

# City of Windom Comprehensive Plan

December

2018

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*This project was a collaboration between the City of Windom and the Development Office which includes the Economic Development Authority of Windom and Planning and Zoning.*

# CITY OF WINDOM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WITH ACTIVE LIVING COMPONENT

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December 2018

## Executive Summary

The Windom Comprehensive Plan is an official public document adopted by the Windom City Council as a guide to decision-making. The Plan presents a general concept for the future land uses. An Active Living component was also integrated into the Comprehensive Plan and the Windom Active Living Plan is included as an addendum.

This Compressive Plan update represents a renewal of a planning process that began in 2005. In 2005, the Building and Zoning Official for the City started to update the plan. Draft chapters were developed, and this information was incorporated into the plan.

The original Comprehensive Plan for the City was adopted in April, 1978. There has not been an adopted update to the Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended that the Comprehensive Plan be subject to periodic review and that it undergo revision and updating every 10 to 15 years.

Upon adoption by the City Council, this Plan will become a legal planning document. It serves as an official means to facilitate the orderly, planned development of the community. It thus acts as a guide for local officials and decision makers who are actively involved in the physical growth of the City. It also provides a reference to answer questions arising as to what, when, where, and how development should occur.

Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan provides the basis for the implementation of planning activities such as zoning and subdivision regulations, the annual budget and work programs, the Capital Improvements Plan, and any related grant or loan programs. Most notably, in the case of zoning and subdivision regulations, a Comprehensive Plan is recognized as the basis for enactment of such regulations by identifying where and what types of development can and should occur within the community. Above all, this publication is intended to provide the City of Windom with the tools it needs to guide future development in an efficient and orderly manner.

*It should be noted that the Comprehensive Plan provides the basis for the implementation of planning activities. As implementation occurs it is likely that modifications will occur that are not outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a guiding tool, so additional community input and planning is during implementation may be necessary. Steps should be taken to ensure there are adequate opportunities for public input into the planning process and implementation.*

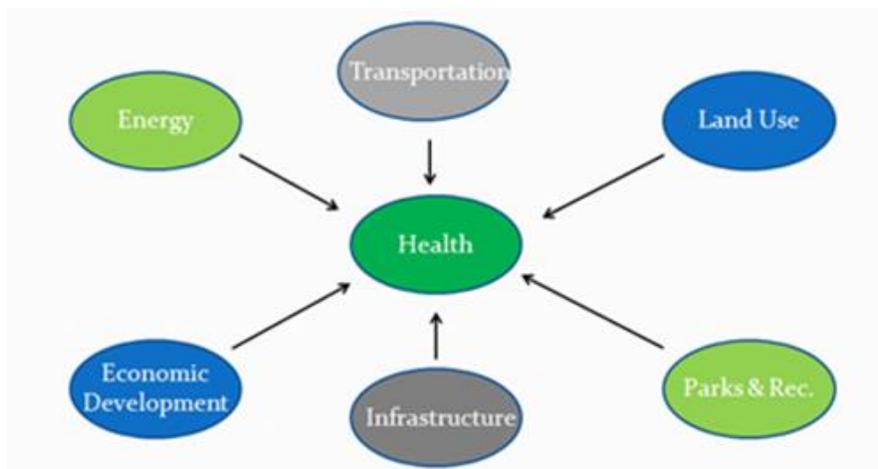
Incorporated into the Plan are elements relating to land use and include: demographics, housing, economy, transportation, active living, parks and recreation, physical features, community facilities, infrastructure, and existing and future land use. Increasingly these elements are being incorporated with a common theme of health in all policies. Health is influenced by the built environment, so it is important that decision makers consider the health impacts of land use decisions.

A common theme through the entirety of this plan is health, livability, and active living. These elements are all impacted by the built environment, so it is critical that decision makers consider these elements when making land use decisions.

### Overarching Vision

1. Recognize that growth happens over time, and that all neighborhoods are on a continuum of improvement. City policies and regulations need to be flexible to allow for change and growth.
2. Incorporate *Health In All Policies* into City planning and land use decisions.
3. Encourage new development without large expenditures for infrastructure (infill projects).
4. Enhance, Market, Promote – incorporate into all City planning.

**G-Figure #1** **Health In All Policies**



Incorporating active living into this Comprehensive Plan is a fundamental change in the way planning has been traditionally considered. This new vision of planning provides a unique opportunity for new partnerships between planning staff and engineers with advocates for active transportation and health related organizations. Through the adoption of this plan the City of Windom wants to strengthen the link between planning and health and foster an environment that enables people to lead healthy lives.

The stated goals in this plan reflect the aims and desires of the citizens of this community and correlate with the policies that establish direction for decision making. Together, the goals and strategies form a general framework around which the plan was developed. In both narrative and graphic forms, this Comprehensive Plan charts a course for development within the City of Windom.

Ultimately, it is the goal of the City of Windom to ensure that future development remains in conjunction with the goals and policies outlined in this Plan. To act otherwise would cause this document to lose its validity - allowing it to serve little, if any, purpose.

### **Community Vision**

In 2012, the City of Windom completed a Long Range Plan. A vision was developed as part of the planning process for the Long Range Plan. This vision is being incorporated into the Windom Comprehensive Plan.

The Council identified the following seven elements as a foundation for the City's future vision.

- I. Deep sense of pride and community self-esteem
- II. Connected, engaged, and invested citizens
- III. Competent, professional and progressive workplace culture
- IV. Promote and cultivate local business retention and development
- V. Promote, invest in and discover the future community leaders
- VI. Commitment to a collaborative future for our community
- VII. Market and brand the traditional values of our community

Five strategies were developed to guide city officials in pursuit of the vision.

- I. Community Pride – A positive image and reputation developed by a progressive and active community.
- II. Community Vitality – Create a diversified jobs base and a thriving, revitalized commercial corridor and downtown square.
- III. Organizational Culture – Provide high quality public services.
- IV. Public Facilities – Maintain and upgrade public infrastructure and City facilities pursuant to a defined and prioritized plan.
- V. Natural Resources – Utilize and market the value and beauty of our land and geography.

Strategies and goals from the Long Range Plan can be found in Appendix A.

**For more information regarding the Windom Comprehensive Plan, contact:**



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# CHAPTER 1: Geographic Area & Planning Process

## Geographic Location

The City of Windom is located in Cottonwood County in the southwest portion of Minnesota.

### Transportation

Windom is located along Minnesota Highway 60, a 4-lane connection between Minneapolis – St. Paul, Minnesota and Omaha, Nebraska. This location offers excellent shipping routes and connectivity to national shipping networks.

### High Speed Internet

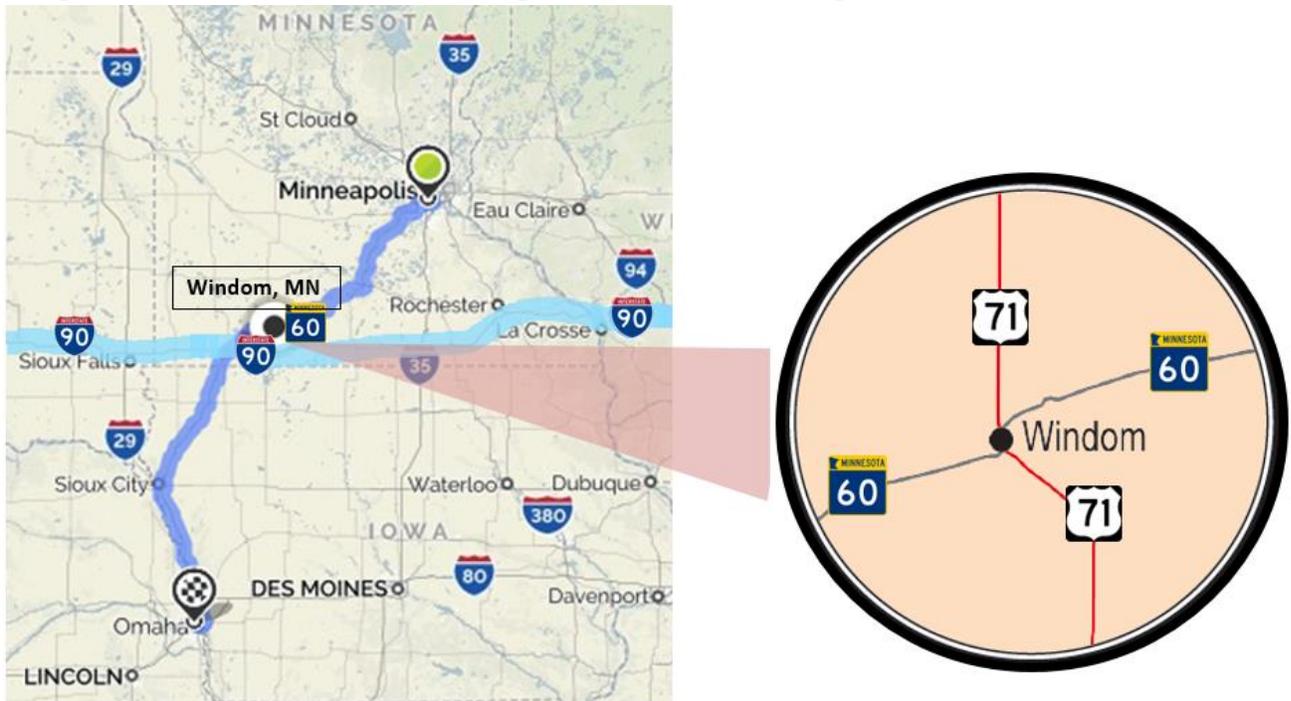
Windom is located along the information highway. Numerous fiber networks run through Windom. There are multiple Tier 2 carriers which provide fiber to the home or business.

### Livability

Windom is located along the scenic Des Moines River and the west side of Cottonwood Lake. The community features a new community center, developed parks system, city swimming pool, and a beautiful downtown square with shopping, greenspace, and dining.

**G-Figure #2**

**Regional Identification Map – Windom**



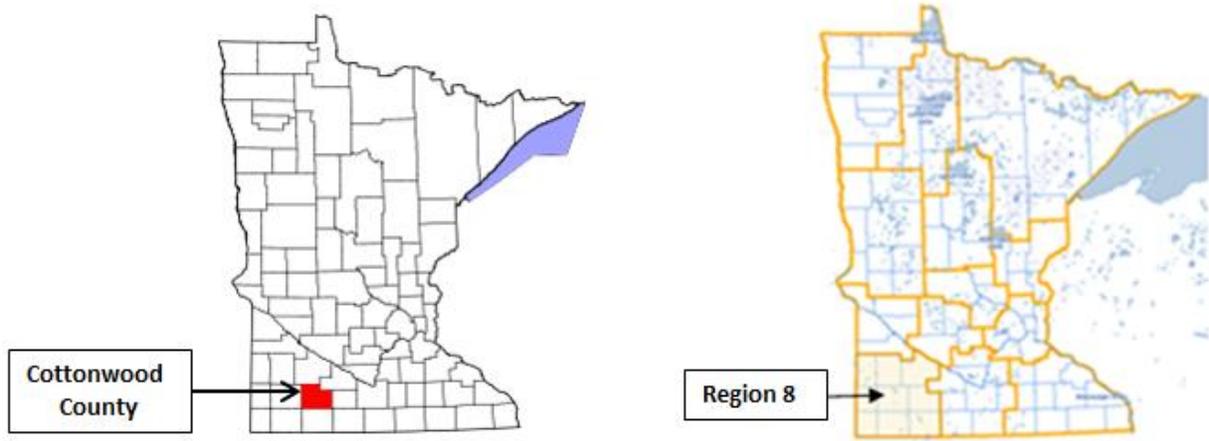
The county's boundaries are joined by Redwood County to the north, Brown County to the northeast, Watonwan County to the east, Jackson County to the south, Nobles County to the southwest, and Murray County to the west. Windom is located at the intersection of Minnesota Highway 60 and US Highway 71.

**G-Figure #3 Township Map - Cottonwood County**



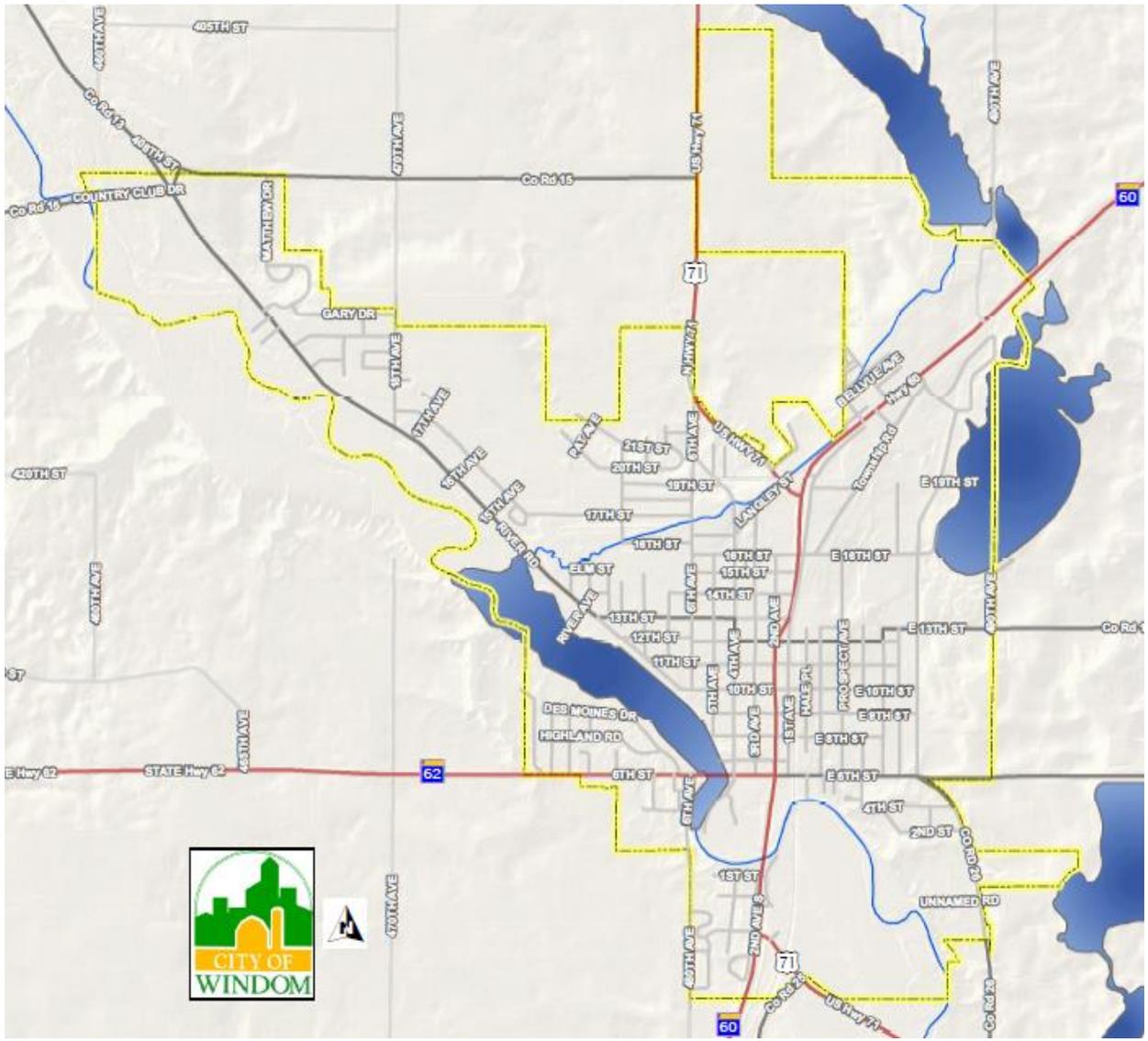
G-Figure #4

Cottonwood County & Region 8 Development Commission



G-Figure #5

City Limits Map - Windom



G-Figure #6

Points of Interest - Windom



Points of Interest

- 1 BARC (Business, Arts & Recreation Center)
- 2 County Law Enforcement Center
- 3 City Hall
- 4 City Library
- 5 Cottonwood County Courthouse
- 6 Post Office
- 7 Cottonwood County Historical Museum
- 8 Chamber of Commerce
- 9 St. Francis Xavier Catholic Cemetery
- 10 Cottonwood County Family Services
- 11 Lakewick Cemetery

Area Churches

- A American Lutheran Church, ELCA
- B Assembly of God
- C Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal
- D Evangelical Free Church
- E First Baptist
- F First Presbyterian

Area Schools

- 1 Windom Area Middle/High School
- 2 Winfair Elementary School
- 3 Red Rock Ridge Alternative Learning Center

## Description of the Planning Process

Community input was critical in the development of the Windom Comprehensive Plan. The planning process for the Windom Comprehensive Plan was an efficient planning process based on community meetings, online input via Wikimapping, and a community survey. Community members had a variety of ways to participate and provide input.

### Participation in Plan Development

The development of the Windom Comprehensive Plan was a multiparty effort between the City of Windom, Economic Development Authority of Windom (EDA), community members, private sector representatives, service organization representatives, and public organizations. Public participation and the expertise of elected and appointed city representatives played a prominent role in guiding the planning process.

#### Comprehensive Plan Committee:

- Steve Nasby – City Administrator
- Dominic Jones – Mayor/ Economic Development Authority Liaison
- Brian Cooley – Street Superintendent (Brent Brown – Electrical & Street Department)
- Drew Hage – Economic Development Authority & Development Office
- Wayne Wormstadt – Superintendent : Windom Public Schools
- Marv Grunig – Council Representative
- Bryan Joyce – Council Representation
- Kevin Stevens – County Commissioner (Donna Gravely – Alternate)
- Mary Ann Anderson – Community Member (Previous Comp Plan Committee)
- Coralee Krueger – Community Member (Previous Comp Plan Committee)

#### *Prior Comprehensive Planning Effort*

An initial Comprehensive Planning Process started in 2004 and 2005. This planned effort developed draft chapters, goals, and strategies. These draft documents were not finalized and developed into a plan. These draft documents were incorporated into the 2017 and 2018 update.

The planning process restarted in 2013 through 2015. Draft documents were developed during this planning effort, but the draft documents were not finalized and developed into a plan. These draft documents were incorporated into the 2017 and 2018 update.

#### *Windom Active Living Plan*

The Windom Active Living Plan was finalized in November, 2016. Public input for the plan occurred over the summer and fall. This public input was incorporated into the planning process for the

Comprehensive Plan. Wikimapping and a Community Survey were part of the planning process for the Active Living Plan. Refer to the Addendum for the Windom Active Living Plan and a description of the planning process.

### *Wikimapping*

Wikimapping is an online public input tool community members used to identify issues regarding walking and biking in the City of Windom. Community members provided input by adding a point or route on an interactive map or by commenting on existing posts. This was part of the planning process for the Active Living component of the Comprehensive Plan. Wikimapping was an effective way of engaging community members who were not able to attend the community meetings. Refer to Appendix B and C for the Wikimapping Landing Page.

### *Community Survey*

A Community Survey was distributed as part of the planning process for the Active Living Plan. The survey was distributed via email through community list serves and was posted on the City of Windom's website. The survey was also available in hard copy at City Hall and the Windom Library. The survey was another tool to engage community members who were not able to attend the two community meetings. Refer to the Appendix C for the Community Assessment Survey.

### *Comprehensive Plan – Planning Process*

Outreach for the Windom Comprehensive Plan was initiated by sending out information regarding the planning process and a news article in the Citizen Newspaper. All of the community meetings for the Comprehensive Plan were announced at the City Council meeting prior to the meeting. The Planning Team was also critical in conducting outreach for the meetings. The majority of community meetings were held prior to the second council meeting of every month.

The agendas for the community meetings focused on reviewing the background information that was developed for the meeting; review and update the previously developed goals and strategies; and to ask meeting attendees to share the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) of each area of analysis. The SWOT analysis helped in the development of goals, strategies, and objectives that will be included in the Comprehensive Plan. An important aspect of the community meetings was to develop an overarching vision. Refer to page iii for the overarching vision.

### *Community Meeting #1 – Demographics & Housing*

The first community meeting was held at City Hall on January 17, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to review demographic information regarding Windom. This discussion guided the development of new goals, objectives, and strategies and the reconfirmation of the goal to reach 5,000 people. Draft Demographic goals and strategies from past planning efforts were discussed and updated.

### *Community Meeting #2 – Housing*

The second community meeting was held at City Hall on February 21, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to continue our discussion regarding housing and to develop new goals,

objectives, and strategies regarding housing in Windom. Draft Demographic goals and strategies from past planning efforts were also discussed and updated.

#### *Community Meeting #3 – Economy*

The third community meeting was held at City Hall on March 21, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to review information regarding the economy in Windom. Part of the Economy Chapter was to focus on Market Study that was developed by the University of Minnesota Extension. The discussion at the meeting was guided by the previously developed goals and strategies. We needed to expand on this to develop objectives that can be implemented.

#### *Community Meeting #4 – Economy & Transportation*

Additional time was needed to review and update the previously developed goals and strategies for the Economy Chapter. The fourth community meeting was held at City Hall on April 18, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to finish our discussion on the Economy Chapter and start our discussion on the Transportation Chapter. We only covered the Economy Chapter at this meeting.

#### *Community Meeting #5 – Transportation*

The fifth community meeting was held at City Hall on May 16, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to review information regarding the transportation system in Windom. Pedestrian planning was the focus of the recently completed Windom Active Living Plan. Draft Transportation goals and strategies from past planning efforts were also discussed and updated.

#### *Subcommittee Meeting #1 – Transportation & Active Living*

A Bikeable Communities Workshop was led by the Minnesota Bike Alliance at the Windom Hospital on May 31, 2017, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. The workshop included an informational session regarding pedestrian safety before the community bike ride. After the bike ride we discussed bike safety and we developed draft projects. The draft projects were added to the Implementation Guide for the Windom Active Living Plan.

#### *Subcommittee Meeting #2 – Natural Resources & Physical Features*

Audubon International led the kickoff meeting for Windom to initiate into Audubon's Sustainable Communities Program on June 1<sup>st</sup> through June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. A local assessment was initiated during the Audubon International visit and kickoff. The local assessment includes 15 different areas that include: Agriculture; Economic Development and Tourism; Education, Environment; Governance; Public Health; Housing; Open Space and Land Use; Planning, Zoning, Building, and Development; Population; Public Safety and Emergency Management; Recreation; Resource Use; and Transportation. The kickoff meeting focused on Agriculture, Environment, and Resource Use. These initial discussions will guide the Natural Resources and Physical Features Chapter.

#### *Community Meeting #6 – Parks & Recreation*

The sixth community meeting was held at City Hall on June 20, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to review results from a Parks Survey that was administered as part of the Comprehensive Plan Planning Process. 397 community members responded to the Parks Survey. The

Parks Survey can be found in Appendix D. Draft Transportation goals and strategies from past planning efforts were also discussed and updated.

*Community Meeting #7 – Community Facilities*

The seventh community meeting was held at City Hall on July 18, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss community facilities. The meeting focused on the Ice Arena and Community Center. A footprint plan for the Community Center was also a main focus. Draft Community Facility goals and strategies from past planning efforts were also discussed and updated.

*Community Meeting #8 – Present & Future Land Use*

The eighth community meeting was held at City Hall on August 15, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss nonconforming land uses within the City and to review draft Future Land Use Maps. The draft Future Land Use Maps were developed by Development Department staff with feedback from the past community meetings. Planning Team members and past community meeting attendees were able to review the draft Future Land Use Maps prior to the meeting. Feedback during the meeting helped to develop a Future Land Use Map that was reviewed via email prior to the draft review process.

*Subcommittee Meeting #3 – Utility Infrastructure*

Development Department staff review the utility infrastructure maps at Community Meeting number two as part of our housing discussion. Prior to the meeting the utility infrastructure maps were discussed with the Water & Wastewater Superintendent and the Public Works Director (Electric Department and Street Department). Utility infrastructure was also discussed with City staff to prepare for the Present and Future Plan Use meeting.

An Infrastructure Chapter Subcommittee meeting was held as part of the regularly scheduled Utility Commission meeting on January 25, 2018. The Utility Commission is one of the main decision makers when it comes to determining future growth options. Infrastructure is the largest cost for most developments, so thorough planning is needed at multiple levels before a new development should move forward. Draft tables from the Infrastructure Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan were reviewed and discussed. The draft Future Land Use Maps were also reviewed and discussed.

*Subcommittee Meeting #4 – Draft Review Process*

Development Department staff summarized feedback from community meetings, prior draft documents regarding the Comprehensive Plan, and community input into a draft Windom Comprehensive Plan. The review process started with individual sections of the plan being emailed out to Planning Team members. Once more finalized drafts were developed, a draft Windom Comprehensive Plan was shared with community meeting attendees, community groups, and the Planning Team. The draft Windom Comprehensive Plan was also available on the City's website. Local press and social media were used to direct community members to the draft Windom Comprehensive Plan.

*Community Meeting #9 – Draft Review Meeting*

The ninth community meeting was held at City Hall on \_\_\_\_\_, 2017, from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to review feedback and comments regarding the draft Windom Comprehensive Plan. The objective of the meeting was to finalize the plan before it is submitted to the

City of Windom for adoption. The Windom Comprehensive Plan was posted online on the City's website and was shared with planning Team members and past community meeting attendees via email. A hard copy of the plan was also available at City Hall.

## **Description of the Goals, Strategies & Objectives**

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the City of Windom wants to achieve. A goal is often a broad concept or outcome. A Broad goal was developed for chapters of Comprehensive Plan by prior Comprehensive Planning efforts, and these goals were updated and incorporated into every chapter of this plan.

Strategies narrow the general guidelines and define in more detail how the goal will be achieved. A strategy is the approach that will be taken to achieve a goal. Numerous broad strategies were developed for every chapter by prior Comprehensive Planning efforts and these strategies were updated and incorporated into every chapter of this plan.

Objectives are the actual steps to be taken to achieve the goals. An objective is often a measurable step you can take to achieve a strategy. An objective may just be the first step, but the general need for the project is outlined. Prior Comprehensive Planning efforts did not identify specific action steps to achieve the strategies and overarching goal for each chapter. A number of the objectives were developed using existing SMART Goals. SMART Goals are updated annually City Department Heads.

The goals, strategies, objectives are a guide. As additional planning and implementation occurs, strategies and objectives will likely evolve. The City will work within these guiding principles to achieve the outlined goals.

The specific strategies and objectives for each chapter were ranked by the Planning Team on a three point scale: high priority, medium priority, and low priority. This ranking or prioritization will help with directing time and money. Prioritization does not mean that the first goal has to be accomplished before moving onto another goal.

The purpose of the prioritization is to show that there was a discussion about the possible options and with unlimited resources this is what they would choose to accomplish first. Due to scarce resources, it may be necessary to start with a goal that has less upfront costs and is relatively easier to implement. The goals and action steps being outlined in the Windom Comprehensive Plan are recommendations, so during implementation modifications can take place.

# CHAPTER 2: Demographics

## Introduction

Population growth has not been norm in southwest Minnesota. The 2010 Census show a trending population decline in Southwest Minnesota. This is true for Cottonwood County and Development Region 8, but it is not true for the City of Windom. Between 2000 and 2010, Windom grew by 3.5 percent.

Windom has experienced continued growth from 1940 to 2010. Between 1940 and 1970 Windom experienced a 40.8% increase in population. Between 1970 and 2000 Windom experienced an 14% increase in population.

Windom is well positioned for growth. Windom is located at the intersection of Minnesota Highway 60 and U.S. Highway 71. Windom is the midpoint between Omaha and Minneaplis – St. Paul on a 4-lane highway network. This location offers excellent shipping routes and connectivity to national shipping networks, and offers excellent connectivity for area residents to and from regional metropolitan areas and interstate transportation routes.

Windom is also located along an information highway. Windomnet is a municipally-owned telecommunications company which provides citywide fiber-to-the-home or business. In addition, there are 14 Telecommunication Providers/Carriers (Tier 2 carriers) going through Windom with 11 different fiber routes. This redundancy provides reliable high speed internet for home or business, and allows community members to conduct business worldwide while still enjoy the amenities of a close-knit community.

**D-Figure #1 Regional Population & Households**

### Regional Draw

Windom is a regional center in Southwest Minnesota. The surrounding communities support businesses in Windom, and a large percentage of the workforce computes to Windom. Approximately 35 percent of Prime Pork, Fast Global Solutions & Toro employees live in the 56101 zip code (2018).



## Livability

Livability and community pride make Windom a great space to live and raise a family. Windom is located along the scenic Des Moines River and the west side of Cottonwood Lake. The community features a community center, developed parks system, city swimming pool, and a beautiful downtown square with shopping, greenspace, and dining.

## Historical Trends

It is important to analyze past population trends before planning for the future. Population trends impact the demand for goods and services in Windom and Cottonwood County. Population trends in Windom, Cottonwood County, and Development Region 8 all need to be analyzed as part of planning in the City of Windom.

However historical trends can only provide a limited outlook into the future. Population projections are also a key component along with qualitative information regarding personal preferences. It should be acknowledged that population projections are dependent upon a number of factors some of which are beyond municipal control.

Census data was the primary data source for this chapter. The American Communities Survey was only used when census data was not available. The American Communities Survey is an estimate based on a smaller sample size since Windom and Cottonwood County are relatively small in regards to population.

## Population

Windom is the largest city in Cottonwood County and is a hub for business and social activity in Southwest Minnesota. According to the 2010 Census, the population of Windom was 4,646. There was a 3.5 percent population increase from 2000 to 2010.

From 1980 to 2010, Cottonwood County saw a population decrease of 21.3 percent. The population decline in Cottonwood County has slowed to 3.9 percent from 2000 to 2010. Cottonwood County has seen a population decrease similar to other counties in Development Region 8.

Development Region 8 saw a 13.1 percent population decrease from 1980 to 2010. From 2000 to 2010, Development Region 8's population decline slowed to 2.1 percent.

**D-Table #1**

**Population**

Type	1980	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010	2015 Estimate*
Windom	4,666	4,283	4,490	4,646	3.5%	4,550
Cottonwood County	14,854	12,694	12,167	11,687	-3.9%	11,549
Region 8	137,039	123,400	121,717	119,151	-2.1%	NA

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010

\*Source: American Community Survey (this is an estimate based on a sample)

## Age Distribution

The Population by Age cohort can help planners identify trends and make predictions based on these trends. Changes in age cohorts can also help government plan for changes in demand for specific services.

If the childbearing cohorts decline, government can make predictions that student enrollments may decline in the near future.

The largest gain in population by age cohort was the age group 55 to 64 with 27.6 percent. The second largest gain was the age group 0 to 4 with 24.4 percent. The largest loss in population by age cohort was 10 to 14 with -18.0 percent.

**D-Table #2 Age Distribution – Windom**

Age	2000-Number	2000-Percent	2010-Number	2010-Percent	Percent Change 2000–2010
0-4	246	5.5%	306	6.6%	24.4%
5-9	273	6.1%	322	6.9%	17.9%
10-14	334	7.4%	274	5.9%	-18.0%
15-19	325	7.2%	281	6%	-13.5%
20-24	182	4.1%	213	4.6%	15.1%
25-34	463	10.3%	496	10.7%	7.1%
35-44	632	14.1%	576	12.4%	-8.9%
45-54	617	13.7%	629	13.6%	1.9%
55-64	442	9.9%	564	12.2%	27.6%
65 and Over	976	21.8%	985	21.2%	0.9%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,490</b>		<b>4,646</b>		

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010

### Median Age

The median age of Windom is slightly higher than Development Region 8 and significantly higher than Minnesota. Cottonwood County’s median age is significantly higher than Windom, Region 8, and Minnesota. As the population ages, demand for public services also shifts. Resource allocation should adjust as demand for public services change to meet community needs.

**D-Table #3 Median Age**

	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000 - 2010
Windom	41.8	42.6	1.9%
Cottonwood County	41.7	44.2	6.0%
Region 8	39.9	41.5	4.0%
Minnesota	35.4	37.4	5.6%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000, 2010

### Race Distribution

Many communities in Southwest Minnesota have started to see an increase in minority populations and have started to plan for increasing minority populations. Windom has not seen a large change in demographic makeup. In 2000, 97.1 percent of residents in Windom reported their race as white. In 2010, 92.1 percent of residents reported their race as white. Refer to the Cultural Diversity strategy and objective on page 194 for additional information.

**D-Table #4****Race Distribution – Windom**

Race	2000- Number	2000- Percent	2010- Number	2010- Percent	Percent Change
White	4,362	97.1	4,277	92.1	-1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	71	1.6	373	8.0	425.4%
Asian	32	0.7	55	1.2	71.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	15	0.3	12	0.3	-20.0%
Black or African American	11	0.2	64	1.4	481.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	0.1	15	0.3	200.0%
Some other race	38	0.8	170	3.7	347.4%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010

**Population Projections**

Population projections from the Minnesota State Demographic Center show that the population in Cottonwood County is projected to increase by 3.5 percent from 2020 to 2045. The projections show an increase in the age cohorts 0-4, 5-9, 30-39, 40-49, 65+. All of the other population cohorts are expected to decrease over the same time period.

The population for the City of Windom is projected to increase by 4.4 percent from 2010 to 2020. From 2020 to 2030 the population is projected to increase by 2.1 percent. The population growth from 2010 to 2030 will bring the population of Windom to approximately 4,950. As Windom's population increases and the County's population declines, local governments must ensure that services and needs are met as the demands for public services change.

**D-Table #5****Demographic Projections – Cottonwood County**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Percent Change 2020 - 2045
Total Population	12,020	12,184	12,317	12,429	12,433	12,443	3.5%
<b>Male</b>	5,946	6,085	6,170	6,220	6,252	6,264	5.3%
<b>Female</b>	6,074	6,099	6,147	6,209	6,181	6,179	1.7%
Age Distribution							
<b>0-4</b>	678	726	754	747	718	701	3.4%
<b>5-9</b>	628	669	715	745	742	718	14.3%
<b>10-19</b>	1,550	1,392	1,312	1,401	1,486	1,528	-1.4%
<b>20-29</b>	1,431	1,511	1,467	1,314	1,242	1,348	-5.8%
<b>30-39</b>	1,276	1,332	1,477	1,559	1,528	1,389	8.9%
<b>40-49</b>	1,145	1,169	1,278	1,334	1,492	1,592	39.0%
<b>50-59</b>	1,377	1,208	1,112	1,140	1,257	1,330	-3.4%
<b>60-64</b>	825	758	598	594	510	630	-23.6%
<b>65+</b>	3,110	3,419	3,604	3,595	3,458	3,207	3.1%

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center, March 2014

D-Table #6a

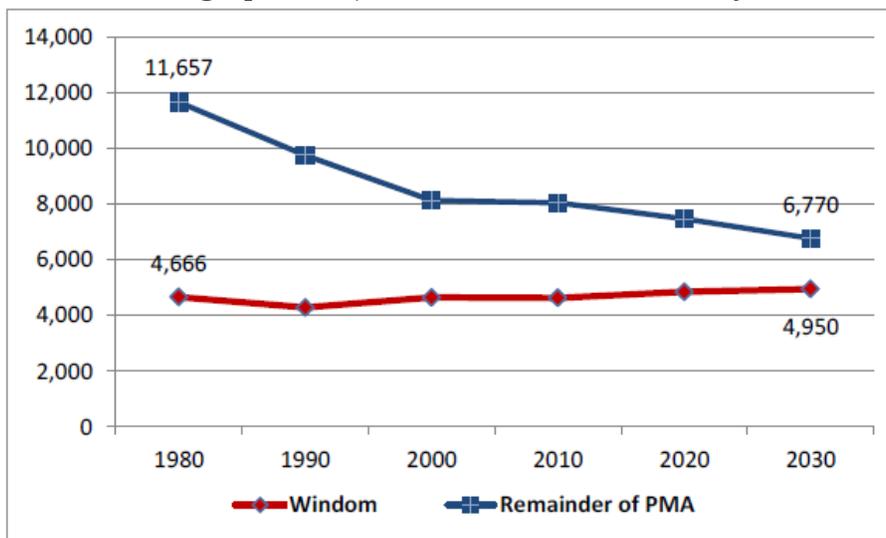
Demographic Projections – Windom

	Census 2010	Estimate 2014	-- Projections --		----- Change -----			
			2020	2030	-- 2010 - 2020 -- No.	Pct.	-- 2020 - 2030 -- No.	Pct.
<b>POPULATION</b>								
Windom	4,646	4,630	4,850	4,950	204	4.4	100	2.1
Remainder of PMA	8,133	8,045	7,470	6,770	-663	-8.2	-700	-9.4
<b>PMA</b>	<b>12,779</b>	<b>12,675</b>	<b>12,320</b>	<b>11,720</b>	<b>-459</b>	<b>-3.6</b>	<b>-600</b>	<b>-4.9</b>
<i>Cottonwood County</i>	<i>11,687</i>	<i>11,590</i>	<i>11,400</i>	<i>11,000</i>	<i>-287</i>	<i>-2.5</i>	<i>-400</i>	<i>-3.5</i>
<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>5,310,584</i>	<i>5,490,800</i>	<i>5,772,259</i>	<i>6,182,305</i>	<i>461,675</i>	<i>8.7</i>	<i>410,046</i>	<i>7.1</i>
<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>								
Windom	1,994	1,990	2,075	2,100	81	4.1	25	1.2
Remainder of PMA	3,346	3,300	3,125	2,900	-221	-6.6	-225	-7.2
<b>PMA</b>	<b>5,340</b>	<b>5,290</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>-140</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-200</b>	<b>-3.8</b>
<i>Cottonwood County</i>	<i>4,857</i>	<i>4,845</i>	<i>4,830</i>	<i>4,650</i>	<i>-27</i>	<i>-0.6</i>	<i>-180</i>	<i>-3.7</i>
<i>Minnesota</i>	<i>2,087,227</i>	<i>2,183,800</i>	<i>2,339,934</i>	<i>2,562,091</i>	<i>252,707</i>	<i>12.1</i>	<i>222,157</i>	<i>9.5</i>

Source: Windom Housing Study; Minnesota State Demographic Center (PMA – Primary Market Area for housing)

D-Table #6b

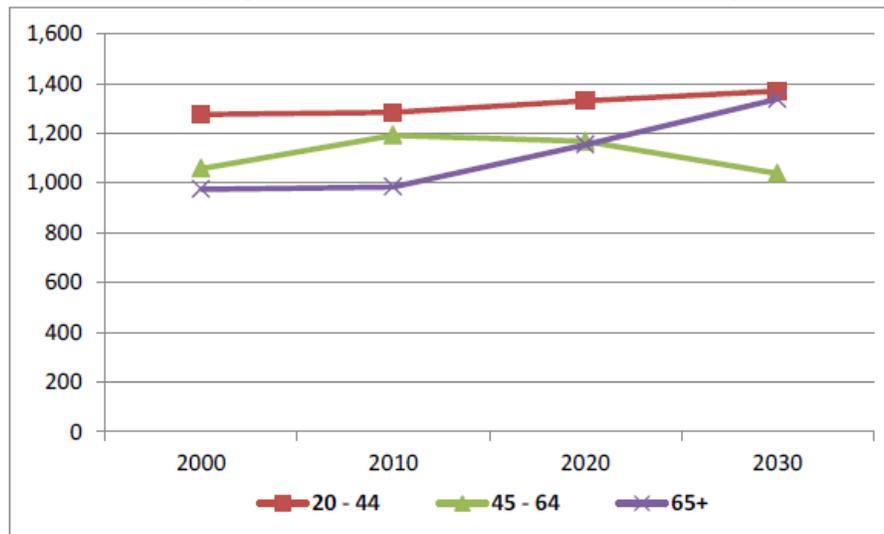
Demographic Projections – Windom & Primary Market Area



Source: Windom Housing Study; Minnesota State Demographic Center (PMA – Primary Market Area for housing)

D-Table #6c

### Demographic Projections – Windom & Primary Market Area



Source: Windom Housing Study; Minnesota State Demographic Center (PMA – Primary Market Area for housing)

### Windom School District – Enrollment Projections

An Enrollment Projections Study was completed for Windom School District #177 in February, 2015. The Executive Summary is outlined below. For more detailed information refer to the link to the study at the bottom of the page.<sup>1</sup>

- Windom Public School enrollment increased by 7.7 percent in the past ten years (2005 to 2015)
  - Resident enrollment increased 7.4 percent
  - In 2014-15, nonresidents make up 9.2 percent of K-12 enrollment
  - Kindergarten is larger than the previous year's Grade 12 in the past nine years, an indicator of more young families
  - The district's estimated school age population increased in the past ten years. Today, the Windom Public Schools capture 86.7 percent of the district's school age population, a high percentage
- Enrollment is projected to increase 17.9 percent to 24.9 percent in the next ten years
  - In 2024-25, projected enrollment ranges from 1,181 students to 1,251 students. This compares to 1,002 students in 2014-15
    - The migration assumptions have a larger effect on the projections than the kindergarten assumptions
    - Almost half of the projected growth is in the high school grades
      - This growth results from the size of grades today and the migration assumptions
  - Several indicators point to enrollment growth

<sup>1</sup> Windom School District #177 Enrollment Projects. Accessed: 1/23/16. Available: <http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/WindomSD117/WindomSD117/Departments/DocumentsSubCategories/Documents/Windom%202014%20Final%20Enrollment%20Projections.pdf>

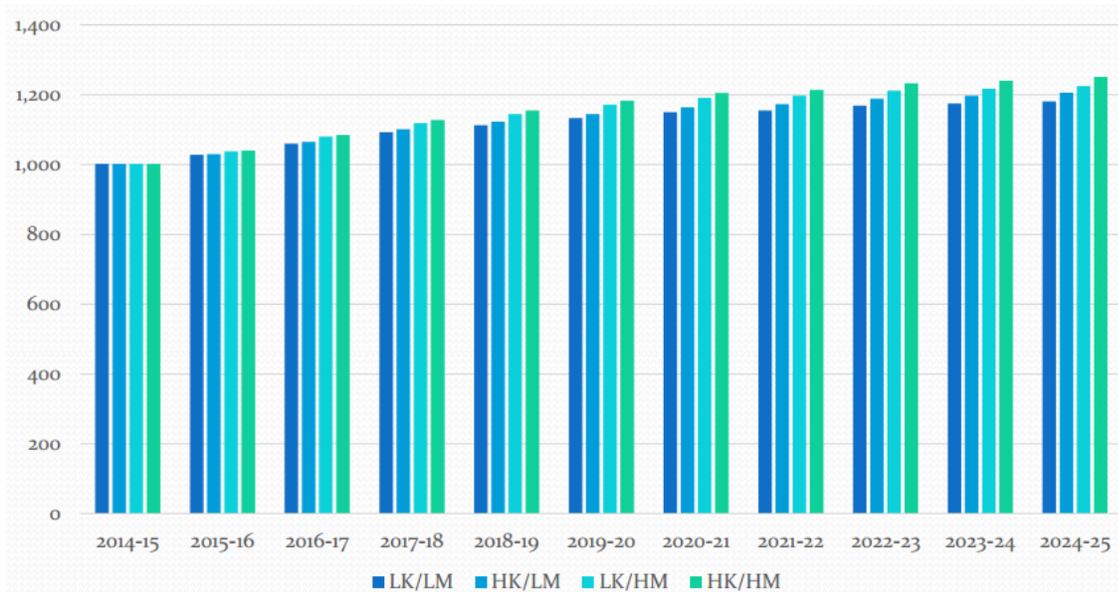
- There are more students in the elementary grades than in the middle school or high school grades
  - Resident births increased recently
  - Enrollment increased in the recent past
- Projections by race/ethnicity show that both the white and the minority student populations will increase; however, minority students will increase at a faster rate and are projected to be 30.6 percent of all students in five years.

**D-Table #1 Enrollment – Windom Public Schools**



2

**D-Table #2 Enrollment Projections – Windom Public Schools**



<sup>2</sup> Windom Public Schools. Enrollment Projections. Accessed: 1/6/17. Available: <http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/WindomSD117/WindomSD117/Departments/DocumentsSubCategories/Documents/Windom%202014%20Census%20Presentation.pdf>

**D-Table #9**

**Demographic Projections – Windom Public Schools**

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
White	758	771	780	811	823	828
Minority	236	262	290	317	336	365
Sum	994	1,033	1,079	1,128	1,159	1,193
Districtwide	1,002	1,040	1,085	1,128	1,155	1,183
Free/Reduced	460	474	489	501	506	514

**Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Demographics**

Below is the overarching goal related to demographic changes in the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve the goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the demographic goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community based approach is used.

*Goal:* It is the goal of the City of Windom to increase its population to ensure stability and vitality in the City.

*Total Population of 5,000+* *All Departments* *High Priority*

*Strategy:* Grow the total population of Windom to 5,000 plus.

*Objective:* Pursue Housing Goals to increase the supply of housing.

Pursue Economic Development Goals to increase the number of employment opportunities that pay a livable wage.

Market livability as a growth strategy to attract and retain residents.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Mayor and City Council in the April of 2017 have reaffirmed the existing goal to grow the population of Windom to 5,000 plus. There are numerous benefits to reaching a population of 5,000 that include additional transportation funding, a larger tax base, and will help to reaffirm Windom as a Regional Center. Housing opportunities, economic opportunities, and livability all impact Windom’s potential of reaching 5,000 plus people.

A Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate (Housing Study) was finalized for the City of Windom on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. This study identified a 3.7 percent vacancy rate in Windom. This vacancy rate includes market rate units and affordable rental units.

In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom to confirm a vacancy rate below 5 percent. In November 2016, the vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3 percent. This does not include 1500 Perkins Creek. 1500 Perkins Creek is 1 of 5 subsidized rental properties in Windom. No vacancies were identified among the other four subsidized properties, which combine for 164 units.

“A healthy rental market is expected to have a vacancy rate of about 5% to allow for sufficient consumer choice and unit turnover. With pent-up demand (a shortage of units), persons who would normally form their own rental households instead room with other persons in a housing unit, live with their parents, or live in housing outside of the area and commute to jobs. In Windom, only a couple vacant rental units were found – indicating pent-up demand.”<sup>3</sup>

### Housing Study Highlights

There is demand for approximately 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade (a housing unit is defined as a residence such as a house, apartment, or mobile home). Of that demand, about 30 to 35 units will be for owner-occupied housing and 95 to 100 units will be for rental and senior housing.

There is clear demand for housing and the demand is growing. The housing study was done prior to Fast Global Solutions expansion and Prime Pork. Fast Global Solutions currently employees 160 individuals and their goal to increase their workforce by 50 percent to 300 by 2020. By mid-July 2017, Prime Pork hopes to have 350 employees, including management and maintenance staff. That number is expected to be closer to 500 employees when the plant is at full capacity. There is also optimism with smaller employees. The City wants to continue this growth cycle, but housing is the critical variable.

