new development.
- **Land Uses and Development**
 - Desire for housing, rental or owner occupied, that is attainable for members of the community who want to stay in the area.
 - Limiting the establishment of chain businesses or big box stores to continue the small town village feel.

- Bringing in new amenities such as restaurants, personal services, or other businesses that would serve local residents.
- Apprehension to create design or other performance standards that would negatively impact existing residents.

Approximately 35 individuals attended the Public Open House. See the Appendix B for records of the maps and information/activity boards shown to attendees.

Survey Input

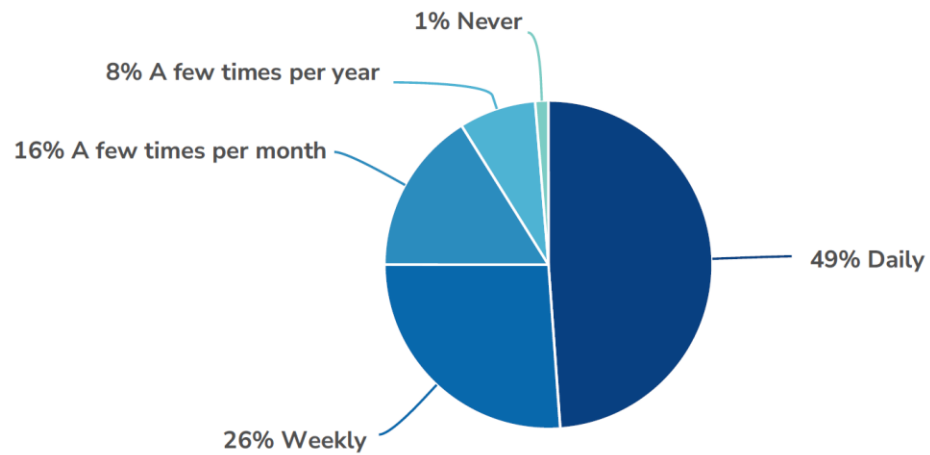
Community engagement for the Village Vision Study was initiated with the launch of a comprehensive online survey. This survey was designed to capture the voices of our residents and to incite deepened interest in the project. The survey included more than 20 questions focused on identifying residents' current relationship to the Village area and their preference and priorities for future growth. The findings, summarized here, reveal a community deeply invested in the preservation of Lake Elmo's unique character while embracing thoughtful growth and development.

The survey launched on Saturday, June 1, 2024 and closed Monday, July 1, 2024. 556 complete responses were submitted, and 603 partial responses during during this period

Excerpts from the survey are provided here. A full copy of the survey response report is available in Appendix C.

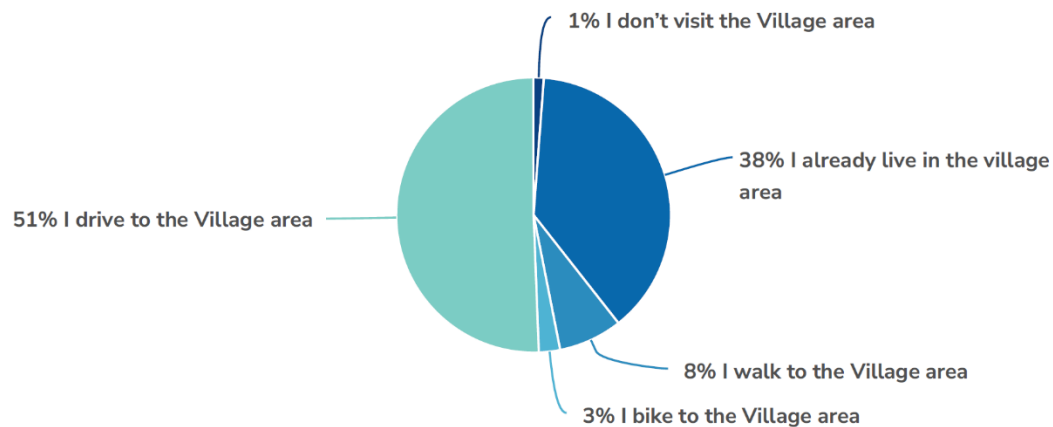
[remainder of page intentionally blank]

Frequency of visits to the village area



Nearly half of respondents visit the Village area every day.

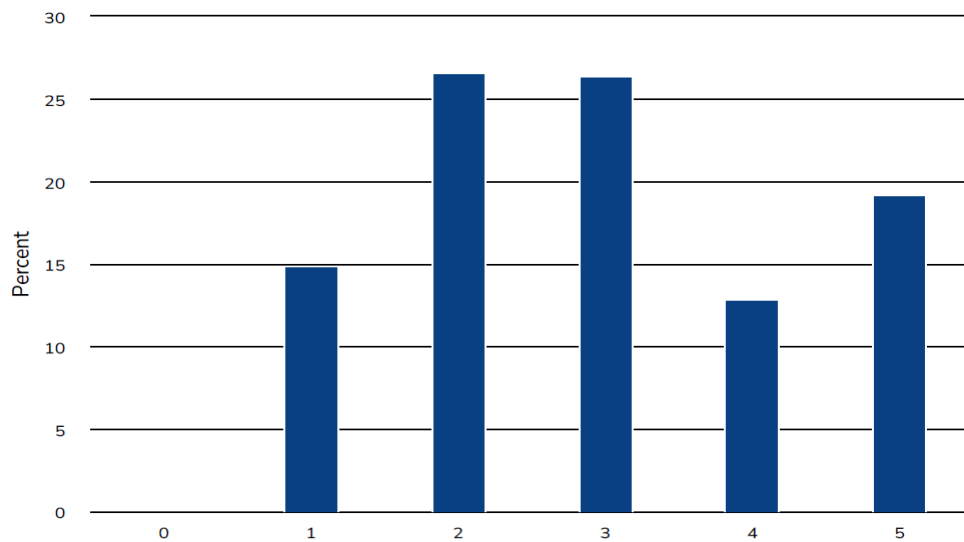
Mode of travel to/from the village area



Over half of all respondents drive to the Village area. About 40% of respondents already live in the area.

Ease of reaching the Village area by walking (1=Very Difficult, 5=Very Easy)

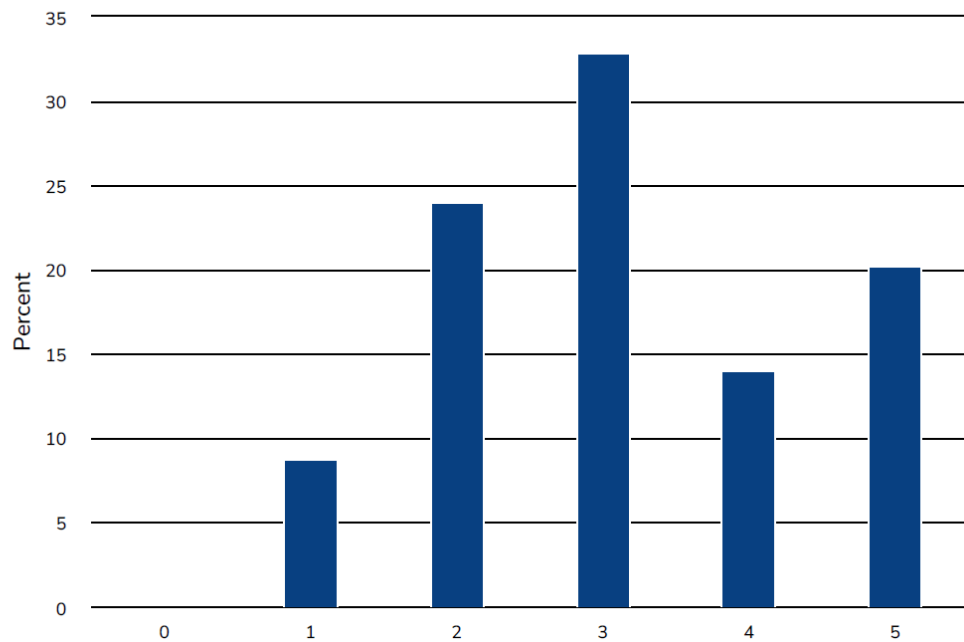
Walking



There's little consensus about ease of walking to the Village area. About 30% of respondents indicated that it's "Difficult or Very Difficult" to walk to the Village

Ease of reaching the Village area by biking (1=Very Difficult, 5=Very Easy)

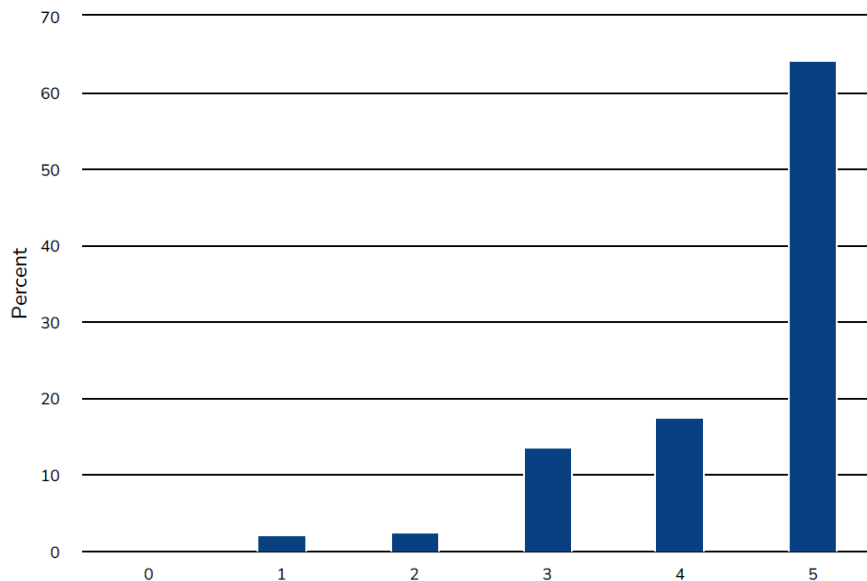
Biking



There's little consensus about ease of biking to the Village area.

Ease of reaching the Village area by driving (1=Very Difficult, 5=Very Easy)

Driving



Respondents agree that it's Very Easy to get to the Village by driving.

Prevailing strengths of the Village area

- **Aesthetics.** Many responses included words like “charm”, “quaint”, and “cute” which highlight an appreciation for the visual appeal of the downtown village area.
- **Small Town Character.** Almost 200 residents indicated the importance of maintaining the “small town feel”, referring to both the size of the downtown, the amenities, and sense of place it offers.
- **Business and Development.** Over 100 responses pointed to businesses as a strength of the area, with several mentions of Lake Elmo Inn, Sunshine Coffee and various other small businesses contributing to the vitality of the village.
- **Walkability and Location.** Residents also appreciate the town’s convenient location and the ability to walk easily, emphasizing the importances of maintaining and potentially enhancing walkable spaces.

Prevailing weaknesses of the Village area

Weaknesses discussed for the village area were varied. Two clear themes were transportation issues (including parking and safety) and development. speeding and pedestrian safety. Several respondents highlighted dangerous conditions for crossing streets without crosswalks or sidewalks.

- **Transportation Issues.** Many respondents were concerned with traffic generally and the speed of traffic. Participants expressed concerns with a lack of crosswalks sidewalks as a significant safety concern. Several residents expressed that there was a need for parking in the village area.
- **Development.** Residents noted the desire for a variety and diversification of new businesses in the village area. Many responses were about “use”. Over 50 responses included “restaurant” indicating the desire for more businesses centered around eat, drink and play. “Pizza”, “ice-cream”, and “grocery” were all pointed to as wish-list items for the downtown.

Future vision for the Village Area



What residents do want to see in the Village area

- Community amenities
 - Gathering spaces for events and play
 - Community center
 - Pools, splash pads
 - Live music
- Increase of local & small scale retail and service businesses
- Recreational spaces
- Green space
- Eating & Drinking establishments
 - Brewery
 - Ice cream
 - Pizza
- Pedestrian safety
 - More safe routes for walking and biking
 - Sidewalks and trails
- Beautification

Responses are generally consistent with perceived strengths and weaknesses in the village area.



What residents don't want to see in the village area

- A variety of housing types
- Big box retail
- Car dealerships
- Industrial uses
- Storage businesses
- Increase in traffic

Responses are generally consistent with perceived strengths and weaknesses in the village area.

Preferred Single-Family House types (respondents could select more than one option)

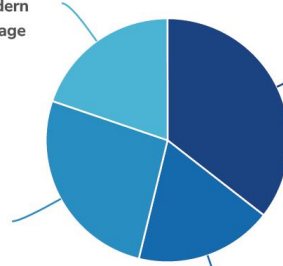


43% Single family house; modern manor style; front-loaded garage



78% Single family house; rear loaded white ranch style house

58% Single family house; modern prairie style; front porch; side-loaded garage



40% Single family house; modern carriage house



Single-Family Houses where the garages were side- or rear-loaded were most popular

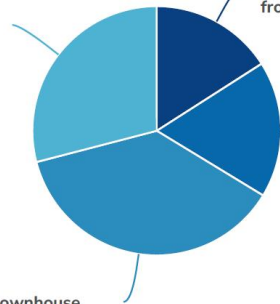
Preferred Townhouse types (respondents could select more than one option)



46% Classic, rear-loaded, walk-in townhouses. Half of units have turf yard and half of units have brick patios.



25% Typical suburban townhouse, front loaded with garages



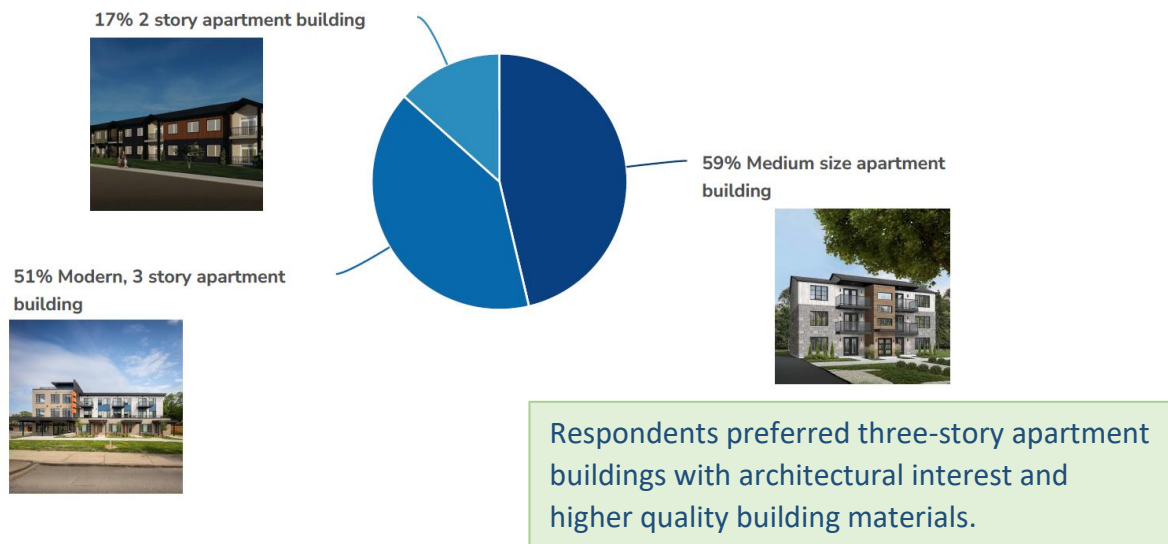
28% modern front loaded townhouses



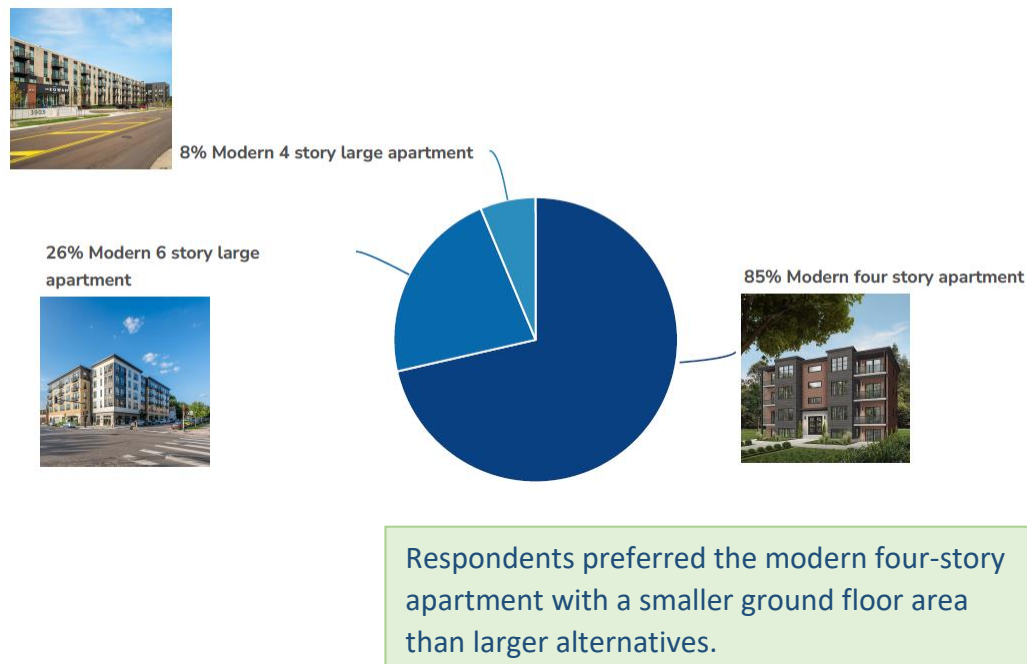
59% Classic, walk-in townhouse

Respondents preferred classic, walk-in Townhouses with garages that are rear-loaded.