### Livability

Windom features small town advantage with the incentives of a high quality of life, sense of ownership in the community, and the ability to live close to work and play. Cottonwood Lake and the Des Moines River are two nature amenities that contribute to recreational amenities to scenic places to live. The Windom Area Hospital and Windom Public Schools also contribute to a quality of life that will help to keep Windom on this growth cycle.

### *Family Friendly Atmosphere*

All Departments

Medium Priority

*Strategy:* Maintain growth in the population cohort 20 to 34.

*Objective:* Maintain a family friendly atmosphere to continue to grow the population cohort 20 to 34.

Promote the return of prior Windom residents to the community to pursue a career and a family.

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<sup>3</sup> Viewpoint Consulting Group. Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimates for Windom. Accessed: 11/22/16. Available: Windom City Hall.

Promote the return of prior Windom residents to the community to retire.

*Existing Conditions:*

There was a 22.1 percent increase in the population cohort 20 to 34 from 2000 to 2010. The population cohort 20 to 34 is typically the childbearing age cohort. Maintaining growth in this cohort will help to ensure youth in the community and a more stable population.

To help maintain a family friendly atmosphere, livability campaigns should be pursued. Livability campaigns could be centered on promoting the community. We need to make it easy for community members to share about events, recreational amenities, natural assets, and general livability.

Market:

- Historical nature of Windom and the Jeffers Petroglyphs
- Natural resources – Cottownood Lake and the Des Moines River
- Recreational opportunities of the area, including Kilen Woods

The goal would be to attract and retain residents, promote a healthy lifestyle, and improve livability and amenities in Windom. We can do this by promoting the community through pictures, videos, and posts. This will make it easy for people to share, and for people to learn about Windom. This is only sustainable if community members are helping to post pictures, videos, and stories. Refer to the Live Windom Strategy on page 71 of the Economic Chapter.

Through pictures, videos, and stories prior Windom residents will be drawn back to Windom for the quality of life and to start a family. Attracting back younger families will also help to retain more of the 65 plus cohort. Seniors will be more likely to retire in Windom if their kids and grandchildren live in the area.

Attracting businesses is not the only strategy for economic development. It is important to develop livability campaigns that improve amenities and that will help to attract people to Windom. People will move to Windom, and this will create demand. Increasing demand will allow for established businesses to expand and for new businesses to be established. Maintaining a growth cycle in Windom is a key component in our economic development strategies.

*Senior Amenities*

Development Department & HRA

Medium Priority

*Strategy:* Retain more of the population cohort 65 plus.

*Objective:* Short Term: Administer a survey asking seniors in the community what services are lacking.

Long Term: Work towards addressing the identified gaps in services.

*Existing Conditions:*

Different population cohorts require different amenities. Southern states like Florida and Arizona have been successful at attracting retirees. The warm weather in the winter time is a significant driver, but family, friends, and community also impact where people want to retire.

Senior amenities and housing are two areas that could be improved upon in Windom. A survey will help to identify gaps in services and amenities. Pickelball is one amenity that has been identified, but other recreation and at home service amenities need to be outlined.

According to the Windom Housing Study, there is a gap of approximately 95 to 100 units for rental and senior housing. A market rate apartment will help to fill the independent living gap, but there is also a need for senior housing with services. An additional 36 to 38 units of senior housing with services is also outlined in the Windom Housing Study.

*Population Cohort 35 to 44*

*Development Department*

*Low Priority*

*Strategy:* Decrease population decline in the population cohort 35 to 44.

*Objective:* Short Term: Research why there has been a population decline in the population cohort 35 to 44.

Long Term: Work towards addressing the reasons why there has been a population decline in the population cohort 35 to 44.

The only population cohort above 20 years old to decline was the age cohort 35 to 44. This population cohort declined by 8.9 percent from 2000 to 2010. It is unclear why there has been such a large loss in the age cohort 35 to 44.

There are less young people choosing to live in rural communities. Younger people that are choosing to live in Windom may be doing so to gain experience and start a family. As young professionals gain experience they may move to advance their careers. As their children age, the family friendly atmosphere of Windom may not be as high of a priority.

Additional research is needed why there has been a population decline in the population cohort 35 to 44.

# CHAPTER 3: HOUSING

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## Introduction

A Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate (Housing Study) was finalized for the City of Windom on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. This study identified a 3.7 percent vacancy rate in Windom. This vacancy rate includes market rate units and affordable rental units.

In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom to confirm a vacancy rate below 5 percent. In November 2016, the vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3 percent. This does not include “Perkins Creek Apartments” (1475 17th Street). Perkins Creek is one of five subsidized rental properties in Windom. No vacancies were identified among the other four subsidized properties which combine for 164 units.

“A healthy rental market is expected to have a vacancy rate of about 5% to allow for sufficient consumer choice and unit turnover. With pent-up demand (a shortage of units), persons who would normally form their own rental households instead room with other persons in a housing unit, live with their parents, or live in housing outside of the area and commute to jobs. In Windom, only a couple vacant rental units were found – indicating pent-up demand.”<sup>4</sup>

## Housing Study Highlights

There is demand for approximately 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade (a housing unit is defined as a residence such as a house, apartment, or mobile home). Of that demand, about 30 to 35 units will be for owner-occupied housing and 95 to 100 units will be for rental and senior housing.

The Housing Study was done prior to Fast Global Solutions’ expansion and Prime Pork’s opening. Prime Pork currently employs 350+ as of September, 2017. Fast Global Solutions has a goal to double its workforce by 2020. Approximately 150 jobs will be created between 2017 and 2020.

## Housing Study

For the purpose of the Windom Comprehensive Plan Planning Process, the Housing Study was used as the informational document for analysis. The Housing Study provided community members with information regarding housing characteristics, an analysis of the owner-occupied housing market and rental housing market, demand analysis, and a community overview. Refer to the housing study for tables, figures, and the analysis of housing in Windom.

## Housing Guidelines –Affordable Housing

Housing is considered “affordable when it requires no more than 30 to 40 percent of a household’s monthly income or when the sum of housing plus transportation expenses are less than 45 percent”.

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<sup>4</sup> Viewpoint Consulting Group. Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimates for Windom. Accessed: 11/22/16. Available: Windom City Hall.

## Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Housing

Below is the overarching goal related to the housing in and around the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve the goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. Goals and strategies that were identified in the Windom Housing Study are also included in this section. All of the strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the housing goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community-based approach is used.

**Goal:** It is the goal of the City of Windom to promote safe, sanitary, and well-maintained housing and maintain a quality living environment for all present and future residents of the community.

**Total Population of 5,000+ All Departments High Priority**  
**Strategy:** Grow the total population of Windom to 5,000 plus.

**Objective:** Encourage and promote housing development opportunities within the City including multiple-family residential rental housing units.

**Short Term:** Work to identify strategies to increase the supply of housing in the City of Windom.

**Long Term:** Implement strategies to increase the supply of housing in the City of Windom.

Work towards a new Planned Unit Development within the City that includes multi-family.

### *Existing Conditions:*

A Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate (Housing Study) was finalized for the City of Windom on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. Windom’s Housing Study identified the need for single family homes, duplexes, quads, and multi-family to accommodate market rate housing, seniors, higher-income families, and lower income families. There is demand for 130+ new housing units, since the Housing Study was done prior to Fast Global Solutions’ expansion and Prime Pork’s opening.

Until a new market-rate apartment is built in Windom, any new development in Windom should include *a parcel for multi-family*. There is demand for a market-rate apartment building in Windom and multiple experienced multi-family developers are interested in Windom.

### Strategies to Increase the Supply of Housing

- Housing Tax Abatement Program
  - Cottonwood County Home Initiative (Implemented 2017 – Program Window: January 1, 2017, through December 31, 2019)
- New Residential Development

- Plan a new housing development to attract professionals from Prime Pork and other businesses to build homes in Windom. The availability of desirable lots on which to build a new home is limited.
- Any new residential development should also include multi-family units.
- Multi-family
  - Develop property for multi-family
  - New market-rate apartment
  - New senior housing
- Marketing
  - Improve the marketing of available lots. This does not mean simply listing the lots. Think about the locations, connectivity, and how the lot could be developed. The National Realtors Association study points to the changing behavior of homebuyers and states, “people prefer to live in communities that allow them to walk to shops, parks and other destinations and will pay more for a home that allows them to do just that.”<sup>5</sup> First-time homebuyers are looking for neighborhoods and cities that are more walkable. “Millennials, though, are just part of the picture. As baby boomers get older, many are opting to live in places where they don’t have to drive as much to get to services and where they can age in place.”<sup>6</sup> This is a national trend and Southwest Minnesota needs to recognize livability, walkability, and bikeability as economic development tools.
- Age-Appropriate Housing
  - Encourage seniors to consider moving into duplexes, quads, senior apartments, and assisted-living facilities. These housing units can be more age appropriate with additional amenities to increase safety and self-reliance. This will increase the number of available single-family homes for new families who are potential job applicants.
- Property Values
  - Explore amenities to help increase property values.
  - Explore funding options for lowering the cost of constructing new single-family housing units and multi-family housing units. New homes typically are more expensive to construct than their subsequent appraised values. This creates a gap and discourages developers from building spec housing and pursuing new developments.
- Maintenance Programs
 

Utilize the Small Cities Residential Rehab Program and research other maintenance programs to help retain the existing housing supply in a safe, sanitary, and well-maintained condition.

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<sup>5</sup> National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

<sup>6</sup> Builder Magazine. Why Smart Builders Care About Walkability. Accessed: 5/29/15. Available: [http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability\\_o](http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability_o)

## Background

Numerous businesses in Windom have expansion plans and are currently hiring new employees. Fast Global Solutions has a goal to increase its workforce by 50 percent to 300 by 2020. Prime Pork is currently hiring and began operations with approximately 296 employees.

A Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate was finalized for the City of Windom on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. This Housing Study identified a 3.7 percent vacancy rate in Windom. This vacancy rate includes market rate units and affordable rental units.

In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom to confirm a vacancy rate below 5 percent. A healthy rental market is expected to maintain a vacancy rate of approximately 5 percent to allow for sufficient choice and unit turnover. In November 2016, the vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3 percent. This does not include the Perkins Creek Apartments at 1475 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Perkins Creek is one of five subsidized rental properties in Windom. No vacancies were identified among the other four subsidized properties which combine for 164 units.

Perkins Creek reported 11 vacancies. According to Viewpoint Consulting Group, this indicates the vacancies at Perkins Creek are likely “project specific” versus a community-wide lack of demand. This vacancy level was verified with Windom Public Utilities. The Utilities Office has seen 4 to 5 new vacancies per month over the past several months at Perkins Creek. This turnover is significant and vacancies may be the result of management and policies.

This low vacancy rate and the lack of new rental units are contributing factors for professionals and other new employees who choose not to come to Windom. Locations for all housing types need to be planned. Infill development should be encouraged before new infrastructure is extended.

An infill development utilizes existing infrastructure and increases the City’s return on investment for that existing infrastructure. Utilizing existing infrastructure will help to generate local tax dollars without new expenditures for infrastructure. Infill development helps to promote compact efficient developments that cash flow and include maintenance and replacement costs.

The “Future Land Use Map” outlines areas for future development. Example plat maps for these areas should be developed. These example plat maps, including various scenarios, can be discussed and evaluated in regards to potential return on investment.

### *Demolition & Redevelopment Program*

Dev. Dept.

High Priority

*Strategy:* Promote infill development within the City of Windom.

*Objective:* Short Term: Annually demolition and redevelopment two to three properties in Windom.  
Long Term: Work with the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to build new homes on these redeveloped properties.

*Existing Conditions:*

Numerous homes in Windom have been identified for demolition. These homes are in very poor condition and may be physically and/or functionally obsolete. Removing these old homes may be good for the neighborhoods and may also create some in-fill lots that could potentially be redeveloped with single-family or twinhomes.

Windom’s Housing Study did identify a demolition program as an option to research. The Development Department has received estimates for demolition. Twenty Thousand to Thirty Thousand Dollars should be sufficient to demolish two to three homes a year.

The HRA has started to research non-profit organizations that work to preserve affordable homeownership through the construction of subsidized homes. Habitat for Humanity and Rebuild Together are two of these organizations.

<i>Affordability &amp; Housing Turnover</i>	<i>Dev. Dept. &amp; HRA</i>	<i>High Priority</i>
<i>Strategy:</i>	Encourage development of housing to meet the needs of all residents of the City, including the elderly, disabled, low-income, and students.	
<i>Objective:</i>	Consider all users when planning a new housing development.	
	Encourage age appropriate housing and housing turnover.	

*Existing Conditions:*

A Comprehensive Housing Study was completed for the City of Windom in May 2014. The housing study identified the need for approximately 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade. The need includes: entry-level single-family homes, move-up single-family homes, affordable townhomes, market rate townhomes, affordable rental housing, market rate rental housing, and senior housing – independent and memory care. (The housing study was completed prior to Prime Pork’s opening and Fast Global’s expansion).

Affordability is created through subsidies and turnover of existing housing stock. When a new single-family house is built, there is an opportunity for 2 or more existing houses to turnover. This turnover typically results in the availability of lower cost housing options.

Housing turnover also applies to multi-family. When a new apartment is built, higher rents are needed to cash flow the project. These higher rents can be generated through amenities and newer units. Some older rentals will become available as renters move from older lower cost rentals to new rental units. This turnover typically results in the availability of lower cost housing options.

<i>Building Code Enforcement</i>	<i>Dev. Dept.</i>	<i>Medium Priority</i>
<i>Strategy:</i>	Enforce building codes in order to improve the quality of housing.	
<i>Objective:</i>	Continuously work with developers and builders to improve the permitting process and ensure compliance.	

Educate community members regarding the Building Code, permitting process, and compliance.

*Existing Conditions:*

Maintaining relationships with developers and builders and improving the permitting process will help to ensure compliance. Developers and builders are aware of the building code requirements and the permitting process through the Development Department. Accountable and licensed developers and builders will help to ensure code compliance, however the general public may not understand the process.

The general public may not understand what is required when undertaking a remodel, building a fence, or other projects that require a building permit or approval by the City. It is important to continuously educate the general public regarding the permitting process and compliance issues. Information is available on the City's webpage, but other avenues should also be pursued. Examples include: periodic public service announcements, brochures, news articles, etc.

There are opportunities to improve the process for developers and builders and the general public. Roofing, siding, window replacements, and minor remodeling projects only require one visit to the Development Department. Major remodeling projects and new construction may require multiple visits with the Building Official. We are working towards options to streamline the process. An easier process will help ensure compliance and save time.

**Examples**

- Revisit the permit process periodically to discuss the process and possible efficiencies
- Building Permits for common projects (windows, doors, decks)
  - Streamline the process for acquiring a building permit for common projects. This may include establishing a standard price for specific projects.

*State & Federal Housing Programs*

*Dev. Dept. & HRA*

*Low*

**Priority**

**Strategy:** Promote housing rehabilitation and ownership incentive programs through state and federal housing programs.

**Objective:** Apply for residential rehab funding through the Small Cities Development Program every 3 to 5 years.

Work with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to promote their various programs

- Start Up: First-time homebuyer loans
- Mortgage Credit Certificate: First-time homebuyer tax credit
- Step Up: Repeat homebuyer and refinancing loans
- Fix Up: Home improvement loans

Work with the USDA on various housing programs

- Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans
- Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Program
- Single-Family Housing Repair Program

*Existing Conditions:*

There are a number of programs to assist first-time homebuyers, lower- income individuals and families, and individuals who may not qualify for traditional financing. The Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) is a great resource in Southwest Minnesota for cities with housing needs. The City of Windom does have an established relationship with the SWMHP, but it is critical for city staff to stay up-to-date on existing and new housing programs.

*Zoning, Rezoning & Compatible Land Uses*

Dev. Dept.

High Priority

*Strategy:* Utilize zoning ordinances designating density patterns in residential areas to allow for a variety of residential development districts.

*Objective:* Work with developers and existing properties owners to build tax base and ensure compatibility.

Encourage more R-2, R-3, and mixed use development (less restrictive).

Locate residential uses adjacent to compatible uses, or when this is impossible, buffer zones should be used or developed.

*Existing Conditions:*

Zoning should not be static and should change when land uses change. As demands change, areas zoned for a specific use may also change. The redevelopment of an industrial site may become residential, an Agricultural-Open Space District (A - 0) may become industrial or residential, and single-family residential may become mixed use.

Zoning is a tool to ensure compatibility of land uses within a jurisdiction. Planning and zoning is intended to preserve property values and ensure that communities are functional and safe places to live and work. Land uses are generally divided into a hierarchical order: I-2, I-1, B-1, B-2, B-3, R-1, R-2, R-3, and A-O. This hierarchical order helps to ensure compatibility and is a buffer between land uses. Streets and other physical barriers are typically used as transitions to other zoning districts.

Landscape buffers also help to ensure compatibility and provide a buffer between land uses. Landscaping can provide a space between different land uses, obstruct undesirable views, and reduce the impact of one land use upon another. Landscaping buffers can include traditional landscaping, garages, open space, and site designs. Site designs can include positioning the building closer to the

desirable street or part of the property and having parking in the back or in a less desirable part of the property.

If a question arises concerning conflicting land uses, several questions can be discussed:

- Are we establishing a Hierarchical Order?
- Are we separating uses with a street or other physical barrier?
- Are we establishing a Landscaping Buffer?

**H-Figure #1**

**Land Use Descriptions**

<p><u>Present Land Use</u></p> <p>▶ What the actual use is</p>	<p><u>Zoning</u></p> <p>▶ Existing Permitted Use</p>	<p><u>Future Land Use</u></p> <p>▶ What you would like the use to be</p>
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*Residential Character*

Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

*Strategy:* Encourage preservation of the residential character and integrity of individual neighborhoods.

*Objective:* Encourage the continuity of similar size lots.

Encourage the establishment of Homeowner Associations.

*Existing Conditions:*

Similarly sized lots encourage similarly sized uses. When planning a new development, adjacent neighborhoods should be considered. Adjacent lots should be similar in size and homes and accessory buildings of similar size are encouraged. As the distance between the existing neighborhoods increases, lot sizes and uses may change.

The unintended consequence of a new development should not be lower property values for existing neighborhoods. Buffer zones can be used to help separate uses. Refer to the goal in “Zoning, Rezoning & Compatible Land Uses” for more information regarding buffers.

Homeowner Associations

A Homeowner Association (HOA) is an organization of property owners that administers the rules and upholds the covenants of a subdivision, development or condominium complex. HOAs are established to help maintain property values by managing and maintaining the development. HOAs can provide neighborhood amenities, such as parks, landscape maintenance, club houses and pools, and even fundraising. Other benefits include:

VIII. Community Appearance: Homes within an HOA must meet the standards set by the association.

- IX. Low Maintenance: Depending on the HOA, services such as trash and snow removal and lawn care are handled by the association, leaving less work for the homeowner.
- X. Recreational Amenities: While not all HOAs have swimming pools and tennis courts, many offer a range of amenities such as a community center, walking trails, sports courts, and greenspace for residents.
- XI. Association Management: If you have a problem with your neighbor's dog barking, loud parties or a dispute over a tree, you can ask the management to handle the issue rather than getting directly into a spat with the homeowner next door.

Specific covenants, conditions, or rules are established to preserve the value of your land and can affect colors you can paint your house, vehicle parking, landscaping, and other aesthetic characteristics. These covenants, conditions, or rules are set by a committee or board of directors and can be modified. Many homeowners appreciate that HOAs often maintain higher standards for a neighborhood's appearance, but there is a cost associated with membership.

*Building & Zoning Regulations & Policies*

Dev. Dept.

Low Priority

*Strategy:* Encourage innovation and flexibility in housing design and development.

*Objective:* Periodically review and evaluate building and zoning regulations.

*Existing Conditions:*

As preferences change, regulations and policies should be reviewed and updated. Before World War II it was common practice for each residence to have a single-stall garage. Today it is more common to build a new house with a three-stall garage rather than a two-stall garage.

This change in preferences has resulted in a number of conditional use permits for garages and accessory buildings in Windom. Garages and accessory buildings were one topic that was reviewed and updated by the Planning Commission in 2017. Lot coverage percentages were updated along with accessory space. Other updates were also part of the new proposal.

This proposal made building in Windom more flexible and accommodating. Updating outdated ordinances needs to become common place. Other Building & Zoning Regulations & Policies that need to be reviewed and evaluated includes but is not limited to:

- Fence Ordinance
- Outdoor Liquor Policy
- Building Permits for common projects (windows, doors, decks)
  - Streamline the process for acquiring a building permit for common projects. This may include establishing a standard price for specific projects.
- Minimum Standards Ordinance
- Rental Ordinance
  - Require all owners of residential rental property to obtain a Rental Housing License. The purposes of issuing rental housing licenses and conducting inspections of rental housing units are to protect the life, health, safety and general welfare of the rental housing

occupants; to protect the character and stability of rental housing units; and to preserve the value of land and buildings throughout the City.

- In 2017, The Planning Commission has reviewed rental housing ordinances from area cities and has approved a draft ordinance for Windom. This ordinance will now be submitted to the City Council for review and adoption.

### *Compact Efficient Development*

All Departments

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Encourage the development of housing in areas that can most economically be serviced by City services (streets, sewer, water, electric, and telecom)

**Objective:** Strategically plan the placement of public utilities.

#### *Existing Conditions:*

Compact development should be encouraged and promoted as an efficient use of public utilities (water, sewer, streets, etc.), an efficient use of land, and to promote a more active lifestyle. This may be accomplished through strategic placement of public utilities, enactment or enforcement of zoning regulations, and through the annexation of land. Controlling the land use in and around the City will help keep development contained and planned.

In 2017, the estimated construction costs for one new city block (water, sewer, 22-foot street) for residential development were \$265,000. There are typically 10 houses on a city block, so over time these development costs can be recouped through property taxes, sewer and water usage fees, etc. Maximizing investment on the block is critical, so compact development can help spread the cost of the infrastructure, including maintenance and replacement.

A city street and sewer and water infrastructure are liabilities, since they need to be replaced after their useful life cycle. Part of proper planning is investing in new infrastructure when demand is documented and investing where the highest return will be achieved. Connectivity plays a primary role in determining where a new development should be located.

### *Downtown Square Housing*

Dev. Dept. & Street Dept.

Low Priority

**Strategy:** Encourage the development or redevelopment of multi-family units adjacent to or as secondary uses in or near the Central Business District.

**Objective:** Research incentives to help create a more integrated branding of the Downtown Square.

Research additional parking options, including indoor parking.

Research incentives to encourage higher-end apartments on the Downtown Square.

#### *Existing Conditions:*

Adding housing around the Downtown Square will increase demand for goods and services around the Square. Additional demand will help to drive investment on the Downtown Square. Incentives,

additional parking options, and type of rentals all need to be part of the mix to help initiate this initial investment.

The “Success of the Square” is also dependent on placemaking (redefining a space and making it a destination), increasing demand (jobs), and increasing demand (housing). There are four related strategies outlined in Economy Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that include: Placemaking Around the Square, Downtown Square Development – Mixed Use, Increasing Demand Around the Square, and Co-working Space.

### Incentives

Millennials and seniors are the target populations for housing options in the Downtown Square. These population cohorts want to be able to walk to restaurants, shopping, and greenspace. The Downtown Square has all of those amenities, but placemaking and several other amenities are missing.

Incentives to help create a more integrated branding of the Downtown Square can be researched. The Downtown Square does have an authentic identity, but more consistent messaging is needed. Placemaking is redefining a space and making it a destination.

### Transportation & Parking

Transportation is critical. Walking and biking are the preferable modes of transportation, but the option to take your car needs to be convenient. Off-street parking and indoor parking need to be part of the mix.

### Upscale Apartments

Higher-end apartments are also important. Downtowns with little or no investment are not going to attract millennials and seniors looking for nicer apartments. The whole corridor has to be part of the project, since you are not going to see investment adjacent to a rundown property.

### Mixed Income Housing

### Dev. Dept. & HRA

### Low Income

*Strategy:* Locate subsidized and low-income housing throughout the City and not unduly concentrated in any particular area.

*Objective:* Identify new locations for subsidized and low-income housing that are not adjacent to existing subsidized and low-income housing.

Identify locations for new subsidized and low-income housing that provide good connectivity to community amenities including: schools, parks, healthy food options, etc.

### Existing Conditions:

The Windom Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) owns and operates two larger income-eligible properties in Windom. The Windom HRA is also working towards acquisition and rental of single-family income-eligible properties. The Economic Development Authority also owns one income-eligible property. Currently, all of the publicly-held properties are spread throughout the City.

Subsidized and low-income housing needs to be spread throughout a city. There are numerous issues associated with concentrated poverty that include: segregation, developmental issues, crime, neighborhood disinvestment, lack of community, and others.<sup>7</sup> Subsidized and low-income housing projects typically involve the city and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority. These projects require years to plan to allow potential locations to be fully researched.

*Apartment Buildings as a Google Place* Dev. Dept. & HRA Low Priority

**Goal:** Have all apartment buildings in the City of Windom searchable as a Google Place or listed on the City’s website.

**Strategy:** Work with apartment building managers to add their apartment buildings to Google Place or a list on the City’s website.

*Existing Conditions:*

Google Place is a basic platform to ensure your local business information can be easily found across Google, including Google Maps, Google Search, and Google+. Basic information should be easily searchable online. Under Google Place, a business can add its location, phone number, and a brief profile.

If a business is searchable as a Google Place, customers (whether or not they are looking for your business) can see what is in the area on Search, Maps, or Google+. Businesses can be added to Google Place for free. All apartment buildings in Windom should be listed as Google Places.

There are 14 larger multi-family buildings in Windom. Only 5 out of these 14 buildings are currently listed on Google. All of the other multi-family buildings in Windom either require secondary websites to find information or are not listed.

Basic information should be available on Google or other search engines. If an individual is not familiar with Windom, he/she would need to search on secondary websites to find basic information about Windom. Basic information for multi-family housing units in Windom should be searchable online.

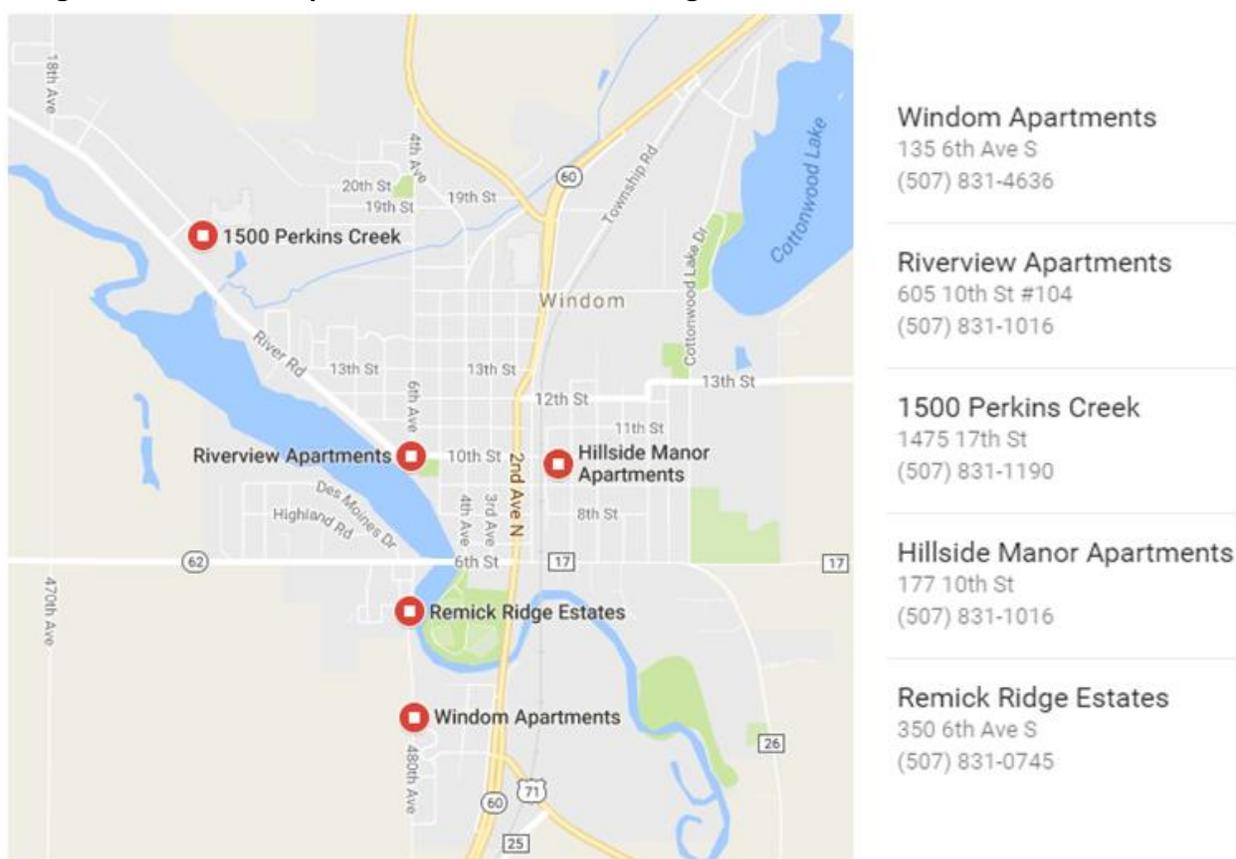
**H-Table #1 Multi-Family Housing Units – Windom**

Multi-Family Residential	Address	Number of Units
8 – Plex	625 4th Avenue	8
River Bluff Townhomes	River Bluff Drive	12
Hillside Manor	177 10 <sup>th</sup> Street	30
Riverview Apartments	605 10 <sup>th</sup> Street	58
Tanglewood Estates	1755 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	24
Perkins Creek	1475 17 <sup>th</sup> Street	48

<sup>7</sup> Urban Institute. Effects from Living in Mixed-Income Communities for Low-Income Families. Accessed: 11/21/17. Available: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/27116/412292-Effects-from-Living-in-Mixed-Income-Communities-for-Low-Income-Families.PDF>

Windom Apartments	135 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue South	52
Mikkelsen Manor	725 Fuller Drive	24
Remick Ridge Estates	350 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	28
Heritage Court	705 6 <sup>th</sup> Street	18
Pine View Assisted Living	750 4 <sup>th</sup> Street	10
Glenwood Apartments	Fuller Drive & 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	8
Riverside Apartments	619 6 <sup>th</sup> Street & 652 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	8
Westside Apartments	1851 26 <sup>th</sup> Street	24 units

**H-Figure #2 Apartments in Windom – Google Search**



\*The Google Search was conducted on 1/30/17

### Housing Study Goals & Strategies – 2013

The following is a list of goals and strategies that were identified in the Windom Housing Study.

### Single-Family Homes

Based on incomes in Windom, the majority of demand for single-family homes is for those priced below \$150,000. This demand will largely be met through resales of the existing housing stock. For one, it is very difficult to construct new homes with prices below this level. Most of the demand for new construction single-family homes in Windom will be from local homeowners looking to move-up from their existing housing situation. It is estimated that approximately 60% of the single-family demand is for entry-level homes and 40% is for move-up homes. It should be noted that even new homes with entry-level prices will attract some move-up buyers in Windom, as many of the existing homes in the community are priced below \$100,000.

New entry-level homes in Windom should be priced from about \$155,000 to \$185,000 and move-up homes should be priced above \$200,000. Most households with incomes above \$60,000 who also have adequate down payment and good credit history can afford homes priced above \$200,000, while households with incomes below approximately \$60,000 are the primary market for entry-level homes. Current low interest rates are making move-up homes affordable to some households with incomes below \$60,000. However, lack of an adequate down payment limits many buyers.

A three-year lot supply is recommended to ensure adequate consumer choice without excessively prolonging developer carrying costs. Currently, Windom's lot supply is almost non-existent for move-up homes and fewer than 10 for entry-level homes. Some of the existing entry-level lots have not been highly sought after because of their seventy-foot width. Thus, there is the potential to create an additional entry-level subdivision with slightly wider lots.

To maintain an adequate lot supply, new subdivisions will need to come on-line immediately for entry-level and move-up homes. Based on the demand and construction trends over the past decade, between 12 and 20 lots should be platted. Five to eight of the lots should be for entry-level homes and seven to 12 lots should be for move-up homes. To appeal to buyers and accommodate the appropriate housing prices, entry-level lots should be priced at approximately \$15,000 and move-up lots between \$25,000 and \$30,000.

To create lots in the \$15,000 price range, some partnership may be needed from the private and public sectors. This could be in the form of Tax Increment Financing, tax abatements for new construction, or other financial incentives to homebuyers. In addition, care should be taken as to the placement of a new subdivision. Locations on higher ground north of the Windom Area High School and near the Windom Area Country Club have proven to be the most appealing areas for new home buyers.

### For-Sale Townhomes

An estimated six townhome units were built in Windom last decade and two so far this decade, all of which were single-level twinhomes. Empty-nesters and young seniors moving from their single-family homes have been the primary buyers, although some younger people have also purchased townhomes. There are no designated townhomes developments that are association maintained in Windom. Townhomes can be built on any lot as long as it meets other zoning requirements, and that is where existing units have been built.

Lots to support an additional 10 to 12 townhomes are recommended in Windom. Lots should come on-line as soon as possible to meet current unmet demand. The units should be one-level twinhomes with attached two-car garages. Base on previous sales, townhomes in the \$145,000 to \$160,000 range would be appropriate to capture the majority of the target market.

As with single-family homes, care should be taken as to the placement of a new subdivision to maximize the new townhomes' appeal. In addition to lots created in new subdivisions, there is the potential to add townhomes on in-fill lots located close to the downtown. Other townhome units built in the 1990s and 2000s near the downtown have sold well.

### Affordable Rental Townhomes

An affordable townhome development is recommended with a mix of approximately half two-bedroom and half three-bedroom units. The development should have 28 to 30 units and be targeted to households earning approximately \$35,000 or less per year. The 2014 income-limit for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program at 60% AMI in Cottonwood County ranges from \$29,160 for two-person households to \$39,360 for five-person households. A large portion of the wage earners in Windom would income-qualify for an affordable rental development at this limit.

Windom currently has five income-restricted apartment properties totaling over 200 units in which residents pay 30% of their adjusted gross income for rent. These properties are largely meeting the demand for deeply-subsidized units from very low income households. The recommended affordable development should have contract rents of approximately \$585 for two-bedroom units and \$660 for three-bedroom units, excluding heat and electricity. Units should feature attached garages and have sizes of approximately 1,100 square feet for two-bedroom units and 1,250 square feet for three-bedroom units.

### **Market Rate Rental Townhomes**

A rental townhome development is recommended for two target markets: professionals and other higher-income households moving to Windom for employment and for younger seniors seeking an alternative to their single-family homes. The recommended townhome development should feature two- and three-bedroom units to appeal to families with children or seniors moving from homes who still want space for their accumulated belongings. Unit sizes should be about 1,200 square feet for two-bedroom units and 1,350 square feet for three-bedroom units. Monthly rents should be approximately \$735 for two-bedroom units and \$815 for three-bedroom units, excluding all utilities. Key amenities should be in-unit washer/dryers, patios, and attached garages. A development with 16 to 18 units is recommended.

The recommended monthly rents are well above rents at River Bluff Townhomes. While the 13-year-old property is the current market leader in Windom, some homes in town are commanding rents that are similar to the recommended rents for the new townhome development. Based on the waiting list at River Bluff Townhomes and rents being achieved at some homes, we find that there is a small pool of renters willing to pay these higher rents for upper-end units, which largely do not exist in Windom.

One of the target markets for the recommended market rate rental townhomes are seniors seeking an alternative to their single-family homes. Some of the recommended townhome units could be developed on the Good Samaritan campus, which currently includes skilled nursing care, congregate independent, and assisted living housing. Townhomes would appeal to seniors who value proximity to services available on the campus, particularly if a spouse is residing in the care center. Monthly rents achievable by units on the campus would be slightly higher than the recommended \$735 for two-bedroom units due to the availability of services, including meals.

### **Market Rate Apartment**

Homes for Creative Living is seeking to relocate from their building located at 108 9<sup>th</sup> Street. For decades, this former hospital has been used as an intermediate care facility for persons with developmental disabilities. The two-story building has a total of 14,646 square feet and has the potential to be converted to general-occupancy apartment units. The location is excellent as it is in a residential neighborhood and is a four-block walk from Windom's downtown. It is estimated that 16 to 18 units could be accommodated in the building, depending on the unit sizes.

To satisfy a portion of the rental demand as identified in Table 27, we recommend converting the building at 108 9<sup>th</sup> Street into rental housing. Apartments on this site would appeal to various target markets, including young professionals working in Windom (with incomes of approximately \$30,000 or more) as well as active seniors. Given the floor sizes, most of the units would likely need to have just one-bedroom, although some two-bedrooms could also be created. To be affordable to the target market, monthly rents, excluding utilities, should be

approximately \$510 for one-bedroom units and \$635 for two-bedroom units. With these rents, the proposed development would satisfy some of the rental demand from households defined as low-income by HUD.



108 9<sup>th</sup> Street

### Senior Housing

To satisfy the unmet demand in Windom through 2020, two types of developments are recommended. The first is a congregate independent building (or “senior housing with services”) with 24 to 26 units. The second is a memory care building, or assisted living specializing in care for persons with memory impairments. While there are independent and assisted living properties in Windom, there are no memory care properties. Heritage Court is in a skilled nursing facility and most of the residents have greater care needs than seniors who are the target market for memory care housing.

The recommended independent senior housing development should be independent but offer assisted living services to residents in any unit. It is estimated that over half the demand initially would come from independent residents, but over time as residents age in place, over half the residents could be receiving assisted living care. Independent units should have base monthly fees beginning at approximately \$1,600 for one-bedroom units, or similar to the existing Remick Ridge Estates on the Good Samaritan campus.

Based on demand, the recommended memory care housing should have approximately 12 units. A stand-alone memory care property of this smaller size may be financially unfeasible to develop (although it can be done, as evidenced by Pine View Assisted Living). As we understand, Mikkelsen Manor (assisted living) on the Good Samaritan campus is designed such that an addition can be added to the end of one of the wings. A financially feasible way to add memory care housing could be to add a secured memory care wing to a wing of Mikkelsen Manor. The new memory care housing would benefit from the shared the costs of administration, meal preparation, and services with the existing property.

It should be noted that new senior housing developments in Windom would indirectly satisfy some demand for modestly priced single-family homes. When seniors move from their homes into the new senior housing development, their homes become available to younger individuals/families. Table 24 shows that homes currently listed for sale in Windom have a median price of \$105,000. This is much lower than the cost to build new and these homes would be affordable to moderate-income families.

### **Other Housing Recommendations**

The preceding pages outlined new housing products that should be built in Windom through the remainder of the decade to satisfy housing demand from current and future residents. In addition, there are other programs that Windom can implement to assist in meeting local housing needs and improving the quality of the existing housing stock. Key programs/initiatives that Windom should pursue or continue to promote are outlined below.

#### **1. Housing Rehabilitation**

Maintaining the quality of the existing housing stock is vital to any community. In 2011 to 2013, Windom and Mountain Lake received a Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) grant for the purpose of rehabilitation of residential properties. The funds, which must benefit low- and moderate-income persons, were administered by Western Community Action. Through the grant, 18 homeowners in Windom were able to rehab their homes. The grant funds were administered quickly as demand was very high from people wanting to rehab their homes with furnaces, roofs, windows, insulation, etc. There is no active housing rehab program in Windom.

We recommend the City of Windom explore the potential to apply for rehab funds from SCDP again as they assist in the preservation of housing stock affordable to low- and moderate-income households. About 60% of Windom's homes older than 45 years and a windshield survey of the older neighborhoods indicates that as much as 30% of the older homes may benefit from some rehab improvements.

#### **2. Housing Choice Vouchers**

Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), funded by HUD, are a tenant-based rent subsidy utilized by lower income households in market rate housing developments. Voucher recipients pay 30% of their adjusted gross income for rent and the subsidy payment makes up the difference to the landlord. With limited funds available to construct new subsidized housing buildings, Housing Choice Vouchers are a great way to meet the housing needs of low-income households who cannot afford market rate housing.

The Housing Choice Voucher program is managed by the Worthington HRA, which manages the program for a seven-county area that includes Cottonwood County. Of the 185 vouchers issued in the seven-county area, only four are being used in Windom. We recommend increased efforts to increase utilization in Windom as a way of providing affordable housing to low-income households without having to construct new buildings.

Currently, there are 15 names from Windom on the Voucher waiting list. The vouchers also increase the pool of potential renters for local market rate properties.

3. First-Time Home Buyer Programs

First-time homebuyer programs by USDA Rural Development and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) are offered through participating local banks. USDA partners with approved local lenders to extend 100% financing to eligible individuals and families (incomes below \$93,450) to purchase homes (with no maximum purchase price). MHFA offers affordable fixed-rate loans with various down payment and closing cost loan options for both first-time and non-first-time homebuyers. Among the eligibility requirements, homebuyers must have incomes below \$81,300 for one and two-person households and \$93,495 for three or more person households and the homes must be priced below \$237,041. Rural Development and MHFA programs are very beneficial in enabling first-time homebuyers to purchase both existing homes and new entry-level homes. As we understand, local lenders are utilizing these programs to help clients achieve their goals of homeownership. With strong demand in Windom for modestly priced existing homes and new entry-level homes, we recommend the City continue efforts to make the public aware of these programs to prospective homeowners in the community.

4. Rental Registration Program

The City of Windom does not have an ordinance requiring a registration certificate for rental housing units in the City. Some communities have adopted a "rental license" program to help ensure a well maintained rental housing stock. The rental license program is intended to benefit both the residents of the rental housing and the entire neighborhoods in which rental housing is located. We recommend Windom explore the potential to create a rental licensing program.

5. Dilapidated Housing Demolition Program

There are an estimated 12 homes in Windom that are in very poor condition and may be physically and/or functionally obsolete. Removing these old homes may be good for the neighborhood and may also create some in-fill lots that could potentially be redeveloped with single-family or twinhomes, particular lots located within walking distance of Downtown Windom. We recommend exploring the potential to create a demolition program for dilapidated homes in Windom.

6. Termite Mitigation

It was identified that termites continue to be a problem in Windom after first being reported in the 1950s. According to Windom's Comprehensive Plan, common problems caused by termites include damage to walls, windows/door frames, garages, floors, and floor joists. Given that modestly priced homes is one of Windom's greatest housing needs, maintaining the quality of Windom's older housing stock is very important. We recommend monitoring the termite problem and searching for ways to minimize their spread. Assistance to low-income homeowners to treat termites and fix damage could also be explored.

#### 7. Flood Insurance Rate Map Redrawing

Windom straddles the Des Moines River, and a portion of the community is located in a high risk flood plain according to the Flood Insurance Rate Map. The map is published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency – or FEMA). A larger portion of Windom is located in moderate and minimal risk areas. The value of homes in the flood plain are negatively affected, since insurance costs for lower priced homes can be higher than mortgage payments. A dam located on the Des Moines River near Island Park began to fail in 2008 and in 2011 it was removed and replaced with rock riffles. It may be that the removal of the dam has reduced the area of Windom affected by the flood plain. However, the Flood Insurance Rate Map has not been updated. We recommend efforts to have the map updated. Homes that are removed from the flood plain would likely increase in value while at the same time becoming more affordable to potential buyers because of the removal of flood insurance. This is a win-win for both sellers and buyers.

# CHAPTER 4: Economy

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## Introduction

Knowledge of a community's economy is fundamental to all land use planning analysis. Studying the local economy provides a critical element to understanding the city's present land use and planning for its future land use. Planning is a critical part of orderly development and assisting with creative destruction as change occurs. Examining how the city has developed to where it is today will help create a path into the future.

## How a City Develops

Communities flourish because they serve as centers for the production and distribution of goods and services. Therefore, production and distribution functions create jobs and employment opportunities that attract people. Cities will not exist if all workers and land are equally productive and there are constant returns to scale in exchange and production.

There are two common scenarios of how cities develop. A trading city develops when individuals specialize in the production of goods or services they have a comparative advantage in and trade for other goods and services. Transportation costs influence where a trading city will develop. To maximize the gain from trade, producers will want to take advantage of economies of scale in transportation. A trading point will develop, producers will move there, the population density around the trading point goes up relative to the surrounding area, and a city develops.

It is likely that Windom's economy and population will grow as the expansion of Minnesota Highway 60 is finished. Windom is located on a 4-lane highway network connecting Omaha to Minneapolis-St. Paul. Windom is one of the few communities along the 4-lane highway network that is not bypassed by the main transportation route or passed through at 55 plus miles an hour.

A factory city develops when commuting costs are high and there are gains to be made by trading with the factory. To minimize commuting costs, workers will move closer to the factory. This competition bids up the price for land, so workers economize on land leading to higher population density. Also, individuals move closer to the factory to gain from trade with the factory.

Windom is also a factory city with multiple manufacturing companies located within the City. The demand for labor contributes to the likelihood of population growth in Windom. The combination of transportation infrastructure and existing businesses will likely contribute to growing the local economy and population.

## Basic & Non-Basic Employment

To fully understand the economy of a city, it is necessary to first identify its important "basic" industries. Employment in any city can be divided into either "basic" or "non-basic" employment. Basic employment provides goods and services to persons living beyond the immediate area, whereas non-basic employment provides goods and services to the local area. Basic employment laborers are workers who produce output for export out of the local economy. For example, a person engaged in the manufacturing of a product

that is to be sold outside the area is employed in a basic occupation. Agriculture is a good example of a basic industry.

Non-basic employment laborers are workers who produce output for local consumption. Individuals working for a local unit of government or most retail establishments, such as drug stores, restaurants, grocery stores, or barber shops, are employed in non-basic occupations. Nevertheless, many times economic activity cannot be neatly categorized into either basic or non-basic activities.

Ideally, a local economy should have more basic employment than non-basic employment. The potential for a community's economic growth depends on the strength of its basic sector. Basic employment brings money and jobs in which grows the local economy. Exporting goods helps to bring in money from outside the community which finances the importing of goods that the area does not produce for itself. A non-basic employment activity circulates money that is already found within the area. An exception to this situation would be money spent by tourists or others who reside outside Windom's general vicinity. Nevertheless, a general rule is that for any one person employed in a basic occupation, approximately 1.5 new jobs will be generated. In short, the future of a municipality is heavily dependent upon the ability of the city to bring in money from outside areas.

There are a number of different strategies that can be implemented to increase export employment (basic) that include the following. If labor productivity can be increased, then costs will decrease per unit and output will increase. A lower business tax may shift the supply curve to the right resulting in increased output. Improved public services may attract a more qualified workforce. Having a shovel ready industrial park will make it convenient for companies to establish themselves. Time will not be required to develop the lot.

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development collects economic and employment data by counties and for individual communities over 2,500. This plan will utilize economic data for Windom and Cottonwood County.

- | <b><u>Reasons Impacting Business Relocation</u></b> |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1.  | Availability of Skilled Labor   |
| 2.  | Highway Accessibility           |
| 3.  | Quality of Life                 |
| 4.  | Occupancy or Construction Costs |
| 5.  | Available Land                  |
| 6.  | Labor Costs                     |
| 7.  | Corporate Tax Rate              |
| 8.  | Proximity to Major Markets      |
| 9.  | State & Local Incentives        |
| 10.   | Energy Availability & Costs     |

### **Employment Characteristics**

Windom has seen a steady decline in the number of workers from 2001 to 2014. There has been an increase since 2014. E-Table #1 shows the annual employment and wages for all industries in Windom.

Demographics contribute to this decline in the number of workers. From 2000 to 2010, Windom's elderly and younger population cohorts experienced population growth. These population cohorts are not traditionally in the labor force.

Another factor influencing the steady decline in the number of workers in Windom is people living in Windom and working in other communities. From 2000 to 2010, Cottonwood County and Development Region 8 saw a population decline, while Windom’s population grew. These are just two of the many variables that impact the number of workers in Windom. Other variables could include: efficiencies in agriculture and manufacturing, economies of scale and business consolidation (number of establishments decline from 2001 to 2015), online retail, and numerous other variables.

The average wage per week in Windom has steadily increased from 2001 to 2015. In 2001, the average wage per week for Windom was \$438. In 2015, the average wage per week for Windom was \$664. This is an increase of 51.6 percent, but this does not include inflation. After adjusting for inflation, the increase in the average wage per week was 13.3 percent which is still a significant increase.

**E-Table #1 Annual Employment & Wages: Totals, All Industries –Windom**

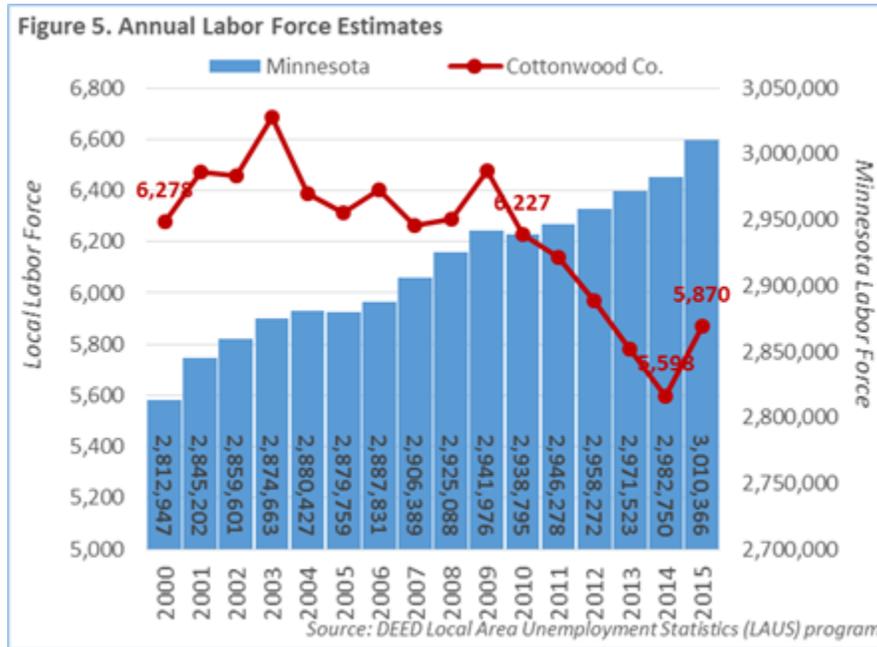
Year	Labor Force – Cottonwood County	Number of Establishments – Windom	Average wage per week – Windom	Average wage per week in 2001 dollars – Windom
2001	6,471	204	\$438	\$438.00
2002	6,458	204	\$456	\$448.90
2003	6,684	205	\$471	\$453.34
2004	6,390	200	\$477	\$447.20
2005	6,311	12	\$473	\$428.92
2006	6,405	214	\$516	\$453.29
2007	6,261	204	\$540	\$461.24
2008	6,290	198	\$536	\$440.89
2009	6,477	195	\$550	\$454.02
2010	6,227	193	\$562	\$456.44
2011	6,139	186	\$573	\$451.14
2012	5,970	184	\$594	\$458.19
2013	5,780	183	\$596	\$453.09
2014	5,598	181	\$633	\$473.54
2015	5,870	180	\$664	\$496.14

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
Annual Labor Force, Not Seasonally Adjusted

\* NOTE – E-Table #1: Does not include self-employed persons, firms employing less than four persons, railroad employment, persons working solely on commission, employees of religious organizations, minor children, elected officials, and student employees at schools.

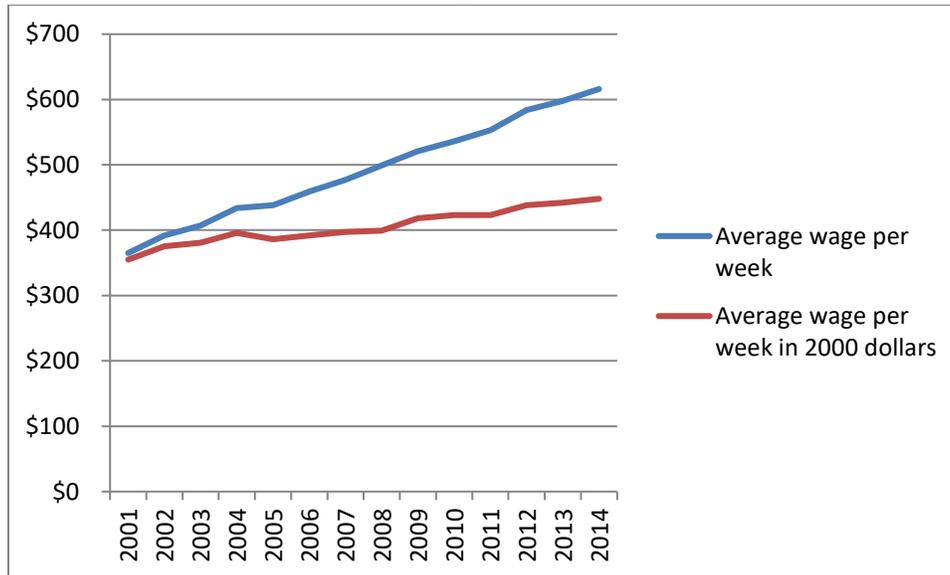
E-Figure #1

Annual Labor Force Estimates



E-Figure #2

Average Wages per Week - Windom



E-Table #2 shows the employment by industry in Windom in 2014. The largest industry based on the number of employees was “Manufacturing” followed by “Education and Health Services”. Manufacturing is anticipated to grow. Fast Global Solutions has a goal to double its workforce from 2016 to 2020. Toro Company was in the process of hiring another 150 workers (early 2017).

Agriculture is not separated out in these figures. A number of jobs in all of the categories are related to agriculture or provide services directly to agricultural producers. The second largest industry based on the number of workers was Education and Health Services.

Prime Pork purchased PM Beef Windom in 2016 and was operational in 2017. Prime Pork is a pork processing facility that planned to initially employ 296 people. Within 3 to 5 years, Prime Pork plans to employ 300 to 500 people. This will be a big boost to employment in Windom.

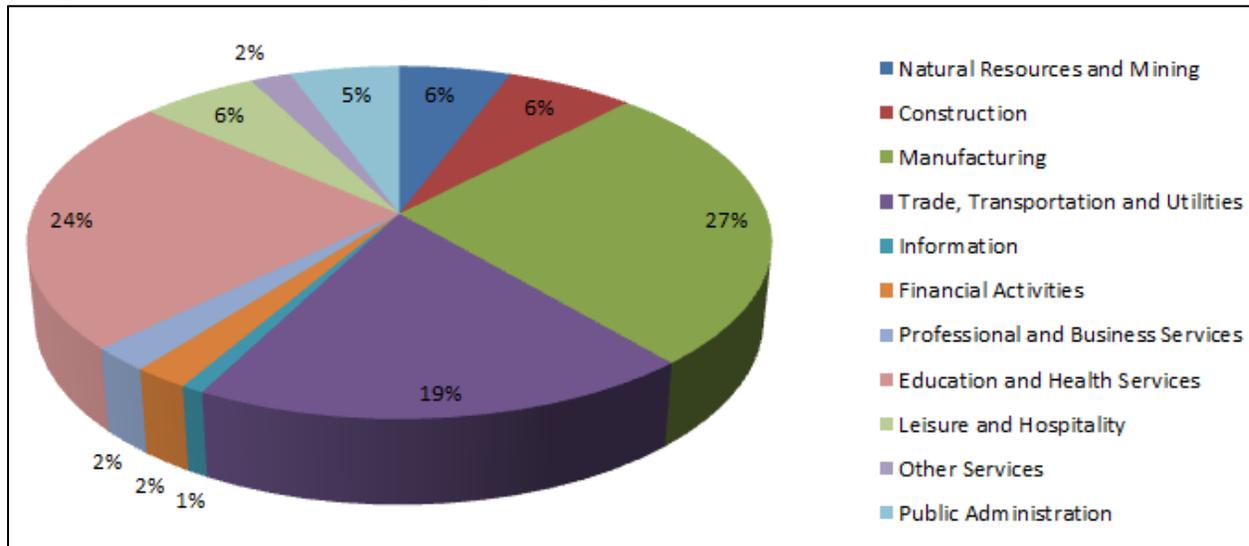
The total number of employees in all industries in Windom was 2,733 in 2015. The average wage per week in 2014 was \$664. In 2014, the highest paid industry was “Financial Activities” while the lowest paid industry was “Leisure and Hospitality”.

**E-Table #2 Employment by Industry – Windom 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	2,733	180	\$664
Natural Resources and Mining	25	5	\$1,000
Construction	112	16	\$765
Manufacturing	1,062	9	\$715
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	388	44	\$509
Information	34	6	\$790
Financial Activities	52	12	\$1,050
Professional and Business Services	73	16	\$716
Education and Health Services	524	28	\$708
Leisure and Hospitality	204	16	\$206
Other Services	64	16	\$582
Public Administration	192	12	\$835

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Figure #3 Distribution of Jobs by Industry Sector – Windom 2015**



**E-Table #3 Employment by Industry: Private Ownership – Windom 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	2,442	165	\$640
Natural Resources and Mining	25	5	\$1,000
Construction	84	15	\$721
Manufacturing	1,062	9	\$715
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	373	43	\$487
Information	34	6	\$790
Financial Activities	52	12	\$1,050
Professional and Business Services	73	16	\$716
Education and Health Services	469	27	\$688
Leisure and Hospitality	204	16	\$206
Other Services	64	16	\$582

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Table #4 Employment by Industry: Government Ownership – Windom 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	291	15	\$858
Construction	28	1	\$887
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	15	1	\$1052
Education and Health Services	55	1	\$897
Public Administration	192	12	\$835

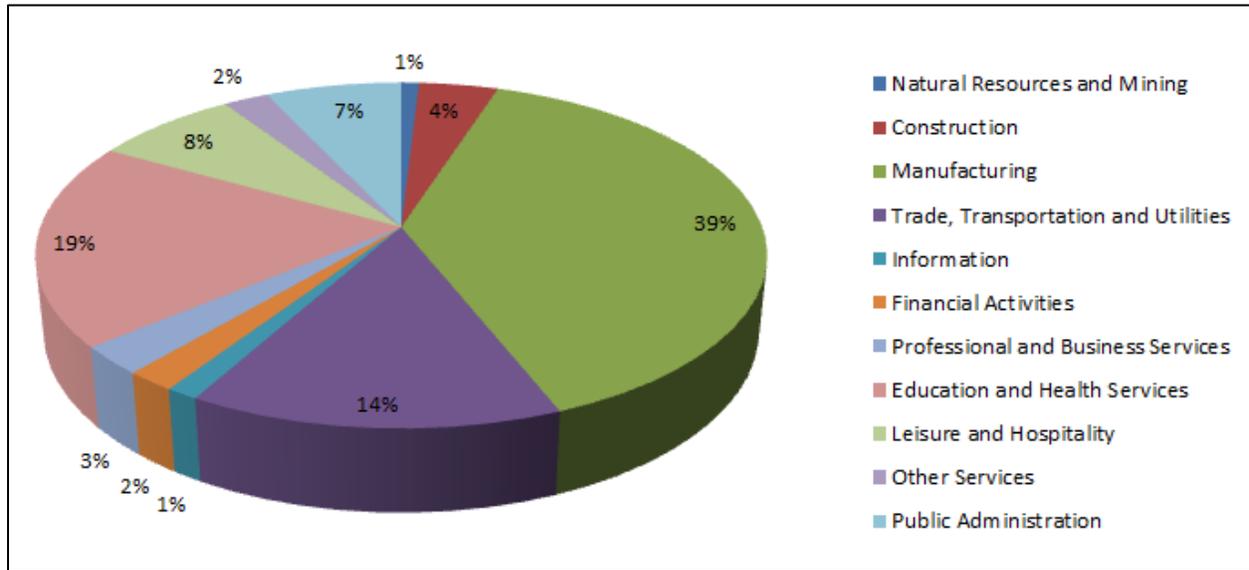
Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Table #5 Employment by Industry – Cottonwood County 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	4805	389	\$680
Natural Resources and Mining	272	34	\$712
Construction	312	48	\$862
Manufacturing	1278	21	\$749
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	903	103	\$645
Information	41	11	\$844
Financial Activities	100	21	\$891
Professional and Business Services	107	24	\$788
Education and Health Services	1138	46	\$662
Leisure and Hospitality	284	28	\$222
Other Services	99	28	\$494
Public Administration	268	24	\$720

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Figure #4 Distribution of Jobs by Industry Sector – Cottonwood County 2015**



**E-Table #6 Employment by Industry: Private Ownership – Cottonwood County 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	3977	349	\$669
Natural Resources and Mining	272	34	\$712
Construction	228	44	\$796
Manufacturing	1278	21	\$749
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	851	95	\$631
Information	41	11	\$844
Financial Activities	100	21	\$891
Professional and Business Services	107	24	\$788
Education and Health Services	714	42	\$655
Leisure and Hospitality	284	28	\$222
Other Services	99	28	\$494

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Table #7 Employment by Industry: Government Ownership – Cottonwood County 2015**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Average wage per week
Total, All Industries	827	40	\$737
Construction	83	4	\$1,035
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	51	8	\$887
Education and Health Services	424	4	\$674
Public Administration	268	24	\$720

Source: Department of Employment and Economic Development

## Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate is the percentage of the total labor force that is unemployed and actively seeking employment. The unemployment rate does not include people who have stopped looking for work. Since people who stopped looking for work are not included, the unemployment rate may significantly understate the number of people who are not working. Data is not available for the number of people not in the labor force for Cottonwood County.

The unemployment rate is also a lagging indicator. The employment rate can be used as a tool to confirm long-term market trends, but it should not be used to foreshadow how the economy is doing. Additional variables need to be considered.

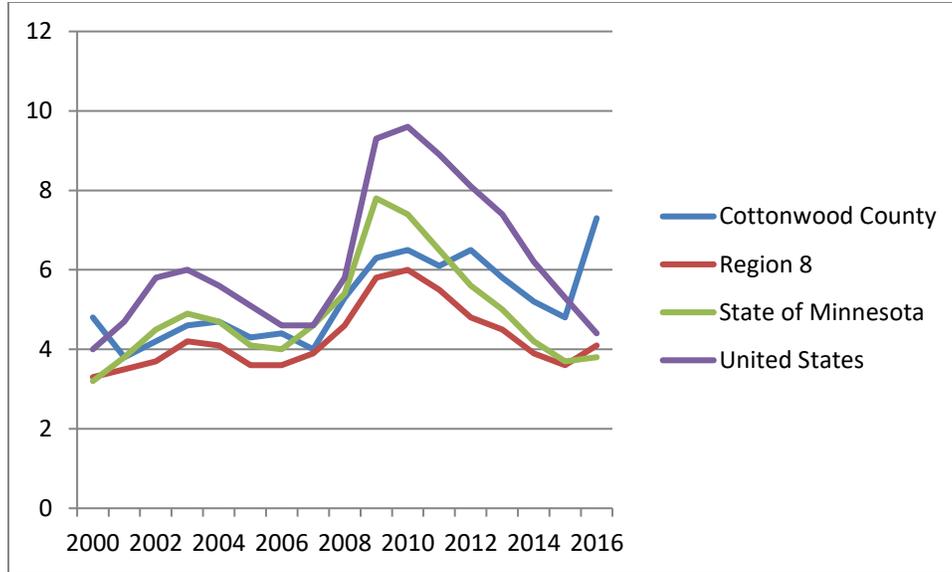
In 2015, the unemployment rate in Cottonwood County was 4.8 percent, while the unemployment rate in Development Region 8 was 3.6 percent and the State of Minnesota was 3.7 percent. From 2001 through 2015, the average unemployment rate for Cottonwood County was 5.1 percent, 4.3 percent for Development Region 8, 5.0 percent for Minnesota, and 6.5 percent for the United States. Cottonwood County has seen a consistent higher unemployment rate than counties in Development Region 8.

**E-Table #8a Annual Unemployment Trends**

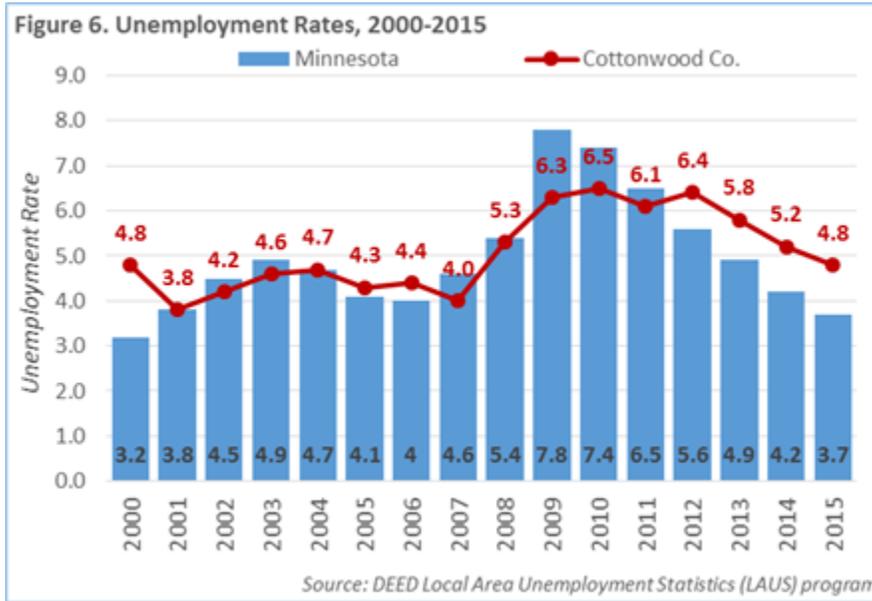
Year	Cottonwood County	Region 8	State of Minnesota	United States
	Percent			
2000	4.8	3.3	3.2	4
2001	3.8	3.5	3.8	4.7
2002	4.2	3.7	4.5	5.8
2003	4.6	4.2	4.9	6
2004	4.7	4.1	4.7	5.6
2005	4.3	3.6	4.1	5.1
2006	4.4	3.6	4	4.6
2007	4	3.9	4.6	4.6
2008	5.3	4.6	5.4	5.8
2009	6.3	5.8	7.8	9.3
2010	6.5	6	7.4	9.6
2011	6.1	5.5	6.5	8.9
2012	6.5	4.8	5.6	8.1
2013	5.8	4.5	5	7.4
2014	5.2	3.9	4.2	6.2
2015	4.8	3.6	3.7	5.3
2016	7.3	4.1	3.8	4.4

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**E-Table #8b Annual Unemployment Trends**



**E-Figure #8c Annual Unemployment Trends**



**E-Table #9 Labor Force Participation Rate**

Year	Cottonwood County	Region 8	State of Minnesota	United States
	Percent			
2001	NA	NA	75.3	66.8
2002	NA	NA	74.8	66.6
2003	NA	NA	74.5	66.2

2004	NA	NA	74.0	66.0
2005	NA	NA	73.3	66.0
2006	NA	NA	72.7	66.2
2007	NA	NA	72.4	66.1
2008	NA	NA	72.2	66.0
2009	NA	NA	72.1	65.4
2010	NA	NA	71.4	64.7
2011	NA	NA	71.0	64.1
2012	NA	NA	70.7	63.7
2013	NA	NA	70.4	63.3
2014	NA	NA	70.0	62.9
2015	NA	NA	70.2	62.7

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

### Household Income Levels

In 2013, the average median income for Cottonwood County was \$45,294, while Development Region 8 was only \$48,321. When comparing Cottonwood County to Development Region 8, Cottonwood County had a lower median income in 2011 and 2013. The difference between Murray County’s median income and Development Region 8’s median income in 2013 was -\$3,027 or -6.3 percent.

When comparing Cottonwood County to the State of Minnesota in 2013, Cottonwood County had a 24.3 percent lower median income than the state average. The cost of living in Windom is 15 percent less than the Minnesota average.<sup>8</sup>

In 2013, the average mean income for Cottonwood County was \$56,577, while Development Region 8 was only \$60,486. When comparing Cottonwood County to Development Region 8, Cottonwood County had a lower mean income in 2011 and 2013. The difference between Cottonwood County’s mean income and Development Region 8’s mean income in 2013 was -\$3,909 or -6.5 percent.

When comparing Cottonwood County to the State of Minnesota in 2013, Cottonwood County had a 38.6 percent lower mean income than the state average.

**E-Table #10 Household Income Levels**

County	2011 Median Income (\$)	2011 Mean Income (\$)	2013 Median Income (\$)	2013 Mean Income (\$)	Percent Change Median	Percent Change Mean
Cottonwood	43,111	52,730	45,294	56,577	5.1%	7.3%
Jackson	47,455	59,590	51,681	63,657	8.9%	6.8%
Lincoln	46,270	57,343	47,861	61,738	3.4%	7.7%
Lyon	47,254	58,821	49,594	64,484	5.0%	9.6%
Murray	47,833	57,001	52,160	62,197	9.0%	9.1%
Nobles	45,552	56,576	48,208	59,590	5.8%	5.3%
Pipestone	42,217	55,082	46,019	56,824	9.0%	3.2%

<sup>8</sup> AreaVibes. Cost of Living Index. Accessed: 11/20/17. Available: <http://www.areavibes.com/windom-mn/cost-of-living/>

<b>Redwood</b>	45,177	58,269	47,447	61,493	5.0%	5.5%
<b>Rock</b>	44,510	54,802	46,623	57,815	4.7%	5.5%
<b>Region 8</b>	45,487	56,690	48,321	60,486	6.2%	6.7%
<b>Minnesota</b>	58,476	75,432	59,836	92,087	2.3%	22.1%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In 2015, 54.3 percent of households in Windom had an annual income between \$25,000 and \$99,999. The income range that had the highest percentage of households was \$50,000 – \$74,999 with 17.9 percent. There is also a large percentage of the population below the household income level of \$25,000.

Thirty-four percent of households in Windom have an annual income less than \$25,000. Eight percent of the households are making less than \$10,000 annually. The poverty rate in Cottonwood County for all ages was 13.7 percent from 2009 to 2013.<sup>9</sup> The state average in Minnesota was 11.5 percent from 2009 to 2013.<sup>9</sup>

**E-Table #11 Household Income Levels – Windom 2015**

<b>Income (\$)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Under 10,000</b>	8.3
<b>10,000 – 14,999</b>	9
<b>15,000 – 24,999</b>	16.8
<b>25,000 – 34,999</b>	11.6
<b>35,000 – 49,999</b>	12.8
<b>50,000 – 74,999</b>	17.9
<b>75,000 – 99,999</b>	12
<b>100,000 – 149,999</b>	7.7
<b>150,000 or more</b>	3.8
<b>Median</b>	\$39,549

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### Youth in Poverty

In 2014, 52.2% or 181 kids in Windom under the age of 5 live in poverty.<sup>10</sup> At Windom Public Schools, approximately 474 students (of the 1,052 enrolled) qualified for the free and reduced lunch program in 2016 – 2017 school year.<sup>11</sup> The overall poverty rate for Cottonwood County has grown from 9.6 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2015.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Minnesota Poverty Rate by County. Accessed: 1/5/17. Available: <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/minnesota/percent-of-people-of-all-ages-in-poverty#map>

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2010-2014 5-year estimates. Accessed: 10/12/17. Available: [www.mncompass.org/profiles](http://www.mncompass.org/profiles)

<sup>11</sup> Minnesota Department of Education. Accessed: 10/12/17. Available: [rc.education.state.mn.us/#mySchool](http://rc.education.state.mn.us/#mySchool)

E-Figure #5

Youth in Poverty – Windom & Cottonwood County



### Windom Market Area Profile

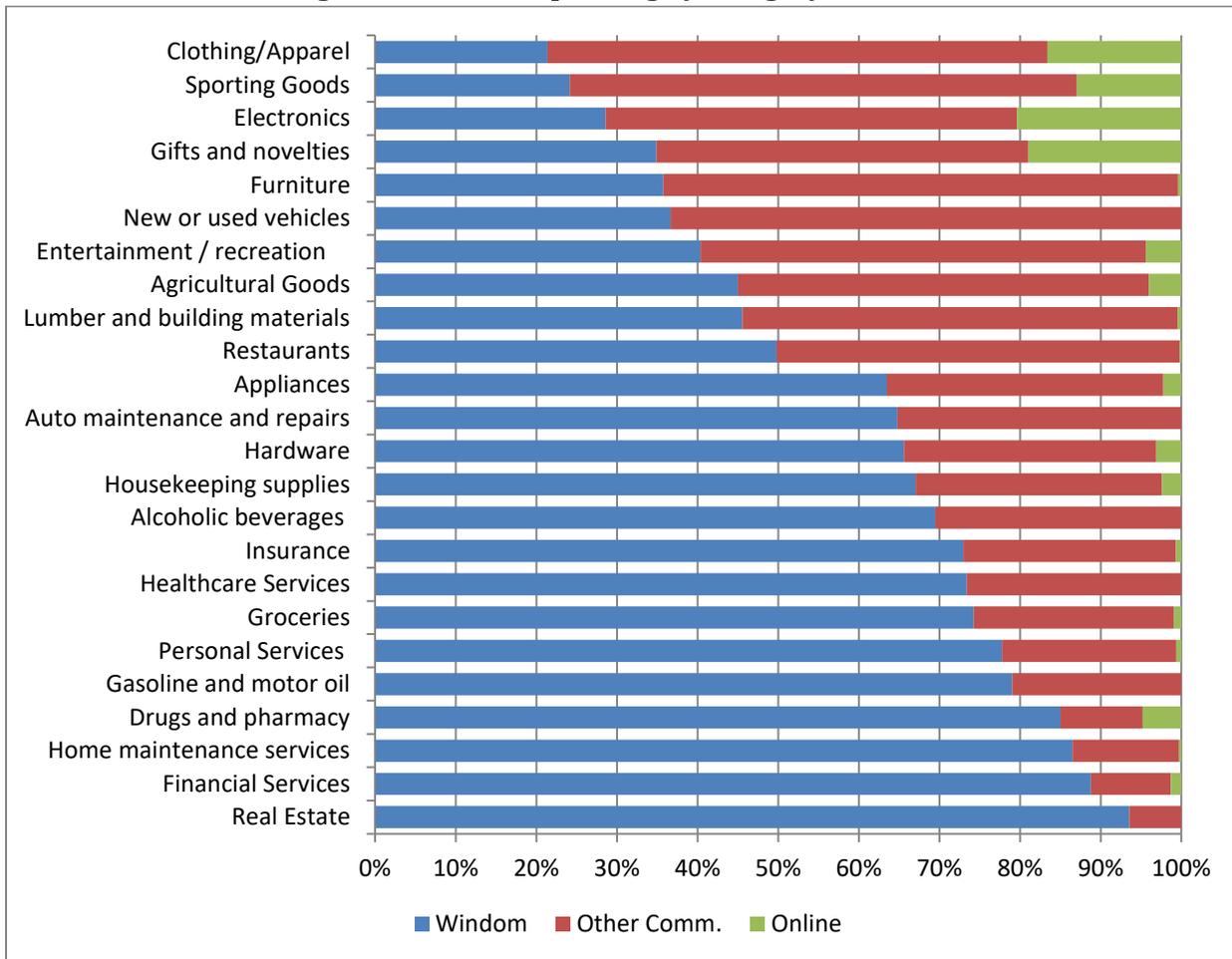
In the Spring of 2017, the City of Windom contracted with University of Minnesota Extension to conduct a consumer and business survey to assist the community’s comprehensive planning efforts. The report which follows includes excerpts of the major findings for inclusion in the comprehensive planning document. The survey was a random sample of community members in Windom. We received 83 responses out of 193 usable addresses (12 were returned by the US Postal Service) for a 48 percent response rate. Refer to Addendum II for the Windom Market Area Profile.

A business survey was also administered. Thirty-five retail and service businesses and organizations operating in Windom received a survey to gather input on market opportunities and areas for improvement. We received 33 responses for a 91 percent response rate.

### Spending by Category & Location

When analyzing spending across a range of convenience and destination businesses in Windom, other communities, and online, Extension found that respondents are purchasing a majority of their goods and services in Windom. Participants reported leaving Windom for a number of destination goods, including furniture, vehicles, and building materials. A sizeable portion of convenience goods and services, such as groceries and pharmacy, are sourced locally.

**E-Table #12 Percentage of Household Spending by Category & Location**



**Frequency of Shopping in Other Communities**

Respondents reported that they shop most frequently in Mankato, 7.4 times a year on average, followed by Sioux Falls and the Twin Cities Metro. When asked to share other communities in which they shop, nearly 15% of respondents report shopping in Worthington rather frequently, ten times per year on average. Four respondents reported shopping in Spirit Lake.

**E-Table #13 Frequency of Shopping in Other Communities by Respondents**

Community	Average times per year	No. of respondents
Sioux Falls	5.1	66
Mankato	7.4	66
TC Metro	3.2	62

### Top 10 Stores Frequented when Shopping in Nearby Communities

Respondents are most frequently shopping at big box stores for general merchandise, clothing, and building materials in other communities. Menards in Mankato is the top store attracting local residents and is the second most cited store in Sioux Falls. Also in the building material category, Lowes and Home Depot were two of the top stores in Mankato. The general merchandise goods found in Walmart, Sam’s Club, Kohl’s, and Target are also popular, pulling Windom shoppers to these large regional centers.

**E-Table #14 Top 10 Stores Frequented when Shopping in Nearby Communities**

Sioux Falls		Mankato		Twin Cities Metro	
Walmart	11	Menards	19	Target	8
Menards	10	Kohl’s	15	Mall of America	5
Kohl’s	8	Target	15	Mall	4
Scheels	8	mall	13	Kohl’s	3
Target	8	Lowes	9	Ikea	3
mall	6	Walmart	9	Macy’s	2
Sam’s Club	5	Hobby Lobby	7	Walmart	2
Hobby Lobby	4	Home Depot	7	Menards	2
Barnes & Noble	3	Herberger’s	6	TJ Maxx	2
Lowes	3	Scheels	6		

### Shopping District Improvements

When asked about the ways to improve shopping in the community, an overwhelming majority ranked ‘goods and services available’ as the most important, underlying the importance of developing some types of businesses which could meet the needs of residents. This finding is in keeping with responses from other Minnesota communities in which Extension has conducted a consumer survey.

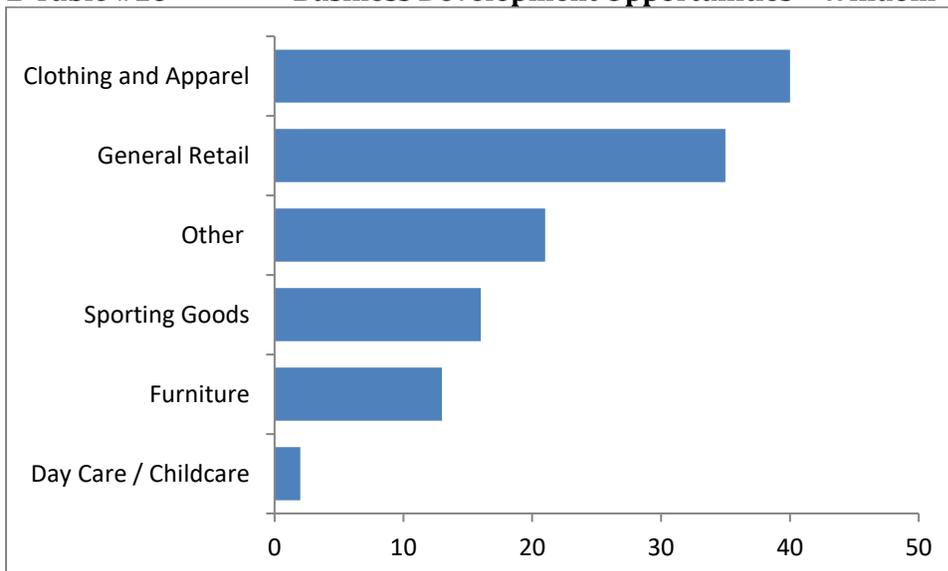
**E-Table #15 Priorities to Improve Shopping in Windom Ranked by Importance**

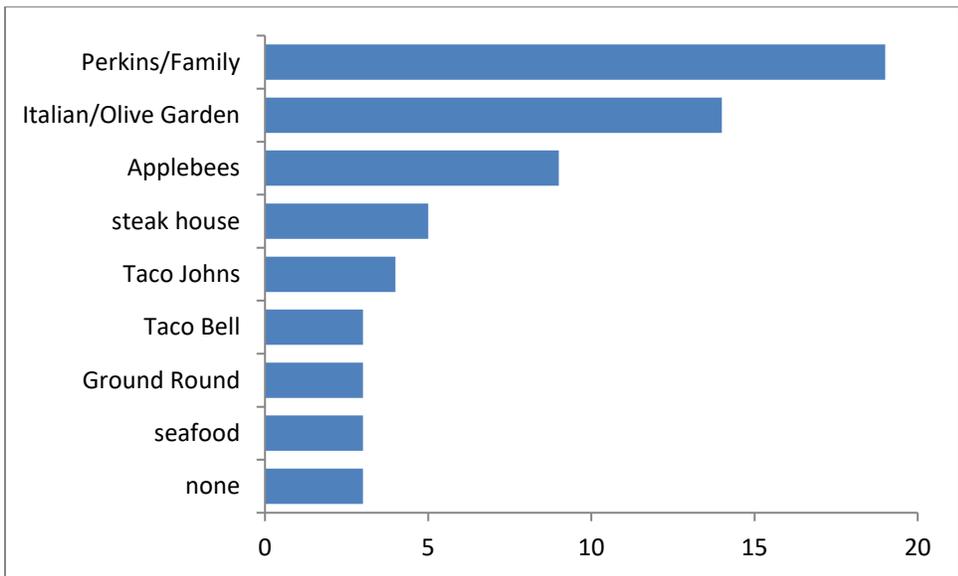
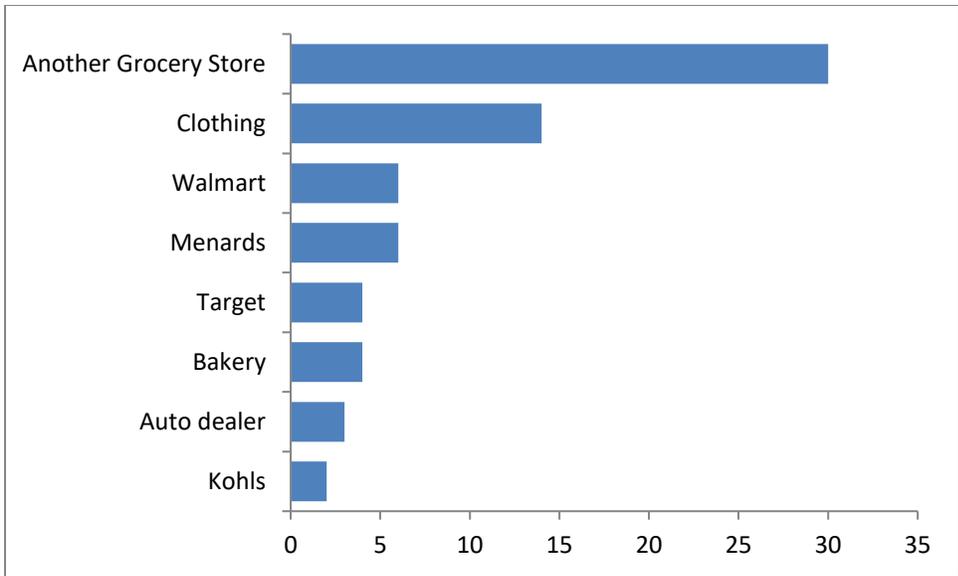


**Business Demand**

General merchandise goods, which drive residents to other communities for purchase, was ranked second only to clothing. Sporting goods ranked third, another merchandise line which respondents reported shopping for in other communities, namely at Scheels. The ‘other’ category had a wide distribution of suggestions.

**E-Table #16 Business Development Opportunities – Windom**

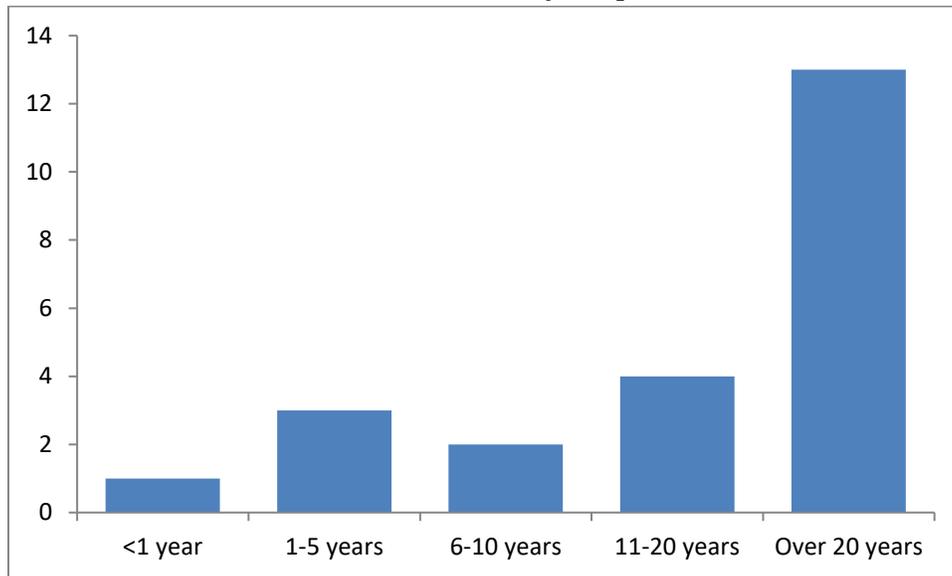




### Business Outlook

In Spring 2017 Extension mailed a two-page survey instrument to 129 retail and service businesses and organizations operating in Windom utilizing the same survey procedure as the resident survey. The purpose of the survey was to obtain insights regarding market opportunities and areas for improvement from those currently doing business in the study area, that is, those who know the local marketplace well. Many of the survey respondents operate long-standing businesses. More than half of respondents work in enterprises that have been in existence more than 20 years.

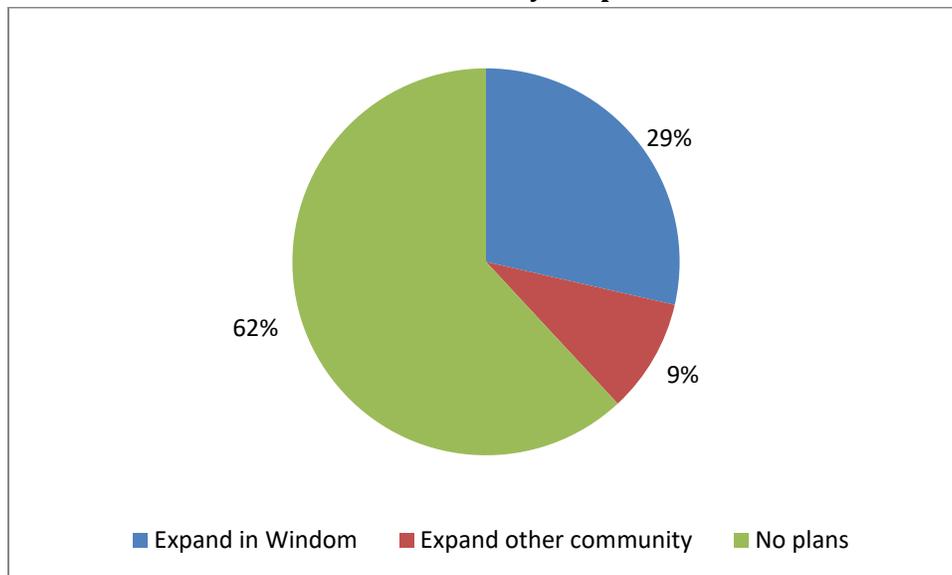
**E-Table #17**      **Years Business in Existence by Respondents**



**Plans for the Future**

Similar to the results of business surveys conducted by Extension in other rural communities, about one-third of businesses are planning for expansion. A majority of those planning for expansion are looking to do so in Windom with about a quarter expanding in other communities.

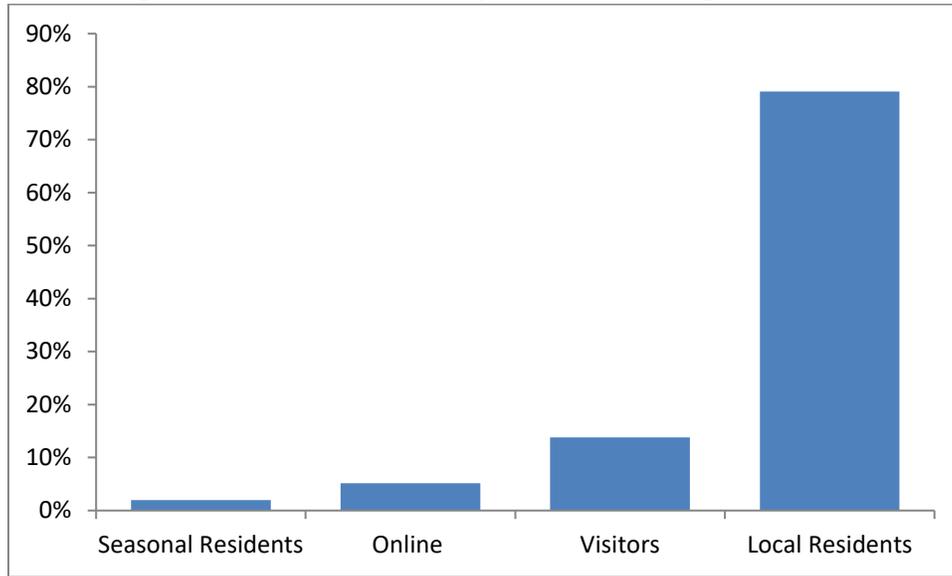
**E-Figure #6**      **Plans for Future Business Growth by Respondents**



**Current Customer Base**

The survey asked business owners to estimate the source of their sales by customer group. The overwhelming majority are local residents.

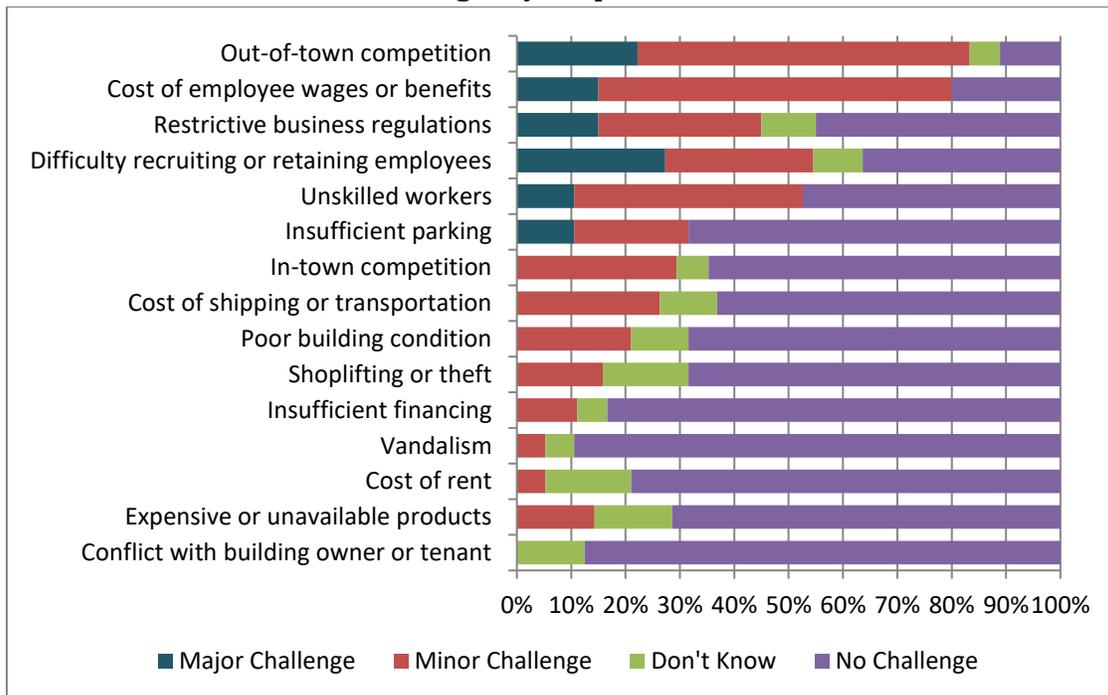
**E-Table #18 Average Contribution of Sales by Customer Group - Windom**



**Business Challenges**

The survey asked business owners to rank a set of common business issues by the level of challenge to their operations. The top major challenge was “recruiting or retaining workers” which was cited by a quarter of businesses. Few issues rose as major challenges and those only to a minority of respondents. A majority of respondents ranked out-of-town competition and employee wages and benefits as minor challenges.