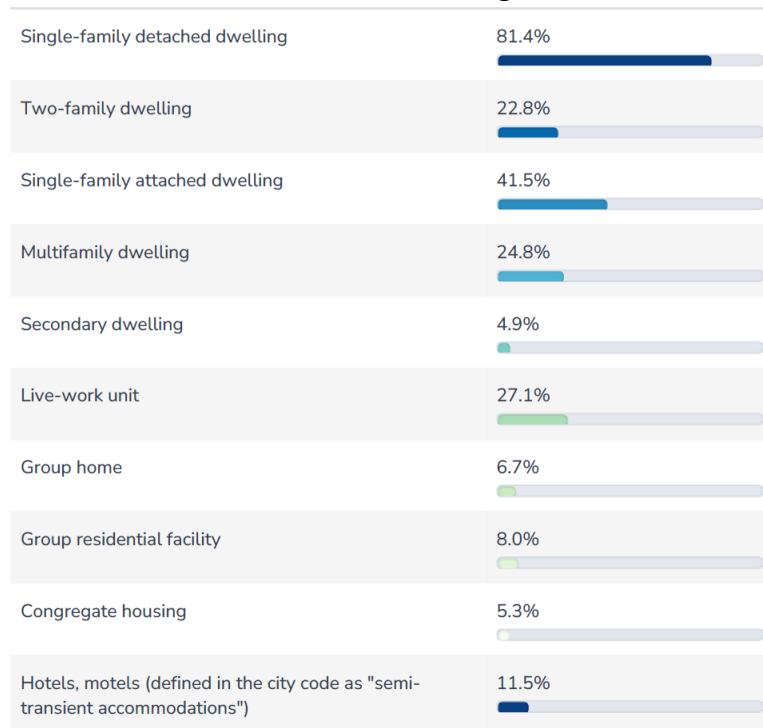
Preferred Small-/Mid-Sized Apartment Building types (respondents could select more than one option)



Preferred Mid-/Large-Sized Apartment Building types (respondents could select more than one option)

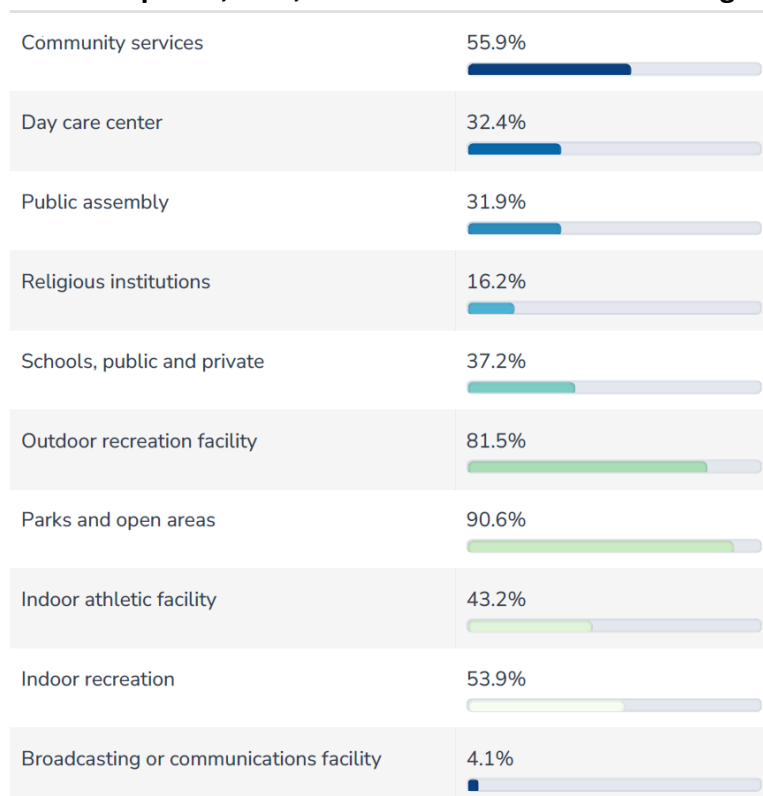


Preferred residential uses in the Village area



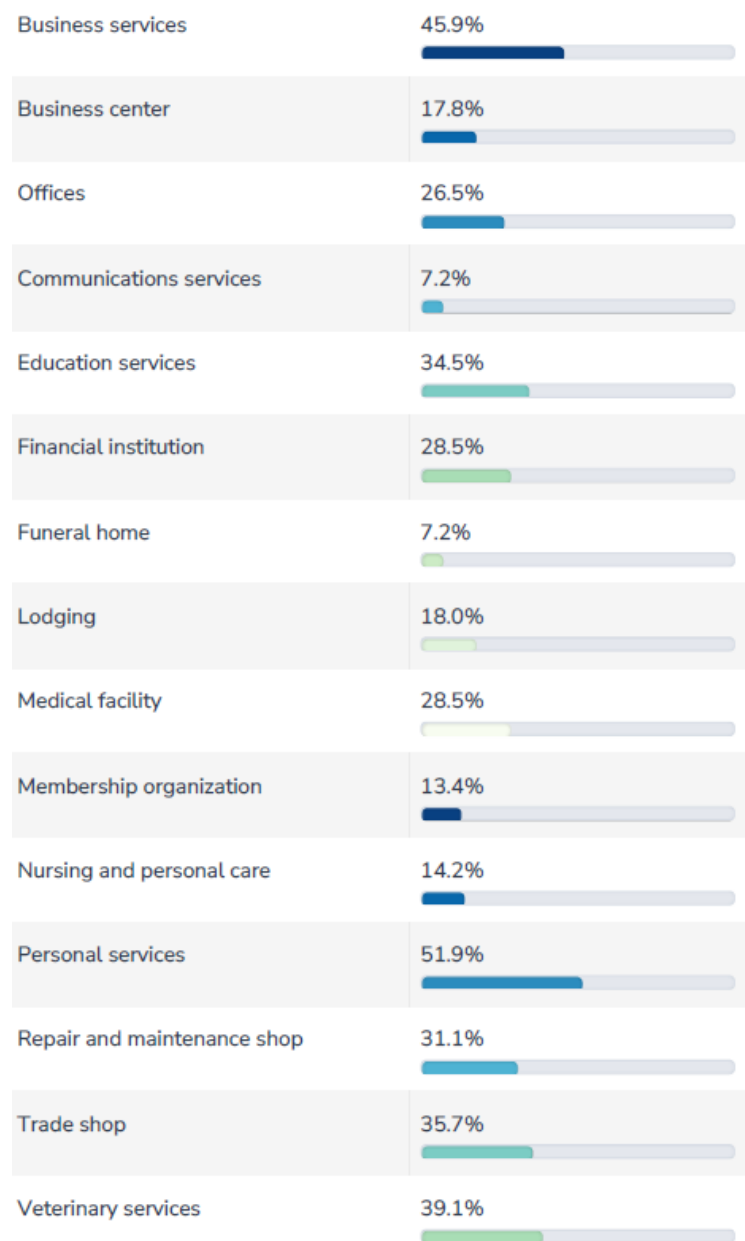
Respondents prefer Single-Family attached (Townhouses) and Single-Family Detached houses for residential uses in the Village area.

Preferred public, civic, and recreation uses in the Village area



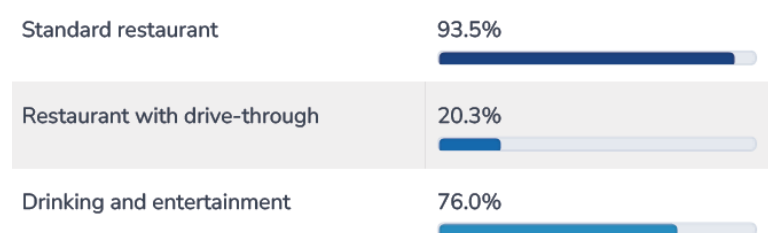
Outdoor recreation, parks, and open space are widely preferred. Communications facilities and religious institutions were least preferred by respondents in this category.

Preferred service uses in the Village area



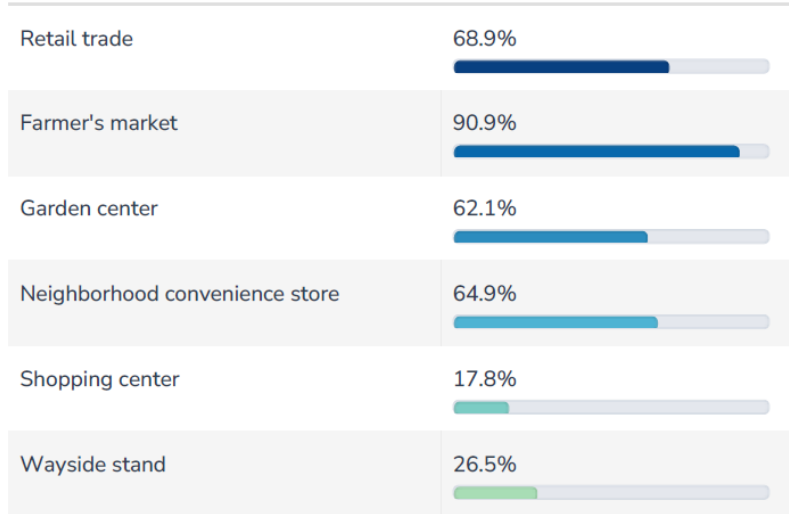
Preferences for service uses were scattered. The most preferred services were business services and personal services (it should be noted that these are the broadest classes of service types).