**E-Table #19 Business Challenges by Respondents - Windom**

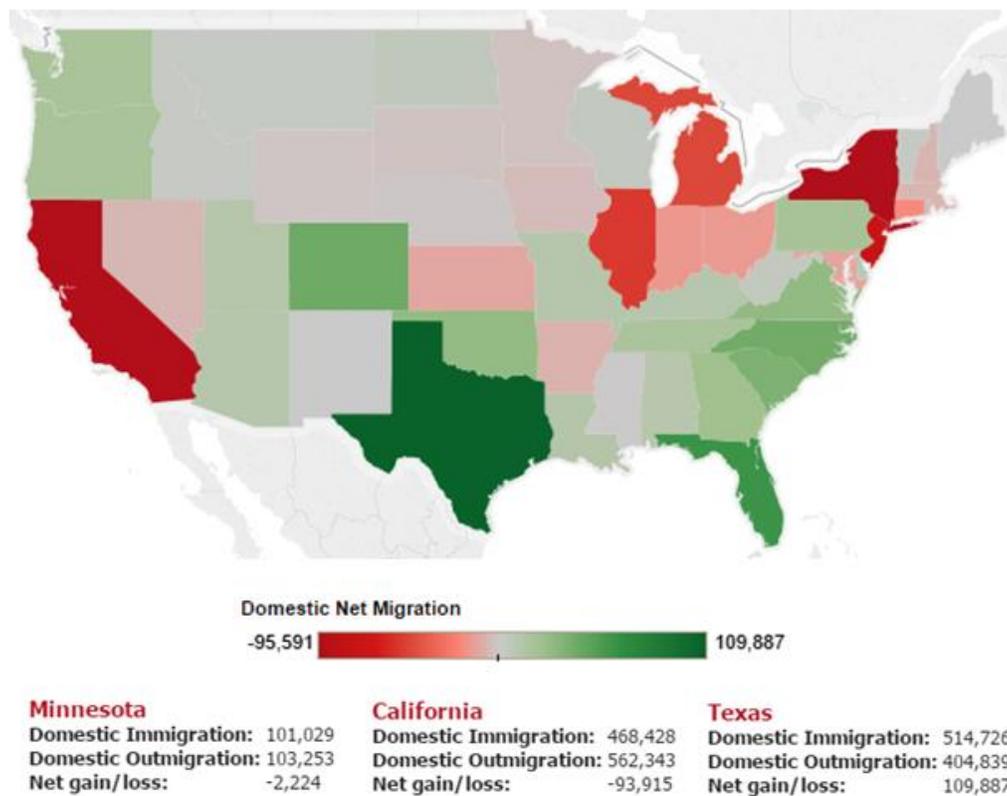


## Population Migration & Economic Freedom

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates state-to-state migration flows. Minnesota's net gain/loss of domestic migration was -2,224 in 2011.<sup>12</sup> E-Figure #3 outlines the net migration from each state for 2011. This is of significance for Windom and Southwest Minnesota, since Windom and Southwest Minnesota have a number of open job offerings and not enough qualified people to fill them.

For Minnesota businesses to grow, a skilled and educated workforce is essential. If domestic outmigration continues in Minnesota, business growth may decline. A number of variables impact domestic migration. Two of these variables are personal and economic freedom and livability. E-Figure #3 outlines the overall freedom ranking for all 50 states.<sup>13</sup>

**E-Figure #6 State-to-State Domestic Net Migration**

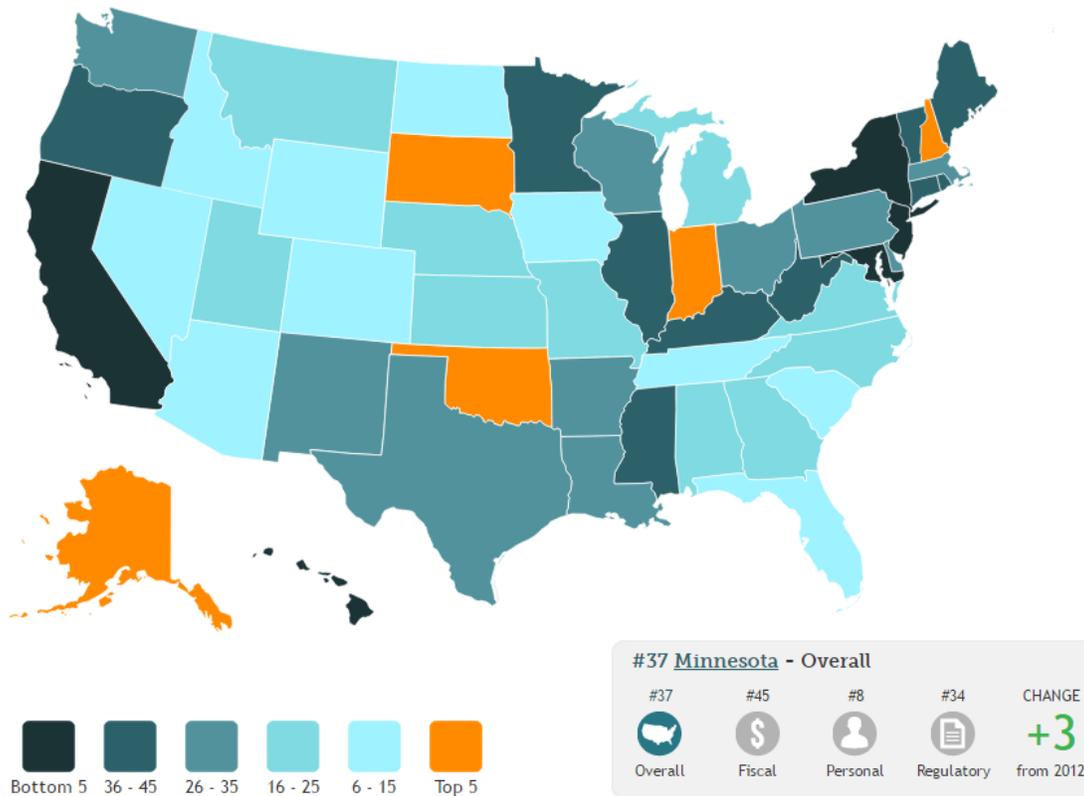


<sup>12</sup> Governing. State-to-State Population Migration. Accessed: 1/30/17. Available: <http://www.governing.com/gov-data/census/2010-census-state-migration-statistics.html>

<sup>13</sup> Freedom in the 50 States. Accessed: 1/30/17. Available: <https://www.freedominthe50states.org/>

E-Figure #7

### Personal & Economic Freedom In All 50 States

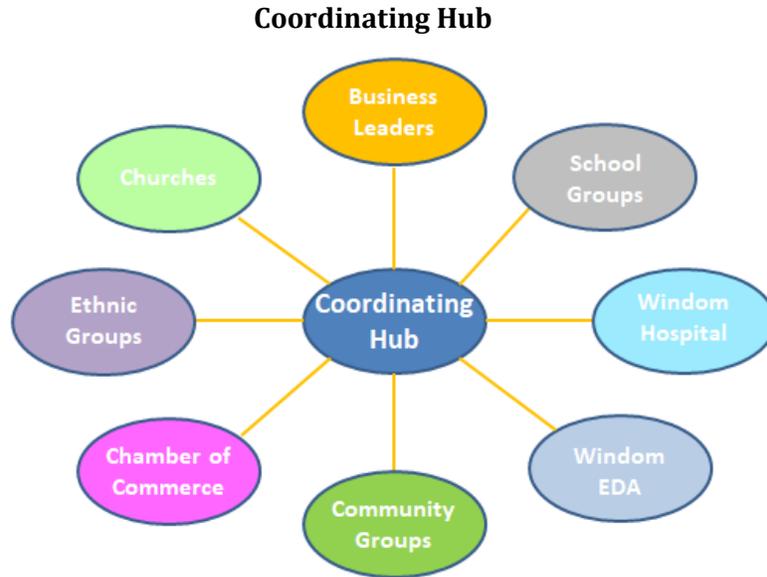


#### Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Economy

Below is the overarching goal related to the economy in and around the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve this goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the economy goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community- based approach is used.

**Goal:** It is the goal of the City of Windom to develop and maintain a diverse economic base conducive to the stability, vitality, and growth of local business and industry, while enhancing employment opportunities by attracting new business and industry.

**E-Figure #8**



### Coordinating Hub

The Coordinating Hub is comprised of organizations working together to provide community planning and coordination to ensure a healthy, skilled, and productive workforce.

### Spokes

Spokes are organizations in the community with grass-root connections and support to move projects forward to help ensure a healthy, skilled, and productive workforce.

*60/90 Corridor – Center of Commerce and Industry in SW Minnesota* Dev. Dept. Medium Priority Strategy: Build on the City of Windom’s role as a center of commerce and industry in Southwest Minnesota.

- Objective:*
- Raise awareness of regional economic development strategies and amenities.
  - Actively participate in the 60/90 Corridor Initiative.
  - Support the SW MN and NW IA Retail Initiative.

### Existing Conditions:

In Southwest Minnesota travel is based on miles. In the metro travel is based on minutes. The volume of traffic in the metro can often more than double the time required to arrive at your destination.

Within a 30-mile radius of Windom are the Cities of Jackson, Worthington, St. James, Spirit Lake, and a number of smaller cities. Windom should actively work with these communities to promote the region. Cities and counties within this area should be seen as close partners when it comes to planning and promoting amenities.

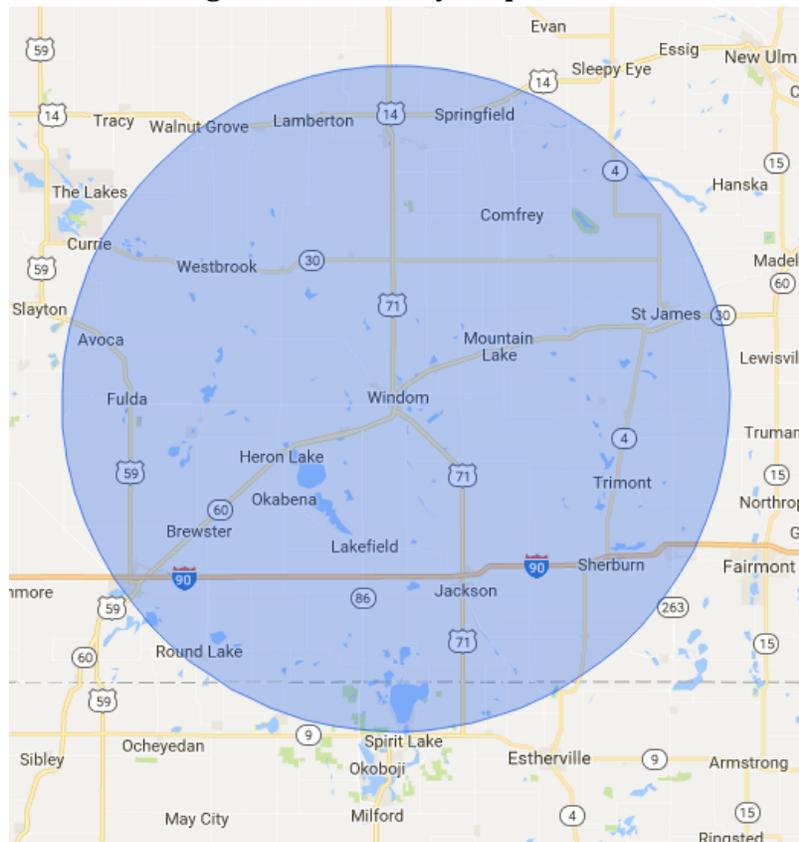
If we classify the Windom, Worthington, Jackson, Fairmont and Spirit Lake/Okoboji area as one shopping district, we have the population to support specialty shops, additional restaurants, etc. The groundwork

for a regional retail initiative is currently being developed by members of the 60/90 Corridor Initiative. The first Southwest Minnesota and Northwest Iowa Retail Initiative Meeting was held on November 16, 2017.

The SW MN and NW IA Retail Initiative is an avenue to bring brokers, franchisors/franchisees, and developers to the region to network with local influential stakeholders, investors, lenders, prospective owners/operators, developers, and land/facility owners. An overview of gaps in the retail landscape can guide discussions to help spur development. Retail is vital to local economies for quality of life, citizen retention and growth, and to retain dollars in the local economy.

**E-Figure #9**

**Regional Community Map - Windom**



*Economic Diversification – Workforce Attraction, 60/90 Corridor Initiative*

Dev. Dept. High Priority

- Strategy:** Encourage continued economic diversification while maintaining a viable tax base.
- Objective:** Market the 60/90 Corridor to areas of the United States with higher unemployment rates.
- Market the 60/90 Corridor as one entity with a variety of amenities within the various communities.
- Promote umbrella marketing of economic development strategies and amenities.

*Existing Conditions:*

Windom does have a diverse economic base including: manufacturing, healthcare, agricultural food processing, transportation and many others. Agricultural-related businesses are at the center of Windom's economy and this is true for the region as well. Agriculture did insulate the region through the last economic downturn during the Obama Presidency.

Windom and the region did not see high unemployment rates. Recently, the region has seen some of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. Employers are competing for a limited number of employees.

Economic diversification can be centered on attracting and retaining people in Southwest Minnesota. Southwest Minnesota has a number of available jobs and we need additional people to fill them. Population trends impact the demand for goods and services, so economic diversification will be pursued through population growth.

Marketing and promotion need to be elevated to help attract and retain people in the region. This is being undertaken by Explore Southwest, but there needs to be greater coordination. We need to raise awareness and increase marketing of Southwest Minnesota.

Marketing at a regional level should be the primary strategy. Southwest Minnesota needs to switch to a regional mentality to help maintain economic vitality. Part of this coordination is cross promotion.

The 60/90 Corridor Initiative can be the avenue to raise funding for targeted marketing strategies. The mission of the 60/90 Corridor Initiative is to utilize umbrella marketing to promote Cottonwood, Jackson and Nobles Counties. Marketing is centered on connectivity to international shipping routes, broadband, and other similarities.

The availability of jobs can be one of the targeted marketing strategies. Events, festivals, and amenities in the region can also be highlighted to promote livability. Specific marketing campaigns can be developed at 60/90 Corridor Initiative Meetings.

*Public/Private Partnerships –Supply Chain & Distribution Analysis*      Dev. Dept.    Medium Priority  
**Strategy:**      Support the concept of public/private partnerships as a means of increasing city involvement in the economic development process.

**Objective:**      Work with the larger employers in Windom to analyze their supply chains and distribution networks to work towards attracting new supporting businesses to Windom.

Develop a direct marketing campaign with the identified supporting businesses.

*Existing Conditions:*

“Supply chain analysis is a tool for identifying growth opportunities related to a given industry within a region. Every industry is part of a greater supply chain—the sequence of industries involved in the production and distribution of a good or service, from raw materials to final products. That industry purchases inputs (raw materials, parts, knowledge) from certain industries, creates an output, and then

sells that output on to another industry. Additional value is added to the output as it moves along the supply chain until it reaches its final buyer: the consumer.”<sup>14</sup>

A Supply Chain and Distribution Analysis could assist the City of Windom in understanding how regionally significant industries (larger employers in Windom) are connected to other industries located both inside and outside of the region. Through this analysis, new business leads will be developed and efficiencies will occur for the businesses. The end goal is to use the list of targeted companies in an attraction and expansion campaign ultimately convincing new businesses to locate in Windom. [Larger businesses in Windom include, but are not limited to, Toro, Fast Global Solutions, and Prime Pork (specialized businesses)].

#### Direct Benefits to the Business

1. Total supply chain cost reduction (transportation, distribution and inventory)
2. Improved customer service

#### Direct Benefits to City

1. Strengthen existing local business
2. Identify potential new businesses

#### Steps – Supply Chain and Distribution Analysis

1. Supply Chain Mapping – Understand how the business fits into its overall supply chain.
2. Gap Analysis – Determine where key supply chain industries source their inputs (within or outside the region).
  - a. Target inputs with high transportation costs
3. Targeted Business List – Identify business candidates for attraction and expansion (mutually beneficial relationship with existing business)
4. Direct Marketing Campaign – Contact the identified supporting businesses

#### *Business & Industry Needs – Housing*

All Departments

High Priority

*Strategy:* Provide infrastructure, utilities, and support capable of meeting the needs of business and industry.

*Objective:* Encourage and promote housing development of all types within the City.

#### *Existing Conditions:*

A Comprehensive Housing Study was completed for the City of Windom in May 2014. The housing study identified the need for approximately 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade. The need includes: entry-level single-family homes, move-up single-family homes, affordable townhomes, market rate townhomes, affordable rental housing, market rate rental housing, and senior

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<sup>14</sup> Supply Chain Analysis 101. Accessed: 7/5/17. Available: <https://www.camoinassociates.com/supply-chain-analysis-101>

housing – independent and memory care. (The housing study was completed prior to Prime Pork’s opening and Fast Global’s expansion).

The housing study identified a 3.7% rental vacancy rate in Windom. This rental vacancy rate includes market rate units and affordable rental units. In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom and the rental vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3%.

As of December 2016, there were approximately 50 single-family homes for sale in Windom. There are approximately 1,500 homes in Windom which equates to a single-family home vacancy rate of 3.3%. The total vacancy for Windom is 2.8% which is below a healthy vacancy rate of 5%.

Housing is a real issue in Windom and the issue is growing as Prime Pork expands its workforce and Fast Global Solutions continues to grow. Prime Pork is creating 296 jobs within the first year. Fast Global currently employs over 160 workers and they have a goal to increase their workforce by 50 percent to 300 by 2020.

Windom is a net importer of workforce employees. A large percentage of the employees in Windom’s facilities drive in to work from neighboring communities. This is partially due to the lack of available housing in Windom.

The City has received numerous letters of support for new housing developments in Windom. To grow the housing supply in Windom, the City will need to partner with private developers. The market is not filling this need on its own.

#### Lack of Rental Housing

The lack of available rental housing is the consequence of rents not keeping up with the cost of new housing. There is a gap between existing local rents and the minimum rent that is needed to cash flow a new apartment building. In Windom, the cost to build a home or rental unit is greater than the appraised value of the unit when it is completed.

The projected limited, zero, or negative return on investment restricts the ability of a developer or builder to secure financing from traditional lenders. Developers and builders are investing in communities where they are receiving a higher return on investment. Developers and builders are risk adverse. Thus without economic incentives, developers and builders of large projects are not choosing Windom.

#### Lack of New Single-Family Housing

A number of management level staff are not choosing to live in Windom. This is partially due to the lack of available lots. Windom does not have a newer area of town. There are newer single-family homes in Windom, but they are mixed in with older housing stock.

A new single-family home typically costs more than \$200,000 to construct. For resale value, some people are choosing not to construct a \$200,000 plus house in a neighborhood with \$50,000 homes. A new residential development will provide an area for new construction that will help to maintain home values.

**Strategy:** Continue to promote and encourage the Central Business District and Highway Business District as the focal points of commercial and retail activity.

**Objective:** Work with businesses to participate in the “Get Your Business Online” Program through Google.

*Existing Conditions:*

Google is working to engage millions of small businesses to improve their online presence. On Highway 60 in Windom, the average daily traffic volume is 12,000+. This volume is anticipated to grow by 3,000 to 5,000 after the 4-way expansion is completed between Windom and Mountain Lake. Windom will be a midpoint between Omaha and Minneapolis – St. Paul on a 4-way highway network.

Businesses in Windom need to boost their online presence to capitalize on these customers traveling through Windom. Part of this strategy is working with Trusted Digital Media Advisors with Google to expand their advertising.<sup>15</sup> Establishing a web presence will help to bring additional funding into Windom.

“In the web environment today there are essentially four areas that work together to make your business a success online. All of the required knowledge I mentioned above fits into these four areas.

1: An optimized website and social networks. Job one is to optimize your web presence for your customers. Make it visually appealing, easy to understand and use and readily available from wherever they are on whatever device they are using. The second part of on-site optimization is making the site conform to Google best practices for SEO. This makes it easy for search engines to understand what your site is about so that they can show it to the right people at the right place and time.

2: Produce great content. Don’t just let your finished web presence sit there. Post new content to your site and social networks on a regular basis. It needs to be top quality content that is relevant to your business and useful to your customers. This content can include text, images and video. All of these types of content need to be individually optimized as well.

3: Distribute your content. Your intended clients can’t use your content if they can’t find it. Distribute your website content to your social networks and business listing pages. Distribution is a necessary part of the strategy and done properly can yield amazing results. Done poorly it can damage you site’s reputation and performance.

4: Advertising. AdWords lets you target prospective customers with a laser focus. If

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<sup>15</sup> Google. Get Your Business Online. Accessed: 5/16/17. Available: <https://www.gybo.com/>

most of your customers are at the airport and using mobile devices, then you can target your ads to appear only to that group of people in that place. It also allows you to promote via search, Google’s vast display network and on YouTube. You can use your text, image and video assets within advertising or create new assets specifically for this purpose. A great deal of knowledge is required to run a successful AdWords campaign.”<sup>16</sup>

*Active Living as an Economic Development Strategy*      Dev. Dept. & Park & Rec      Medium Priority  
**Strategy:**      Encourage continued economic diversification while maintaining a viable tax base through attraction and retention efforts.

**Objective:**      Market the Windom Water Trail, Cottonwood Lake, and other recreational amenities in and around Windom.

Annually implement a minimum of two Active Living related (projects outlined in the Windom Active Living Plan, Bikeable Community Workshop Project Summary, etc.).

*Existing Conditions:*

Fifteen infrastructure projects and 15 non-infrastructure projects were identified in the Windom Active Living Plan. Another 4 short-term and 3 long-term projects were identified during the Bikeable Communities Workshop that was led by the Minnesota Bike Alliance on May 31, 2017, in Windom. Implementing these outlined projects will help to create a more walkable, bikeable, and livable community.

Numerous projects were completed in 2017. These include two infrastructure projects and one non-infrastructure project. These are denoted in the tables below with a strike-through.

Other projects were started in 2017 but were not finished. These projects are denoted in the tables below by bolded lettering.

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<sup>16</sup> Specialized Digital Marketing. The Google “Trusted Digital Media Advisor” – What Is It. Accessed: 5/16/17. Available: <https://specializeddigitalmarketing.com/trusted-digital-media-advisor/>

E-Table #20

Infrastructure Goals – Windom Active Living Plan

Rank	Location
1	Windom Recreation Area Sidewalk Gap
2	Windom High School/Middle School - Safe Routes to School Trail
3	Windom Bike Loop - River Road Loop
4	<del>15th Avenue Safe Route to School</del>
5	Collins Avenue Sidewalk Gap
6	16th Street Safe Route to School
7	16th Street Sidewalk Gap
8	Midblock Crossing - Highway 60/71
9	Abby Park Neighborhood Sidewalk Gap
10	Mayflower Park Recreation Trail
11	<del>6th Avenue South Sidewalk Gap</del>
12	Highway 60 Pedestrian Connectivity - 1st Avenue North Sidewalk Gap
13	Highway 60/71 Pedestrian Connectivity - 3rd Avenue South & Cindy Street Sidewalk Gap
14	12th Street Sidewalk Gap
15	6th Street Sidewalk Gap

**E-Table #21**

**Non-Infrastructure Goals – Windom Active Living Plan**

Rank	Project
1	<b>Windom Water Trail*</b>
2	<del><b>City Park Map*</b></del>
3	<u>Parklet(s)</u> on the Square
4	Road Art / Crosswalk Painting
5	Crossing Safety - Highway 62 & 4th Avenue
6	Stop Bars on Highway 60/71
7	Stop for Pedestrian Signs
8	Curb Extensions - <u>Winfair</u> Elementary
9	Creative Ideas - Parks & Recreation / Active Living
10	Paved Shoulders, Fog Lines & Center Striping
11	River Road Maintenance - paved shoulders, fog lines & center striping
12	Curb Extensions - General
13	Problem Intersections
14	<b>Regional Park Designation*</b>
15	Pedestrian Lighting

**E-Table #22**

**Bikeable Communities Workshop Goals – Short-Term**

Rank	Project
1	<b>Bike Ride with the Windom City Council</b>
2	Increasing Bike Parking around "The Square"
3	Painting Customized Crosswalk Art for Windom School District
3	<b>Fog Lines/Potential Bike Lanes- Highway 62</b>
4	Potential Partnership with Bike MN/MDH for Bike Maintenance @ BARC

E-Table #23

**Bikeable Communities Workshop Goals – Long-Term**

Rank	Project
1	Adding Bike Routes on Windom Parks Brochure
2	Creating Windom Bike Loop
3	Creating “Open Streets” Event During <u>Riverfest</u>

What Are “Open Streets”?

- Temporarily closes street(s) to driving so people use them for any activity **besides** driving
- Community building by bringing together organizations and local businesses



*Live Windom – Social Media*

Dev. Dept.

Low Priority

**Strategy:** Center a marketing campaign on livability, active living, and community health.

**Objective:** Organize an informal group of approximately 30 people to share admin rights to the “Live Windom” Facebook Page and a “Live Windom” Instagram.

Promote and market Windom through pictures, videos, posts, and social media.

**Market:**

- Historical nature of Windom and the Jeffers Petroglyphs
- Natural resources – Cottonwood Lake and the Des Moines River
- Recreational opportunities of the area, including Kilen Woods

*Existing Conditions:*

The City does not currently have an effective tool to promote the community. We need to make it easier for community members to share about events, recreational amenities, natural assets, and general livability. The goals would be to attract and retain residents, promote a healthy lifestyle, and improve livability and amenities in Windom. We can do this by promoting the community through

pictures, videos, and posts. This will make it easy for residents to share and for visitors and newcomers to learn about Windom. This is only sustainable if community members are helping to post pictures, videos, and stories.

The starting point is creation of an informal group of approximately 30 people to share admin rights to the “Live Windom” Facebook Page and Instagram. We can start with Facebook and Instagram and possibly expand to other social media. These individuals would post pictures and videos of events in Windom to help promote the community and its amenities. Examples include: 5K color run, pool, Cottonwood Lake, T-ball, sand volleyball, hockey, etc. We would ask these contributors to make 2 posts a week, so there would be 30+ posts a month. These posts should be centered on active living and participation in the community, showcasing events in the community, and other positive things to share about Windom.

This group could be organized through Audubon International and/or Blandin Leadership training. The City and Hospital would work to identify the original members. These members would rotate as needs change. We would ask original members to help find replacements, so a larger group would be maintained.

Sustainability through convenience is the key to the success of this strategy.

*Maintain a Competitive Tax Rate*

All Departments

High Priority

*Strategy:* Encourage the expansion and growth of existing and new businesses.

*Objective:* Develop a more in-depth analysis of services and amenities provided in Windom.

Pursue a sustainable level of city services.

Pursue a sustainable balance of amenities.

*Existing Conditions:*

The availability of skilled labor is typically number one when it comes to site selection criteria for a business. Other site selection criteria include: highway access, quality of life, available buildings, proximity to major markets, energy costs, etc. When discussing strategies to attract and retain a skilled labor force the availability of services and amenities will be part of the discussion.

The number of city services and amenities does impact the local tax levy. The City of Windom does ‘publicly’ provide a number of services and amenities. Windom’s local tax rate is still towards the middle when comparing similarly-sized cities in Southern Minnesota.

Periodic evaluations regarding sustainability and privatization should be part of the annual budgeting process. The tables below outline local tax rates, city services, and city amenities for eight comparable cities in Southern Minnesota.

**E-Table #24****City Services Comparison**

City	City Tax Rate *	Total Tax Rate **	Municipal Telecom	Municipal Liquor Store	Municipal Hospital	Library
St. James	88.96	146.84	No	Yes	No	City Owns building
Redwood Falls	89.80	134.57	No	Yes	Yes - City	City Library
Blue Earth	87.07	121.70	No	Yes	No	City Library
LeSueur	73.83	143.88	No	No	Yes - Lease	City Bldg and grounds
Pipestone	94.21	126.48	No	Yes	Yes - County	Share w\County & School
Luverne	61.80	91.70	No	Yes	No	County Library
Jackson	70.12	108.44	Yes - SMBS	Yes	No	County Library
Slayton	94.77	118.80	No	No	Yes -County	City Library
Windom	89.05	132.75	Yes	Yes	Yes - City	City Library

\*Three Year Average (City) (2014-16)

\*\*Three Year Average (City, County and School) (2014-16)

#### Municipal Telecommunications

The City of Windom invested early in a fiber communications system. Windomnet is the center for a “fiber-to-the-premise” network that offers fiber to homes and businesses in Windom. Windomnet’s fiber network allows businesses to compete internationally and community members to enjoy fast streaming and connectivity at home.

The continued operation of Windomnet is maintained by City Staff. The Windomnet network also provides services to Southwest Broadband Services (SMBS). SMBS is a consortium of eight communities including the City of Jackson, a comparable city. Jackson is the only other comparable city providing municipal telecommunications.

#### Municipal Liquor Store

The City of Windom owns and operates Riverbend Liquor. A municipal liquor store is the most common city service when comparing city services with comparable cities.

#### Municipal Hospital

The City of Windom owns the hospital. The Windom City Council and the Hospital Board oversee operation of the Windom Area Hospital. The Windom Area Hospital currently has a service contract with Sanford Health.

## Library

The City of Windom owns and operates the Windom Library. The Windom Library is a member of the Plum Creek Library System. Most libraries are part of a cooperative which allows access to shared materials and resources.

The City of Windom does receive an annual transfer from Cottonwood County. In 2016, the annual transfer was \$16,451. This transfer is based on population and is close to the minimum transfer allowable under state statute. Other comparable cities share the cost of the building, building maintenance, and operations with a county, school, or both.

**E-Table #25 City Amenities Comparison**

City	City Tax Rate*	Total Tax Rate**	City Arena	Community Center	Swimming Pool
St. James	88.96	146.84	No	Yes	Yes/City/Outdoor & Lake
Redwood Falls	89.80	134.57	Yes	Yes	Yes/ City/Outdoor Aquatic Ctr
Blue Earth	87.07	121.70	No	Yes/Fitness & Senior Ctr	Yes/City/Outdoor Aquatic Ctr
LeSueur	73.83	143.88	Yes	Yes	Yes/City/Indoor & Outdoor
Pipestone	94.21	126.48	No	No/City Bldg Senior Ctr	Yes/City/Aquatic Ctr & Fitness
Luverne	61.80	91.70	Yes***	No/City Bldg Senior Ctr	Yes/with Fitness Center
Jackson	70.12	108.44	No	No	Yes/School/Indoor
Slayton	94.77	118.80	No	No/ City Bldg Senior Ctr	Yes/City/Outdoor
Windom	89.05	132.75	Yes	Yes	Yes/City/Outdoor & Lake

\*Three Year Average (City)

\*\*Three Year Average (City, County and School)

\*\*\*Hockey Association owns the rink

## City Arena

The Windom Arena is owned by the City and is situated on land leased from the Cottonwood County Ag Society. In 2016, the City entered into a 30-year lease for this location with the Cottonwood County Ag Society. The Windom Arena is a year-round multipurpose recreation arena. The Windom Arena provides space for community members to enjoy a range of recreational activities. The arena features two air-conditioned racquetball courts, wallyball (a version of volleyball), two sheets of ice in the winter, horse show arena in the summer, an archery range, and a community room. For more information, refer to the Community Facilities Chapter.

The Windom Arena is operated by the City Staff. The City's General Fund provides long-term maintenance for the Arena and an annual transfer for operations. The Windom Hockey Association is constructing new locker rooms to be donated to the City in 2018. Other user groups have also provided support over the years.

There is a mixture of examples from comparable cities. Other comparable cities do provide similar support for their arenas. There are also other examples where the user groups provide the majority of the support for their arena and not the City. The Blue Mound Ice Arena in Luverne was completed by the Luverne Hockey Club. Recently, the Spirit Lake Arena was built with no city assistance. Staffing also varies between these facilities.

### Community Center

The Windom Community Center is owned by the City and was built through a combination of funding including a state grant, private fundraising, and the Utility Commission's match of fundraising dollars. The Community Center was opened in 1999 and features a senior citizen center, full kitchen, dining area, meeting rooms, and a large multi-purpose room that is used for wedding receptions, anniversary and graduation receptions, dances, banquets, Christmas parties, craft shows, gun shows, regional meetings, training seminars, concerts, athletic and intramural activities, bloodmobile visits, and youth activities. There are also 7 acres of City-owned property around the Community Center. For more information, refer to the Community Facilities Chapter.

The Windom Community Center is operated by the City Staff. The City's General Fund provides long-term maintenance for the Community Center and an annual transfer for operations. Lutheran Social Services contracts with the City for use of the kitchen and dining space for its Senior Dining Program. Seniors also help to maintain the senior citizen center.

Other comparable cities do provide similar support for their community centers, and there is a mixture of amenities at the various community centers. In discussing the different amenities at the various community centers, it is not the upfront costs of establishing a new amenity, but the long-term maintenance and staff time for the different locations. Staffing varies between community center facilities and is based on the amenities that are offered.

### Swimming Pool

The City owns and operates the outdoor pool in Windom. A "Friends of the Pool" group was created in the Summer/Fall of 2017 to gather public input and study options regarding the 50-year old pool. Options that are being discussed include replacement options, remodel options, and Tegels Park remodel.

The need for addressing the condition of the pool has been documented in two pool studies, but these pool studies have not considered all of the options. All options should be considered along with the upfront costs and the long-term maintenance costs. The City's General Fund provides long-term maintenance for the Windom Pool and an annual transfer for operations.

## Summary

Long-term maintenance and operational costs are the two main variables for community facilities that impact services and amenities of those community facilities, and also impact a portion of the local tax levy in Windom. These costs should be outlined, discussed, and budgeted for in the City's annual budgets. City services and amenities can change, and the public's input is critical when comparing options. Transfers from the General Fund need to be outlined, so members of the public can compare options.

*Commercial/Industrial Development & East Highway 60 Development*    Dev. Dept.    High Priority  
**Strategy:**    Provide infrastructure and municipal utilities capable of meeting the needs of business and industry.

**Objective:**    Development and maintain a variety of commercial and industrial properties.

- Central Business District (Square)
- Highway Business District (Highway 60/71)
- North Windom Industrial Park

Develop the existing agricultural property along East Highway 60 between Runnings and Prime Pork into commercial property.

### *Existing Conditions:*

Businesses have differing needs, so it is critical that there is a variety of properties available for development. Windom has multiple unique business development areas. These include, but are not limited to, the Central Business District (Square), Highway Business District (Highway 60/71), North Windom Industrial Park, Carl Schneider Business Park, and Windom Warehousing Subdivision (South Windom along County Road 26).

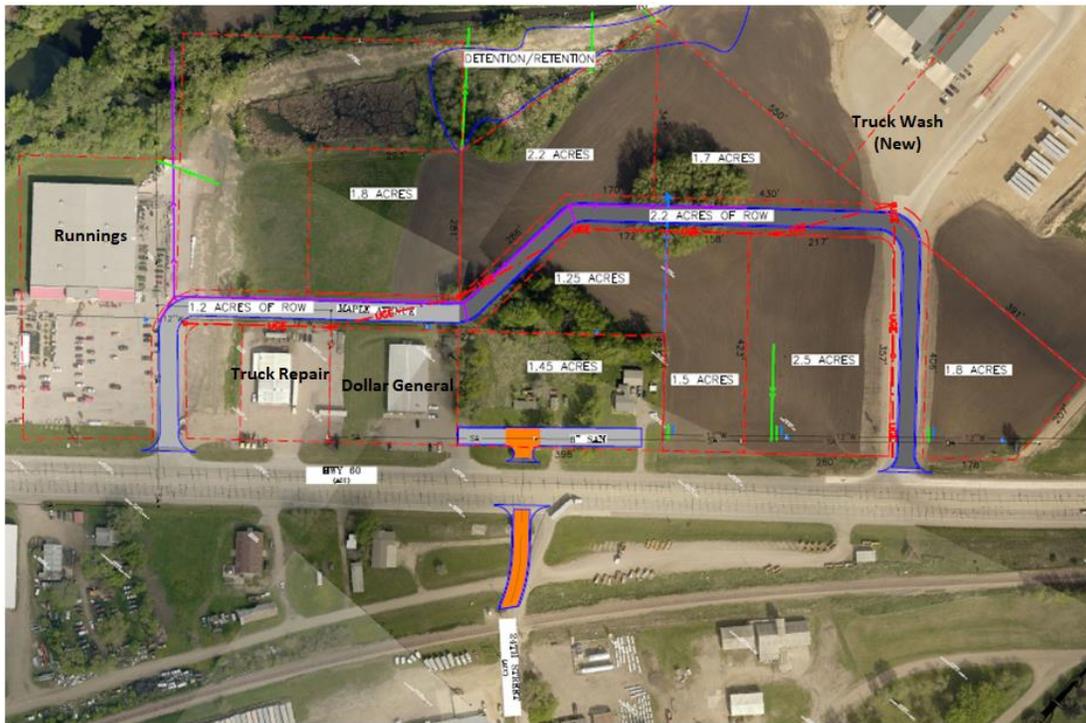
The highest demand properties have been along Highway 60. This demand is anticipated to increase when the last stretch of four line highway between Omaha and Minneapolis – St. Paul is completed in 2018. There is currently an average daily traffic volume of 12,000+, and MnDOT predicts another 5,000 plus when the last leg of the 4-lane expansion project is completed in 2018.

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) has received numerous inquiries regarding buildable lots along TH 60, and there are no buildable lots that do not have limitations. There are two existing lots for sale along TH 60, however both have building limitations and one has access issues. Available buildings are limited by space and access.

The proposed East Highway 60 Development would make available six to eight new lots. These lots would be highly desirable because the availability of buildable lots along TH 60 is very limited, their visibility is excellent, the new lots are close to Prime Pork and Toro (two major employers in Windom), and no new highway approaches are needed. The East Highway 60 Development is an infill project. The Development utilizes existing infrastructure and discourages sprawl.

E-Figure #10

East Highway 60 Development - Backage Road Option



E-Figure #11 East Highway 60 Development - Frontage Road Option



*Data Center*

Dev. Dept.

Low Priority

*Strategy:* Attract industries that will maximize the return on municipal investments; i.e. facilities and services that encourage high technology businesses to locate in Windom.

*Objective:* Actively market the Certified Data Center Site in the North Windom Industrial Park.

*Existing Conditions:*

The North Windom Industrial Park is certified in DEED’s Shovel Ready Program. The Economic Development Authority of Windom partnered with Great River Energy and Deloitte to certify a Data Center Shovel Ready Site in the North Windom Industrial Park. The proposed site can accommodate Data Center Facilities from 25,000 to 250,000 square feet.

Currently there are 14 Telecommunication Providers/Carriers (Tier 2 carriers) going through Windom with 11 different fiber routes. Windom is on the informational highway connecting Omaha to Minneapolis – St. Paul. This telecommunication infrastructure is a competitive advantage for Windom.

In 2005, the City of Windom was the first community in Minnesota with a citywide fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network. Windomnet is a city-owned enterprise offering telecommunication services to businesses and home owners. Windomnet offers a full suite of “Carrier Hotel” services providing interconnection service to multiple tenants. Windomnet boasts a 35-mile fiber network throughout the City of Windom and is considered 85% neutral in its carrier operations.



**Certified Data Center Site**

**Certified Data Center Site (Great River Energy & Deloitte)**

The proposed Data Center location within the North Windom Industrial Park can accommodate Data Center Facilities from 25,000 to 250,000 square feet.

Currently there are 14 Telecommunication Providers/Carriers (Tier 2 carriers) going through Windom with 11 different fiber routes.



Citywide fiber-to-the-home or business.

A 35-mile fiber network throughout the City of Windom.

A full suite of "Carrier Hotel" services providing interconnection service to multiple tenants.

Windomnet is considered 85% neutral in its carrier operations.

Partners



**GREAT RIVER ENERGY™**



**SCE**  
South Central Electric Association



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**North Windom Industrial Park**

- Nearly 100 Acres Available
- Preferred Data Center Site Designation
- All Lots Served by Utilities and Fiber Optics

Watch DRONE VIDEO of North Windom Industrial Park at:  
[www.windom-mn.com](http://www.windom-mn.com)



**Contact Us Today**

Economic Development Authority of Windom  
 Drew Hage | 1-800-494-6366  
[dhage@windom-mn.com](mailto:dhage@windom-mn.com)  
 Phone: 507-832-8661

**Strategy:** Highlight businesses and industries that will provide higher wages and increase the standard of living for the city's residents.

**Objective:** Support the Career Academies Program the Greater Twin Cities United Way is leading with Windom Area Schools.

Actively promote two-year certificates and Community College education as a better option for a vast majority of students/adults rather than the four-year degrees.

*Existing Conditions:*

The availability of skilled workers is typically the number one or a close second in site selection factors. Southwest Minnesota has a number of skilled manufacturing positions available, and there are a number of businesses that are planning to grow their labor force. A collaborative effort is needed to plan, educate, and grow a skilled labor force locally.

The Greater Twin Cities United Way (GTCUW) is expanding its Career Academies Program into Greater Minnesota. The Southwest Initiative Foundation received a grant to develop a Career Academies Program in high schools in Worthington, Jackson, and Windom. In Windom, the Windom Area Hospital, Windom Area Schools, and the Economic Development Authority of Windom have partnered with the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative, Southwest Minnesota Industry Council, and Minnesota West Community and Technical College to develop the program.

The grant would provide up to \$150,000 for planning efforts between April 2017 – July 2018 to develop 9<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> + grade career academies/pathways for students. Additional funding for implementation and ongoing support for successful projects is available in subsequent years for a total of \$420,000. The goal of this opportunity is to increase the number of students, particularly low income students and students of color, who graduate with the skills and credentials needed for postsecondary and career success. This Career Academies Program is a great opportunity to promote high-paying careers in manufacturing and trades that require technical training and not 4-year degrees.

Windom has a number of current job openings that require technical training, certificates, and trade skills. A number of high school students are pursuing four-year degrees and are struggling to find work in their related fields and have accumulated large student loans. It is critical to educate students and parents on the benefits of pursuing a technical degree and certificates.

**E-Figure #13                      Benefits – Two-Year Colleges & Technical Certificates**

- Demand – this is where the jobs are at in SW MN
- Lower cost per credit than 4-year colleges
- Save time & money (compared to a 4-year degree)
- Start earning money faster
- Some programs enable graduates to earn as much or more than a typical bachelor's degree
- Smaller class sizes (compared to a 4-year college)

- Good place to complete General Courses if you want to pursue a 4-year degree later.

**E-Figure #14 Site Selection Factors – Consultant Survey 2016**

COMBINED RATINGS*		
CONSULTANTS SURVEY 2016		
Site Selection Factors	2016	2015
<b>RANKING</b>		
1. Availability of skilled labor	100.0	100.0 (1)**
2. Highway accessibility	98.7	93.5 (6)
3. Labor costs	95.8	96.1 (2)
3T. Proximity to major markets	95.8	96.1 (2T)
3T. State and local incentives	95.8	94.9 (4)
3T. Available land	95.8	91.0 (7)
3T. Tax exemptions	95.8	91.0 (7T)
8. Energy availability and costs	93.0	85.8 (13)
8T. Proximity to suppliers	93.0	84.2 (14)
10. Training programs/technical schools	91.7	86.9 (12)
11. Available buildings	88.9	94.8 (5)12.
12. Accessibility to major airport	88.8	88.4 (9)
13. Expedited or "fast-track" permitting	87.3	88.4 (9T)
14. Occupancy or construction costs	86.0	84.0 (15)
15. Inbound/outbound shipping costs	84.6	88.4 (9T)
16. Low union profile	82.0	83.1 (16)
17. Environmental regulations	80.3	82.9 (17)
18. Corporate tax rate	78.9	74.1 (20)
19. Right-to-work state	76.4	76.7 (18)
20. Water availability	72.2	75.3 (19)
21. Availability of advanced ICT services	69.5	57.2 (25)
22. Availability of unskilled labor	69.0	65.0 (21)
23. Raw materials availability	64.8	64.9 (22)
24. Quality-of-life	63.3	64.5 (23)
25. Proximity to innovation/ commercialization/R&D centers	62.0	61.9 (24)
26. Railroad service	45.1	52.0 (26)
27. Availability of long-term financing	40.8	39.0 (28)
28. Waterway or oceanport accessibility	29.6	42.9 (27)

\* All figures are percentages and are the total of the "very important" and "important" ratings of the Area Development Consultants Survey and are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

\*\* 2015 ranking

**E-Figure #15**

**Windom EDA Support for Career Academies Program**

- Enter into a formal partnership with secondary, postsecondary, and other community partners;
- Work with local businesses to provide students an opportunity to participate in some form of workplace learning, such as job shadowing, paid or unpaid internships, virtual and group experiences, and paid part-time and/or summer employment;
- Help to create an up-to-date skills map for the industry/sector that identifies essential job requirements and competencies;
- Identify industry-valued skills credentials related to the pathway;
- Work with local businesses to provide workplace visits, speakers, and mentors for participating students and externships for secondary teachers and community college faculty as appropriate;
- Collaborate with secondary and postsecondary staff to align technical skills and workplace competencies with curriculum, course offerings, and other resources;
- Provide dedicated staff to work on the career pathway program who have the authority to coordinate with the secondary and postsecondary school(s) on the business partner’s behalf; and
- Serve on an advisory board, and share expertise and experiences on the development of career pathway programs, as well as pertinent resources, tools, and strategies.

*Tourism*

Park & Rec. & Dev Dept

Low Priority

*Strategy:* Promote and encourage the full potential of tourism by focusing on destinations in and around Windom

*Objective:* Work with Explore Southwest to market the historical nature of Windom, natural resources, and recreational opportunities in and around Windom.

- Historic Downtown Square
- Jeffers Petroglyphs
- Cottonwood Lake
- Des Moines River
- Kastle Kingdom
- City Parks
- Kilen Woods.

*Existing Conditions:*

The new Explore Southwest Minnesota website launched in 2016. Windom and Cottonwood County have very limited information on the site as of October, 2017. The Windom Convention and Visitors Bureau is working on adding information to the website.

Explore Southwest Minnesota is one way to market information in and around Windom. It is critical to maintain an active presence on regional marketing platforms and post information regularly. This will help to maintain a positive marketing presence.

*Shops of Windom – Social Media Marketing*

*Dev. Dept.*

*Medium Priority*

**Strategy:** Increasing planning and coordination between retail businesses and restaurants around the Square and in Windom.

**Objective:** Create a shared Facebook page for all retail businesses and restaurants in Windom.

Posting new events and keeping information up-to-date on social media can be time consuming and overwhelming for some businesses. It can also be difficult to drive traffic to your pages. Sharing information on multiple pages helps to generate traffic and can also be easier to maintain.