Preferred food service uses in the Village area



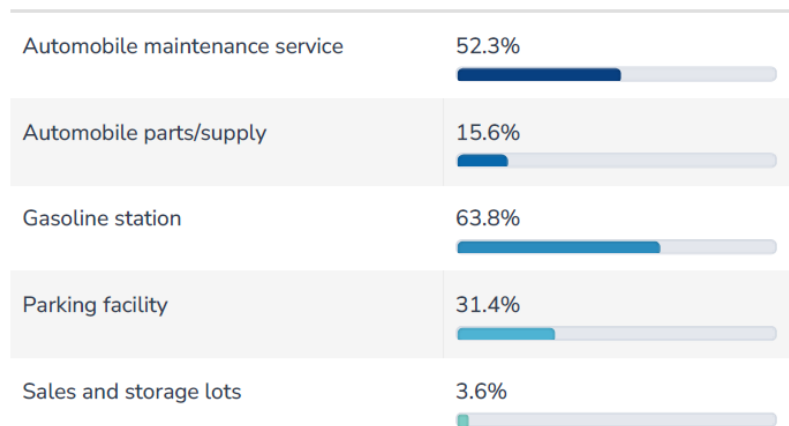
Respondents want sit-down (standard) restaurants and other places for drinking and entertainment in the village. Only 20% of respondents want to see drive-through restaurants in the Village.

Preferred mercantile uses in the Village area



Respondents would like to see most types of mercantile uses in the Village, except for shopping centers (malls or strip malls)

Preferred automobile or vehicular uses in the Village area



More than half of respondents said they would like to see automobile maintenance services (auto repair garages) and gas stations. Overwhelmingly, however, 96% of respondents do not prefer to see auto sales and storage lots in the Village area.

Preferences for the future of the former fire hall and parks building

Respondents gave a variety of answers for what they would like to see in the old fire hall and parks building. Responses included new uses such as:

- Eating & Drinking establishments
- Community center
- Family friendly establishments
- Housing, including mixed use
- Green spaces and parks
- Recreational uses
- Retail



Additional thoughts on the Village Area

A wide variety of feedback was received. Sentiment was mostly positive with many comments pointing to the types of development, if any, they would like to see in the area. Many responses indicated that residents wanted to maintain the “charm” and “feel” of the area and limit big box retail. This was consistent with previous qualitative responses in the survey.

Appendix B – Open House Engagement Materials

WHAT CAN CHANGE?

If you could change one thing about the Village area, what would it be? Share your thoughts below.

More gathering space (parking?)
something for the elementary site in the future.

Some sort of arts center.

Shops with apartments above. Yes

Shops for things people need - not tourist, gift, liquor
Hardware store, outdoor recreation store, clothes

Reduce speed
Bld in scale with what we have
No more Lerner developments

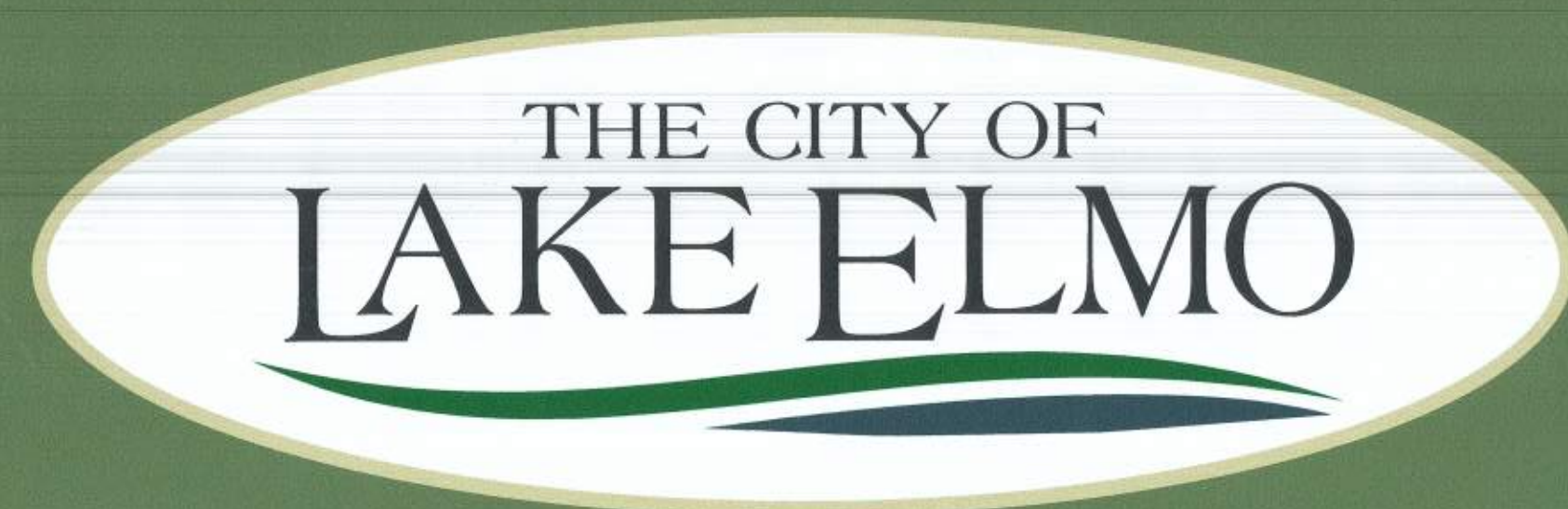
Water feature! lake access? splash pad? swimming pool?

Traffic already
bad here
Adding more
homes will make
worse.

Slower speeds on the Ave. (L.E.)
Safer ways to cross Co. Hwy 14 - reduce speed here & add stoplight @ 38th by bank

Yes, please reduce speed limit on LE
avenue from Kreuzers, South

Stoplight at 38th & LE Ave

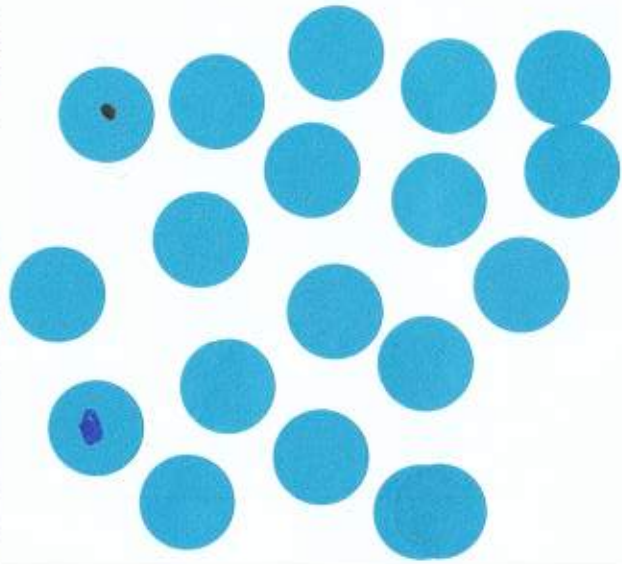


VILLAGE VISION PLAN
LAKE ELMO, MN

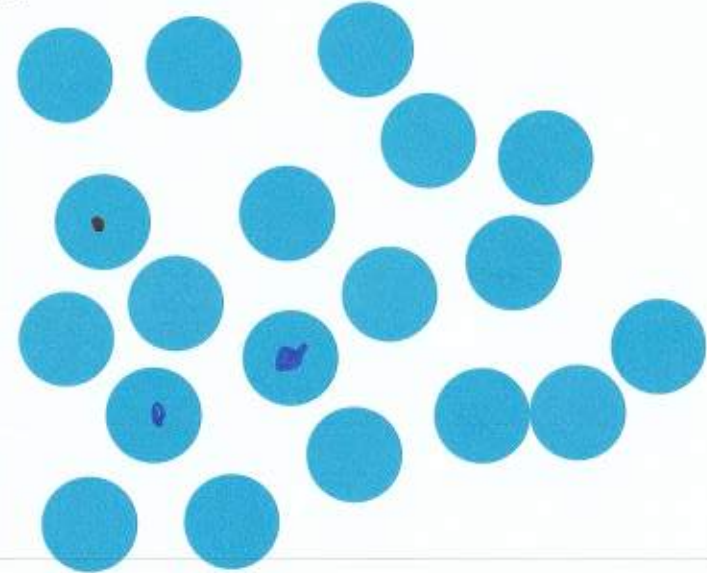
FUTURE SPACES

What types of spaces would you like more of in the Village area? Place a dot by your recommendation!

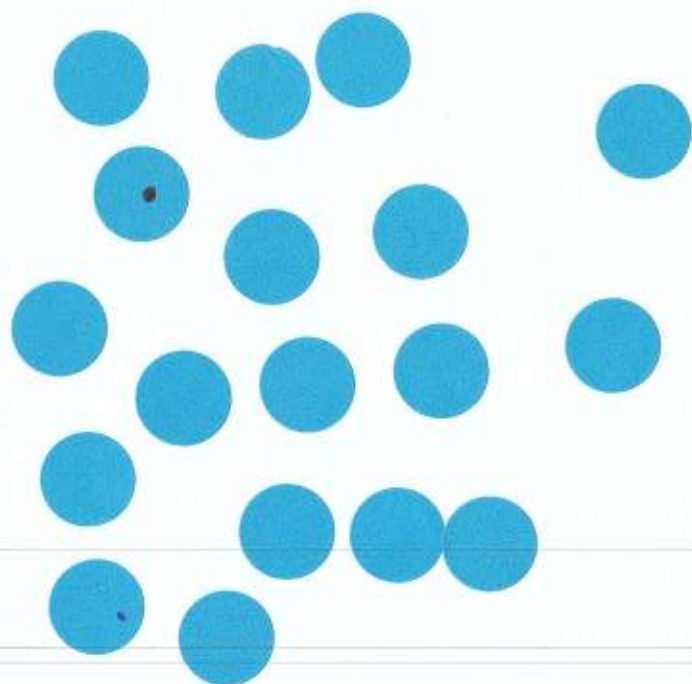
Restaurants



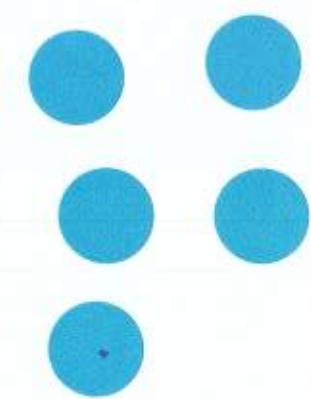
Public or Green Space



Shops



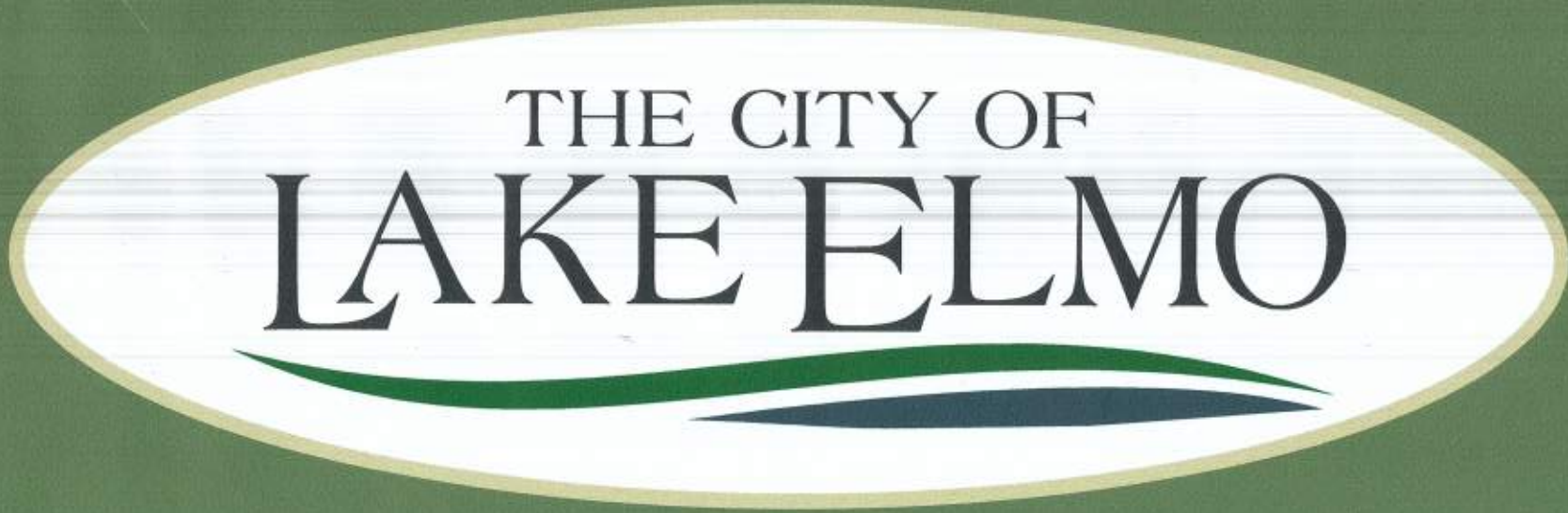
Convenience/essentials stores



Homes



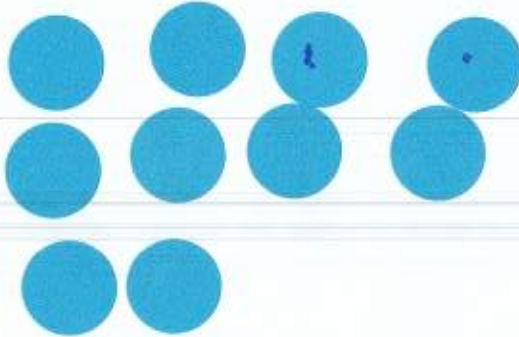
Employment or Office



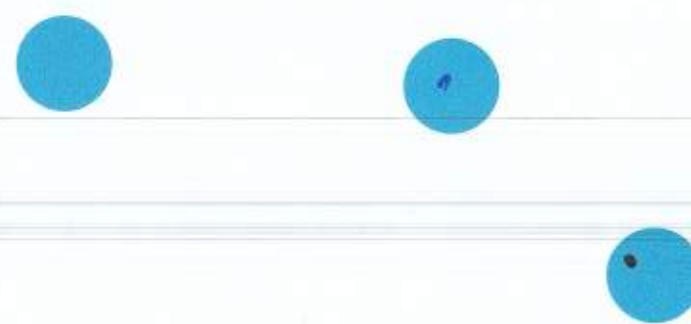
FUTURE HOUSING

What types of housing would you like more of in the Village area? Place a dot by your recommendations!

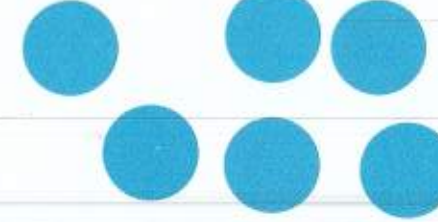
Single-family houses



agree
NONE

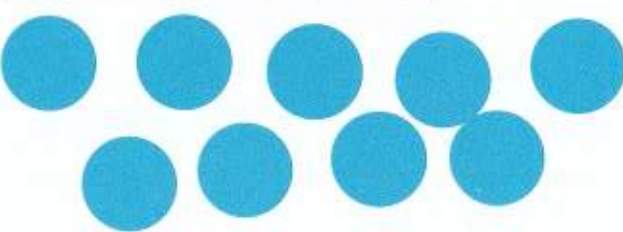


Small- to mid-size multifamily buildings



None

Townhouses

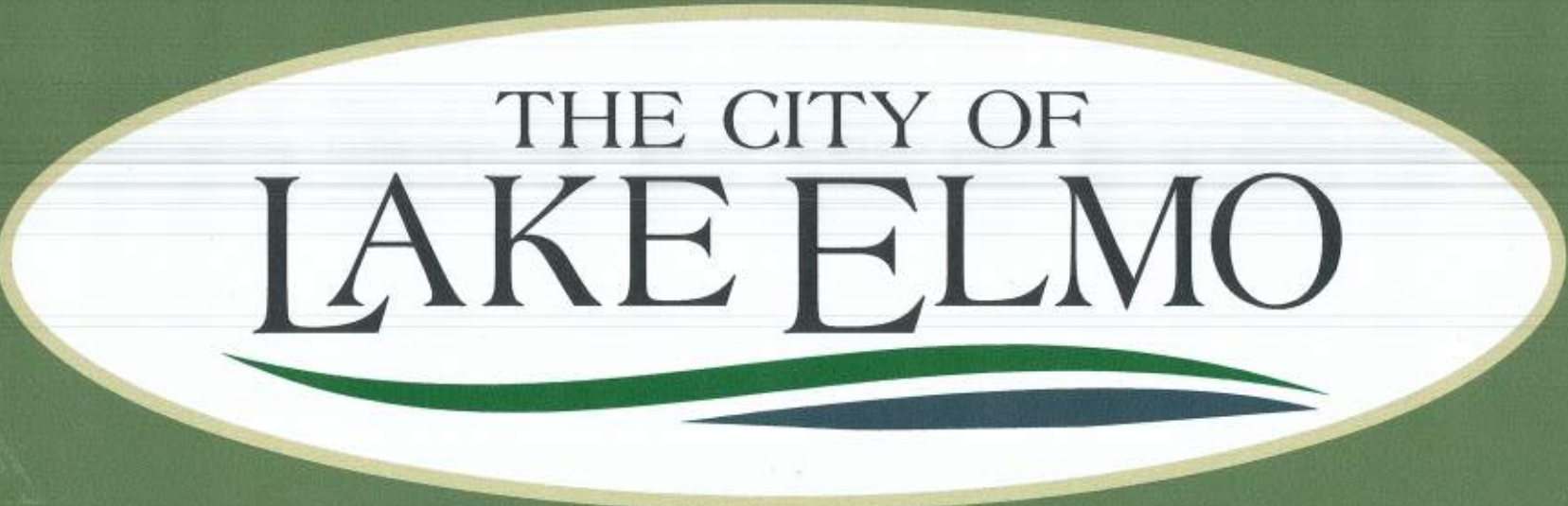


Mid- to large-size multi-family buildings



None

● No more ● ● ✓ Already too much housing, please stop



VILLAGE VISION PLAN

LAKE ELMO, MN

THOUGHTS ON THE VILLAGE AREA?

When you think of the Village area in Lake Elmo, what comes to mind? Share your thoughts below.

HISTORIC CHARM + LOTS OF POTENTIAL!