A shared Facebook group for “Shops of Windom” could help to increase sales in Windom. The different businesses would have shared access to the “Shops of Windom” Facebook page, so they could post and repost sales and other events on this common page. If a business does not post for a few days or weeks, other businesses are likely posting, so that will help to continually drive traffic to the page.

Community members can use this page as a one-stop-shop for sales and dinner features in Windom. More in-depth information can then be found on the businesses’ own pages by clicking the posts. The “Shops of Windom” page will likely attract more users due to the variety of information. There will be more exposure for all retail shops using this shared model.

Rules can be agreed upon, so content is managed on the shared page. Everyone has admin rights which allow businesses to post when it is convenient for them. Businesses can still retain their own page and, hopefully, a shared page will result in reposting and additional exposure.

There is an existing retail committee in Windom that meets quarterly. It is an informal group led by the Chamber. A joint meeting with Finding Windom would be recommended.

*Downtown Square – Part A*

*Placemaking Around the Square*

*Dev. Dept.*

*Medium Priority*

**Strategy:** Increase pedestrian traffic, retail, and leisure activities around the Square.

**Objective:** Encourage Placemaking as an economic development strategy.

Help plan a minimum of two Placemaking projects a year for the Downtown Square.

Promote the Downtown Square as a Lifestyle Center.

*Existing Conditions:*

“When people are there, people invest more.”<sup>17</sup> Dining, Retail, and professional services around the Downtown Square create a medium for attracting people to the Square. The economies of scale of a compact and walkable shopping district can drive investment.

A more integrated branding of the Downtown Square is needed. Joint marketing projects have been undertaken in the past, but continued support and continuous messaging are needed. “Hip to be Square” is a successful branding effort, and this branding effort can be expanded to include more of the businesses.

The Downtown Square does have an authentic identity, but more consistent messaging is needed. Placemaking is redefining a space and making it a destination. A branding initiative should utilize the Shops of Windom Strategy outlined on page 82, social media, billboards, traditional marketing, and creative marketing efforts to integrate branding of the Downtown Square into all other marketing efforts by businesses around the Square.

Walkability also needs to be a significant element of the branding initiative. People can walk from shop to shop and this is not the case in other shopping districts. Newer strip malls are typically designed for vehicles and require driving from one store to another store. A compact downtown shopping district, like the Square, has a number of unique aspects the district’s businesses could intentionally market.

A more purposeful branding initiative can help to redefine the Downtown Square as a destination in Windom and in the region. The Downtown Square can become more of a Lifestyle Center. Lifestyle centers are defined by the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) as a “specialized center” that has specialty stores with dining and entertainment in an outdoor setting. The ICSC further describes them as a “multi-purpose leisure-time destination, including restaurants, entertainment, and design ambiance and amenities such as fountains and street furniture that are conducive to casual browsing.”<sup>18</sup> The Downtown Square needs to be redefined as a destination in Windom.

Below is a draft billboard to be hung along Highway 60. This is the first round of a joint marketing effect between businesses around the Square, the Economic Development Authority of Windom, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. This joint marketing effect will concentrate on branding and pooling marketing funds to attract people to the Square.

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<sup>17</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 6/21/16. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

<sup>18</sup> New Republic. The Mall Is Dead. American Shop at Lifestyle Centers Now. Access: 10/2/17. Available: <https://newrepublic.com/article/121203/american-malls-are-changing-their-look-and-their-tactics>

E-Figure #16

Downtown Square Marketing – 2017



*Downtown Square – Part B*

*Downtown Square Development – Mixed Use*

*Dev. Dept.*

*Medium Priority*

**Strategy:** Increase the population density around the Square.

**Objective:** Incentivize residential development and redevelopment above retail shops and office space around the Square.

Develop a public parking lot map for the Downtown Square.

Develop indoor parking around the Downtown Square.

*Existing Conditions:*

Mixed use housing is one of the hottest trends to reemerge in the real estate market.<sup>19</sup> This is a reemerging trend since historic downtowns typically had retail on the first floor and residential on the second and third floors. The success of a mixed-use development is dependent on a number of factors that center on placemaking.

Placemaking is redefining a space and making it a destination. A placemaking strategy was developed for the Downtown Square and is outlined on page 82. This strategy centers on a more integrated branding of the Downtown Square.

Placemaking needs to be an integral element in any incentive program to develop and redevelop residential space around the Downtown Square. Millennials and seniors are the target populations.

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<sup>19</sup> Fortune Builders. The 5 Must-Haves Of A Successful Mixed-Use Development Project. Accessed: 11/6/17. Available: <https://www.fortunebuilders.com/the-5-must-haves-of-a-successful-mixed-use-development-project/>

People want to be able to walk to restaurants, shopping, and greenspace. The Downtown Square has all of those amenities, but placemaking and several other amenities are missing.

### Transportation & Parking

Transportation is critical. Walking and biking are the preferable modes of transportation, but the option to take your car has to be convenient. Off-street parking and indoor parking need to be part of the mix.

### Upscale Apartments

Higher-end apartments are also important. Downtowns with little or no investment are not going to attract millennials and seniors looking for nicer apartments. The whole corridor needs to be part of the project, since you are not going to see investment next to a rundown property.

### Jobs

Creating employment opportunities in the corridor is also important. People want the option to walk or bike to work. The more jobs you can add to a town center, the more synergy and placemaking can occur. The jobs element links with two other strategies outlined in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that include: Increasing Demand Around the Square and Co-working Space.

### *Downtown Square – Part C*

### *Increasing Demand Around the Square*

Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Recognize the importance of a strong central business district and encourage businesses to locate in the Central Business District.

**Objective:** Encourage investment in the larger buildings around the Downtown Square.

Encourage Cottonwood County to invest in the Downtown Square for County Offices.

### *Existing Conditions:*

Adding jobs around the Downtown Square will increase demand for goods and services around the Square and help to redefine the Square as a destination. The Success of the Square is dependent on placemaking (redefining a space and making it a destination), increasing demand (jobs), and increasing demand (housing). There are two related strategies outlined in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that include: Placemaking Around the Square and Downtown Square Development – Mixed Use.

### Background

The Downtown Square is a compact business district that includes dining, retail, and professional services. There are economies of scale around the Square for creating demand for goods and services. The Downtown Square has been able to maintain business investment, but there are a few vacancies.

These vacancies are primarily in larger buildings that require larger investments. The smaller buildings have experienced shorter vacancy periods and occupancies have turned over more regularly, since the required investment is less. More substantial economic incentives may be needed to redevelop some of the larger buildings.

One larger entity that could potentially invest in the Downtown Square is Cottonwood County. Parking is one concern regarding the County office space around the Downtown Square. The parking issue could be resolved through the development of a County Parking Policy, parking lot striping, identification of public parking lots, and adding one to three new parking lots.

### Parking Availability

There are a total of approximately 431 on-street parking spots on the Square and within one block of the square. There are also potentially three new parking lots that could be developed within one block of the Downtown Square. These additional lots and a parking policy by Cottonwood County would open up on-street parking on the Square.

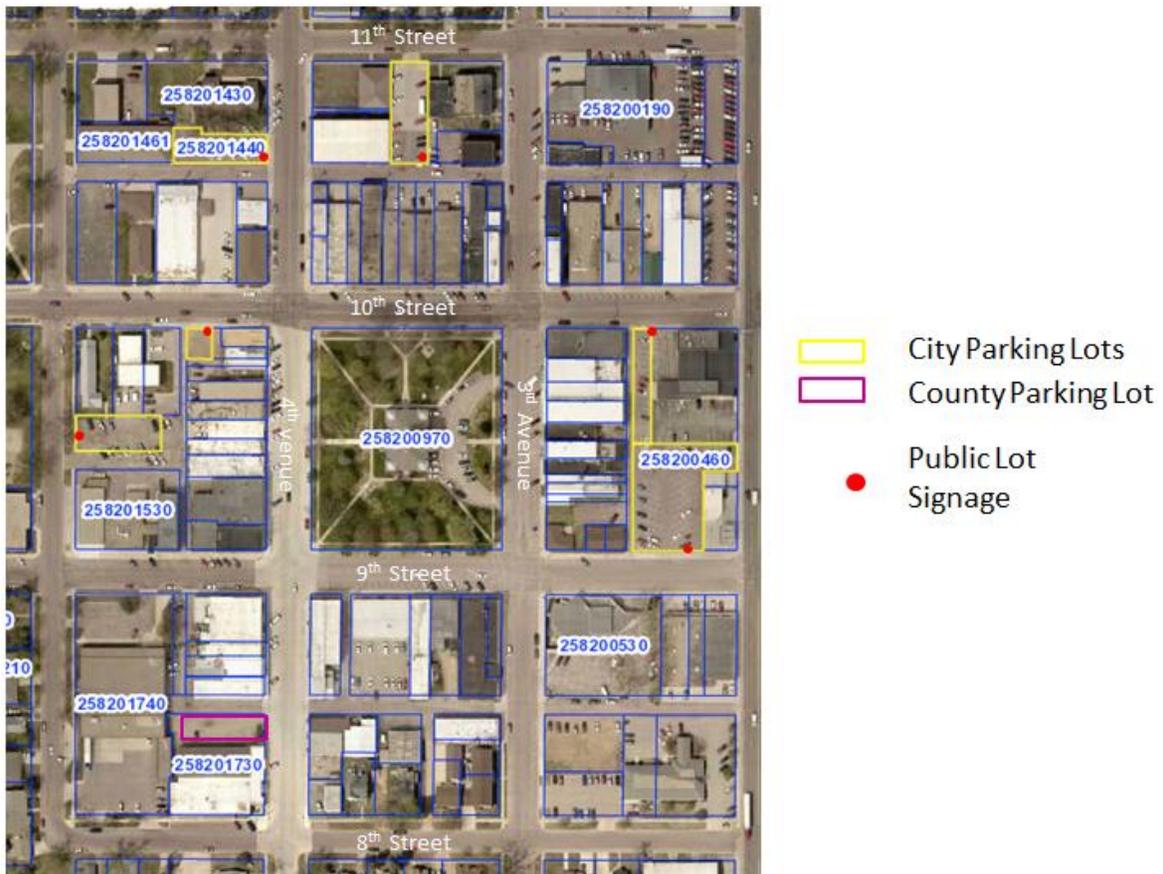
### Example: County Parking Policy

Parking directly on the Downtown Square is reserved for customers of Cottonwood County Offices and other downtown businesses. Cottonwood County Employees should park in public parking lots around the Downtown Square and utilize on-street parking not directly on the Square. Refer to the figure below identifying parking options for County Staff.

### Public Parking Lots

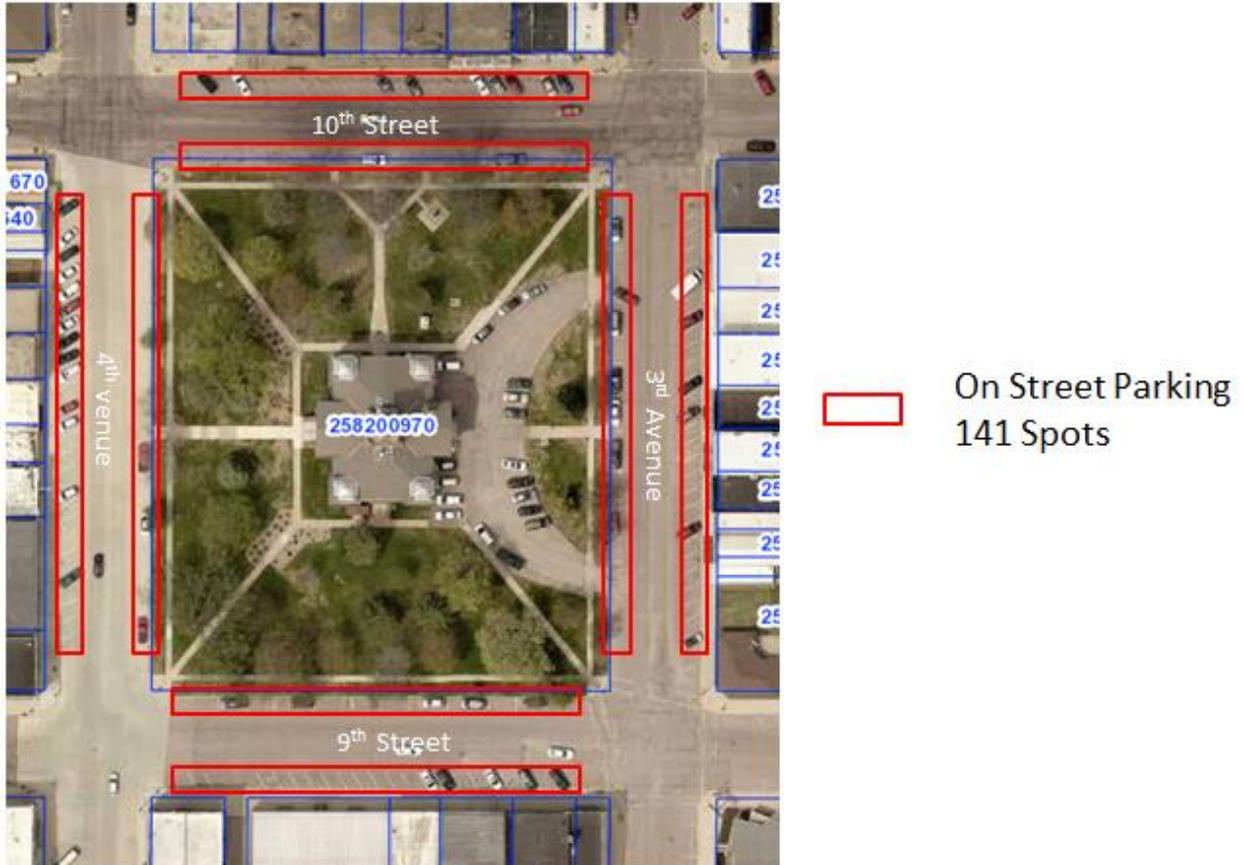
There are seven public parking lots around the Downtown Square. The total number of public parking slots in these lots is approximately 131. These public parking lots are identified in the Figure below.

**E-Figure #17 Public Parking Lots – Downtown Square**



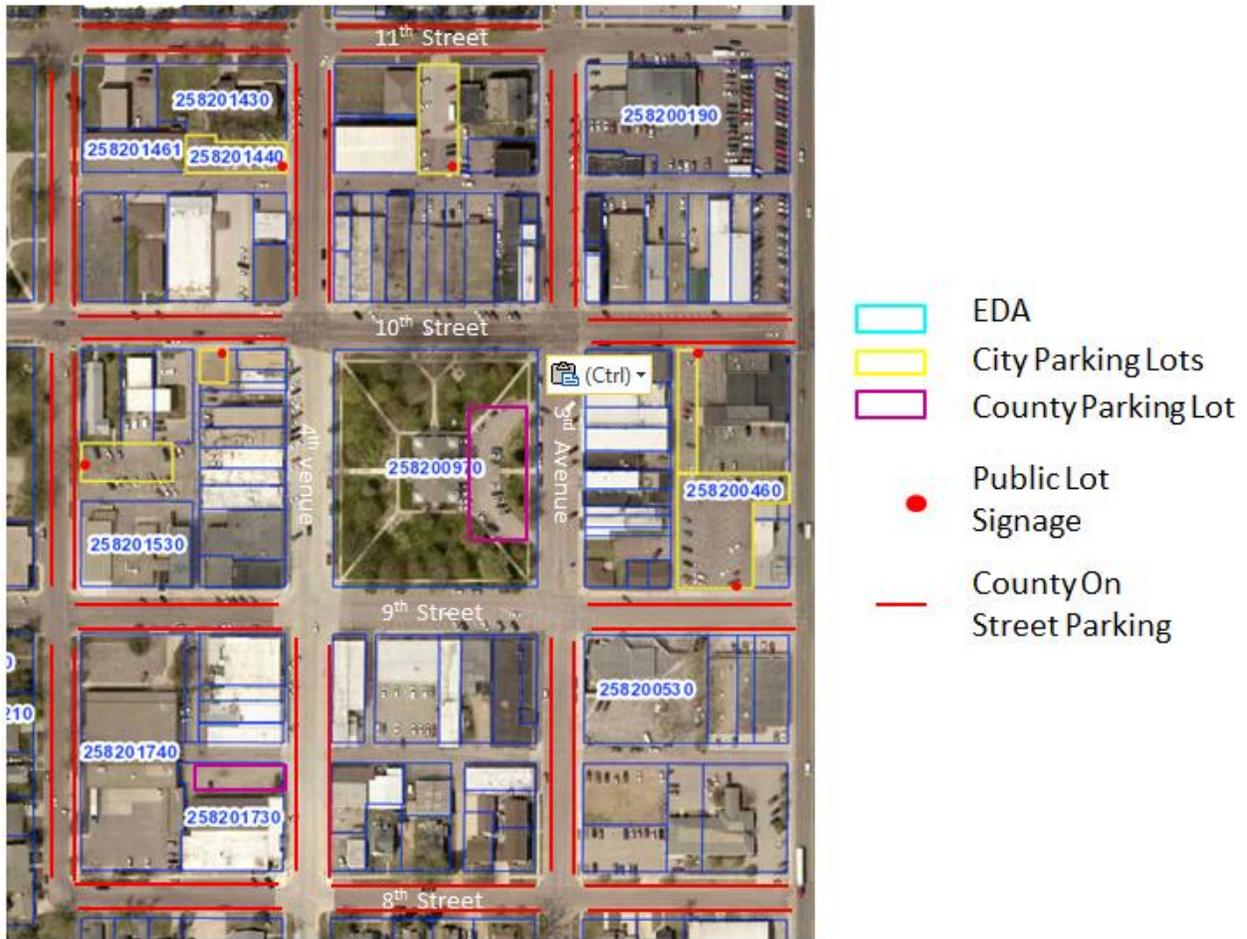
There are approximately 141 on-street parking spots on the Square. There are approximately another 290 on-street parking spots within one block of the Square. This brings the total number of on-street parking spots on the Square and within one block of the Square to approximately 431.

**E-Figure #18 On Street Parking – Downtown Square**



E-Figure #19

County Staff Parking Options - Downtown Square



*Downtown Square – Part D*

*Co-working Space*

*Dev. Dept.*

*Low Priority*

**Strategy:**

Provide incentives for existing businesses to expand and for small businesses to locate within the City.

**Objective:**

Provide a lower cost option for existing in-home businesses to expand and for new small businesses to locate within the City.

Explore the possibility of a Co-working space on the Downtown Square.

**Existing Conditions:**

Owning and maintaining an office or a physical building can sometimes become a barrier for a small business. A Co-working space can be an option for an in-home business looking to grow their business, a new business that is starting out, or an existing business that wants to minimize costs. A Co-working space also provides an opportunity for collaboration.

- Share building costs
- Share interest costs
- Share printer costs
- Share other fixed costs
- Share conference room space
- Share a receptionist
- Share a physical mailing address
- Etc.

There are several larger buildings around the Downtown Square that may be too big for one business, but would provide excellent Co-working spaces. Office space could be developed in addition to a common coffee/lunch break area and conference space. This Co-working space on the Downtown Square would provide a unique lower cost option for businesses.

There are several examples in Greater Minnesota. “Workup” is a Co-working space in Willmar, Minnesota. Workup is in a renovated 1900’s cottage on the MinnWest Technology Campus. Workup caters to the needs of entrepreneurs, freelancers, virtual workers, and businesses that are looking for an inspired space to do their best work and get connected. Members include a wide range of businesses from a jewelry designer to several marketing companies to an engineering firm and a sales and action service. For more information visit: [workup.cc/members/](http://workup.cc/members/).

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# CHAPTER 5: Transportation & Active Living

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## Introduction

A transportation system is the mover of people and goods and it can be used to direct or shape municipal growth. There is a very close relationship between transportation and land use and both must be considered in the planning process. There is also a close relationship between transportation and promoting an active lifestyle. A balanced multi-modal transportation network is essential for strong economic growth. Transportation planning in the City of Windom will include active transportation, pedestrians and bicyclists, along with traditional transportation modes. Key issues for all modes of transportation are efficient use of financial resources, providing access and mobility, relieving congestion, promoting economic development, and protecting the environment. This section will examine these modes of transportation: active transportation, motor vehicle transportation, public transportation, rail, and aviation.

## Active Living

*An Active Living Plan for the City of Windom was developed over the Summer and Fall of 2016. The Windom Active Living Plan outlines specific goals and strategies. Refer to Addendum I for the Windom Active Living Plan.*

### Goal

*To enable the City of Windom to become a more walkable community through strategic pedestrian improvements outlined in the Windom Active Living Plan.*

### Objective

*Identify destinations, gaps, areas of concern, and prioritize projects for addressing pedestrian infrastructure in the City of Windom.*

### Proposal

*Think about walkability and bikeability when considering decisions that influence the built environment.*



## Function of a Road or Street

When you are building a street, you need to consider the function of that street. Is the function of the street to move cars quickly or is it to create an atmosphere that encourages investment?

***“When you narrow up the street lanes, cars drive slower, people feel more comfortable there. They walk across the streets, to a store across the street. And in a real subtle and cheap way you get a lot more pedestrian traffic, a lot more retail, a lot more people. And people spend money, and that's what makes a place wealthier. When people are there, people invest more.”***<sup>20</sup>

Since WWII we have over built our transportation infrastructure. Instead of encouraging infill projects and higher density housing, cities have sprawled outwards. These less connected neighborhoods do not encourage walking, biking, and a neighborhood feel. The sprawled out neighborhoods are connected by streets that encourage car travel, since the distance between these neighborhoods is greater.

Decision makers need to think about the function of a street and research what is the highest returning type of street. According to Charles Marohn, the highest returning type of street is the kind that was built prior to WWII.

*“It's where you've got the line of shops with a second story of apartments or living units. The kind of stuff that you see on Main Streets all over this country. There's a reason our ancestors built that way. It's really, really financially productive. Some of the obstacles to doing that today: one of them includes the fact that we've just over-engineered and over-built our streets. A lot of that comes from national standards that have been established; a lot of it comes from the way that funding comes down through the Feds and the state and the mandates that come with that in terms of what the design capacities have to be. But one of the simplest solutions to getting these neighborhoods back is just to go out and narrow up the street lanes.”*

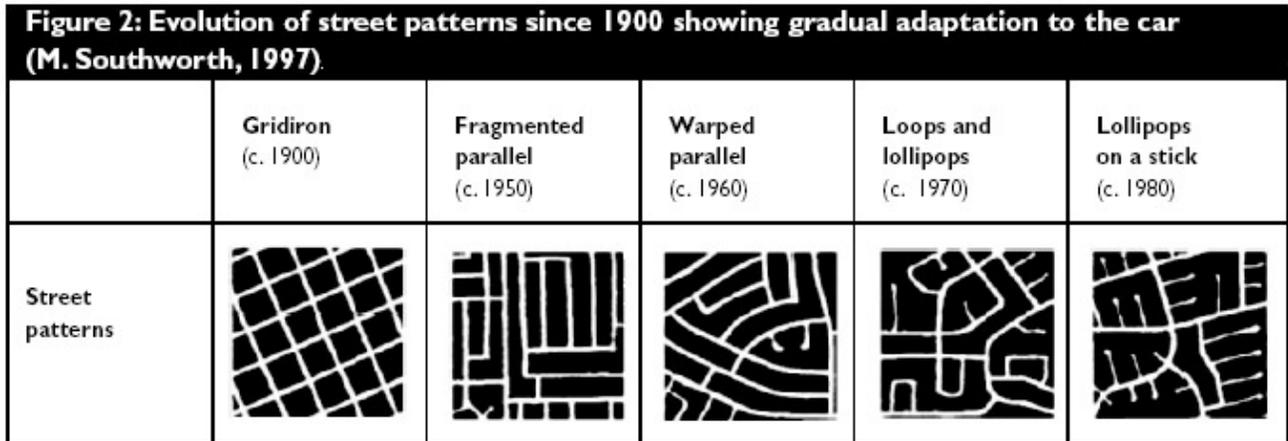
Traditional grid development, what we built prior to WWII, increases connectivity and promotes walking and biking. Promoting compact developments will make it more convenient to walk and bike which has lasting health benefits. As you move to the right in the figure below, connectivity decreases and you move towards a more car-dependent development. This shift from the square grid development has taken place over the past half a century. This shift can be seen by older developments being more compact and walkable to newer developments being spread out and auto-dependent. Land use and the design of the community can have a significant impact on the health of the community.

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<sup>20</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

**T-Figure #1**

**Residential Street Pattern Design Comparison**



Residential Street Pattern Design<sup>21</sup>

**Why Active Living?**

Active Living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into your daily routine. It starts with choosing to walk or bike instead of taking the car. This choice is influenced by the built environment.

- Economic Sense: It is more expensive to build and maintain a sprawling community.
- Health Benefits: A more walkable community encourages interconnectedness throughout the community and is related to a number of positive health outcomes and a healthy community.
- Economic Development: “When people are there, people invest more.”<sup>22</sup>

**Economic Sense**

As density decreases the cost per block goes up. There are costs associated with building and maintaining more streets, including the costs of sewer and water and other public infrastructure. Urban sprawl is the outward spread of a city which decreases population density. Urban sprawl often results in an auto-dependent subdivision. Connectivity within the city decreases as the city spreads out and obesity and other health outcomes are a negative externality of urban sprawl.

Efficient city growth relates to less dependence on vehicle travel and more opportunity for pedestrian travel, walking or biking. Studies show that a majority of future U.S. housing demand lies in smaller homes and lots, townhouses and condominiums in walkable neighborhoods where jobs and activities are close at hand.<sup>23</sup> The need to drive reduces significantly with compact development that has a mix of land uses, transportation options and pedestrian-friendly designs. Benefits of compact development include financial stability with increased property taxes, stable climate change effects, as well as a more active

<sup>21</sup> Residential Street Pattern Design. Accessed: 7/14/15. Available: <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html>

<sup>22</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

<sup>23</sup> Bedimo-Rung, A. L., Mowen, A. J., & Cohen, D. A. (2005). The significance of parks to physical activity and public health: a conceptual model. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 28(2), 159-168. Available at: [http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(04\)00304-6/fulltext](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(04)00304-6/fulltext)

lifestyle. To achieve this, cities should make transit, pedestrians, and biking an important part of community development. Jane Jacobs, author of *The Death of Life of Great American Cities*, wrote in 1961 “we are overbuilding our cities for cars, making vehicles required” and that is still happening today.<sup>24</sup>

### Economic Development

Walkability affects property values, so investing in pedestrian infrastructure and designing more walking neighborhoods and streets can have a positive return on investment. The National Realtors Association points to the changing behavior of home buyers, “people prefer to live in communities that allow them to walk to shops, parks and other destinations and will pay more for a home that allows them to do just that.”<sup>25</sup> First time home buyers are looking for neighborhoods and cities that are more walkable. “Millennials, though, are just part of the picture. As baby boomers get older, many are opting to live in places where they don’t have to drive as much to get to services and where they can age in place.”<sup>26</sup>

“Houses with the above-average levels of walkability command a premium of about \$4,000 to \$34,000.”<sup>27</sup> Higher property values can help to increase the tax base for your city. Refer to the Economic Development Chapter for more information regarding walkability as an economic development strategy.

### Health Benefits

Walking and biking are two of the most popular ways to integrate regular physical activity into your daily routine. Physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Physical activity can help:

- Control your weight
- Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease
- Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Reduce your risk of some cancers
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your mental health and mood
- Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- Increase your chances of living longer

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<sup>24</sup> Burden, Dan, and Todd Litman. "America needs complete streets." ITE Journal 81.4 (2011): 36-43. Available at: <http://www.auoy.grpc.com/Data/Sites/1/jeff/ite-complete-streets-article-april-2011-burden-litman.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

<sup>26</sup> Builder Magazine. Why Smart Builders Care About Walkability. Accessed: 5/29/15. Available: [http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability\\_o](http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability_o)

<sup>27</sup> National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

Communities that have pedestrian scale infrastructure and programs promoting walking and biking tend to be more physically active. “People who live by trails are 50 percent more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.”<sup>28</sup> Adding pedestrian infrastructure and promoting walking and biking will help to reduce:

- Roadway congestion
- Time wasted stuck in traffic
- Driver frustration
- Pollution

“Roadway improvements to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists also can enhance safety for motorists. For example, adding paved shoulders on two-lane roads has been shown to reduce the frequency of run-off-road, head-on, and sideswipe motor vehicle crashes.”<sup>29</sup>

### Environmental Benefits

Newer developments in cities have moved away from sidewalks on both sides of the street, having garages facing the alleyway behind the house, and having similar sized lots. This creates a disincentive to walk and bike and decreases the interconnectedness of the community. A study conducted by the University of British Columbia found that lowering neighborhoods’ walkability increases the use of motor vehicles and, therefore, raises the air pollution and body mass index per capita.<sup>30</sup> Cul-de-Sacs were also found to decrease the walkability of a neighborhood.

Motor vehicle traffic generated by the travel to and from school adds 20 to 30 percent more traffic volume to the roads.<sup>31</sup> Replacing short trips with walking or biking can help reduce air pollution and energy consumption. There are also a number of health benefits (refer to health benefits above).

### Road Classifications

Functional classification is the grouping of streets and highways into classes or systems according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Basic to this process is the recognition that most travel involves movement through a network of roads, and that most people are a pedestrian at some point of every day. You are a pedestrian when you walk from your car into work or when you walk from your car into a shop.

Our nation’s roadway system is a vast network that connects places and people within and across borders. This network was developed with particular travel objectives in mind. These objectives range from serving long-distance passengers and freight needs to serving neighborhood travel from residential developments to destinations in the community. Functional classification defines the role that any particular road or street plays in serving the flow of trips through an entire network serving various travel needs.

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<sup>28</sup> Active Living Research. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available:

[http://activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR\\_Brief\\_ActiveTransportation\\_0.pdf](http://activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_ActiveTransportation_0.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available:

<http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/factsheet.cfm>

<sup>30</sup> Environmental Health Perspectives. Healthy Neighborhoods: Walkability and Air Pollution. Accessed 1/22/15.

Available: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2801167/>

<sup>31</sup> Safe Routes to School Guide. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: [http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide\\_Introduction.pdf](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_Introduction.pdf)

The classification of roads and highways can be done in several ways. The easiest way to understand and explain this is through jurisdiction or ownership of the road. Several jurisdictions have ownership of the roads in the United States. In Windom, there is U.S. Trunk Highway 71; Minnesota Trunk Highways 60 and 62; County State Aid Highways 13, 15, 17, 25, and 26; and local roads or streets. Each jurisdiction maintains their roads at different design standards and must build and maintain the roads at minimum specifications that have been developed by the State.

Another method of identification of the roads is through functional classification or classifying roads and streets by their use. The Federal Highway Administration and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have established definitions for the categories in the Functional Classification System. The following are the categories and their definitions:

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Interstates                  |                     |
| 2) Other Freeways & Expressways | 5) Major Collector  |
| 3) Other Principal Arterials    | 6) Minor Collectors |
| 4) Minor Arterials              | 7) Local Roads      |

Below is a brief description of the categories in the Functional Classification System. The descriptions are from the Federal Highway Administration Highway Functional Classification Concept, Criteria and Procedures.<sup>32</sup> These descriptions describe the function of a road in regards to motor vehicle travel. There is not much consideration of pedestrians in the Functional Classification System.

#### Interstates

Interstates are the highest classification of Arterials and were designed and constructed with mobility and long-distance travel in mind.

#### Other Freeways & Expressways

Roadways in this functional classification category look very similar to Interstates. While there can be regional differences in the use of the terms 'freeway' and 'expressway', for the purpose of functional classification the roads in this classification have directional travel lanes, are usually separated by some type of physical barrier, and their access and egress points are limited to on- and off-ramp locations or a very limited number of at-grade intersections. Like Interstates, these roadways are designed and constructed to maximize their mobility function, and abutting land uses are not directly served by them.

#### Other Principal Arterials

These roadways serve major centers of metropolitan areas, provide a high degree of mobility and can also provide mobility through rural areas. Unlike their access-controlled counterparts, abutting land uses can be served directly. Forms of access for Other Principal Arterial roadways include driveways to specific parcels and at-grade intersections with other roadways.

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<sup>32</sup> Federal Highway Administration. Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures. Accessed: 8/20/15. Available: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway\\_functional\\_classifications/fcauab.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf)

## Minor Arterials

Minor Arterials provide service for trips of moderate length, serve geographic areas that are smaller than their higher Arterial counterparts and offer connectivity to the higher Arterial system. In rural settings, Minor Arterials should be identified and spaced at intervals consistent with population density, so that all developed areas are within a reasonable distance of a higher level Arterial. Additionally, Minor Arterials in rural areas are typically designed to provide relatively high overall travel speeds, with minimum interference to through movement. The spacing of Minor Arterial streets may typically vary from 1/8- to 1/2-mile in the central business district (CBD) and 2 to 3 miles in the suburban fringes. Normally, the spacing should not exceed 1 mile in fully developed areas.

**T-Figure #2** **Characteristics of Urban & Rural Arterials**

Urban	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interconnect and augment the higher-level Arterials</li> <li>• Serve trips of moderate length at a somewhat lower level of travel mobility than Principal Arterials</li> <li>• Distribute traffic to smaller geographic areas than those served by higher-level Arterials</li> <li>• Provide more land access than Principal Arterials without penetrating identifiable neighborhoods</li> <li>• Provide urban connections for Rural Collectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link cities and larger towns (and other major destinations such as resorts capable of attracting travel over long distances) and form an integrated network providing interstate and inter-county service</li> <li>• Be spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, so that all developed areas within the State are within a reasonable distance of an Arterial roadway</li> <li>• Provide service to corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those served by Rural Collectors and Local Roads and with relatively high travel speeds and minimum interference to through movement</li> </ul>

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## Major and Minor Collectors

Collectors serve a critical role in the roadway network by gathering traffic from Local Roads and funneling them to the Arterial network. In the rural environment, Collectors generally serve primarily intra-county travel (rather than statewide) and constitute those routes on which (independent of traffic volume) predominant travel distances are shorter than on Arterial routes. Consequently, more moderate speeds may be posted. The determination of whether a given Collector is a Major or a Minor Collector is frequently one of the biggest challenges in functionally classifying a roadway network.

The distinctions between Major Collectors and Minor Collectors are often subtle. Generally, Major Collector routes are longer in length; have lower connecting driveway densities; have higher speed limits; are spaced at greater intervals; have higher annual average traffic volumes; and may have more travel

<sup>33</sup> Federal Highway Administration. Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures. Accessed: 8/20/15. Available: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway\\_functional\\_classifications/fcauab.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf)

lanes than their Minor Collector counterparts. In rural areas, AADT and spacing may be the most significant designation factors. Minor Collectors offer more access; it is beneficial to reexamine these two fundamental concepts of functional classification. Overall, the total mileage of Major Collectors is typically lower than the total mileage of Minor Collectors, while the total Collector mileage is typically one-third of the Local roadway network

**T-Figure #3 Characteristics of Major & Minor Collectors**

MAJOR COLLECTORS	
Urban	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve both land access and traffic circulation in <u>higher</u> density residential, and commercial/industrial areas</li> <li>• Penetrate residential neighborhoods, often for <u>significant</u> distances</li> <li>• Distribute and channel trips between Local Roads and Arterials, usually over a distance of <u>greater than</u> three-quarters of a mile</li> <li>• Operating characteristics include higher speeds and more signalized intersections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide service to any county seat not on an Arterial route, to the larger towns not directly served by the higher systems and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks and important mining and agricultural areas</li> <li>• Link these places with nearby larger towns and cities or with Arterial routes</li> <li>• Serve the most important intra-county travel corridors</li> </ul>
MINOR COLLECTORS	
Urban	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve both land access and traffic circulation in lower density residential and commercial/industrial areas</li> <li>• Penetrate residential neighborhoods, often only for a <u>short</u> distance</li> <li>• Distribute and channel trips between Local Roads and Arterials, usually over a distance of <u>less than</u> three-quarters of a mile</li> <li>• Operating characteristics include lower speeds and fewer signalized intersections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, to collect traffic from Local Roads and bring all developed areas within reasonable distance of a Collector</li> <li>• Provide service to smaller communities not served by a higher class facility</li> <li>• Link locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterlands</li> </ul>

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### Local Roads

Locally classified roads account for the largest percentage of all roadways in terms of mileage. They are not intended for use in long distance travel, except at the origin or destination end of the trip, due to their provision of direct access to abutting land. They are often designed to discourage through traffic. Local

<sup>34</sup> Federal Highway Administration. Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures. Accessed: 8/20/15. Available: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway\\_functional\\_classifications/fcauab.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf)

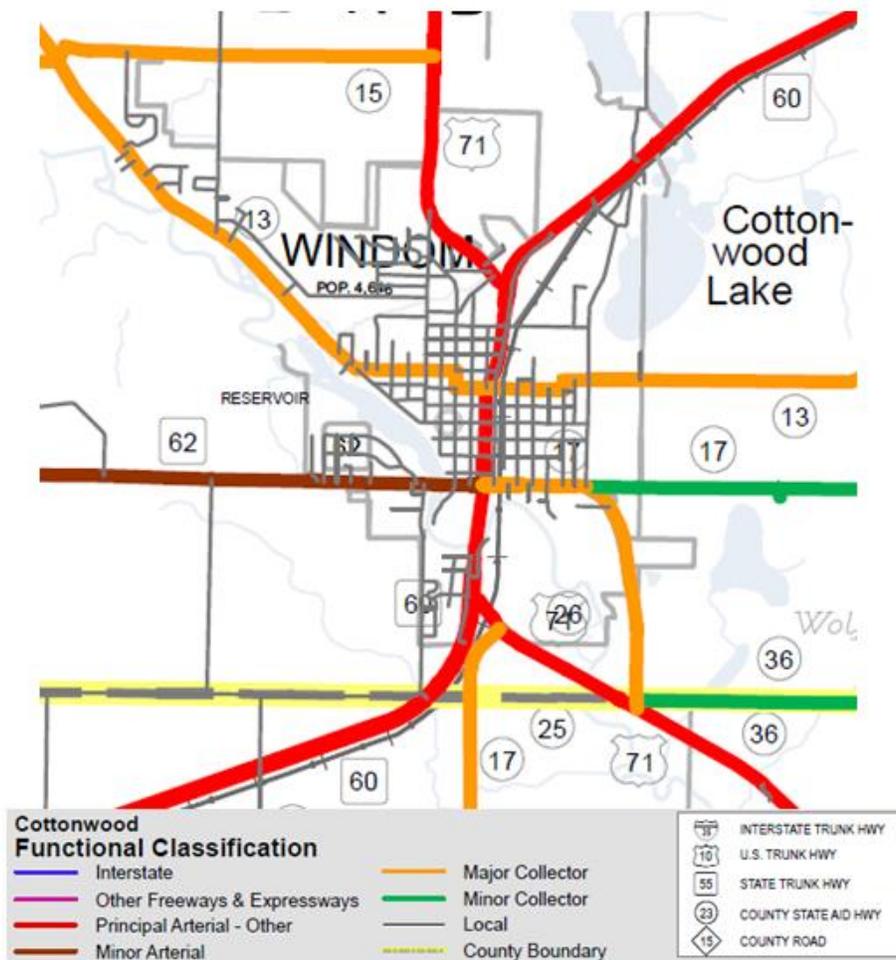
Roads are often classified by default. In other words, once all Arterial and Collector roadways have been identified, all remaining roadways are classified as Local Roads

**T-Figure #4** **Characteristics of Urban & Rural**

Urban	Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide direct access to adjacent land</li> <li>• Provide access to higher systems</li> <li>• Carry no through traffic movement</li> <li>• Constitute the mileage not classified as part of the Arterial and Collector systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve primarily to provide access to adjacent land</li> <li>• Provide service to travel over short distances as compared to higher classification categories</li> <li>• Constitute the mileage not classified as part of the Arterial and Collector systems</li> </ul>

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**T-Figure #5** **Functional Classification Map - Windom**



<sup>35</sup> Federal Highway Administration. Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures. Accessed: 12/5/15. Available: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway\\_functional\\_classifications/fcauab.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/fcauab.pdf)

## Existing Conditions

### Municipal Streets

The Windom Street Department maintains and cleans streets and the storm sewers within the City. Within the city boundary of Windom, there are approximately 29.1 miles of paved hard surface streets, 2.6 miles of gravel streets, and 3.4 miles of alleys. The surface type of alleys is primarily gravel with .7 miles of asphalt.

The Street Department maintains a Street Inventory that includes grades for all of the municipal streets. This condition inventory is used to identify streets for reconstruction and helps to prioritize investment. The streets are resurfaced and/or reconstructed as needed and when funding is available. A street project is planned for 2017. Every 3 to 5 years a larger street project is undertaken.

**T-Table #1 Street Inventory Summary – Windom 2016**

Surface Type	Miles	Age – Average (Years)	Age Range – (Years)	Width – Average (Feet)	Width Range (Feet)
Concrete Surface	3.2	6.8	4 – 10	37	29 – 60
Bituminous Surface	24.7	29.7	4 – 67	35.6	24 – 60
Gravel Streets	2.6	55.4	11 – 67	30.9	30 – 36
Alleys (gravel & asphalt)	3.4	67	67 / NA	22	18 – 30
<b>Total / Average</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>Average 39.7</b>		<b>Average 31.4</b>	

Source: 2016 Street Inventory

**T-Table #2 Estimated Useful Life for Capital Assets – Infrastructure**

Street	Years
Concrete Surface	30
Bituminous Surface	25
Brick or Stone	50
<b>Parking Lot</b>	
Concrete Surface	35
Bituminous Surface	15
Brick or Stone	45
<b>Bridges</b>	<b>Years</b>
Precast Concrete	40
Prestressed Concrete	45
Steel with Truss	50
Steel without Truss	45
Timber / Wood	30
Concrete	30
Wood	25

Source: DOT

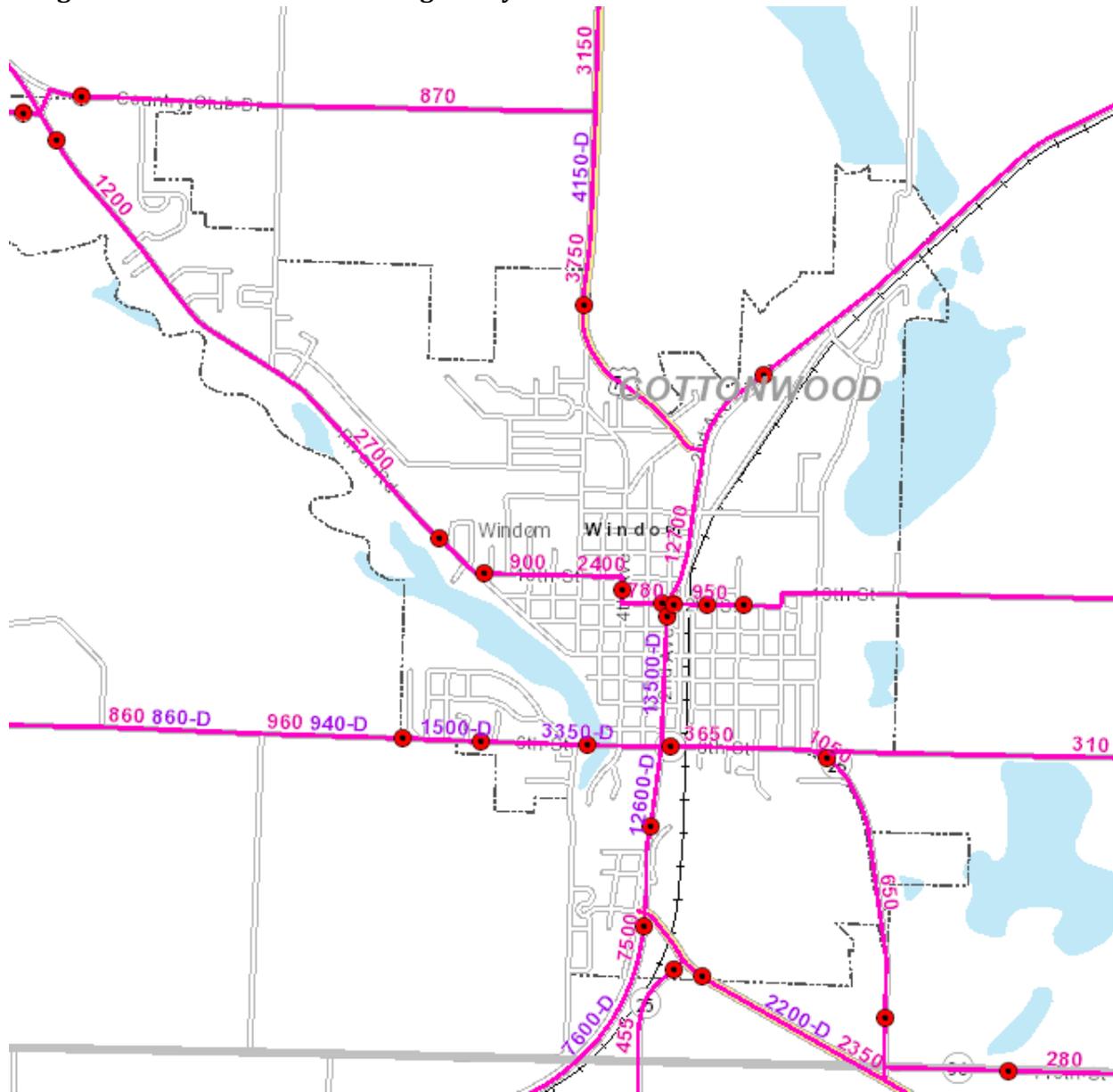
\*subject to weather conditions

## Traffic Volumes

The Windom Active Living Planning Process analyzed traffic volumes from 2015.

**T-Figure #6**

**Average Daily Traffic Volumes –Windom 2018**

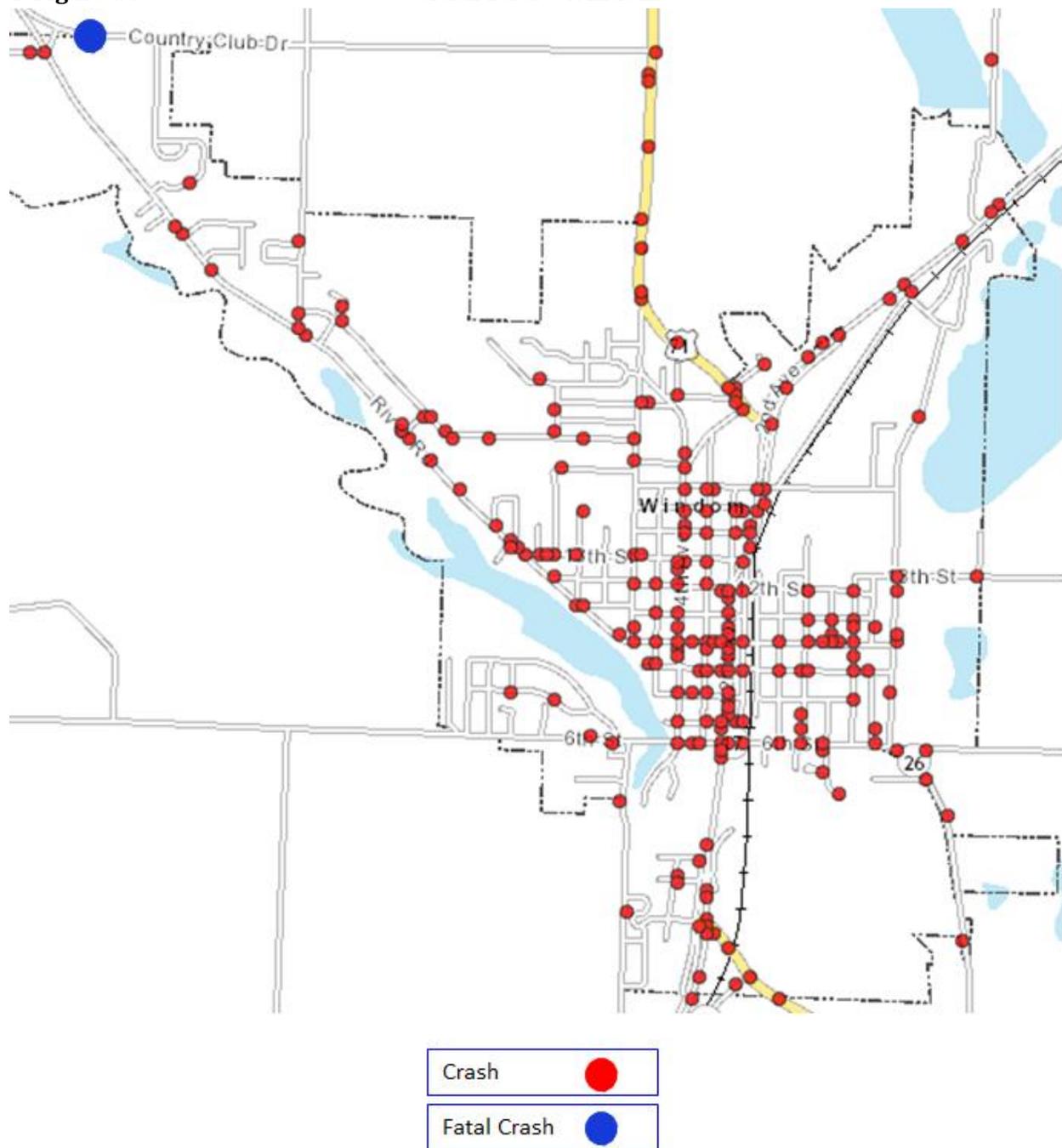


## Crash Data

The Windom Active Living Planning Process analyzed crash data within the City of Windom. Within Windom, there were 497 reported crash occurrences from November 2005 through March 2015. Twelve of the outlined crashes involved a pedestrian (none of the crashes were fatal). There was one fatal crash in Windom involving motor vehicles.

T-Figure #7

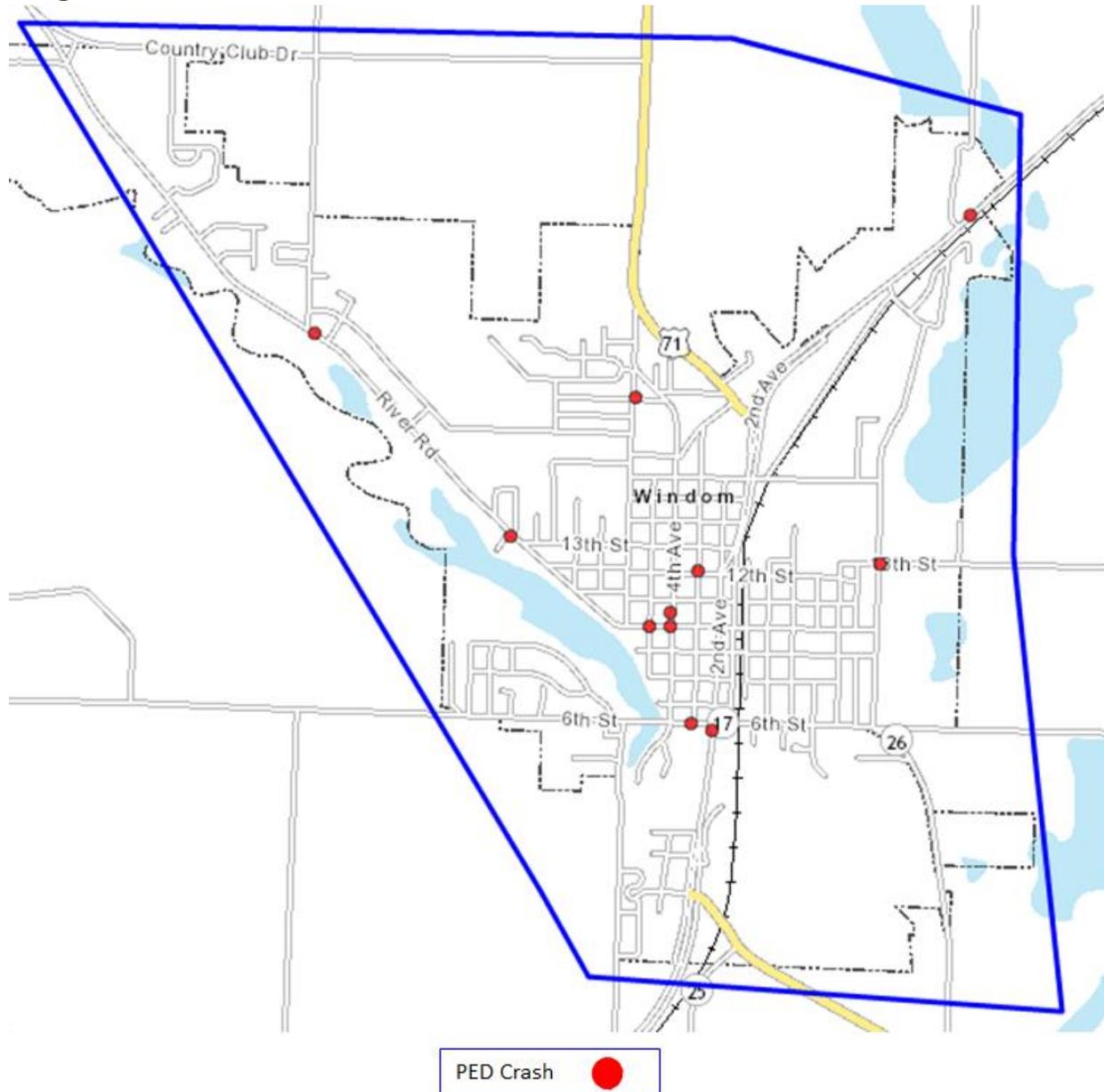
Crash Data - Windom



When analyzing the 12 pedestrian crashes, one of the crashes involving a pedestrian resulted in an incapacitating injury, four resulted in possible injury, and seven resulted in non-incapacitating injuries.

T-Figure #8

Crash Data: PEDs - Windom



### Sidewalk Network

Windom does have a well-developed network of sidewalks. This existing sidewalk network is an asset and helps to make walking and biking safer and more convenient. There are gaps that need to be addressed, and these gaps are identified and prioritized in the Windom Active Living Plan. Refer to T-Figure #9 below for the Windom Sidewalk Map.



Highway 71 connects to Interstate 90 approximately 19 miles to the southeast and approximately 86 miles east on Interstate 90 to Interstate 35.

**T-Table #3 Commercial Transportation & Shipping – Highway**

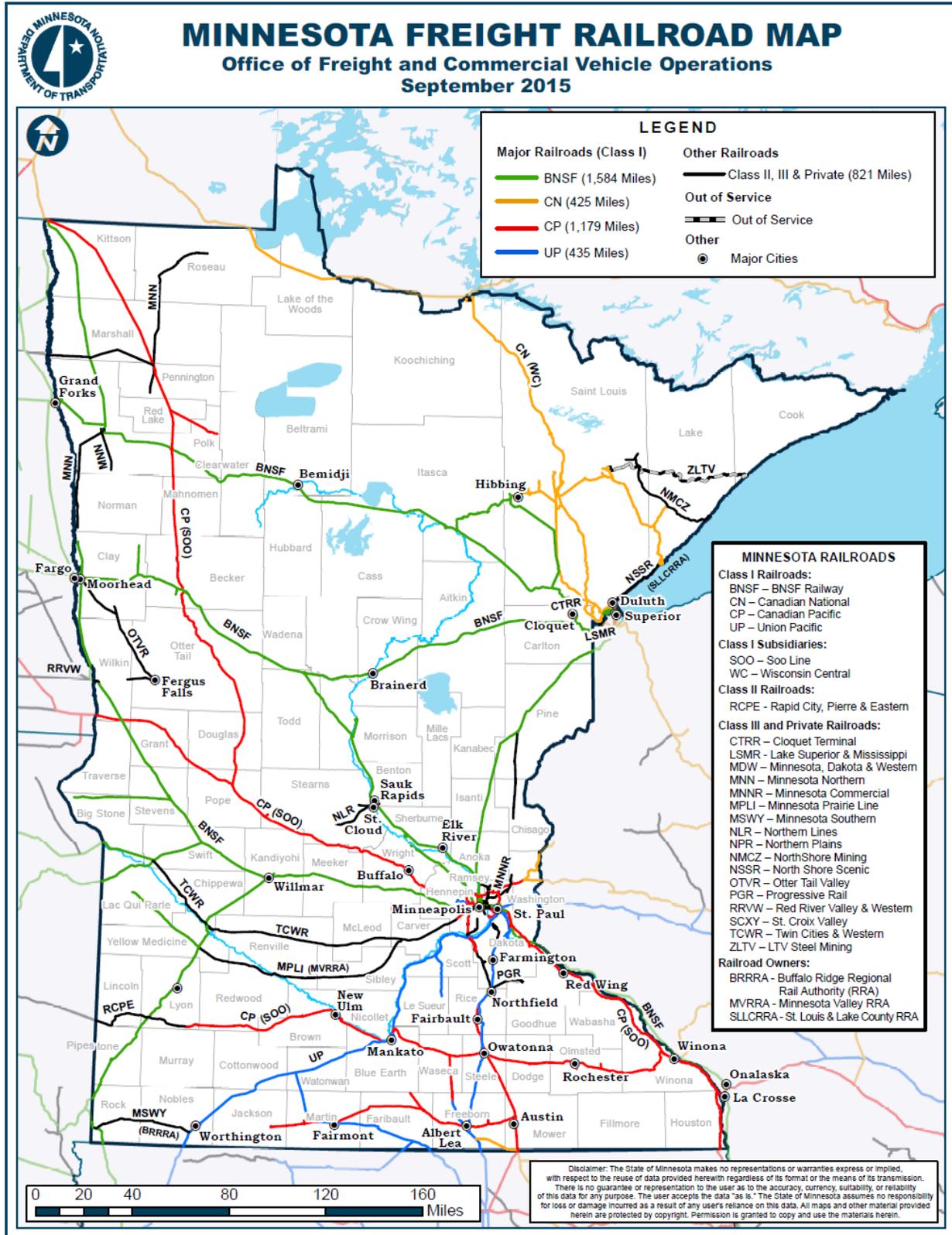
Highways/Interstate	Miles From Windom	Load Limit -Tons	Seasonal Limit - Tons
I-90	19	10	10
MN-60 (Four Lane)	Within	10	10
US-71	Within	10	10
MN-62	Within	10	10

**T-Table #4 Commercial Transportation & Shipping – Rail**

Rail	
Rail Lines	Union Pacific
Frequency	Daily
Reciprocal Switching	N/A
Passenger Service	No
Inter-Modal Facility	No

T-Figure #10

Minnesota Freight Railroad Map



## Aviation

The Windom Municipal Airport is located 3 miles north of the City of Windom. The Windom Municipal Airport features a 75' x 3,600' paved runway, federally approved all-weather lighting system, heated administration building, Unicom Radio System, and BEACON Navigational Aids. A courtesy car is also provided.

The airport has seen multiple large investments within the past decade. In 2006, the City of Windom completed a construction project in excess of \$1.3 million. New hangars and a new Arrival/Departure Building were constructed along with improvements to the electronics including the NDB (Non-Directional Beacon) and AWOS (Automated Weather Observations Services). Other renovations included pavement replacement and additional paved surfaces. In 2010, the City completed a new concrete runway and taxiways project at a cost of \$1.2 million. In 2013, the City constructed a large aircraft hangar at a cost of \$508,000.

Recreational flights and sprayer planes are the most common air traffic at the airport. The closest regularly-scheduled airline services are located in Sioux Falls (90 miles).

**T-Figure #11 Windom Municipal Airport**



**T-Table #5 Airport Summary**

	International	Regional	Local
Air Service Name	Minneapolis - St. Paul Intl. Airport (MSP)	Sioux Falls Regional (FSD)	Windom Municipal Airport
Location	Bloomington, MN	Sioux Falls, SD	Windom, MN
Miles To	135	90	3
Longest Runway	10,000 feet	9,000 feet	3,600 feet
Surface Type	Paved	Paved	Paved
MSP	<a href="http://www.msairport.com/">www.msairport.com/</a>		
FSD	<a href="http://www.sfairport.com/">www.sfairport.com/</a>		
Windom	<a href="http://www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-municipal-airport/">www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-municipal-airport/</a>		

## Transit

Transit services in Cottonwood County are provided by Western Community Action. Bus and volunteer transportation services are provided. The service is available to anyone within Cottonwood County no matter what age or income level. The bus will pick up an individual anywhere, including at the person's home.

The hours of operation for the transit service are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 1-800-658-2480 or 507-847-2632 extension 1, option 3. A 24 hour reservation or notice is preferred, but same day rides are available.

For more information visit: <http://www.unitedcapmn.org/services/community-transit/>

**Other organizations** provide transit services for individuals participating in their activities, such as the school provides transportation for students to and from school and school activities. The DAC and some churches provide transportation for individuals who are participating in their programs. The Good Samaritan Communities in Windom have van service for their residents. There is periodic Greyhound bus service through Windom. The Country Pride Cenex station is used as the bus depot stop in Windom.

Certain **private individuals** also provide rides for people to the airport, etc. There is a sober cab service that provides rides on request and particularly on certain holidays.

## Gaps in the Sidewalk & Trail Network

As part of the Windom Active Living Plan a number of gaps in the sidewalk network were discussed. When examining the various gaps in Windom's pedestrian infrastructure, a classification system was used.

The 3-tier classification system was based on the function of the street, safety, traffic volumes, traffic speeds, perceived safety, and available alternatives. The classification system helped to provide guidance when making transportation decisions.

A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does not have to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if it is safe for pedestrians.

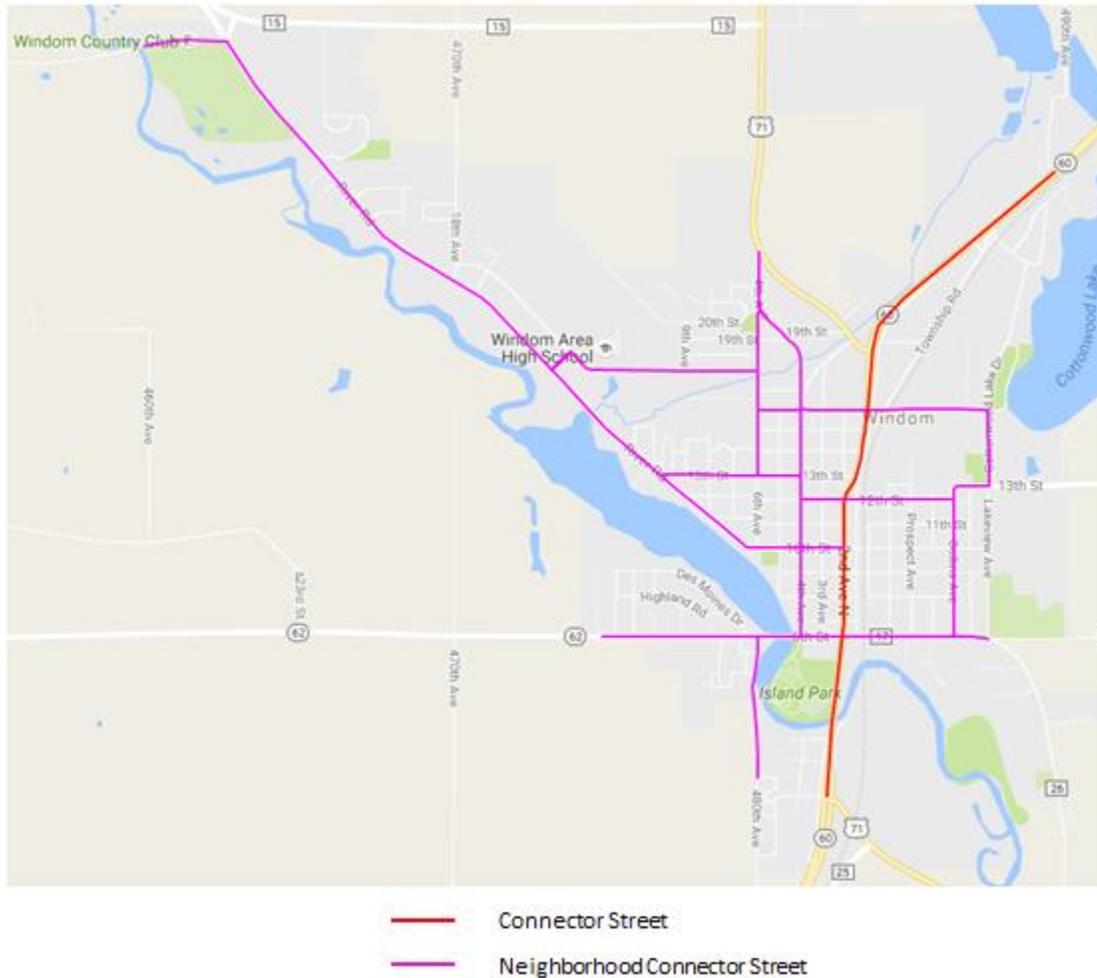
Different Streets require different pedestrian amenities. Younger children may need a sidewalk to separate them from vehicle traffic. Younger children may be learning how to ride a bike, so it is not safe for them to share the road with vehicle traffic. When making a decision whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

Below are the three classifications that were used to describe the need for sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure on streets in Windom.

- ▶ Connector Streets
  - Connects primary destinations
  - Highest traffic volume streets

- Require the highest level of pedestrian amenities - Sidewalks on both sides of the street or a sidewalk or trail conveniently located along the corridor that connects key locations.
- ▶ Neighborhood Connector Streets
  - Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets
  - Medium level traffic volume streets
  - Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.
  - A wide paved shoulder may be sufficient if parking does not significantly affect the space for pedestrians.
- ▶ Residential Streets
  - All other streets
  - Lower traffic speeds
  - Lower traffic volumes
  - Sidewalks are encouraged but there is no sidewalk requirement.

**T-Figure #12 Pedestrian Functional Classification System Map – Windom**



## Studies

### Trunk Highway 60 Access Management Plan

In October of 2002, Edwards and Kelcey completed an Access Management Plan for Trunk Highway (TH) 60 in Windom. The Plan was prepared to address land use access along TH 60. The Plan was intended to guide future actions along the TH 60 Corridor.

- Improve through traffic movement and interregional mobility
- Retain reasonable and safe access to/from local streets and corridor businesses
- Coordinate MnDOT investments with City and County investments

The purpose of access management is to balance the need for accessibility, safety, and mobility between interregional highways and abutting properties and intersection roads and streets. The Plan identifies the importance of land use in access management and recommends addressing the following:

- Allow land uses relative to compatibility with adjacent uses and performance standards
- Set-back and the relation between building footprints and lot lines

- Platting to define lots and blocks, public areas, or any other division of land
- Dedication of roads, streets, and alleys
- The number and location of driveways providing access to a parcel or lot of land
- Non-conforming entrances and how to bring them into conformance.

Recommendations were outlined in the Plan and were split into short-term (0 to 3 years), mid-range (3 to 10 years), long-range (10+ years), and on-going. There were numerous strategies for the City to implement, but these strategies limited development along TH 60. A balance needed to be achieved between MnDOT’s recommendations and what is realistic within the City of Windom. This balance was not achieved, so little to no implementation occurred. The goals and strategies below start to address a number of MnDOT’s recommendations so a balance can be achieved.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: MnDOT has requested the City of Windom and Cottonwood County to support, adopt and incorporate the recommendations included in the 2002 Access Management Plan. These recommendations suggest a transportation framework for improvements in the City of Windom. The City of Windom has indicated that these access study recommendations will be inputs into the development of the comprehensive plan. MnDOT strongly supports adoption of the access recommendations as part of the comprehensive plan. Refer to the strategy, “Minimize Conflict Points While Encouraging Business Investment along Highway 60”, for more information regarding the 2002 Access Management Plan.

### Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Transportation & Active Living

Below is the overarching goal related to transportation in the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve the goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the transportation goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community-based approach is used.

Active transportation goals are listed separately in the Windom Active Living Plan. The Windom Active Living Plan is included as an addendum to this plan.

**Goal:** It is the goal of the City of Windom to develop, maintain, and improve transportation-related systems for the movement of people and goods.

<b>Street Inventory</b>	<b>Street Dept.</b>	<b>High Priority</b>
<b>Strategy:</b>	Ensure that all components of the transportation system are developed, maintained, and improved in a cost-effective manner.	

**Objective:** Continue to Maintain a Street Inventory of municipal streets.

Develop a Street Inventory Map to enhance planning regarding future street projects.

Continue to finance programs to properly maintain all city streets.

*Existing Conditions:*

Part of maintaining adequate funding for city streets is to understand that streets are liabilities that need to be replaced. A bituminous surface street has a lifespan of 25 years, a concrete surface street has a lifespan of 30 years, and a brick or stone surface street has a lifespan of 50 years.

The average age of Windom's streets and alleys is 39.7 years. The average age of bituminous streets in Windom is 29.7 years. A more aggressive resurfacing and/or reconstruction schedule is needed to keep up with aging infrastructure.

The Street Department does maintain a Street Inventory. The Street Inventory includes information on grades for all of the municipal streets. This condition inventory is used to identify streets for reconstruction and helps to prioritize investment.

The Street Inventory is currently an excel file. A more user-friendly Street Inventory Map would improve the process of sharing street condition information with the Mayor and City Council and community members. Educating decision makers and community members will help in maintaining an adequate funding stream for transportation projects.

*Classification Systems*

*Dev. Dept. & Street Dept.*

*Medium Priority*

*Strategy:* Design and develop transportation systems and facilities compatible with existing land uses, yet sufficient to serve present and potential uses.

*Objective:* Work with MnDOT to maintain the Functional Classification System in Windom.

Maintain the Pedestrian Functional Classification System.

*Existing Conditions:*

Different streets require different amenities. MnDOT uses the Functional Classification System to group streets and highways into classes or systems according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Basic to this process is the recognition that most travel involves movement through a network of roads.

“Everyone is a pedestrian at some point. Every time you leave your house, walk into a store, cross the street with your child, go for a jog or walk through a park, you are a pedestrian.”<sup>36</sup>

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does not

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<sup>36</sup> AAA. Pedestrian Safety. Accessed: 5/15/17. Available: <http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/pedestrian-safety/#.WRn6ANLytbU>

have to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if it is safe for pedestrians.

A Pedestrian Functional Classification System was established as part of the Windom Active Living Plan. The classification system used three levels to determine pedestrian infrastructure needs on all streets within the City of Windom. The three-tiered classification system includes: Connector Streets, Neighborhood Connector Streets, and Residential Streets. Refer to the Windom Active Living Plan for more information.

### *Plan for All Users*

### *Medium Priority*

*Strategy:* Include mobility needs of all users in the planning, development, and improvement of the transportation system.

*Objective:* Develop and maintain a sidewalk/trail system to provide an alternative means of transportation and increase safety.

Implement a minimum of one project per year as outlined in the Windom Active Living Plan.

As planning occurs, add goals and strategies to the “Additional Goals and Strategies” Chapter.

Conduct a full update of the Windom Active Living Plan every 10 to 15 years or when needed.

### *Existing Conditions:*

Windom does have a well-developed sidewalk network, but numerous gaps were identified in the Windom Active Living Plan. Fifteen infrastructure projects were identified in the Windom Active Living Plan. These projects were primarily related to sidewalk gaps, trail gaps, and increasing safety and connectivity.

During the Summer of 2017, two of the infrastructure projects were implemented. The first project was a Safe Routes to School Sidewalk Gap on 15<sup>th</sup> Street between River Road and 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The second project was the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue South Sidewalk Gap. With 13 other infrastructure projects identified and ranked, City Staff can plan future projects in conjunction with street projects and apply for infrastructure grants through MnDOT, DNR, and US Fish and Wildlife.

### *Non-Infrastructure Projects*

Fifteen “Non-infrastructure” Projects were identified in the Windom Active Living Plan. In 2017, a parks brochure was completed and the Windom Water Trail was started. The Windom Water Trail was ranked #1 under the Non-infrastructure Goals. A Low Impact Kayak/Canoe Launch for Dynamite Park is currently being constructed by Brady Haugen of Small Town Modern. An elevated design was required to traverse the slope and create a safe launch.

The new kayak/canoe launch to be constructed in Island Park will consist of steps with a slide system for canoes and kayaks. The steps will be constructed with the concrete slabs that Union Pacific Railroad donated to the City. These steps will have a rubber mat that increases traction and safety.

Fundraising for the Windom Water Trail to date has totaled \$6,080. This funding should be sufficient to cover the costs for the launches and the signage. City Staff will be installing the steps and maintaining the Windom Water Trail.

**T-Table #6 Infrastructure Projects – Windom Active Living Plan**

Rank	Location
1	Windom Recreation Area Sidewalk Gap
2	Windom High School/Middle School - Safe Routes to School Trail
3	Windom Bike Loop - River Road Loop
4	<del>15th Avenue Safe Route to School</del>
5	Collins Avenue Sidewalk Gap
6	16th Street Safe Route to School
7	16th Street Sidewalk Gap
8	Midblock Crossing - Highway 60/71
9	Abby Park Neighborhood Sidewalk Gap
10	Mayflower Park Recreation Trail
11	<del>6th Avenue South Sidewalk Gap</del>
12	Highway 60 Pedestrian Connectivity - 1st Avenue North Sidewalk Gap
13	Highway 60/71 Pedestrian Connectivity - 3rd Avenue South & Cindy Street Sidewalk Gap
14	12th Street Sidewalk Gap
15	6th Street Sidewalk Gap

**T-Table #7 Non-infrastructure Projects – Windom Active Living Plan**

Rank	Location
1	Windom Water Trail*
2	<del>City Park Map (Parks Brochure)</del>
3	Parklet(s) on the Square
4	Road Art / Crosswalk Painting
5	Crossing Safety - Highway 62 & 4th Avenue
6	Stop Bars on Highway 60/71
7	Stop for Pedestrian Signs
8	Curb Extensions - Winfair Elementary
9	Creative Ideas - Parks & Recreation / Active Living
10	Paved Shoulders, Fog Lines & Center Striping
11	River Road Maintenance - paved shoulders, fog lines & center striping
12	Curb Extensions - General
13	Problem Intersections
14	Regional Park Designation
15	Pedestrian Lighting

\* Started 2017

## Bikeable Communities Workshop

A Bikeable Communities Workshop was led by the Minnesota Bike Alliance at the Windom Area Hospital on May 31, 2017. Draft projects were added to the Implementation Guide for the Windom Active Living Plan. Below is a table identifying the draft projects.

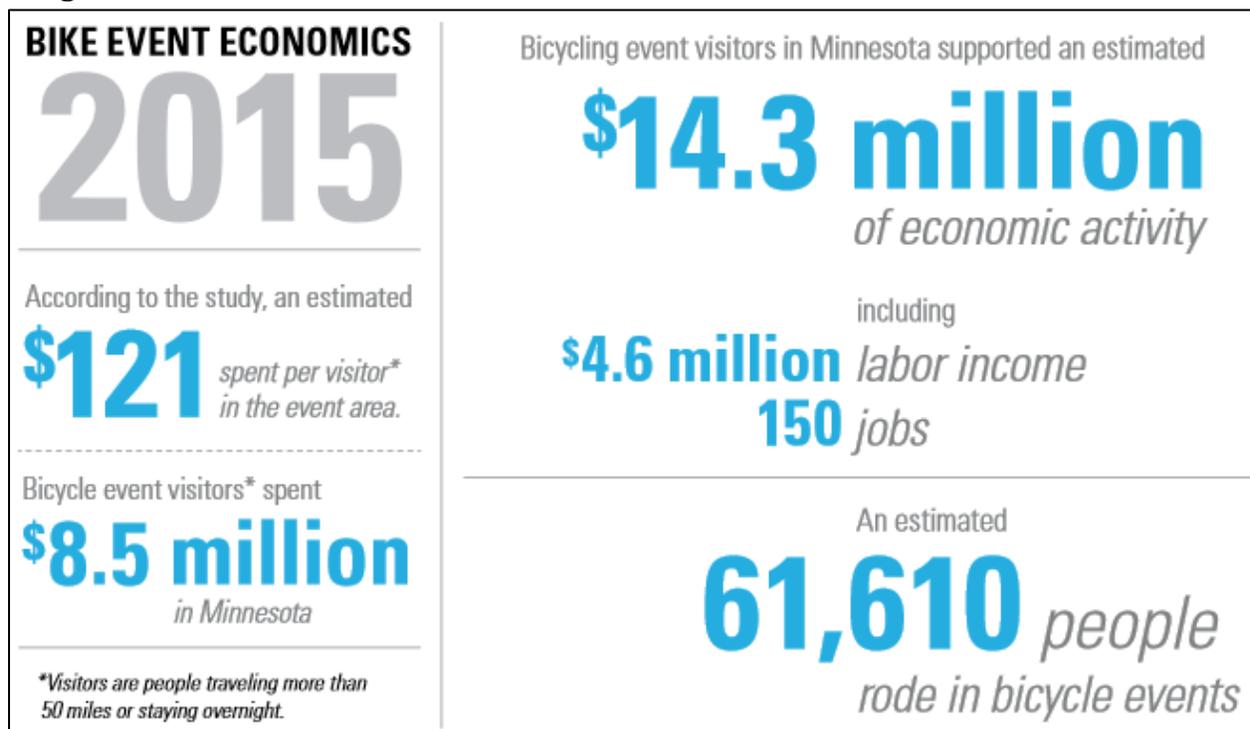
**T-Table #8**                      **Bikeable Communities Workshop – Identified Projects**

Rank	Location
<b>Short Term (3 – 6 months)</b>	
1	Bike Ride with the Windom City Council
2	Increasing Bike Parking around “The Square”*
3	Painting Customized Crosswalk Art for Windom School District*
4	Fog Lines/Potential Bike Lanes- Highway 62
<b>Long Term (6 – 12+ months)</b>	
1	Adding Bike Routes on Windom Parks Brochure
2	Creating Windom Bike Loop
3	Creating “Open Streets” Event During Riverfest

\* Started 2017

**T-Figure #13**

## Bike Event Economics



MnDOT. Statewide Bicycle System Plan <sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> MnDOT. Statewide Bicycle System Plan. Accessed: 6/1/17. Available: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/system-plan/pdfs/statewide-bicycle-system-plan-final.pdf>

**Strategy:** Increase safety for all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, freight, transit, motor vehicles, etc.)

**Objective:** Evaluate and balance the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, freight, transit, motor vehicles, etc.)

Utilize appropriate traffic signals, turning lanes, and islands to minimize traffic conflicts and increase safety.

Improve motorist and pedestrian safety by providing suitable lighting, road signs, traffic control devices, and pavement markings.

*Existing Conditions:*

Evaluate and balance the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, freight, transit, motor vehicles, etc.) and costs during planning, scoping, design, construction, operations, and maintenance of the transportation network in Windom. The analysis should include the connectivity, access, and mobility. The objective is to create a transportation network that encourages investment in Windom.

“When people are there, people invest more.”<sup>38</sup> The environment of the street has to fit the purpose(s) of the street. Appropriate traffic controls, improvements, and streetscape can help to achieve the purpose(s) of the street.

It is critical to define the purpose(s) of the street during the planning stage. An existing street does not have to be reconstructed the same as it has been. A new street can be constructed based on use and not based on what is standard.

Questions to Ask During Planning:

- What characteristic will make this street a Complete Street?
- Is this a through street?
- Are predicted traffic volumes and traffic speeds reasonable to encourage sharing the road with bikes and pedestrians and are off-street pedestrian facilities needed?
- What cost saving measures should be discussed:
  - Width of the street
  - No curb, drive over curb, or full curb
  - Shoulder and drainage system

There are a number of tools in the transportation toolbox that can be used to encourage investment and increase safety. MnDOT is a useful resource for safety improvements. Strong Towns is a useful resource for encouraging investment. Nontraditional and common sense transportation options need to be part of the planning, scoping, design, construction, operations, and maintenance of the transportation network in Windom.

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<sup>38</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

T-Figure #14

Narrow Two-Way Street



[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/small\\_towns/fhwahep17024\\_lg.pdf](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/fhwahep17024_lg.pdf)

*Strategy:* Improve safety at problem intersections.

*Objective:* Maintain a list of problem intersections (more dangerous intersections)

Work with MnDOT to conduct an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) study at the following intersections:

- Highway 62 & 4th Street by Island Park
- Highway 60/71 & 6th Street
- Highway 60/71 & 10th Street
- Highway 60/71 & 12th Street
- Highway 60/71 & 16th Street

Work with MnDOT on implementation of the 2008 Traffic Study regarding the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 71.

- The City's previous preferred Alternative #5 – Roundabout

*Existing Conditions:*

As part of the Windom Active Living planning process, problem intersections were identified. All of the identified problem intersections are along MnDOT Highways. MnDOT is trying to balance through traffic requirements along Highway 60 with residential traffic needs. It is difficult balancing through traffic with pedestrian safety.

It is difficult to cross Highway 60 in a vehicle and it is more difficult to cross as a pedestrian. Safety improvements for pedestrians and residential traffic need to be improved along Highway 60. As average daily traffic volumes increase along Highway 60 in Windom as a result of the four-lane expansion, crossing Highway 60 is going to become more problematic.

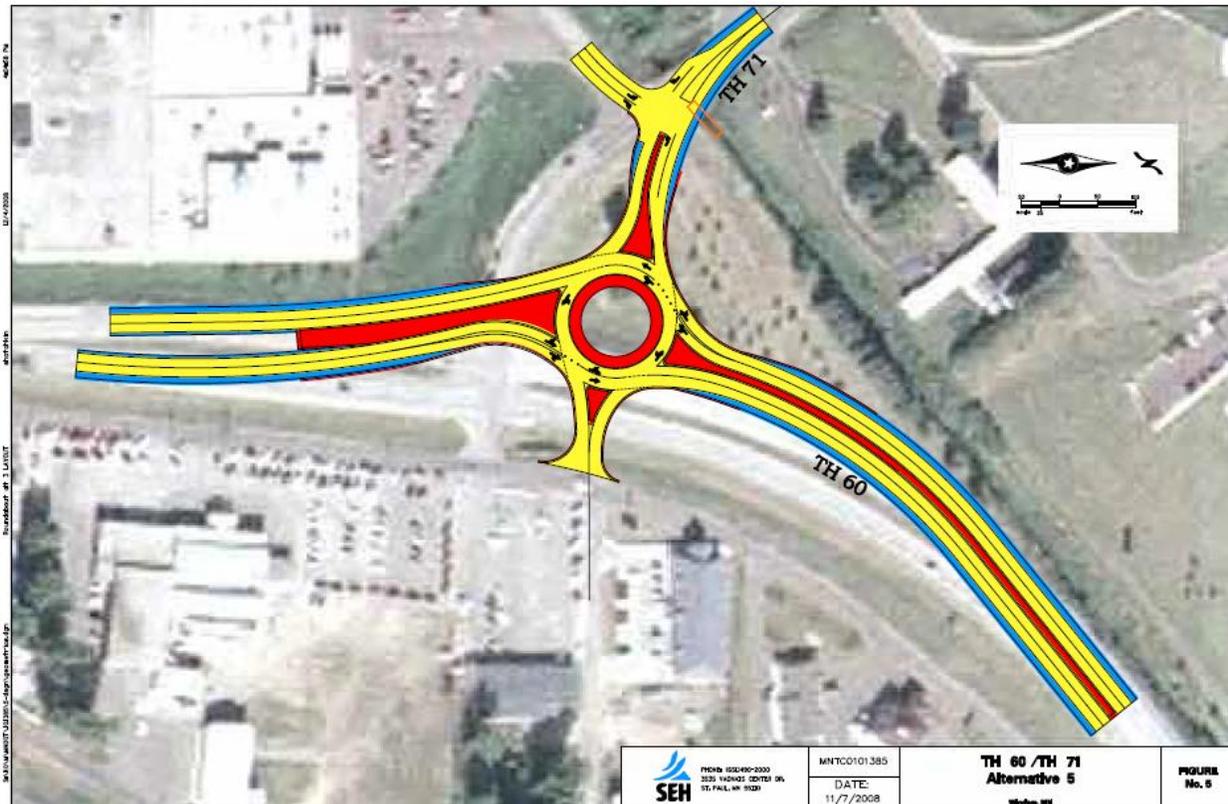
Working with MnDOT requires planning and studies. MnDOT has conducted Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) studies in Windom. MnDOT has recommended a corridor study along Highway 60 in Windom. This corridor study would address pedestrian crossing needs, residential traffic, and at least a two block radius around Highway 60. This two block radius should include the intersection of Highway 62 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street by Island Park which has been identified as a problem intersection. Including a wider radius around Highway 60 will allow for alternative route planning and identifying primary destinations on both sides of Highway 60.

In 2008, a Traffic Study regarding the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 71 was completed. The purpose of the study was to evaluate potential improvements at the intersections of TH 60 with TH 71 and 16th Street in Windom, Minnesota, to accommodate future traffic volumes and improve pedestrian

connections across TH 60. Six different alternatives were developed. The City Council’s recommendation was Alternative 5, if a roundabout is needed at the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 71.

Alternative 5 is a roundabout at the TH 71 and TH 60 intersection. Alternative 5 varies from Alternatives 3 and 4 in that it realigns the TH 71 and TH 60 intersection to 19th Street. This alternative also provides adequate distance between the roundabout and the frontage road so that the frontage road does not need to be relocated.

**T-Figure #15 Roundabout Design – TH 60 & 71**



*Minimize Conflict Points While Encouraging Business Investment along Highway 60*

Dev. Dept. High Priority

**Strategy:** Improve safety along Highway 60.

**Objective:** Work with MnDOT to conduct a corridor study along Highway 60 in Windom.

Limit the number of direct approaches to major arterial streets while working with businesses to ensure access and marketability of their property.

**Existing Conditions:**

A balance needs to be achieved between MnDOT’s recommendations for access management and what is realistic to encourage investment along Highway 60 in Windom. Currently, Windom is working with MnDOT on a project-by-project basis for access management as new construction occurs along the

Highway 60 corridor in Windom. This is not the best method, since working through access management issues with MnDOT has slowed projects and has caused significant pushback to new investment.

The 4-lane highway network connecting Omaha, Nebraska, and Minneapolis – St. Paul is helping to drive investment and growth in Windom. Windom will be a midpoint between Omaha and Minneapolis – St. Paul along a 4-lane highway network when the last stretch of the 4-lane is completed in 2018. This network offers excellent shipping routes and connectivity to national shipping networks.

An Access Management Plan for Highway 60 was completed in October of 2002. Little to no implementation of the Access Management Plan occurred, since a balance between MnDOT's recommendations and the City's development goals was not reached. MnDOT has made significant improvements regarding planning from 2002 to 2017. Pedestrians, Active Living Plans, and local input are included in planning processes at a much higher level than in the past.

MnDOT has been working with City staff to update the Access Management Plan for Highway 60. In the past, the local share for an updated Access Management Plan was a barrier, but MnDOT has worked with City staff to develop a reasonable cost share. Local funds were budgeted by the City Council in 2016. Additional local funds were also budgeted in 2017, so the update to the Access Management Plan can move forward.

*Access & Safety around the Downtown Square*      Street Dept. & Dev. Dept.      Medium Priority

*Strategy:*      Improve safety for all users around the Downtown Square.

*Objective:*      Improve the streetscape around the Downtown Square.

Stripe traffic lanes and bike lanes on the Downtown Square.

Add seasonal parklets to the Downtown Square.

*Existing Conditions:*

"When people are there, people invest more."<sup>39</sup> Dining, retail, and professional services around the Downtown Square create a medium for attracting people to the Square. The economies of scale of a compact and walkable shopping district can drive investment.

The streets on the Downtown Square are 60 feet wide. The distance from the storefronts to the inside edge of the sidewalk around the Courthouse Square is approximately 83 feet. There is room to add pedestrian amenities around the Downtown Square to improve access and safety.

One access and safety improvement is adding a separated bike lane on the Downtown Square. A separated bike lane can be established by striping traffic lanes and establishing a delineated space for vehicle traffic, parking, and pedestrians. Striping and delineating spaces for all users will help to calm

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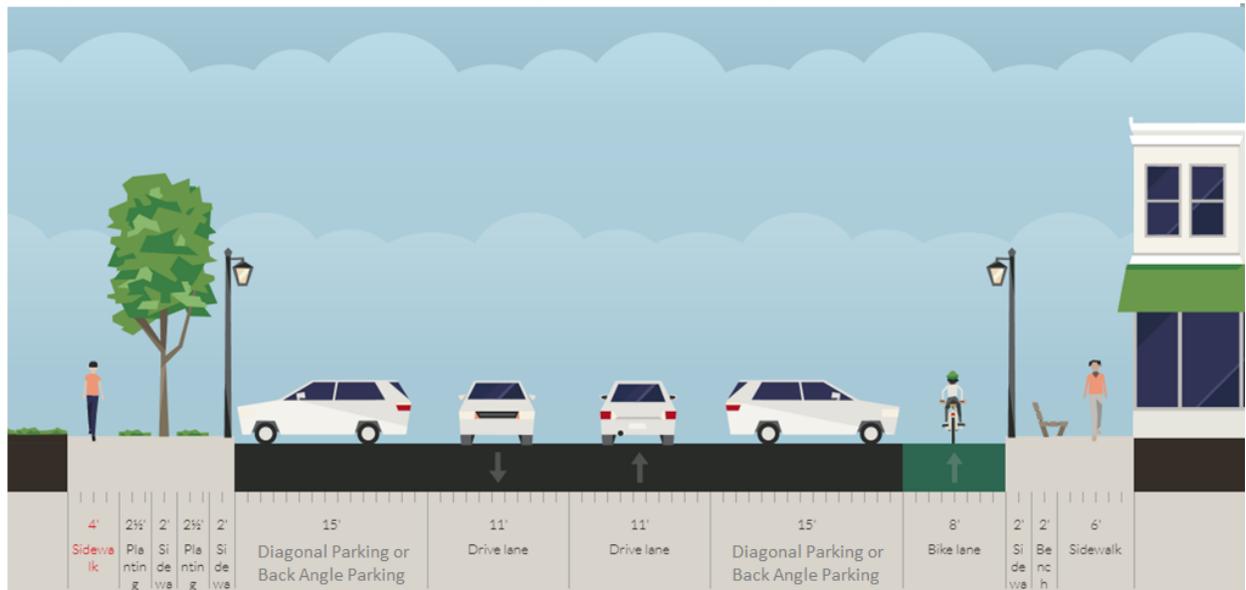
<sup>39</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 6/21/16. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

traffic, free up space for pedestrians, add parking, and entice development around the Downtown Square. The figure below outlines possible street striping configurations. Other pedestrian amenities can be added to the bike lane area. One of these amenities is a parklet.

**T-Figure #16a Street Design – Downtown Square**



**T-Figure #16b Street Design – Downtown Square**



**Parklets**

Parklets are an extension to the sidewalk that provides space for amenities and allows people to better utilize a space. Parklets help to break up the street and concrete feel by adding seating, plants, trees, and bike racks. Parklets are designed with pedestrians in mind, so people have a comfortable and convenient place to relax and enjoy the atmosphere of the city or business district.

Parklets can be designed to be permanent fixtures or seasonal. Seasonal parklets can be removed for easier snow removal. Parklets benefit local businesses by providing unique public spaces that attract customers and foster community feel. Below is an example of a parklet from Hopkins. Parklets can help to improve the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in the Central Business District. Street trees, landscaping, benches, and other pedestrian amenities should also be explored as part of making the Central Business District more of a destination.

**T-Figure #17**

**Parklet Example**



*Windom Wetlands Management District Trail Connection*

Dev. Dept. & Park & Rec.      Medium Priority

**Goal:**            Establish a trail between the City of Windom and the Windom Wetlands Management District.

**Strategy:**        Conduct further research of possible routes for establishing a trail connection between Windom and the Windom Wetlands Management District.

Rank possible trail connections between Windom and the Windom Wetlands Management District.

Explore possible funding sources with US Fish & Wildlife Staff.

*Existing Conditions:*

Multiple trail connections between the City of Windom and the Windom Wetlands Management District have been discussed.

Possible Destinations to Connect:

1. Mayflower Park & Disc Golf Course
2. Minnesota DNR Nature Area
3. Wolf Lake Nature Area & US Fish & Wildlife Visitor Center
4. Windom Rec Area & Tegels Park

**T-Figure #18      Windom Wetland Management District – Possible Trail Connections**



- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Route #1 – 1 mile (from CR 26)     |  Route #3 – 1.3 Miles                 |
|  Route #2 – 1.15 Miles (from CR 26) |  Distance between #1 & #2 (.41 miles) |
|  Wide Paved Shoulder                |  |

# CHAPTER 6: PARKS & RECREATION

## Introduction

Parks and Recreation are important aspects of livability in a community. Quality parks and recreation help a community attract and retain residents. Parks and recreational facilities must be maintained and enhanced to accommodate changing demands within the community.