LET'S GET A BIKE LOOP & MORE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS! ●

Small-town feel → is a little bit of everything I need! library, post office, food, park, etc
lets have what we have had in the past - small town character + scale

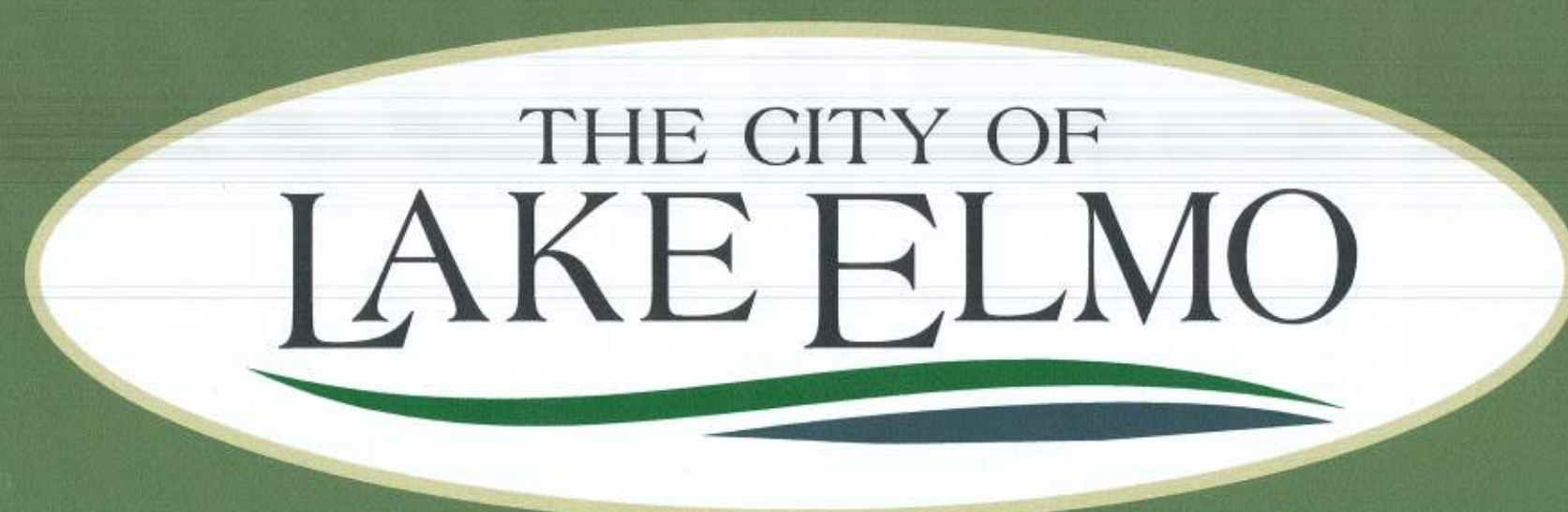
Sense of community

Small shops + non-chain restaurants ✓✓

generally light traffic

Great parks / green space ✓✓

SAVE Old Village - "Historic L.E" from Hagberg to Klondike & TORR



VILLAGE VISION PLAN
LAKE ELMO, MN



Note in **GREEN** things that you like in the Village area.
Note in **RED** things that are a challenge in the Village area.

Note in **GREEN** things that you like in the Village area.
Note in **RED** things that are a challenge in the Village area.



VILLAGE VISION PLAN LAKE ELMO, MN



Streets & community

Streets & community

Historic Old Village Area
Hagbergs to Klondike Ave.

Curb bump outs
along L.E.A. why?
Please make the
bird plantings nicer.

Conceded apartment mix

Area needs updating -
old buildings are an eyesore
Old car dealership on
eye sore also get rid of it.

Mixed use?

VILLAGE AREA

VILLAGE AREA

VILLAGE VISION PLAN LAKE ELMO, MN



Note in **GREEN** things that you like in the Village area.
Note in **RED** things that are a challenge in the Village area.

Traffic congestion on 14
Traffic planning
prior to dev.
approval

Like the
walkability
of the area

Traffic & growth

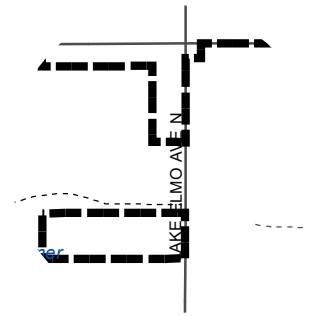
Streets & community

Historic preservation
in old Village!
NEEDED

Appendix C – Full Survey Response Report

Chapter 10: Implementation

Bringing the Plan to Fruition





INTRODUCTION

An important component of this Comprehensive Plan Update process is to identify implementation strategies and priorities that will work towards bringing this Plan to fruition. This Chapter provides a set of implementation strategies that are specific to the chapters, goals and strategies of each component contained within this Plan.

One of the last major public engagement efforts of this planning process was a city-wide Open House to present the draft Plan, and to solicit feedback specific to the Implementation Chapter development. Over 150 residents and stakeholders attended the event on April 11, 2018 and nearly 100 people responded to the Implementation Survey at the Open House or on-line. Once tabulated, trends regarding implementation priorities were identified, and were then used to help inform the implementation strategies contained within this Chapter. A summary of the most agreed to, and highest priority implementation strategies as identified within the survey include:

10-1

- *General Comprehensive Plan Statement:* Overwhelmingly people responded that they rely on the Comprehensive Plan to understand what is happening in the City and that the City should follow its Plan. Further respondents felt that the City should put the work and financial resources into developing appropriate ordinances and policies to implement the Plan. Ordinances should be clear, easy to understand, and reliable.
- *Land Use:* The majority of respondents prioritized the development of zoning districts that support new Future Land Use designations contained within this Plan as the most important implementation step, and identified the top priority as creating zoning that supports the new mixed-use areas. With respect to the character of commercial areas, respondents were fairly consistent in their desire to promote low-intensity users that keep traffic calm. Further, respondents were uninterested in developing a regional destination for commercial and business park users, and instead prioritized creating opportunities for businesses and users that would support existing Lake Elmo neighborhoods and residents. From a residential perspective, respondents were focused on creating policies and ordinances that would support the protection, restoration and integration of existing natural resources into new neighborhoods and developing areas in the City.

- *Balanced Development & Growth:* Respondents were split as to whether the City should take a more proactive approach to economic development in Lake Elmo. Many felt that the City's leaders and staff should be proactive to identify the types of growth and development it wants and may even go as far as supporting that effort with financial resources. Financial commitments aside, overwhelmingly people felt that the City should at a minimum be prepared to respond to development pressure through establishing appropriate zoning, design guideline and policies that support the desired development and growth patterns in the City. Additionally, respondents stated that it was important to create a more streamlined, easy to understand development review process, and to make sure details such as architecture/design standards, setbacks and landscape requirements were established within ordinances to reduce ambiguity.
- *Housing:* Opinions on the top priorities related to housing were more distributed than any other question, and there was less consensus on who and what types of housing would be most needed through this planning period. Generally, people continue to see the owner-occupied single-family detached housing type as important to the future of Lake Elmo. However, a significant number of people also identified the need for owner-occupied town homes and condominiums in the City. With respect to demographic trends, people believe the future needs in the City will continue to be households with young children, and empty-nesters looking to downsize but also recognized that there may be other demographics that may lack options within Lake Elmo.
- *Parks, Trails & Open Space (PTOS):* Respondents generally agreed on their top priorities for the PTOS system; they prioritized the desire to create more local trail connections into Lake Elmo Park Reserve (north and west), to improve and restore the quality of natural resources (lakes, wetland, woodlands, etc.) in the City, and finally identified the desire to make sure new developments (residential and commercial) are required to incorporate a public trail or sidewalk in development plans that provide connections to the larger city-wide planned trail network.
- *Transportation:* People generally rely on the City's existing roadway network as the primary mode of transportation and identified their top priority as maintenance and management of the existing roadway system. Ranked closely behind, respondents were interested in creating more dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian safety improvements on local roadways.

In addition to the top priorities identified through the Implementation Survey, the Advisory Panel has also discussed priorities for implementing this Comprehensive Plan throughout this planning process. A summary of the top priorities that have been discussed by the Advisory Panel over the last year include the following:

- Create zoning districts that support a balanced land use plan and provide opportunities for housing diversity including single-family, townhome and multi-family products within the developing areas of the community.
- Create opportunities for young people to come back to the community in their early adult years. This likely will include some market rate renter-occupied product (apartment, townhome, etc.), that could not only provide options for young professionals but seniors looking to downsize.
- Allow enough flexibility within this Plan and supporting implementation ordinances and policies to have the latitude to respond to market fluctuations and demands.
- Integrate and weave parks, trails, open spaces and natural resources into every development – rural or urbanizing. Create a green network that is an amenity, and accessible, to all residents.
- Create bikeways and pedestrian connections on major roadways to create a more hospitable network.
- Work with the County to see if there is an opportunity to provide non-motorized trail access/connections into the Lake Elmo Park Reserve, particularly from the north and west sides of the park.

10-3

Guided by the priorities identified from the Advisory Panel, and the Implementation Survey the following Implementation Chapter was developed. This Chapter is not intended to identify every planning or policy effort needed to implement this Comprehensive Plan, but instead is intended to provide a road-map of major initiatives that may require time, resources, and additional study to make sure the City prioritizes certain efforts as it continues to grow and evolve.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following strategies are organized by Chapter. In some cases some of the implementation strategies will perform ‘double-duty’ that is to say, there may be an implementation strategy identified that would assist with implementation of the goals and strategies of Chapter 3: Land Use and Chapter 5: Housing. In those cases, the implementation strategy is listed with the Comprehensive Plan Chapter that the implementation strategy most directly supports.