Current demand needs to be considered during the planning process along with growth projections and future demand. Open spaces should be an integral component of future developments within a city. The responsibility for planning these facilities rests with municipal officials, community leaders, and local residents.

A “Parks and Recreation System” is composed of all those facilities (public and private) designed to allow and encourage the public to participate in activities that are passive and active. The City of Windom recognizes the importance of these amenities and has been active in the development of parks and recreational facilities for residents and visitors alike. The City also understands the need for a balance between the availability of facilities and the costs of acquisition and maintenance of such facilities and desires to address these issues.

## Livability as an Economic Development Strategy

“Historically, state and local policymakers have put their energies into trying to attract existing firms from somewhere else, either to relocate to a particular area or to build new facilities there.”<sup>40</sup> State and local policymakers have tried to attract firms by offering tax breaks or other financial inducements. Having states, cities or localities create a policy to encourage firms to locate new plants or headquarters in their region results in competition which is a positive economic driver. Attracting businesses is only one approach to economic development. Newer economic development theory focuses on attracting people to your community and these people will increase demand and create businesses.

For a city to help shift the supply of labor, there are various actions that can be undertaken. Attracting new residents to a city can be done by promoting the existing amenities in the area. Amenities are anything that increases the attractiveness of a city. This can simply be advertising local natural resources like the Des Moines River and Cottonwood Lake to promoting events and recreational activities the city and area offer to residents and visitors. A city can partner with local businesses or organizations to accomplish common goals.

## Background – Livability as an Economic Development Strategy

Entrepreneurship is local because new firms must start somewhere. Individuals launch firms and if these local firms are successful, they expand and attract more people to the area. “Policymakers at local

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<sup>40</sup> Acs Zoltan and etc. “Entrepreneurship and Urban Success: Toward a Policy Consensus.” Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. February 2008. Accessed: 10/19/15. Available: [http://sites.kauffman.org/pdf/state\\_local\\_roadmap\\_022608.pdf](http://sites.kauffman.org/pdf/state_local_roadmap_022608.pdf)

and state levels increasingly recognize that entrepreneurship is the key to building and sustaining their economies' growth."<sup>41</sup>

It is important for a city to think of parks and recreational facilities as tools to attract people to your community. There is an upfront cost for building a new park or trail but there is a return. First, the amenity increases the quality of life for the city's current residents. Second, the amenity may attract more people to your community. Attracting more people to your community will increase demand for current products and services and will, hopefully, result in the establishment of additional businesses.

There are general rules of thumb that apply to land use planning for parks and recreational facilities. First, when planning to update or build a park, all population groups should be considered. This will help to maximize the usage of the park by appealing to a wide range of citizen interests. As an example, small playground parks are necessary for residential areas which have multi-family housing units. Community parks are usually large areas which include facilities for numerous activities like ball fields, tennis or volleyball courts, shelters with amenities, horseshoe pits, picnic areas, and publicly-accessible restrooms.

Second, there are size recommendations for determining the space allocated to parks and green space. The space recommendations are based on a percentage of the city's land area or the city's population. This allows smaller and larger cities to plan accordingly.

#### Percentage – Space Allocated to Parks & Greenspace

Municipalities should generally allocate at least 10 percent of their land acreage to parks and greenspace. According to the United States Census Bureau, the City of Windom has an area of 2,771.2 acres. According to the parcel map, there are 2,712 total acres in the City excluding the airport.

Windom currently has 125 acres of developed park space. There are an additional 63.7 acres of undeveloped park space. The total acres available for municipal parks and greenspace in Windom are 188.7 which excludes school property. The school has approximately 85 acres of parks and greenspace which excludes the environmental learning center which is approximately 14 acres. In total, there are approximately 210 acres of developed parks and greenspace in Windom.

Using the 10 percent guideline, Windom does not reach the recommendation. To reach the 10 percent guideline, the city should have 271 acres of land dedicated to parks and greenspace. Semi-public recreation facilities are typically used in the parks and greenspace figure.

The Windom Country Club is private property, but the course is used for cross county meets and other community events. The Windom Country Club is 80 acres. If the golf course is included in the land dedicated to parks and open spaces, the City reaches the recommendation.

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<sup>41</sup> Acs Zoltan and etc. "Entrepreneurship and Urban Success: Toward a Policy Consensus." Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. February 2008. Accessed: 10/19/15. Available: [http://sites.kauffman.org/pdf/state\\_local\\_roadmap\\_022608.pdf](http://sites.kauffman.org/pdf/state_local_roadmap_022608.pdf)

PR-Table #1

## Parks &amp; Green Space – Windom

Developed Parks	Acres	Location	Area of Windom
Abby Park	1.5	6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue & 20 <sup>th</sup> Street	North Central
Dynamite Park	3	River Road, next to golf course	Western
Horkey Park	1	River Road & Great Bend Boulevard	Western
Island Park	27	Entrance at Hwy 62 & 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Central
Jen’s Park	3	Kalash Road	Northwest
Kastle Kingdom	WRA	Located in the Windom Rec Area	Eastern
Lomens Park	.5	Hwy 60/71 & 12 <sup>th</sup> Street – north side	Central
Lions Park	.5	Hwy 60/71 & 12 <sup>th</sup> Street – south side	Central
Maple Park	1.5	18 <sup>th</sup> Ave between 17 <sup>th</sup> St & Maple Park Circle	Western
Mayflower Park	35	South end of Drake Avenue	Southeast
Schmalz Park	4	Hwy 62 & 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue South	Southwest
Tegels Park	10	West side of Cottonwood Lake	Northeast
Windom Rec Area	38	Cottonwood Lake Dr & 16 <sup>th</sup> St & County Rd 13	Eastern
<b>Total Park Space</b>	125		
Undeveloped Parks	Acres	Locations	
Prairie Ridge Park	1	Undeveloped – 21 <sup>st</sup> Street Area	Northern
Rolling Green Park	.7	Undeveloped – Hwy 62 & Des Moines Drive	Southwest
Ringle Park	60	Undeveloped – River Road & 15 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Western
Potential Dog Park	2	Undeveloped – Portion of the City Landfill Property	Eastern
	63.7		
<b>Total Potential Park Space</b>	188.7		

## Population – Space Allocated to Parks &amp; Greenspace

The second planning guideline is based upon population. General park and recreation planning suggests that ten acres of park land be dedicated for every 1,000 people in population. In 2010, Windom had a population of 4,646. Therefore, the guideline would require 46.46 acres of parks and greenspace. Windom more than meets this planning recommendation.

Maintaining a well-developed parks and recreation system is not only a tool to retain and attract residents, but parks and recreation activities should also be viewed as a tool to maintain a healthy community. A healthy community has numerous benefits that provide value to the community as a whole.

## Community Design

Community design can have a significant impact on health. “Evidence shows that people living in rural communities are more likely to be physically inactive, overweight and obese compared to those living in urban locations.”<sup>42</sup> People in rural areas face unique barriers such as dispersed land use and population which creates greater geographic distances to the nearest town center and other active living

<sup>42</sup> Using Active Living Principles to Promote Physical Activity in Rural Communities. Active Living Research. Accessed: 10/20/15. Available: <http://activelivingresearch.org/using-active-living-principles-promote-physical-activity-rural-communities>

opportunities. Many of the resources (i.e. parks, sidewalks, and bike lanes) that encourage physical activity in urban settings are not available, inconvenient, or scarcely available in rural communities.

**PR-Figure #1      Role of Communities in Promoting Physical Activity**



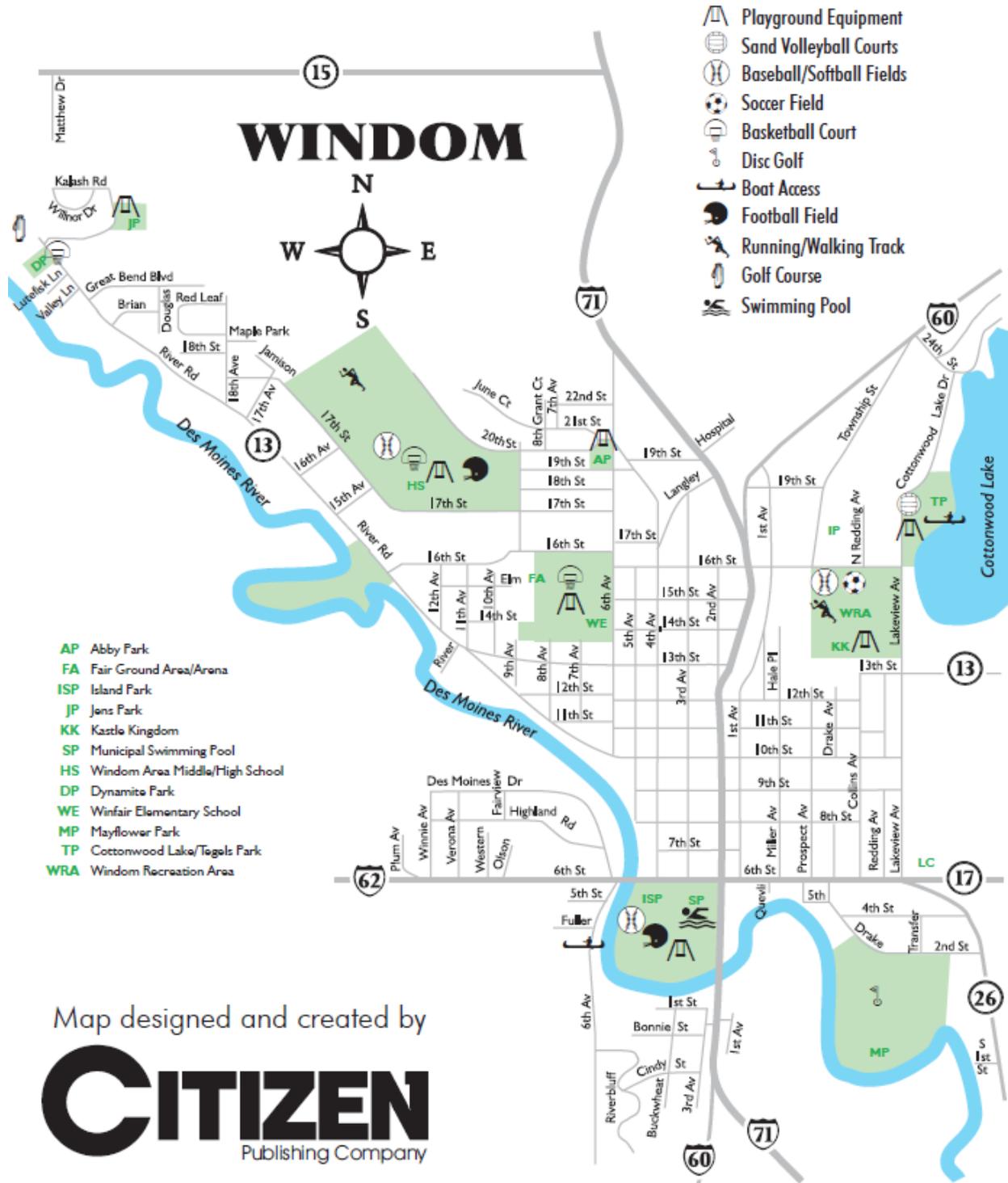
### Parks & Greenspace

There are 13 developed parks covering approximately 125 acres. PR-Figure #2 shows the location of Windom’s municipal parks and greenspace. These facilities are found throughout the City, thus providing greenspace, facilities, and park equipment within a reasonable walking distance to most sections of the City.

There is also an opportunity to develop three undeveloped parks in Windom. These properties are owned by the City of Windom and have been identified as parks that could be developed. The total acres of undeveloped parks are 63.7.

PR-Figure #2

Parks & Greenspace Map - Windom



Map designed and created by



## US Fish & Wildlife & DNR

The US Fish and Wildlife has a District Wetland Management Office within one mile to Windom that features a visitor center and paved and grass walking trails. The Windom Wetland Management District manages nearly 70 separate parcels of federally owned land, called waterfowl production areas, within a 12 county area in southern Minnesota. Together, the waterfowl production areas encompass more than 13,000 acres of land dedicated to wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation. There is 617.3 acres that are within a mile to Windom.

The Minnesota DNR has an Area Office adjacent to Windom. The DNR property adjacent to Windom is 43.6 acres of natural grasslands. The US Fish and Wildlife and DNR property are assets to the City of Windom.

## Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Parks & Recreation

Below is the overarching goal related to the Parks and Recreation in the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve the goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the economy goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community based approach is used.

*Goal:* It is the goal of the City of Windom to provide recreational opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of all age groups.

*Parks & Recreation Marketing* Park & Rec & Dev. Dept. High Priority  
*Strategy:* Actively market parks, recreational amenities, and programs in Windom.

*Objective:* Maintain an up-to-date Parks Brochure targeted at visitors and community members who are less knowledgeable about Windom’s Park System.  
  
Develop separate brochures for the Pool, Arena, Windom Water Trail, and recreation programs.

### Existing Conditions:

In 2017, the Parks Superintendent and the Development Director worked with the Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall to develop Windom’s first park brochure. The target population for the brochure was visitors and community members who are less knowledgeable about Windom’s Park System. The brochure is being marketed at numerous locations in Windom.

Continuous marketing and creative thinking is needed to actively promote Windom’s Parks.

*Livability Amenities On the Square* Street Dept. & Dev. Dept. Medium Priority  
*Goal:* Improve livability amenities On the Downtown Square.

**Strategy:** Add seating, landscaping, and other amenities to make the Square more inviting and pedestrian friendly.

**Existing Conditions:**

Central Business Districts in rural communities have to be unique to attract people, retail, and restaurants. The Square does provide a unique atmosphere, but improvements can be made. These improvements should be centered on pedestrian amenities.

***When people are there, people invest more.***<sup>43</sup>

Some create solutions have been identified in the Windom Active Living Plan. These create solutions include: Parklets, Road Art and Crosswalk Painting, and Stop for PED Signs.

The Square is the Central Business District in Windom. This area is the busiest during the day and drops in the evenings. Improving amenities around the Square will help attract people to the Square which may also entice business owners to stay open later.

A more inviting pocket park will help to create a destination to walk and bike to. Possible improvements could include: nonintrusive trees and landscaping, picnic tables, benches, art, playground equipment, signage, other creative ideals. Below are a few pocket park examples.

**PR-Figure #3**

**Livability Examples – Square**



<sup>43</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 6/21/16. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

**PR-Figure #4**

**Curb Extensions – Square**



**PR-Figure #5**

**Parklet – City of Hopkins**



*Future Population Growth*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

*Strategy:*

Acquire and reserve sufficient park and greenspace land to fulfill the needs of the present and projected future population.

*Objective:*

Undertake park and greenspace development as residential development demands.

Work with developers to plan for pedestrian connectivity between new developments, existing pedestrian infrastructure, and nearby parks and greenspace.

If sufficient park and greenspace is not within a convenient walking distance, work with developers to include a park or greenspace in any new development.

*Existing Conditions:*

The City of Windom currently reaches the general recommendations for parks and greenspace based on acres and population. Refer to the subsection “Percent – Space Allocated to Parks & Greenspace” in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. These general recommendations are minimum requirements that do not address amenities in the parks.

Section 151.60 of the City Code outlines requirements for Public Sites and Open Space. Developers are required to allocate a minimum portion of any proposed subdivision to the public or preserve for public use. This public use includes: parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails, wetlands, and open space, as well as streets, roads, sewer, gas and water facilities, storm water, and similar utilities and improvements.

New park and greenspace requirements are ultimately determined by the City Council when approving a new subdivision or planned unit development. Variables impacting a decision to require a new park or greenspace include: proximity to existing park and greenspace, number of acres being developed, future land use plans, etc.

It is also critical for any new subdivision to include plans for pedestrian connectivity. Section 151.65 of the City Code outlines requirements for sidewalks. The City Council can deem sidewalks appropriate and necessary in any development.

The Windom Active Living Plan outlined a Pedestrian Functional Classification System for determining new pedestrian infrastructure needs.

**Pedestrian Functional Classification System – Windom Active Living Plan**

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does not have to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if it is safe for pedestrians.

Some community members may not have access to a motor vehicle, so walking, biking, and transit are their primary transportation modes. Sidewalks and trails have a community benefit and help to increase connectivity within the community. If there are gaps in the sidewalk and trail network, it is not convenient to walk and bike.

Younger children may need a sidewalk to separate them from vehicle traffic. Younger children may be learning how to ride a bike, so it is not safe for them to share the road with vehicle traffic. When making a decision on whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

A Pedestrian Functional Classification System was established as part of the Planning Process for this plan. The classification system used three levels to determine pedestrian infrastructure needs on all streets within the City of Windom. The three-tiered classification system includes: Connector Streets, Neighborhood Connector Streets, and Residential Streets. Below are descriptions of the classifications that were used to describe the need for sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure on streets in Windom. The classification system is based on traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and perceived safety. The classification system helped to provide guidance when making transportation decisions. Refer to *PR-Figure #18* for the Pedestrian Functional Classification System Map.

▶ Connector Streets

- Connects primary destinations
- Highest traffic volume streets
- Require the highest level of pedestrian amenities - Sidewalks on both sides of the street or a sidewalk or trail conveniently located along the corridor that connects key locations.

▶ Neighborhood Connector Streets

- Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets
- Medium level traffic volume streets
- Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.
- A wide paved shoulder may be sufficient, if parking does not significantly affect the space for pedestrians.

▶ Residential Streets

- All other streets
- Lower traffic speeds
- Lower traffic volumes
- Sidewalks are encouraged but there is no sidewalk requirement.

*New Developments*

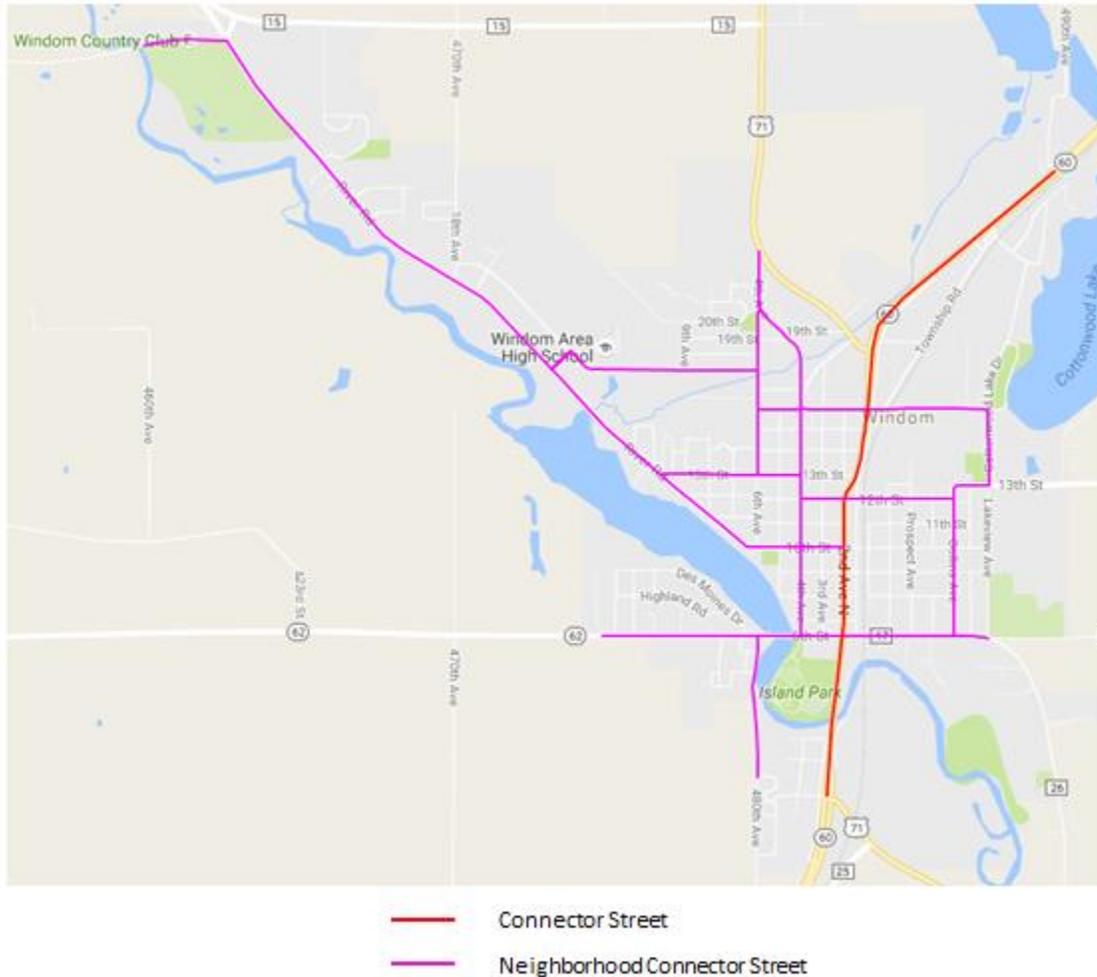
New developments require that sidewalk(s) be discussed and unless an exemption is granted by the Windom City Council, sidewalk(s) will be required at the developer's expense. The Developer must provide satisfactory information as to why a sidewalk will not be needed in the new development (street is wide

enough, low traffic volumes, it is reasonable to walk on the street...). This will help to ensure an adequate discussion occurs regarding pedestrian amenities.

*Existing Sidewalks*

To remove an existing section of sidewalk, the landowner is required to obtain approval from the Windom City Council. This will help to prevent gaps in the sidewalk and trail network.

**PR-Figure #6 Pedestrian Functional Classification Map – Windom**



*Individual Park Plans*

Park & Rec

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Develop individual Park Plans for every park in Windom.

**Objective:** Outline growth opportunities and maintenance needs for each park.

- Updates to the individual Park Plans should include community engagement.
- Funding for new amenities should primarily come from grants, fundraising, and community groups. City Staff should help outline, plan, and implement projects. City Staff can also provide long-term maintenance.

## Administer an Annual Parks & Greenspace Survey.

### *Existing Conditions:*

Individual Park Plans will be shorter work plans that identify growth opportunities and maintenance needs for each park. The individual Park Plans should identify specific needs and specific projects to address those needs. These projects should be ranked by the Park and Recreation Commission to provide guidance to City Staff. Plans should be updated every couple of years as projects are completed.

Planning projects will also help to fundraise for projects. Over \$6,000 was raised in 2017 for the Windom Water Trail. Nearly \$12,000 was received in Active Living Grants in 2017. This was possible since projects were planned and outlined in the Windom Active Living Plan.

Planning projects will also allow community service groups to organize volunteer efforts for a project. In 2017, the Windom Kiwanis Club, the Windom Hospital, and BARC organized a bike recycling program. The need for a bike share program was discussed during the planning process for the Windom Active Living Plan. A bike recycling program was pursued as an effective alternative. Over 40 bikes were repaired and distributed to community members in Windom. The bike giveaway is planned as an annual event every spring.

It is critical to continue planning with the community. A Park & Greenspace Survey can help gather feedback from community members who typically do not attend Park and Recreation Commission Meetings. A broader Park & Greenspace Survey should be administered annually. Information from this broader Parks & Greenspace Survey can provide community input for the individual Park Plans and the Windom Active Living Plan.

### *Previous Planning – Windom Active Living Plan*

The Windom Active Living Plan was completed in November of 2016. The Windom Active Living Plan identified 15 infrastructure projects and 15 non-infrastructure projects. The Windom Active Living Plan was the first broad planning effort to identify sidewalk gaps and Active Living projects in Windom.

Individual Park Plans will be more detailed and will be more of a work plan. The Windom Active Living Plan is a working document, so broader goals and strategies can be added. Planning will overlap and coordination between the individual Park Plans and the Active Living Plan is critical.

*Maximizing Natural Community Features*                      *Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.*                      *Medium Priority Strategy:*                      Develop and improve parks and open spaces to maximize usage of natural community features, notably waterways.

- Des Moines River
- Cottonwood Lake
- Wolf Lake Nature Area – Windom Wetland Management District (US Fish & Wildlife)

*Objective:* Promote passive recreation (wildlife observation, walking, biking, and kayaking/canoeing)

Promote and market the Windom Water Trail as a destination.

Research and discuss possible recreational amenities for Cottonwood Lake.

- Research and discuss a possible unpaved nature trail connecting to the Cottonwood Lake peninsula.

Research and discuss possible connections between the City and Wolf Lake Nature Area

*Existing Conditions:*

Recreational programming in Windom has primarily focused on active recreation (organized sports, playground equipment, etc.). These programs and amenities serve a number of residents, but the needs of a large sector of the population are overlooked. Passive recreation (wildlife observation, walking, biking, and kayaking/canoeing) also needs to be addressed.

The Des Moines River meanders through the City of Windom and provides scenic views and places for passive outdoor recreation. There are three City Parks along the Des Moines River in Windom that include: Dynamite Park, Island Park, and Mayflower Park. These city parks would provide excellent kayaking and canoe accesses to the Des Moines River.

**Windom Water Trail – Background Information**

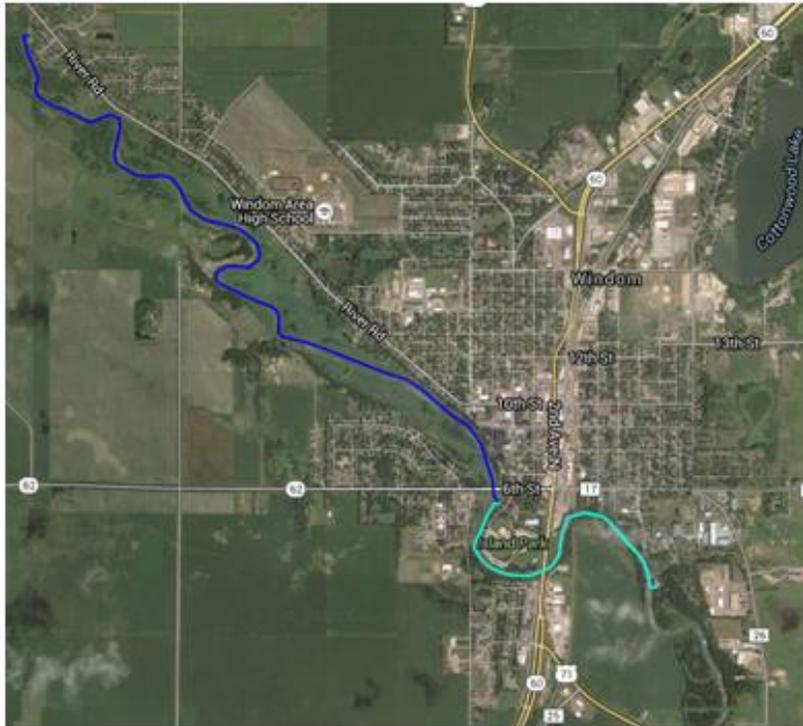
The Windom Water Trail was identified in the Windom Active Living Plan and was ranked #1 under the Non-infrastructure Goals. The goal is to increase recreational options within the City of Windom. The Strategy is to provide safe and convenient launch areas for kayaks and canoes at Dynamite Park, Island Park, and Mayflower Park.

The Windom Water Trail will be a new amenity for Windom in 2018. Planning and fundraising for the Windom Water Trail was completed in 2017. Plans are in place for low impact kayak launches to be installed at Dynamite Park and Island Park in the Spring of 2018.

The length and convenience of the Windom Water Trail will encourage use. The entire section of the Des Moines River through Windom is a water trail, but there is little to no signage, there are no convenient launches, and some of the launches that do exist are not safe. The Windom Water Trail will provide convenient and safe launches.

P&R Figure #7

Windom Water Trail - Map



- Upper Windom Water Trail  
2.8 Miles
- Lower Windom Water Trail  
1.2 Miles

P&R Figure #8

Windom Water Trail - Promotion

**LOW IMPACT  
KAYAK LAUNCH  
WINDOM, MN**

**Windom Water Trail**

- 
- Dynamite Park to Island Park**  
Distance: 2.8 miles  
Estimated Time: 1 hour floating
- Dynamite Park To Mayflower Park**  
4 miles  
Estimated Time: 1.5 hours floating

### Cottonwood Lake Amenities

Cottonwood Lake is located in the northeast portion of Windom and offers convenient access for fishing, recreational water sports, and a sand swimming beach. Cottonwood Lake has approximately 3.47 miles of shoreline and the average depth is 8 feet. Cottonwood Lake is unique to Southwest Minnesota because it is a sand bottom lake which provides better water clarity than most prairie mud lakes in the area.

Tegels Park is located along the Southwest corner of Cottonwood Lake. Tegels Park is 10 acres and features a picnic area, playground, fishing and boat docks, boat ramp, sand volleyball, sand swimming beach, beach house, and restrooms. Tegels Park is adjacent to the Windom Regional Recreation Area which is a 58-acre park and recreation area.

### Cottonwood Lake Nature Trail

The US Fish and Wildlife owns 306 acres along the east and northeast side of Cottonwood Lake. Access to this property is limited. As part of the Windom Active Living Plan, trails were discussed. No route was developed in this area, since other connections received a higher priority.

An unpaved nature trail could be a scenario to research as part of a potential housing development in this area. The Cemstone property is currently being pursued as a redevelopment project. A recreational trail overlooking Cottonwood Lake on the US Fish and Wildlife Property could be connected to the potential Cemstone Recreational Trail. Refer to the figures below. Additional research is needed.

**P&R Figure #9 US Fish and Wildlife Land – Cottonwood Lake**



P&R Figure #10

Cottonwood Lake Nature Trail - 1 mile



P&R Figure #11

Example Gravel Trail



*Equity*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

*Strategy:*

Maintain an equitable distribution of parks and open space areas throughout the community taking care to ensure that sufficient facilities are available and tailored to suit the neighborhoods they serve.

*Objective:*

Ensure that recreational facilities which provide year-round programs and activities are equally distributed throughout the community.

Where deficiencies are noted in park distribution, encourage innovative design and development to provide facilities for the neighborhood.

Encourage and market walking the halls of the BARC, schools, or Community Center as a passive recreation option during colder weather months.

*Existing Conditions:*

“Evidence shows that people with more access to green environments, such as parks, tend to walk more than those with limited access. Health and fitness facilities offer group walking programs and access to places for walking. Park and recreation planners can influence community health by increasing access to parks and helping people find ways to walk indoors in inclement weather.”<sup>44</sup>

**PR-Figure #2** is a parks and greenspace map for Windom. Parks seem to be equitably distributed throughout Windom. Transportation options and Highway 60 are two barriers that do prevent use from some areas of the community.

One of the main themes in the Windom Active Living Plan is Highway 60/71 is barrier to walking and biking. It is unsafe to cross Highway 60/71. This discourages community members from the eastern portion of Windom to utilize parks and community spaces in the western portion of Windom and vice versa.

During colder weather months, indoor facilities are preferred for recreation. There are indoor gyms on both sides of Highway 60/71. This does encourage use, but gym activities are centered on active recreation (organized sports).

One indoor passive recreation option that could be encouraged is walking the halls of the BARC, schools, or Community Center. These facilities are distributed throughout the community, so convenient access is possible.

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<sup>44</sup> CDC. A Partners Guide to Promoting Walking and Walkable Communities. Access: 11/30/17. Available: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/partnerguid.pdf>



*Windom Active Living – Continuous Planning & Implementation*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept. Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to all recreational facilities within the community.

**Objective:** Annually implement a minimum of two Active Living-related projects.

Funding should primarily come from grants, fundraising, and community groups. City Staff should help outline, plan, and implement projects.

Administer an Annual Parks & Greenspace Survey.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Windom Active Living Plan identified 15 infrastructure projects and 15 non-infrastructure projects. The Windom Active Living Plan is a working document, so additional goals and strategies will be added and other projects will be checked off when completed. As planning continues, additional recommendations should be included in the “Additional Goals and Strategies” Chapter of the Windom Active Living Plan.

An additional four short term and three long term projects were identified during the Bikeable Communities Workshop that was led by the Minnesota Bike Alliance on May 31, 2017, in Windom. Implementing these outlined projects will help to create a more walkable, bikeable, and livable community. Additional Active Living projects can also be identified, planned, and implemented.

It is critical to continue planning with the community to help identify new Active Living-related projects. A Park & Greenspace Survey can help gather feedback from community members who typically do not attend Park and Recreation Commission Meetings. A broader Parks & Greenspace Survey should be administered annually. Information from this broader Parks & Greenspace Survey can provide community input for the individual Park Plans and the Windom Active Living Plan.

Numerous projects were completed in 2017. These include two infrastructure projects and one non-infrastructure project. These are denoted in the tables below with a strike-through.

E-Table #2

## Infrastructure Goals – Windom Active Living Plan

Rank	Location
1	Windom Recreation Area Sidewalk Gap
2	Windom High School/Middle School - Safe Routes to School Trail
3	Windom Bike Loop - River Road Loop
4	<del>15th Avenue Safe Route to School</del>
5	Collins Avenue Sidewalk Gap
6	16th Street Safe Route to School
7	16th Street Sidewalk Gap
8	Midblock Crossing - Highway 60/71
9	Abby Park Neighborhood Sidewalk Gap
10	Mayflower Park Recreation Trail
11	<del>6th Avenue South Sidewalk Gap</del>
12	Highway 60 Pedestrian Connectivity - 1st Avenue North Sidewalk Gap
13	Highway 60/71 Pedestrian Connectivity - 3rd Avenue South & Cindy Street Sidewalk Gap
14	12th Street Sidewalk Gap
15	6th Street Sidewalk Gap

**E-Table #21**

**Non-Infrastructure Goals – Windom Active Living Plan**

Rank	Project
1	<b>Windom Water Trail*</b>
2	<del>City Park Map*</del>
3	<u>Parklet(s)</u> on the Square
4	Road Art / Crosswalk Painting
5	Crossing Safety - Highway 62 & 4th Avenue
6	Stop Bars on Highway 60/71
7	Stop for Pedestrian Signs
8	Curb Extensions - <u>Winfair</u> Elementary
9	Creative Ideas - Parks & Recreation / Active Living
10	Paved Shoulders, Fog Lines & Center Striping
11	River Road Maintenance - paved shoulders, fog lines & center striping
12	Curb Extensions - General
13	Problem Intersections
14	<b>Regional Park Designation*</b>
15	Pedestrian Lighting

**E-Table #22**

**Bikeable Communities Workshop Goals – Short Term**

Rank	Project
1	<b>Bike Ride with the Windom City Council</b>
2	Increasing Bike Parking around "The Square"
3	Painting Customized Crosswalk Art for Windom School District
3	<b>Fog Lines/Potential Bike Lanes- Highway 62</b>
4	Potential Partnership with Bike MN/MDH for Bike Maintenance @ BARC

E-Table #23

**Bikeable Communities Workshop Goals – Long Term**

Rank	Project
1	Adding Bike Routes on Windom Parks Brochure
2	Creating Windom Bike Loop
3	Creating “Open Streets” Event During <u>Riverfest</u>

What Are “Open Streets”?

- Temporarily closes street(s) to driving so people use them for any activity **besides** driving
- Community building by bringing together organizations and local businesses



*Public Facility Planning*

All Departments

High Priority

**Strategy:** Plan public facilities to meet the recreational needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Objective:** Plan pedestrian connectivity into site planning for public facilities.

Plan bike parking and other pedestrian needs into site planning for public facilities.

*Existing Conditions:*

Site planning and land use decisions for public facilities in the City of Windom need to consider pedestrian connectivity, bike parking, and other pedestrian amenities. This applies to parks and greenspace and public buildings. Locating a public facility on the edge with limited or no pedestrian infrastructure will have long-term costs. These costs are associated to health, transportation, and infrastructure.

A facility on the edge of town is typically less walkable and bikeable. A smaller number of people will be located within a walkable and bikeable distance, so potential activity levels are decreased. This will require more people to drive to the facility.

Additional traffic can contribute to congestion during a larger sporting event, the beginning and end of the work day or in regards to a school during arrival and departure. Higher infrastructure costs are

associated with extending infrastructure out for a less dense development. Reusing a property or repurposing an existing building will utilize existing infrastructure, so new infrastructure costs are decreased.

*Joint Programming*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Encourage and promote joint cooperation and programming of school and park facilities and recreational programming.

**Objective:** Maximize public facilities and greenspace.

*Existing Conditions:*

School property is counted under the general recommendations for parks and greenspace based on acres and population. Refer to the subsection “Percent – Space Allocated to Parks & Greenspace” in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Without including the school’s property, the City of Windom would not meet these minimum requirements.

Public school property is public property, but some community members may not be aware of this. Promoting the playground as a community asset will help to increase use. It is important to market the playground for public use during non-school hours. The school does use the playground during school hours, so this time restriction needs to be noted on the welcoming playground signage.

*Regional Amenities – Windom Regional Recreation Area*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Promote and properly maintain community recreational features of regional quality, such as the Windom Recreation Area, Tegels Park, and the Community Center.

**Objective:** Ensure that there are sufficient supportive facilities to accommodate the participants and spectators while attending functions at this regional facility.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Windom Recreation Area includes Kastle Kingdom, Legion Field, Wacker Field, Quest Field, Eagle Field, Soccer Field, and Skateboard Park. Diagonal to the Windom Recreation Area is Tegels Park. Across the street from Tegels Park is the Community Center. These City-owned properties are adjacent and could all be combined under the Windom Regional Recreation Area.

Packaging all of these amenities into one destination is one way of creating more of a regional destination. The total square footage of the Windom Regional Recreation Area is 55.2 acres. Planning for amenities in this area should be coordinated to maximize resources and potential appeal.

*Kastle Kingdom*

Kastle Kingdom is a 10,000 square foot playground that features wooden playground equipment. Legion Field, Wacker Field, Quest Field, and Eagle Field form a complex that features three softball diamonds and one baseball diamond. Soccer Field consists of a soccer field and open greenspace. Skateboard Park features ramps and jumps of various elevations. This park complex also includes a shelter house,

picnic facilities, football field, trails, and restrooms. Refer to the Parks Greenspace Section of this plan for additional information.

#### Tegels Parks

Tegels Park is located along Cottonwood Lake. Tegels Park is a 10-acre park that features a picnic shelter, playground equipment, three sand volleyball courts, a boat ramp, two docks for fishing, and a sand swimming beach. Refer to the Parks Greenspace Section of this plan for additional information.

#### Community Center

The Community Center is located on Cottonwood Lake Drive across the street from Tegels Park. The Community Center contains a large multi-purpose room, full kitchen, small meeting room, and a senior center. The large multi-purpose room hosts wedding receptions, anniversary and graduation receptions, dances, banquets, Christmas parties, craft shows, gun shows, regional meetings, training seminars, concerts, athletic and intramural activities, bloodmobile visits, and youth activities. The City- owned property around the Community Center is seven acres. Refer to the Community Facilities Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan for additional information.

#### *Regional Amenities – Arena & Fairgrounds*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Promote and properly maintain community recreational features of regional quality, such as the arena and fairgrounds.

**Objective:** Ensure that there are sufficient supportive facilities to accommodate the participants and spectators while attending functions at this regional facility.

#### *Existing Conditions:*

The Arena is owned and operated by the City. The Windom Arena is a year-round multipurpose recreation arena. The arena features two air-conditioned racquetball courts, wallyball (a version of volleyball), two sheets of ice in the winter, horse show arena in the summer, an archery range, and a community room. During the Cottonwood County Fair, the arena is used as the fair office, for shows, and other events. Programs at the arena include: open skating, adult hockey league, figure skating lessons, archery, wallyball leagues, racquetball leagues, aerobics, baseball/golf hitting cages, and horse shows during the summer.

The Arena is not actively marketed. User groups, like the hockey association, figure skaters club, horse exhibitors, racquetball club, etc., help to market their events and uses. Two approaches could be pursued regarding marketing and daily operations.

One approach is to have Staff take a more active role in marketing the Arena. This may require a larger marketing budget and a specific marketing plan. City Staff would work closely with user groups to increase coordination and messaging. City Staff would continue to staff the facility and provide maintenance and daily operations.

A second approach is to take a more hands-off approach with the Windom Arena. This approach would minimize City Staff at the Arena. User groups would take a more active role in maintenance and daily

operations. This would be similar to Spirit Lake, Fairmont, and Worthington. The City would continue to provide long-term maintenance for the Arena.

*Regional Amenities – Island Park Campground*      Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.      Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Promote and properly maintain community recreational features of regional quality, such as the Island Park Campground.

**Objective:** Ensure that there are sufficient supportive facilities to accommodate the participants and spectators while attending functions at this regional facility.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Island Park Campground is located along the Des Moines River in Island Park. Island Park is 30 acres and features a campground, picnic shelter, pool, playground, river access, fishing, ball fields, and numerous other amenities. The campground features individual hookups for electricity, drinking water, a dump station, picnic tables, and restrooms.

Greenspace and shade are two main improvements that have been discussed by City Staff with feedback from users. Currently, the Island Park Campground has limited greenspace and shade and campers are centered on a gravel parking lot. Improving the layout will definitely make the Island Park Campground more attractive.

Several draft design plans were developed with the Park Superintendent. These designs were further developed with the Park and Recreation Commission. Refer to the figures below.

Upgrades to the Island Park Campground were considered for a grant in early 2018. Upgrades to the campground were not included in the grant due to the total project costs. Lower cost improvements, like grass and trees, should be pursued in the shorter term to increase usability of the Island Park Campground. Longer term improvements, like electrical hook-up relocations, will take more time to develop. Grants and other funding sources should be explored along with a budget projecting payback if general funds are used for the project.

**P&R Figure #13**

**Island Park Campground - Design Option for Grant**

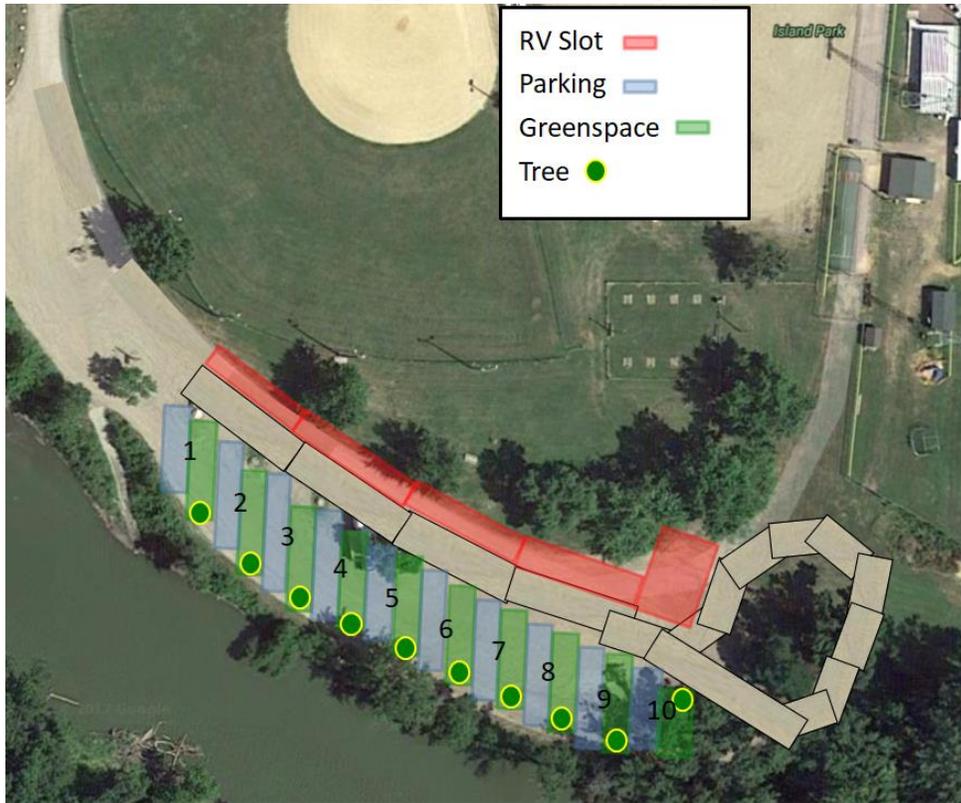


**P&R Figure #14**

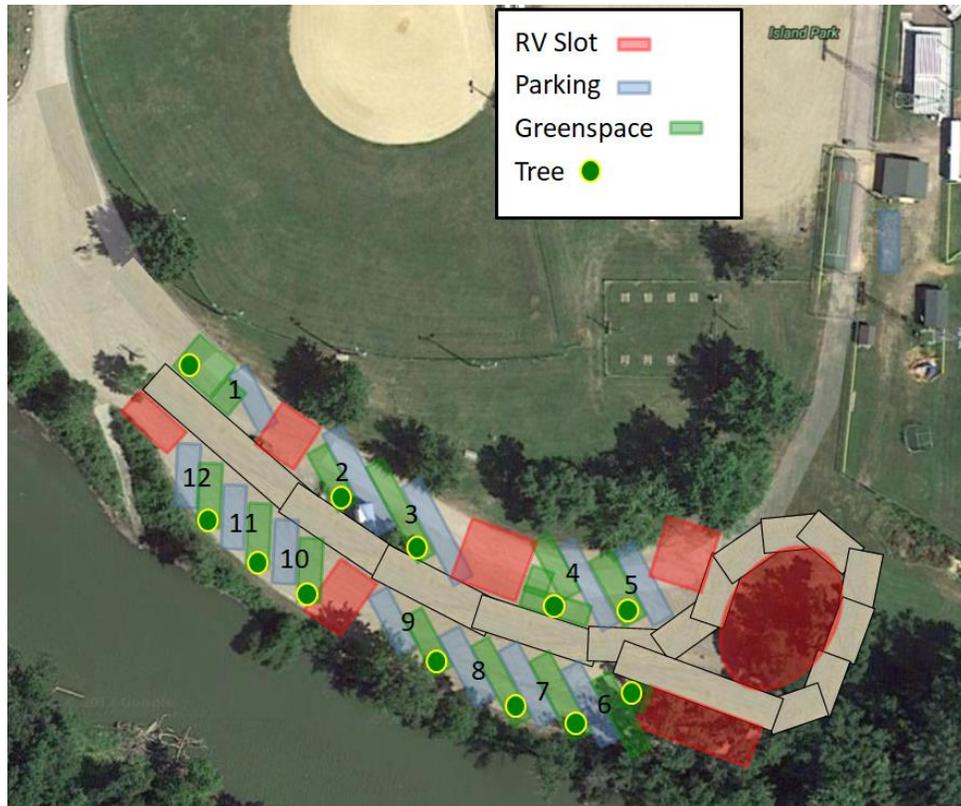
**Island Park Campground - Satellite View**



**P&R Figure #15**      **Island Park Campground – Draft Design Option #1**



**P&R Figure #16**      **Island Park Campground – Draft Design Option #2**



*Strategy:* Ensure that park development does not also harmfully impact surrounding development.