Chapter 3: Land Use

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City’s Future Land Use Plan and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. Create two new zoning designations that support the Mixed-Use Business Park and Mixed-Use Commercial land use designations. The process to prepare the new zoning districts will be led by the Planning Commission and may involve a subcommittee to develop the ordinances. This process should be initiated immediately upon adoption of this Comprehensive Plan and should be completed within nine (9) months. Each zoning district may address and include standards such as:
 - Massing and architecture
 - Setbacks
 - Height restrictions
 - Site design/landscape standards
 - Permitted, conditionally permitted, and not permitted uses
 - Mix of uses
 - PUD process
2. Establish whether each parcel is required to be planned for mix of uses, or if a master planned approach with ghost platting and tracking/monitoring is more desirable

10-4

3. Establish a staff and policymaker process and/or create and adopt a formal policy that defines how mixed-use development projects will be tracked for compliance with this Plan. The process must identify how the City will track the mix of land uses and provide a minimum of 50-percent of the land area within the designations for residential uses at densities that meet minimum thresholds as identified within this Plan. Tracking may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:
 - Require developers to ‘ghost’ plat and file the concept plan as an official document to establish land use mix consistent with this Plan. Create a database or inventory (e.g. Excel) to track residential units and associated density, and acreages associated with each use. This inventory should be considered and used during the development review process.
 - Create a ordinance and process reference sheet for developers and land owners that describes the mix of uses and process (PUD or otherwise) to ensure compliance with the ordinance.
4. The City may consider using a consultant to assist with developing a master plan for the Mixed-Use Commercial and Mixed-Use Business Park designations that can be used to inform the development of the zoning district requirements and the process to track development within these designations.
5. Create a new zoning district to support the Village High Density Residential (V-HDR) land use designation. This zoning district should be based on other Village residential zoning districts but will be refined and updated to reflect the increased density range identified within this Plan.
6. The City will review and revise, as necessary, current zoning district regulations for consistency with the residential density ranges contained within this document. The review, and any changes, will be completed within nine (9) months of adoption of this Plan.

10-5

The City’s current Zoning Map and Zoning District Descriptions can be found on the following pages. As noted, items 1 through 7 outline the changes need to support the Future Land Use plan contained in this Plan.

Zoning District Classifications:

The following description of the Zoning Districts are currently represented on the Official Zoning Map:

Agricultural (A)

Open Space Preservation District (OP)

Business Park (BP)

Business Park Planned Unit Development (BP-PUD)

Commercial (C)

Commercial Planned Unit Development (C-PUD)

Community Commercial (CC)

General Business (GB)

Limited Commercial (LC)

Limited Commercial Planned Unit Development (LC-PUD)

Low Density Residential (LDR)

10-6 Low Density Residential Planned Unit Development (LDR-PUD)

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

Medium Density Residential Planned Unit Development (MDR-PUD)

Golf Course Community (GCC)

Park/Public Facilities (PF)

Residential Planned Unit Development (R2-PUD)

Rural Estate (RE)

Right of Way (ROW)

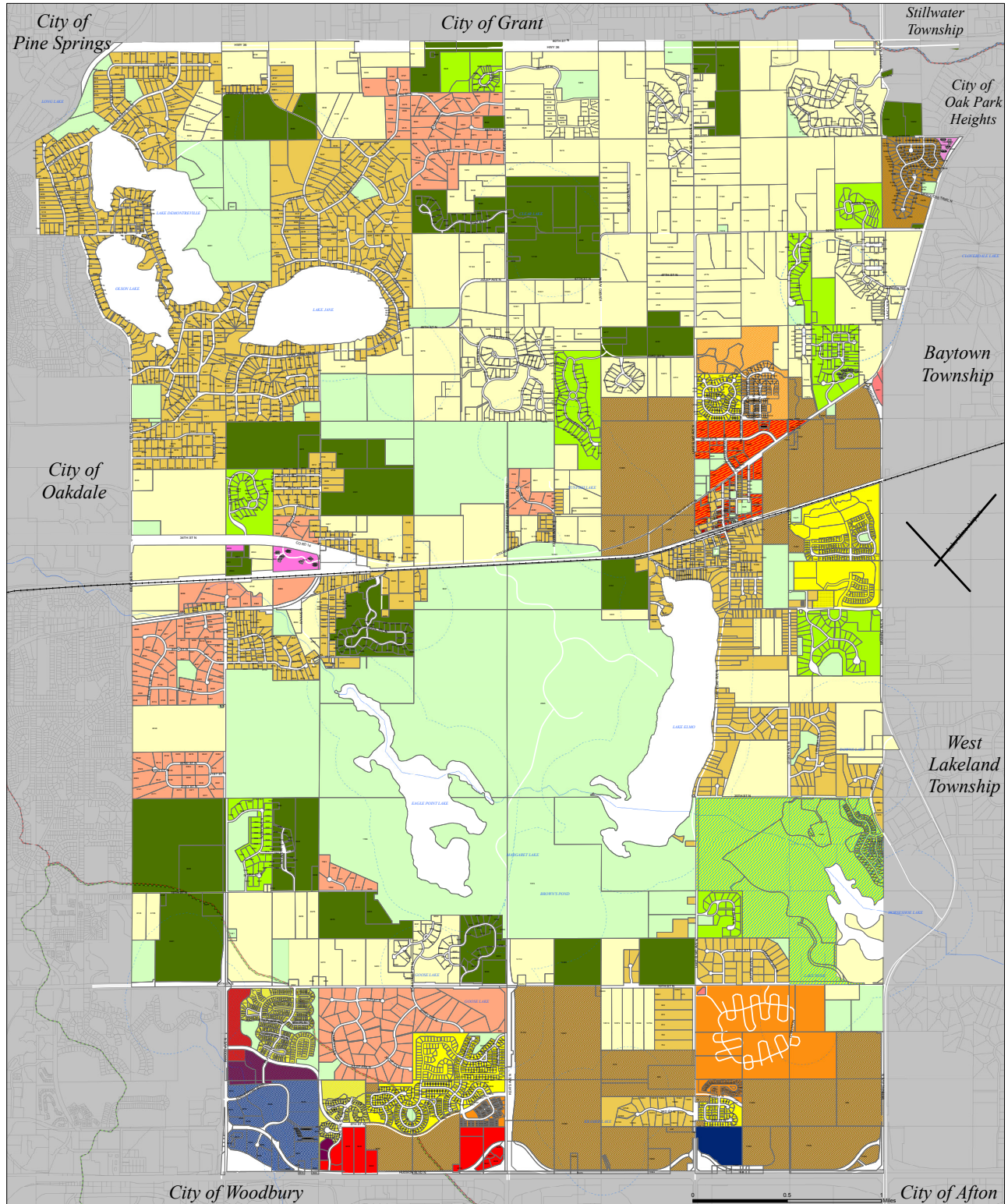
Rural Transition (RT)

Rural Residential (RR)

Rural Single Family (RS)

Village Mixed Use (VMX)

Lake Elmo Zoning Map



Zoning Districts

A	BP-PUD	GB	LC-PUD	MDR-PUD	RE	RS
OP	C	HDR	LDR	GCC	ROW	RT
BP	C-PUD	HDR-PUD	LDR-PUD	PF	RR	VMX
CC	LC	MDR	R2-PUD			

General

Lakes
Tributary
Shoreland Buffer

Watershed Districts

Browns Creek
Cottage Grove Ravine
Valley Branch

Data Source: Washington County
Updated by LE Planning Dept 8/17/2018

Chapter 4: Balanced Development and Growth

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Balanced Development and Growth Chapter and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. This City will prioritize and establish a cost for each of the zoning ordinance updates and budget appropriately to complete these updates within their next Capital Improvement Plan process. Some of these initiatives will likely be staff-led to be cost-effective while others may involve a focus group and/or consultant involvement. The City acknowledges that to effectively manage growth and development, the creation of clear, concise and easy to understand ordinances is integral to the implementation of this Plan.
2. The City will create three Overlay Districts for the Village Planning Area to support this Plan. The Overlay Districts will provide additional detail regarding the vision, plan, and specific standards that are unique and tailored to the specific overlay district. For example, the Old Village District overlay will focus on preservation of the integrity of Main Street and existing building patterns and uses within the District. This is unique to the Old Village Overlay District. The process will determine what characteristics and qualities are unique to each Overlay District, and a specific Zoning Overlay District will be added to the Zoning Ordinance and identified on the City's official Zoning Map. This process will include the Planning Commission and may include a subcommittee to prepare the criteria for each Overlay District. The Overlay Districts will be established and created within nine (9) months of adoption of this Plan.
3. The City will review and update its Open Space Development ordinance to focus on building the greenway network through connected conservation areas, public trails, and other natural resources.
4. The City will explore options to be cautiously proactive about the types of economic development it would like to see in its growth areas. To determine the appropriate level of involvement or engagement by policy makers, a task force, subcommittee, or staff review process may be initiated to establish an economic development and/or competitiveness plan.
5. The Phasing and/or Staging Plan identified within Chapter 3: Land Use, will serve as the foundation for development review and the approval process so that municipal utilities and infrastructure are contiguous and cost-effective.

10-8

6. The City will continue to prioritize identification of a solution to the current water supply issues related to the 3M contamination, and current freeze on water appropriation permits from the MnDNR. The City acknowledges that part of implementing a balanced growth plan is the ability to provide municipal services, and at this time there are obstacles that extend well beyond the City's borders and in some cases, beyond its control.

Chapter 5: Housing

The City's implementation program for Chapter 5: Housing is contained within that Chapter as required by the Metropolitan Council.

Chapter 6: Parks, Trails & Open Space

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Parks, Trails, and Open Space Chapter and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

10-9

1. The City will continue discussions with Washington County Parks to identify opportunities for improved trail connections into the Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve, particularly from the north and west side.
2. The City is open to participating on a task force or working group with the County to plan for future connections into the Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve.
3. The City will continue to require park dedication as established within the City's Ordinance, and will focus its priority on improving trail (bikeway and pedestrian) connections and providing open space/park access to new neighborhoods.
4. The Park Commission will be involved in initial stages of any development review and process and will provide recommendations regarding planned public trails, parks or other open spaces as identified within this Plan. The Park Commission will provide a written recommendation to the Planning Commission detailing how a proposed development plan is consistent, or inconsistent with this Plan and detailing what modifications are recommended, if any, for a project to be consistent with this Plan.

5. An update to the City's Park System Plan originally adopted in 2008 and incorporated as part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan should be completed to reflect recent changes due to development, and to incorporate the Goals and Strategies of this Plan. The System Plan should consider programming such as incorporating ADA accessibility in planning.
6. The City will consider collaborating with the County to plan for and include waste and recycling stations in various areas throughout the City's park and trail systems.
7. The City will prepare an update to the City's Trail System Plan originally adopted in 2005 and incorporated as part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, to reflect recent changes due to development, and to incorporate the Goals and Strategies of this Comprehensive Plan. The Trail System Plan should also include maps that identify existing trails, ownership (private or public), as well as planned trail routes and connections throughout existing and new developments.
8. The City will explore opportunities, either by ordinance, or through the development review process to support and enhance the Green Network through the continued enforcement of the park dedication ordinance.
9. The City will review existing ordinances and policies to identify opportunities to include standards that support the objectives of the Green Network and Resilient Infrastructure as described within this Plan.

10-10

Chapter 7: Transportation

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Transportation Chapter and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. The City will continue to work cooperatively with surrounding Cities, Washington County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and other government agencies in development of a transportation network consistent with the goals and strategies of this Plan.
2. The City will require developers to provide roadways, trails, and appropriate right-of-way consistent with the goals and strategies of this Plan. For example, the City has identified the continuation of the Minor Collector roadway (5th Street) to extend eastward to Manning Avenue as development progresses.
3. The City will participate in coalitions and multi-jurisdictional efforts for improvements to the transportation network that coincide with the overall goals of the City. This could include corridor studies/groups, transit oversight panels, and/or construction projects.
4. The City will continue to improve the transportation network to reflect all modes of travel, and will identify opportunities as development occurs to complete the bikeway and trail systems identified within this Plan or through future planning efforts.
5. The City will continue to work with MnDOT and Washington County on the TH 36 South Frontage Road Study to plan to provide safe and adequate access and connectivity to TH 36 for Lake Elmo residents, while minimizing traffic by-passing through the City.
6. The City will continue to support improvements that will maintain the rural character of Lake Elmo Avenue, in particular along the eastern shoreline of Lake Elmo.
7. The City will continue to incorporate the goals and strategies contained within this Plan into the Capital Improvement Plan process.
8. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is the financial planning mechanism used by the City to plan for long-term expenditures. Each year the CIP is revised and updated to reflect the City's priorities, and the CIP is used to aid in the annual budgeting process. Expenditures are made in accordance with the annual established and adopted budget for the following year. The transportation improvements will continue to be a priority within the CIP, and projects will be identified to implement and support this Comprehensive Plan.

10-11

Chapter 8: Surface Water

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Surface Water Chapter and the corresponding infrastructure goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. The City adopts and incorporates by reference the Watershed District's Water Management Plans, standards, and rules into this Plan and as a part of the City's permitting and development review process. The Watershed Districts will continue to enforce surface water regulations and permitting within the City within their geographic areas. The City will coordinate its review of development proposals with the Watershed Districts and will manage land use to support protection of surface and ground waters through its Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.
2. City Process. The City of Lake Elmo reviews proposed development per its Subdivision Ordinance. Design must be in compliance with Engineering Design Standards. An approved Watershed District permit is required prior to final plat acceptance. WCA approval of any wetland impact must be provided by the designated LGU for the Watershed District. Any impacts to public waters must be reviewed by the DNR. An NPDES Permit must be received from the MPCA when applicable. An approved SWPPP must be provided for all subdivisions. No building permit is issued until the following has been completed:
 - The City will support the Watershed Districts' implementation of their standards for management of water quantity and quality, including control of peak runoff, volume control, infiltration and filtration, wetland quality, and best management practices to control Total Suspended Solids (TSS), Total Phosphorus (TP), and runoff from development or redevelopment within the City.
3. The Watershed Districts will continue to play the primary role in reviewing storm water plans for development applications within the City, and the City will condition any development approvals on demonstrated compliance with the Watershed District Rules. The City will direct applicants to submit completed permit applications of any development proposals at time of City application, and will work cooperatively with the Watershed Districts through the review and approval process.
4. The City will continue to work with each Watershed District on refinement of coordination of permit and development application review processes and timelines.
5. The City will update its ordinances to be consistent Watershed plans, standards and rules, and with NPDES construction storm water permit requirements for erosion and sediment control if necessary.

10-12

6. The City will cooperate with the Watershed Districts to address concerns related to impaired waters and, as the Watershed Districts complete TMDL studies, will manage land use to avoid impacts to water resources within the City.
7. The City will continue to implement the City's MS4 Permit and SWPPP requirements.
8. Funding Mechanisms. The City will continue to use general fund revenues and storm water utility funds to fund improvements when needed to address water quality and quantity concerns and maintain city-owned storm water management facilities. The City's commitments to system maintenance are described in detail in its MS4 permit and SWPPP. The City requires that developers finance the improvements that are required with new development and redevelopment to ensure that private developments meet City and watershed requirements.
9. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The City's CIP will incorporate specific implementation strategies for surface water management as part of the budgeting process.
10. The City's inspection and maintenance program and pollution prevention/good housekeeping is completed under the MS4 Permit and documented per the SWPPP. 10-13
11. The City will continue to implement the strategies and recommendations as needed from the Old Village Area Regional Stormwater Management Study that was completed by SEH, in May 2015, to continue to address and mitigate the Old Village Area flooding problems and to protect resources in the Down's Lake Watershed and downstream.
12. City Ordinances. The City's adopted ordinances that provide standards and regulations to manage water resources include the following:
 - Chapter 53 Storm water Management Utility
 - Chapter 91 Forests and Trees
 - Chapter 150 Illicit Discharge and Connection
 - Chapter 152 Flood Plain Management
 - Chapter 153 Subdivision Regulations
 - Chapter 154 Zoning Code

Chapter 9: Wastewater Services

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Wastewater Services Chapter and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. The City will review and update its Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan based on the Land Use and Zoning adopted in this Plan to ensure system capacity is available for each service area, including an updated Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement Plan.
2. The City will work with the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) to further understand the downstream capacity limitations and planned improvements required for the City's Oakdale interceptor connection and/or WONE interceptor connection; and will coordinate planned improvements with MCES.
3. The City will provide new sanitary sewer extensions consistent with the sanitary sewer staging plan and within the general time frames established as part of this Plan, when possible, and as market conditions warrant.
4. The City will continue to operate and maintain the City-owned 201 Community wastewater systems and will develop a system replacement plan.
5. The City will continue to support the MPCA and County's oversight, monitoring, permitting and enforcement of their respective ISTS rules and regulations within the City.

10-14

Appendix H: Water Supply

The following implementation steps and strategies are identified to support the City's Water Supply System needs and the corresponding goals and strategies identified within Chapter 2 of this Plan.

1. The City will work expeditiously with the MDH, MnDNR and other agencies with regulatory authority of the City's Municipal Water Supply to identify a solution to the closure and decommissioning of Water Supply Well #1 and to implement a new water supply well to meet the existing and growing water customer base.

2. The City will work to implement a new water storage facility to serve the growing water system demands in the low pressure zone (Village Area south of the UPRR and southeastern parts of the City) and to replace the aging Water Tower No.1.
3. The City will review and update its Comprehensive Water System plan based on the Land Use adopted by this Plan to ensure system capacity is available for each service area, including an updated Water System Capital Improvement Plan.
4. The City will continue to work with the MDH to monitor the groundwater contamination plumes and contamination impacts to Lake Elmo properties and will develop a mitigation plan for extending the City's water supply to replace private wells whenever feasible.
5. The City will work to identify appropriate funding resources, including the recent 3M Settlement Fund and Closed Landfill Fund, to implement City water supply extensions to replace private wells, and to address short and long-term public water supply system improvements.
6. Continue to monitor the potential future use of Well No. 3 and Well No. 1 by providing water treatment, but plan for the abandonment of these wells when they are deemed no longer needed. Abandonment is important to protect against groundwater contamination at the well locations. 10-15
7. Negotiate a long-term Agreement with the City of Oakdale for a water system interconnect between the two Cities for standby emergency water supply use.
8. Maintain the City's Water Supply Plan consistent with the MnDNR water supply plan template and continue to provide necessary reporting through the MnDNR Permit and Reporting System (MPARS). Continue to incrementally review the Water Supply Plan to ensure it is consistent with continuing development activities and demands.
9. Implement water conservation measures as identified in the City's Water Supply Plan included as Appendix H of this Plan.