*Objective:* Ensure sufficient park and greenspace land to fulfill the needs of the present and projected future population.

*Existing Conditions:*

The City of Windom currently reaches the general recommendations for parks and greenspace based on acres and population. Refer to the subsection “Percent – Space Allocated to Parks & Greenspace” in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. These general recommendations are minimum requirements that do not address amenities in the parks.

All vacant or underutilized City-owned property does not have to be developed into Park and Greenspace because this property is available. A number of variables need to be discussed and documented that support a decision. Community input through surveys and appointed Park and Recreation Commission members is critical.

A number of Windom’s parks have open greenspace that can be developed for park amenities. The ease of developing a park and recreation amenity is only one variable when deciding locations for new amenities. Other variables include: connectivity for walking and biking, compatibility with other park amenities, adjacent land uses, etc.

Property tax income for the City should also be considered. Is the City-owned property buildable and is there a good probability of the property being developed. The marketability of the property is a critical variable along with the availability of other greenspace in the City.

# CHAPTER 7: Natural Resources & Physical Features

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## Introduction

Physical features and natural resources impact the community's overall quality of life. Southwest Minnesota has an abundance of natural resources including: lakes, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, prairies and bluffs. The region's landscape is one of the reasons we live in Southwest Minnesota. These natural areas and their associated benefits contribute to Windom's marketability and are a key factor in its growth.

## Health in the Environment

There is a common theme of health, livability, and active living in this plan. Health of the environment is part of the equation. If the environment is not healthy, it is more difficult to enhance individual health. Growth can negatively impact the natural environment and livability, but planned and orderly development will help to ensure a balance is maintained. Managing the community's growth in such a way as to preserve, protect, and restore its environment and natural resources offers numerous benefits including: increasing property values, supporting overall economic growth while providing low-cost storm water management and flood control, supplying a purification system for drinking and surface water, providing habitat and biological diversity, contributing to air purity, and creating a sense of place and identity for the community.

## Assets – Related to Natural Resources & Physical Features

Windom is fortunate to have multiple distinct physical features and natural resources in the community. Below are regional physical features and natural resource assets identified by the planning team and at the community meetings. These and other physical features are key components of the health, livability, and active living theme common throughout the plan. Community and economic growth need to be balanced in a way to support, protect, and restore the natural environment.

### *Cottonwood Lake*

Cottonwood Lake is a sand bottom lake in an area with predominately prairie mud bottom lakes. Cottonwood Lake is located in the northeast portion of Windom and offers convenient access for fishing, recreational water sports, and a sand swimming beach. Cottonwood Lake has approximately 3.47 miles of shoreline and the average depth is 8 feet. The maximum depth is 11 feet.

The majority of Cottonwood Lake is undeveloped. The US Fish and Wildlife owns 306 acres along the east and northeast sides of Cottonwood Lake. This area features unique prairie grassland with beautiful lake views.



### *Des Moines River*

The Des Moines River is a tributary of the Mississippi River that is approximately 525 miles long from its headwaters at Talcott Lake. “From Talcott Lake dam access to Windom, the Des Moines travels through flat farmland, and with few trees to interrupt the broad prairie land. From Windom to Kilen Woods State Park, the river valley is bounded by low hills and willow, green ash, slippery elm, and various grasses line the banks. The banks become higher near the park; the river flows between 100-200 foot bluffs covered with oak and basswood forest.”<sup>45</sup>

### *Buffalo Ridge*

The Buffalo Ridge is a sixty-mile expanse of rolling hills in Southwest Minnesota that stands 1,995 feet above sea level. Buffalo Ridge juts up from the open prairie and adds unique beauty to the prairie landscape. The Ridge runs through Lincoln County, Pipestone County, Murray County, Nobles County, and Rock County.

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<sup>45</sup> Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Accessed: 3/20/18. Available: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/watertrails/desmoinesriver/more.html>

Buffalo Ridge is roughly 15 minutes west of Slayton. The high altitude and average wind speed along the Ridge make it a great location for alternative energy production in the form of wind energy. The Ridge ends near the City of Worthington and Lake Okabena. The consistent wind speeds also translate into a premier location for wind sports.

### *Jeffers Petroglyphs*

“Amid the prairie grasses are islands of uncovered rock, where American Indian ancestors left carvings — petroglyphs — humans, deer, elk, buffalo, turtles, thunderbirds, atlatls, and arrows. They tell a story that spans more than 7,000 years.”<sup>46</sup>

**NR-Figure #2**

**Jeffers Petroglyphs Carvings**



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<sup>46</sup> Minnesota Historical Society. Accessed: 12/4/17. Available: <http://sites.mnhs.org/historic-sites/jeffers-petroglyphs>

<sup>47</sup> Indian Country Today. Accessed: 12/4/17. Available:

<https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/images/jpg/j/jeffers-petroglyphs-red-horn-black.jpg>

### *Open Prairie & Farm Land*

Southwest Minnesota is a mixture of open prairie, farm land, and dotted tree croppings (groves). This unique mixture of landscapes combined with prairie lakes creates a natural setting to be promoted. First time visitors to the Midwest often comment on how open and relaxing prairie and farm land can be.

### *Worthington Wind Surf Regatta – U.S. Windsurfing National Tour*

Wind is a unique natural feature. It is important to capitalize on unique natural features that draw people to the area. The Worthington Windsurfing Regatta is held annually on Lake Okabena in Worthington. Lake Okabena is located on the western side of Worthington and is a worldwide destination for windsurfing. The U.S. Windsurf National Championships were held on Lake Okabena multiple times and most recently in 2014.

The annual Worthington Windsurfing Regatta was founded in 1999 and is part of the U.S. Windsurfing National Racing Tour. In recent years the Worthington Windsurfing Regatta has grown to include a music festival, beer garden, and street food vendors. This is a national event located within 39 minutes of Windom.

### **NR-Figure #3**

### **Worthington Windsurf Regatta**



### **Physical Features**

#### **Topography**

Elevations in Windom vary from 1350 to 1420 feet above sea level. The community is situated on what is known as the Coteau des Prairies. The Coteau des Prairies is a plateau approximately 200 miles in length and 100 miles in width located in Eastern South Dakota, Southwestern Minnesota, and Northwestern Iowa. Most prominent in Windom are the terrace benches and bottom lands of the Des Moines River.

## Vegetation

Native prairie, wetlands, and river valleys were the predominant features in and around Windom before development and industrial scale agriculture occurred. There are numerous natural areas in and around Windom that do provide remnants of native prairie, wetlands, and river valleys. These areas are a mixture of public and private natural areas.

## Waterways

The Des Moines River and Perkins Creek are two important physical features which affect the land use development within the community. Both are considered barriers in that due to their location and flood plain configuration, restrictive measures in planning and zoning must be employed to control land use around them. They also serve to separate and define distinct neighborhoods or areas as well as provide recreational opportunities.

The Des Moines River enters city limits on the northwestern corner of the City and flows through Windom at a bed gradient of 2.03 feet per mile. The river covers four plus miles within city limits. The river serves to drain a basin nearly 20 miles wide by 50 miles long upstream from Windom or approximately 1,100 square miles.

Perkins Creek, a tributary of the Des Moines River, flows in a westerly direction through Windom and empties into the River about a mile north of the Highway 62 bridge. The creek's course through the City is nearly 1.2 miles long with a stream bed gradient of 9.5 feet per mile. The creek is a drainage feature for Warren Lake, Cottonwood Lake, and Clear Lake.

## Wetlands

Wetland areas are located along the Des Moines River, Perkins Creek, Cottonwood Lake, and lower lying property in and around Windom. The Department of Natural Resources has encouraged natural vegetation growth as a buffer zone along lakeshores, rivers, and creeks in the City of Windom. These buffer zones minimize erosion as well as provide habitat for wildlife and fish.

Wetlands are environmentally important as natural habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife. Wetlands also serve as water retention areas and are required in new developments in Windom. In addition, wetlands can also serve as environmental education centers, such as the property the school district maintains along Perkins Creek.

## Conservation

Physical features and natural resources impact the community's overall quality of life. It is important to strike a balance between development/economic productivity and conservation. Finding a sustainable balance is key to sustaining the quality of life in our community.

There are numerous local, state and federal organizations in and around Windom that provide support to City Staff including:

- Windom Tree Commission
  - In 2009, a Tree Commission was created to address concerns caused by infestations and pests including the Emerald Ash Borer. The Commission is assisted by the Street and Park

Superintendent and works with the Parks Department. The Commission is tasked with updating the City's standards for removing damaged or diseased trees, determining the standards for tree planting, identifying preferred species, and promoting the planting and/or replacement of trees throughout the community.

- Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
  - The SWCD mission is to “help maintain a better environment for future generations, to encourage the wise use of our top soil and water through programs and education.”<sup>48</sup> The Cottonwood SWCD Office is located in Windom and serves all of Cottonwood County.
- Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
  - The DNR operates a regional office in Windom. “The Windom Area Fisheries Office maintains influence over area fisheries resources that included 80 lakes totaling 35,304 acres, numerous warmwater stream/river miles and 2 coldwater streams managed for trout. The Windom Area Fisheries also has physical land properties that include numerous aquatic management areas (AMA), 3 state owned northern pike rearing ponds, 8-15 natural walleye rearing ponds, numerous rough fish barriers, and 1 state owned drainable walleye rearing pond.”<sup>49</sup>
- US Fish & Wildlife
  - The National Wildlife Refuge System, within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, manages a national network of lands and waters set aside to conserve America's fish, wildlife, and plants. The US Fish and Wildlife has a District Wetland Management Office within one mile of Windom that features a visitor center and paved and grass walking trails. The Windom Wetland Management District manages nearly 70 separate parcels of federally-owned land, called waterfowl production areas, within a 12-county area in Southern Minnesota. Together, the waterfowl production areas encompass more than 13,000 acres of land dedicated to wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation. There are 617.3 acres that are within a mile of Windom.<sup>50</sup>

There is also a strong economic interest in protecting and preserving the natural environment. Residents do not want to live in a contaminated environment. Residents in Southwest Minnesota value their opportunities to go out and enjoy the natural environment. This self-interest will drive conservation and strike a balance between human activity and natural systems.

### **Flood Plain & Development**

The City of Windom participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Windom's FEMA issued Floodplain Map is from 1989. This is an in-depth Floodplain Map, but it is not digitized. It is difficult to determine the exact dimensions of the Flood Fringe and Flood Way.

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<sup>48</sup> Cottonwood SWCD. Accessed: 12/4/17. Available: <http://www.cottonwoodswcd.org/>

<sup>49</sup> DNR. Windom Area Fisheries. Accessed : 12/4/17. Available: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/windom/index.html>

<sup>50</sup> US Fish & Wildlife Service. Windom Wetland Management District. Accessed: 12/4/17. Available: [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/windom\\_wmd/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/windom_wmd/)

Flooding has caused serious problems for numerous residences and businesses in Windom, as well as disrupting community activities and services. These problems include siltation, debris accumulation, inundated structures, and wet basements. Several factors influence the frequency and nature of flooding in the City. These factors include soils, topography, vegetation, existing land use within the watershed, and climate.

Man-made obstructions to the flow have impacted the extent of the flooding damage. Two bridges have been replaced along with removal of a dam on the Des Moines River. Numerous properties have been removed from the floodplain through Letters of Map Revision. The City of Windom has been requesting an updated digitized Floodplain Map.

The present level of development in the flood plain does not constitute a serious degree of encroachment. Notably it is moderately residential, public open spaces, and portions of the business district.

### 100-Year Floodplain

Windom has been damaged by several major and minor floods in the past century. Major floods in 2010, 1969, 1965, and 1953 caused significant property damage. Damage would have been greater in 1962 had it not been for the construction of emergency levees that prevented flooding of commercial and residential buildings near the heart of the city. The highest recorded flood was only of the magnitude of a 60-year flood and this occurred in April, 1969. Peak discharge recorded for that flood upstream of the TH 62 bridge was 14,500 feet per second (cfs); a 100-year flood would measure 18,900 cfs. The following map depicts the floodway of a 100-year flood as mapped by FEMA in 1989. Also depicted is the 500-year flood or the estimate of reasonable maximum flooding.

*The most up-to-date FEMA issued floodplain map for Windom is from 1989. Digitized flood maps are not available. FEMA issued paper maps are available in the Windom Planning and Zoning Office. There is a definite need for FEMA to update floodplain map for Windom. This is a regular request from the City.*

The 100-year floodplain of the Des Moines River within Windom varies from 146 to 1716 feet in width with the narrowest portions just upstream from the Union Pacific Railroad bridge, Highway 62 bridge, and the Highway 60/71 bridge. These three bridges are the choke points that narrow the river, increase velocity of the river, and increase the risk of erosion and flooding.

Perkins Creek is considerably smaller in size than the Des Moines River, but flooding is still a risk. Land use along the creek is primarily residential west of Highway 71 with a substantial amount of the area, including the School Environmental Center, being used as open space. There are five bridges or culverts through which the creek must flow.

### Flood Mitigation Projects

- Dam Removal
  - A dam constructed in 1885 was located in Island Park. The dam was a choke point that caused upstream flooding. The dam was replaced with rock ripples in 2010 after it became inoperable in the mid-2000's. The water began to erode around the dam.



The local assessment encompasses 15 different areas that include: Agriculture; Economic Development and Tourism; Education, Environment; Governance; Public Health; Housing; Open Space and Land Use; Planning, Zoning, Building, and Development; Population; Public Safety and Emergency Management; Recreation; Resource Use; and Transportation. The kickoff meeting focused on Agriculture, Environment, and Resource Use.

These initial discussions were intended to guide the Natural Resources and Physical Features Chapter. Assets related to Natural Resources and Physical Features were identified. These are listed above.

Topics to develop into projects were discussed, but specific action was not identified. Below is an outline of topics that could be developed into projects.

### Topics to Develop into Projects

- Pollinators
  - Incorporate native plants into new developments
  - Educational program regarding backyard pollinators
  - Require pollinator planting in land use codes
  - Allocate a percentage of the City's annual tree planting to Cherry Blossom trees and other pollinators.
- Rain Gardens
  - Add rain gardens around publicly-owned parking lots
  - Add rain gardens in Tegels Park to prevent runoff from entering Cottonwood Lake
  - Add rain gardens along the Des Moines River to slow runoff.
- Education
  - Utilize the electronic billboard by the liquor store for conservation-related messaging.
- Agricultural
  - Tokens for Farmer's Market
  - Add fresh produce to school backpack program
  - Employee Incentive Programs

### Treasuring Home Survey

The following is a summary of the City of Windom residents' responses to the Treasuring Home Survey regarding personal sustainability actions, community assets, concerns, and possible areas that individuals want to contribute to the sustainability effort.

### Personal Actions

Top sustainable practices of Windom respondents were Recycling and Purchasing Recycled Products, Water & Energy Conservation, and Using Water Wisely Outdoors. The actions with the lowest number of responses were Conducting a Home Energy Audit and Making Low-flow Upgrades Inside the Home which may reflect a lack of knowledge about inexpensive low-flow upgrades or the saving potential of an energy audit.

## Priority Areas

The top two focus areas of community sustainability that ranked as most important for the City of Windom by respondents were Health and Environment (fostering environmental awareness). Health was ranked as number one or number two by 42.47 percent of respondents and Environment was marked as number one or number two by 35.3 percent.

Lowest priority (i.e. low importance) areas for sustainability in Windom were Population (fostering a more equitable community) and Volunteerism & Civic Engagement averaging. This can indicate either that other areas are of higher sustainability need or may show a lack of awareness among respondents concerning the sustainability issues inherent in population dynamics and civic engagement.

## Actions Needed

The next section includes answers to the question, “What actions would you like to see your community take to address environmental concerns?” Top answers for this question were Protect Drinking Water Quality, Expand Youth Learning about Environment, and Promote Renewable Energy.

The actions receiving the lowest number of votes were to Increase Expand Shared Transportation Options, Promote Natural Heritage/Historic Tourism, and Conduct a Community-Wide Assessment of Natural Areas/Resources.

## Community Assets

The top two community amenities identified are the Parks (+ lakes/river/waterfront) and the Business District/Courthouse Square. The hospital and schools were also significant community assets.

## Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans

“The six principles that must be recognized in the plan were derived from a review of leading comprehensive plans by the APA Sustaining Places Task Force. As outlined in Sustaining Places: The Role of the Comprehensive Plan (Godschalk and Anderson 2012), the principles are the following:”<sup>51</sup>

1. Livable Built Environment
2. Harmony with Nature
3. Resilient Economy
4. Interwoven Equity
5. Healthy Community
6. Responsible Regionalism

Best practices in support of these principles range across a wide spectrum of plan statements, policies, and actions. Collectively they provide the substantive direction of the comprehensive plan.

### Best Practices – Harmony with Nature

- Restore, connect, and protect natural habitats and sensitive lands.
- Plan for the provision and protection of green infrastructure.

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<sup>51</sup> American Planning Association. Sustaining Places: Best Practices For Comprehensive Plans. Appendix A.

- Encourage development that respects natural topography.
- Comply with state and local air quality standards.
- Provide for renewable energy use.
- Provide for solid waste reduction.
- Encourage water conservation and plan for a lasting water supply.
- Protect and manage streams, watersheds, and floodplains.

### **Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Natural Resources & Physical Features**

Below is the overarching goal related to the natural resources and physical features in and around the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve this goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the natural resources and physical features goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community- based approach is used.

Board strategies were also included without objectives. These broad strategies are guiding principles in regards to natural resources and physical features.

*Goal:* It is the goal of the City of Windom to recognize the varied physical features of the community and maintain/develop appropriate uses suited to these features.

<i>FEMA Floodplain Mapping</i>	<i>Dev. Dept.</i>	<i>High Priority</i>
<i>Strategy:</i>	Encourage the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to update the flood plain map for Windom and include a plat map overlay.	

*Objective:* A digitized floodplain map for Windom.

*Existing Conditions:*

The City of Windom participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Windom does have an in-depth Floodplain Map according to FEMA, however the current map is from 1989. The map is not digitized, so it is difficult to determine the exact dimensions of the Flood Fringe and Flood Way.

An updated floodplain map is needed to allow community members to accurately assess their risk of flooding. Flood insurance is a significant cost for a number of community members in Windom. City staff has requested an updated map from FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers numerous times. The need for a floodplain map update was also stressed when the dam was removed in Windom.

In 2017, FEMA notified the City concerning an upcoming floodplain mapping project for Cottonwood County. The project was to develop detailed floodplain maps for areas within Cottonwood County that do not have a detailed map. Windom’s Floodplain Map is a detailed map, so Windom was not included

in the project. As part of this project, new FEMA floodplain data will be collected for all of Cottonwood County.

In 2017-18, the City is working with SEH Engineering to review the revised FEMA floodplain data for Windom. The scope of work will include the following: identify anticipated floodplain changes; technical review of FEMA-provided draft floodplain data; facilitate Flood Risk Review preparation meeting for the City and County to identify all items to be discussed during the FEMA Flood Risk Review meeting; technical review of FEMA-provided final floodplain data.

**Deliverables:**

- Map of anticipated map changes for the City of Windom.
- List of parcels within the City of Windom which are expected to be removed from or added to the 100-year floodplain.

*Pollinators*

Dev. Dept.

Medium

*Priority*

**Strategy:** Encourage the planting of pollinators in Windom.

**Objective:** Increase habitat for bees and other pollinators in Windom.

Implement a minimum of one pollinator project a year in Windom.

*Existing Conditions:*

“Pollination is not just fascinating natural history. It is an essential ecological function. Without pollinators, the human race and all of Earth’s terrestrial ecosystems would not survive. Over 80 percent of the world’s flowering plants require a pollinator to reproduce. Animals that assist plants in their reproduction as pollinators include species of bats, butterflies, moths, flies, birds, beetles, ants, and bees.”<sup>52</sup>

During the Audubon International visit, the need for pollinators was discussed with US Fish and Wildlife and DNR. Windom currently has 125 acres of developed park space. There are an additional 63.7 acres of undeveloped park space. Other City departments also own property in Windom, so there are numerous locations where pollinator gardens could be established.

In 2017, the City worked with the Cottonwood County Soil and Conservation District (SWCD) to apply for a pollinator grant to plant pollinators on 2.8 acres of the Cemstone property south of Cottonwood Lake and east of the Windom Recreation Area. The pollinator grant was awarded to the City in 2018. Planting will take place in Spring of 2018.

*Rain Gardens & Vegetative Buffer Zones*

Park & Rec. & Dev. Dept.

Medium Priority

**Strategy:** Decrease runoff into Cottonwood Lake, Des Moines River, and Perkins Creek in Windom.

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<sup>52</sup> US Forest Service. The Simple Truth: We Can’t Live Without Them. Accessed: 3/29/18. Available: <https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/simpletruthbrochure.pdf>

*Objective:* Promote rain gardens as vegetative buffer zones on City property in Windom.

Add an earth berm and rain gardens to Tegels Parks by Cottonwood Lake.

*Existing Conditions:*

Runoff can result in sediment and pollutants entering lakes and natural waterways. During the Audubon International visit, runoff into Cottonwood Lake was specifically discussed. The majority of the land around Cottonwood Lake is owned by US Fish and Wildlife, so there is a natural grass buffer. The residential properties around Cottonwood Lake have flatter lawns and grass buffers between impervious surfaces and the lake. The industrial business, Cemstone, has an earth berm, trees, and unpaved surface closer to the lake that act as a buffer.

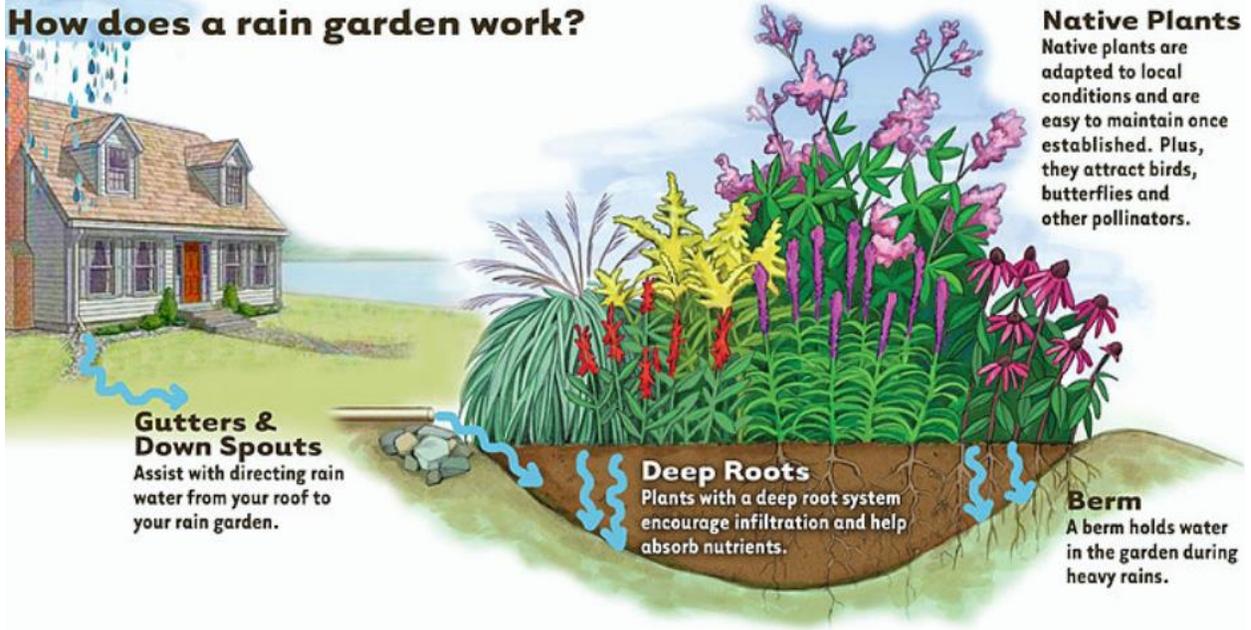
Tegels Park does not have an effective buffer. A significant portion of Tegels Park is on a hill or an incline, so less water is absorbed by the ground. A large paved parking area and street also generate runoff that reaches the lake.

To increase the water quality of Cottonwood Lake, construction of an earth berm and rain gardens in Tegels Park, adjacent to Cottonwood Lake, was suggested at the time of the Audubon visit. This would slow runoff and allow for more water to be naturally absorbed into the ground. This is a concept that needs to be researched in more detail.

There is approximately 1,300 feet of shoreline in Tegels Park. The average distance between the paved park street and the lake is 25 feet. There is enough room to add an earth berm and a minimum of seven rain gardens between impervious surfaces and the lake. The earth berms would direct water to the rain gardens to encourage natural water absorption and to help reduce the volume of sediments and pollutants entering the lake.

This goal should be integrated into the individual Park Plan for Tegels Park.

### How does a rain garden work?



NR-Figure #6

Potential Rain Garden Locations – Tegels Park



Broad Strategies & Guiding Principles – Natural Resources & Physical Features

- It is the goal of the City of Windom to recognize the varied physical features of the community and maintain/develop appropriate uses suited to these features.
- Enhance awareness of the physical features particular to Windom and how they relate to land usage.
- Channel development to areas that are better suited (with regard to physical features) for the type of development desired.
- Discourage development in areas subject to repeated flooding.

- Encourage proper soils management to decrease erosion.
  - Continue to work with other agencies to promote planting and replanting of approved species of trees in appropriate areas.
  - Promote public education concerning termites, how to respond to termite damage, and methods for control of termites.
  - Implement the provisions of the water level management plan for Cottonwood and Warren Lakes.
  - Continue to participate with Cottonwood County and the Department of Natural Resources concerning education, needs assessment, and development of a watershed plan for the Des Moines River.
  - Research natural and infrastructure options to mitigate future flood events including, but not limited to, possible berms in areas adjacent to waterways and storm water system upgrades in areas that are prone to street flooding.
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# CHAPTER 8: Community Facilities

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## Introduction

Community facilities have traditionally been defined as public and semi-public structures and or services which provide for the community's wellbeing. These facilities help create a desirable environment for the overall functioning of a city. Community facilities include the social, religious, recreational, and governmental aspects of a community. Despite their importance, they are often overlooked or underestimated in marketing the community.

In rural communities, community members need to work together to increase and maintain local amenities. Community members should reach out to service organizations, schools, Chambers of Commerce, city staff, and other organizations to implement strategies that improve local amenities and livability for community members. Livability can vary from organizing adult recreation opportunities to expanding youth art education programs. In rural communities, it takes everyone working together and volunteerism to make communitywide events happen.

These community events are part of creating a livable and active community. This chapter will profile various community facilities and will help community members identify issues and potential goals for improving community facilities, increasing livability, and marketing everything the community has to offer.

## Local Amenities

### *Community Center*

The Windom Community Center is located at 1750 Cottonwood Lake Drive and was officially opened in November, 1999. The senior citizen center is housed in one area and the Community Center also has a full kitchen, dining area, a meeting room, and an office. There is also a large multi-purpose room that is used for wedding receptions, anniversary and graduation receptions, dances, banquets, Christmas parties, craft shows, gun shows, regional meetings, training seminars, concerts, athletic and intramural activities, bloodmobile visits, and youth activities. The large multi-purpose room can seat 800 plus people. There is an outside covered patio that is also available for use.

The Community Center is owned and operated by the City.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/community-center-2/](http://www.windom-mn.com/community-center-2/)

**CF-Figure #1**

**Community Center**



*Windom Arena*

The Windom Arena is a year-round multipurpose recreation arena. The arena features two air-conditioned racquetball courts, wallyball (a version of volleyball), two sheets of ice in the winter, horse/livestock show arena in the summer, an archery range, and a community room. During the Cottonwood County Fair, the arena is used as the fair office, for shows, and other events. Programs at the arena include: open skating, adult hockey league, figure skating lessons, archery, wallyball leagues, racquetball leagues, aerobics, baseball/golf hitting cages, and horse/livestock shows during the summer.

The Windom Arena is located on the fairgrounds (1480 8th Avenue). The Arena is owned and operated by the City with property being leased from the Cottonwood County Ag Society.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-arena](http://www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-arena)

**CF-Figure #2**

**Windom Arena**



*Windom Pool*

The Windom swimming pool is located in Island Park and is a destination in the summer with over 13,000 visits annually. The pool and wading pool hold about 320,000 gallons of water and have a combined occupancy of approximately 325 people. The pool features open swimming, adult swim, family swim, water aerobics, American Red Cross swimming lessons, lap swimming, and pool parties. The pool is owned and operated by the City.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/parks-and-recreation/recreation-department/swimming-pool/](http://www.windom-mn.com/parks-and-recreation/recreation-department/swimming-pool/)

## *BARC*

The Business, Arts and Recreation Center (BARC) is a community-minded space with a mission to develop and provide a positive environment for arts, education, recreation and business. Through collaboration with numerous agencies and entities, BARC has become an essential and progressive part of the Southwest Minnesota business community. By continuing to expand its services, BARC is not only recognized as a great place for concerts, events, theatre, seminars, recreation and sports events, but also for arts and education. BARC is conveniently located in downtown Windom at 1012 5th Avenue in the former Windom High School.

BARC has a variety of choice spaces, resources and technology to accommodate all needs. BARC features a performing arts auditorium with state-of-the-art sound and lighting. The gymnasium is available in full or half-size rentals for sports, recreation, banquets, weddings, receptions, meetings, auctions or other special events. The library, classrooms and conference room may be rented for meetings, classes, parties, reunions and more.

### **CF-Figure #3**

### **BARC**

- Over 76,000 square feet of viable space
- Technology & Conference Rooms
- Gymnasium with Bleachers
- 650-Seat Performing Arts Auditorium
- Long-Term Leasing
- Short-Term Rental
- Library and Multi-Purpose Rooms



For more information, visit: [www.barcwindom.com](http://www.barcwindom.com)

## *Windom Public Library*

The Windom Public Library is conveniently located on the Square in the downtown business district. The library is located in the historic 1st National Banking building. The library is a free, safe and friendly environment. The library offers Internet access, free Wi-Fi, audio books, movies, magazines, bike locks, books, e-books and e-audio books. Reading programs are offered to children and adults. Other services the library provides are Adult Coloring, "Let's Play Legos", a puzzle exchange, story times, proctoring exams, printing and scanning documents. The library also offers events and entertainers throughout the year.

The library is a member of the Plum Creek Library System, which is a nine-county cooperative which serves 26 libraries, including some school libraries. This cooperative allows access to share materials and resources offered through the member libraries.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-public-library/](http://www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-public-library/)

**CF-Figure #4**

**Windom Public Library**



*Windom Municipal Airport*

The Windom Municipal Airport contains a federally-approved all-weather lighting system, a 75' x 3,600' paved runway, a heated administration building, Unicom Radio System, windsock, the navigational aids "Reils" (runway and identification lights) on both ends of the runway and "Odals" (sequenced strobe lights) on the south end. A new concrete runway and taxi system were completed in 2010. A new large aircraft hangar was constructed in 2013. There are a total of 4 onsite hangars with 17 bays.

Future plans include installation of a crosswind runway of 3,800 feet in length to complement the lighted north-south runway.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-municipal-airport/](http://www.windom-mn.com/city-facilities/windom-municipal-airport/)

**CF-Figure #5**

**Windom Municipal Airport**



**Schools**

**Windom School District #117**

**Student Population**

- 1094 Students enrolled in Preschool through Grade 12 (2017)

- 7.7% growth since 2005
- 17-24% growth expected by 2025
- 27% minority population

#### Educational Offerings

- 4-Star Parent Aware Preschool program and Early Childhood programming
- K-12 Positive Behaving Intervention and Supports (PBIS), Net Smartz (internet safety), Antibullying instruction
- Electives in Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), Industrial Technology, Art, Agricultural Education and Business/Computers
- 40 college credits taught in-house by our teachers through SMSU and Mankato State University
- One-to-One iPads Program for students
- After-School Program for school-age children
- Adult community education programming

#### Student Opportunities

- Athletic Activities include football, volleyball, cross country, basketball, gymnastics, wrestling, cheerleading, track, baseball, softball and golf
- Fine Arts Activities include band, jazz band, choir, swing choir, pop group, speech, fall musical and winter musical
- Co-curricular programming in robotics and FFA
- Community Education and Recreation Programs for youth in basketball, flag football, softball, baseball, volleyball and soccer.

#### Employees

- 176 full and part-time employees
- Numerous volunteers at all grade levels

For more information, visit: [www.windom.k12.mn.us](http://www.windom.k12.mn.us)

### *Post – Secondary*

#### Minnesota West Community and Technical College (Post-Secondary)

Minnesota West Community and Technical College (MNWest) offers a wide variety of two-year degrees and certificate programs designed to give you the practical skills necessary to kickstart your career.

MNWest also offers a wide variety of liberal arts and science degrees that are transferable to schools within the Minnesota State system as well as other four-year institutions. Campuses are conveniently

located in five Southwest Minnesota communities including: Jackson (20 minutes), Worthington (35 minutes), Canby, Granite Falls, and Pipestone. MNWest's Mission: To help students develop the skills and education they will need as their individual futures begin to take shape; to help them Learn with Purpose.

For more information, visit: [www.mnwest.edu/](http://www.mnwest.edu/)

### *Preschools/ Early Childhood Development Centers*

There are three preschools/early childhood development centers in Windom. Refer to descriptions below.

#### **Busy Bee Preschool – Windom**

Busy Bee Preschool provides a wholesome environment of play and creative activity for preschool aged children. Busy Bee strives to stimulate interest in the community, sciences, academics, music, art, literature and socialization, as well as to develop a positive attitude toward oneself, classmates, teachers and others. The primary purpose of Busy Bee Preschool is to socialize and to prepare for further education.

For more information, visit: [www.childcarecenter.us/minnesota/56101\\_childcare](http://www.childcarecenter.us/minnesota/56101_childcare)

#### **ECFE/Bridges Preschool – Windom**

Windom Public Schools offers preschool through ECFE/Bridges. ECFE's mission is to provide families with resources and support in parenting and family relationships. Bridge's mission is to provide education and life experience learning for preschool-aged children.

For more information, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ECFEBridges-Preschool-Windom-135978303090274>

#### **Head Start – Windom**

Head Start is a federally-funded, high quality, family-focused preschool program that promotes the growth and development of children ages 3 to 5. To participate, children must be at least 3 years of age on or before September 1 of the current year and not yet eligible for kindergarten. Eligibility for Head Start is based on family income with priority given to families whose income is at or below the federal poverty level.

For more information, visit:

[www.childcarecenter.us/provider\\_detail/western\\_community\\_action\\_head\\_start\\_windom\\_mn](http://www.childcarecenter.us/provider_detail/western_community_action_head_start_windom_mn)

### **Healthcare Related Facilities**

#### **Windom Area Health**

Windom Area Hospital is an 18-bed, 82,000 square foot Critical Access Hospital. The hospital offers 24-hour comprehensive general medical, surgical, obstetrical and emergency healthcare services. Windom Area Hospital is owned by the City of Windom and is currently being managed by Sanford Health.

The Windom Area Hospital is located at 2150 Hospital Drive (just west of the north junction of Highways 60 and 71). The current hospital was built in 1975. The addition of the attached clinic building was completed in 1982. A Wellness Center was added in 1999 and expanded again in 2001. In 2004, a new addition that contains 11 patient rooms, a nursery, and 3 labor-delivery rooms was completed. In 2015, an \$11 million expansion to the building was completed that included a new surgery department, new outreach clinic, and new entrance and lobby.

*Vision:*

“Improving health and customer experience through individualized quality care, visionary leadership, and progressive teamwork.”

For more information, visit: [www.windomareahospital.com](http://www.windomareahospital.com)

#### Avera Medical Group – Windom

Avera Medical Group Windom providing state-of-the-art medical care right here in Windom. Avera works to improve the health and quality of life of the people in and around Windom, MN. Through AveraHealth’s network of providers, they offer access to the region’s largest and most comprehensive health care network, for additional depth, expertise and cost savings.

For more information, visit: <https://www.avera.org/locations/profile/avera-medical-group-windom/>

#### Sanford Health Windom Clinic

Sanford Health Windom Clinic is a Sanford Health Clinic. Sanford Health is dedicated to the work of health and healing. They show that commitment by delivering the highest quality of care to the communities they serve. They are leaders in health care and strive to provide patients across the region with convenient access to expert medical care, leading-edge technologies and world-class facilities.

For more information, visit: [www.sanfordhealth.org/locations/sanford-health-windom-clinic](http://www.sanfordhealth.org/locations/sanford-health-windom-clinic)

#### Nursing Homes & Assisted Living

##### Good Samaritan Society – Windom

The Good Samaritan Society-Windom opened in 1958 as a small nursing home. The facility today has grown to serve over 130 clients on its 26-acre continuum of care campus. Their service options include:

- Sogge Memorial, 78-bed skilled care building, offers an 8-bed rehab unit, an 18-bed memory care unit, in-patient and out-patient therapy, and long-term care living.
- Mikkelsen Manor offers 24 units of assisted living services, including 3 daily meals, housekeeping, laundry, and a’ la carte medication, nursing, and home care services.
- Remick Ridge Estates offers 28 independent living 1 and 2-bedroom apartments to those 55 and older. Services include housekeeping, laundry and 1 daily meal.
- Home Care Services of SW Minnesota is a Medicare-licensed home care agency serving 8 counties in SW MN.

- Future additions may include single-family cottages with access to services and additional assistant living units.

You can learn more about their services by visiting [www.good-sam.com/locations/windom](http://www.good-sam.com/locations/windom)

## Government Facilities

### *City Hall*

City Hall is located at 444 9th Street and has housed the City Administrator's Office and other city offices since the early 1970's. In 1985, the library was moved from City Hall to 904 4th Avenue (the former "1st National Bank Building"). The "library" space was then converted into offices for the Economic Development Authority, Building & Zoning Department, and the Council Chambers. The building also includes garage space that formerly housed equipment for the fire and ambulance departments and is currently used for storage by several City Departments.

The Windom City Council meets the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com](http://www.windom-mn.com)

### *Economic Development Authority of Windom*

The Economic Development Authority of Windom is an entity of the City. The EDA oversees economic development activities for the City. The EDA's current properties vary from industrial property to commercial property to housing.

**North Windom Industrial Park:** The North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP) is an 80-acre light industrial park located on US Highway 71 one and a quarter miles north of Windom. Phase I of the Park consists of 12 lots ranging in size from 2.28 to 7.52 acres. Four lots are currently available for development in Phase I. NWIP Phase II includes an additional 80 acres available for subdividing and developing. The NWIP is certified Shovel-Ready and Developer Build-to-Suit/Lease-Back opportunities are available.

For more information visit: <https://www.windom-mn.com/eda/available-properties/north-windom-industrial-park>

**River Bend Center Phase II:** A three plus acre lot along MN Highway 60/US Highway 71 by the intersection with MN Highway 62. The street frontage is 850' plus and the buildable area is over an acre.

For more information visit: [http://www.windom-mn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/River-Bend-Center-Lot\\_Marketing-Handout-with-Strip-Mall.pdf](http://www.windom-mn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/River-Bend-Center-Lot_Marketing-Handout-with-Strip-Mall.pdf)

**River Bluff Townhomes:** The River Bluff Townhomes are owned by the Windom EDA and operated by Van Binsbergen & Associates. The property features 12 units that consist of two and three bedroom apartments. There are income guidelines for the rental of these units.

For more information visit: <http://www.vanblc.com/property/river-bluff-townhomes>

**EDA Spec Building:** The EDA Spec Building is currently being leased. The property is for sale. The 28,000 square foot EDA Spec Building is designed to house manufacturing, technology, R&D, office suites, and/or warehousing. The building and property covers 10 acres.

#### *Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Windom*

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority is an entity of the City. Funding is obtained through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The HRA owns 2 income-based apartment complexes in Windom.

**Riverview Apartments:** This complex is located at 605 10th Street and was completed in 1972. In 2003, 2 units were combined to make 1 specially-designed handicapped unit. The building consists of 60 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit that is designated as the “caretaker unit”. One unit is used as a guest unit for residents’ visitors. The complex provides low-income housing for all ages.

**Hillside Manor:** This complex is located at 177 Tenth Street and was completed in 1984. The building consists of 30 one-bedroom units. The complex provides low-income housing for elderly, handicapped and disabled individuals.

For more information visit: [www.windom-mn.com/housing-and-redevelopment-authority](http://www.windom-mn.com/housing-and-redevelopment-authority)

#### *Windom Police Department*

The Windom Police Department is located at 902 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue along with the Cottonwood County Sherriff’s Office. The Windom Police Department is staffed by 9 full-time police officers and a records clerk. The police department is responsible for enforcing all state statutes and city ordinances as well as responding to all emergency calls 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

#### *Windom Fire Department*

The Windom Fire Department is a volunteer fire department composed of approximately 30 members who are all Certified in Fire Fighter 1 and 2 and provide 24-hour protection. The Fire Department’s volunteer members meet twice each month for meetings and additional training opportunities. These members keep up-to-date on many firefighting techniques, Technical Rescue, Ice Water Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, High Angle Rescue, and Auto Extrication by attending various State and Locally- sponsored schools. The Department responds to from 30 to 90 fire calls a year. The calls are 50% rural and 50% city. The governing body consists of a Fire Chief, Asst. Fire Chief, Training Officer and Equipment Officer.

A new Emergency Service Facility was built in 2017 and consolidated both the Windom Fire Department and Ambulance Service under one roof that located at 938 5th Avenue in Windom. The Emergency Services Facility houses 3 Ambulances, 1- First Response Truck, 2- Engines, 1 – Heavy Duty Rescue Truck, 2- Water Tender Trucks, 1- Wildland Pickup, 1 – Six Wheeler, 1- Emergency Light Trailer, 1 – Rescue Boat, and 1 Technical Rescue Trailer. The Windom Fire Department provides fire protection for 11 area Townships which cover approximately 190 sections and also provides protection to the Cities of Bingham Lake and Wilder. The population of the fire district is approximately 6,800+ people.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/fire-department](http://www.windom-mn.com/fire-department)

### *Windom Ambulance Service*

The Windom Ambulance service provides 24/7 Basic Life Support care to the sick and injured in and around Windom. The Windom Ambulance Service responded to 884 calls in 2017 and over 900 calls in 2018 serving an area of approximately 232 square miles. The majority of the calls were to transfer patients to Windom Area Hospital. The ambulance service also transfers a number of patients from Windom Area Hospital and Sanford Jackson Medical Center to Sanford Medical Center in Sioux Falls along with Avera McKennan and VA hospital.

For more information visit: [www.windom-mn.com/ambulance](http://www.windom-mn.com/ambulance)

### *Public Works*

Public Works facilities in Windom include: Street Department, Electrical Department, Water/Wastewater Department, and Telecommunications.

**Windom Street Department:** The Street Department performs all of the basic street maintenance, including snow removal, pothole repair, boulevard tree maintenance, storm sewer maintenance, street sign maintenance, and street cleaning services. The staff also maintains the city's parks including mowing and maintenance of park facilities. They also assist other City departments throughout the year. Our large street construction projects are handled by outside firms. City staff takes extreme pride in keeping the city clean and beautiful throughout the seasons. The department is located at 80 County Road 26. For additional information regarding streets, refer to the Transportation and Active Living Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/streets-department](http://www.windom-mn.com/streets-department)

**Electric Department:** The Windom Electrical Department is responsible for maintaining the city electrical grid. The City currently purchases power from Western Area Power Agency and Central Minnesota Power Agency as well as from other resources. The City also owns and maintains a municipal generation (peaking) power plant.

The power plant was built in 1936 as a coal-powered plant and a gas generator. The plant has seen multiple generation upgrades. As of 1999, the power plant relies on large caterpillar generators. The power plant is the first municipal building in the United States to be listed in the Art Deco Directory. The front of the building contains three stone sculptured panels. The first two, entitled "Light" and "Energy", were placed there at the time of construction of the building in 1936. (The sculptor is unknown.) Later, an addition was built and a matching panel, entitled "Electricity", was sculpted by Don Gregory of Gustavus Adolphus College. The Power Plant is located at 1105 1st Avenue.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/electrical-department](http://www.windom-mn.com/electrical-department)

**Water Treatment Plant:** The Windom Water Department is responsible for maintaining the Water Treatment Plant. The treatment plant is located in the Carl Schneider Business Park at 10 16th Street in Windom. The treatment plant supplies water to the City of Windom and also to the areas around the cities of Windom and Bingham Lake. The City of Windom also provides a portion of the water that flows

to Red Rock Rural Water System and POET Biorefining in Bingham Lake. The two water towers were rehabilitated in 2017, and the water plant filters were renovated in 2018. An updated facility is currently under construction at a cost of \$18.9 million. This plant will be completed in December 2020 and will meet the City's needs for the foreseeable future. For additional information regarding the Water Treatment Plant, refer to the Infrastructure Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/utility-services/waterwastewater](http://www.windom-mn.com/utility-services/waterwastewater)

**Wastewater Treatment Facility:** The Windom Wastewater Department is responsible for maintenance and operation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, lift stations, and other wastewater infrastructure. The Windom Wastewater Treatment Facility is located at 400 South Drake Avenue in Windom. The facility also provides sewer services to the City of Bingham Lake and Fish Lake. For additional information regarding the Wastewater Treatment Facilities, refer to the Infrastructure Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

For more information, visit: [www.windom-mn.com/utility-services/waterwastewater](http://www.windom-mn.com/utility-services/waterwastewater)

**Windomnet:** In 2005, the City of Windom finished construction of a \$10 million telecommunications system. Windomnet was the first rural Minnesota city to build a municipal telecommunications system and is one of few currently to operate such a system. The state-of-the-art fiber optic telecommunications system provides fiber to the premise (home or business). The system can deliver 1 gigabit per second of high speed digital information. The system was upgraded in 2017-18 to facilitate higher speeds.

Fiber to your home or business is an amenity offered by Windomnet. High speed internet allows businesses to compete internationally and community members to enjoy fast streaming and connectivity at home. Windomnet is the center for a "fiber-to-the-premise" network that provides data, telephony, video and Internet for businesses and residences throughout Windom.

For more information, visit: [www.windomnet.com](http://www.windomnet.com)

**CF-Figure #6**

**Windomnet**



*Cottonwood County Government*

Cottonwood County was organized on July 29, 1870. Windom is the County Seat for Cottonwood County and the site of a number of county buildings and services. The Board of Commissioners meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Courthouse.

For more information, visit: [www.co.cottonwood.mn.us](http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us)

**Cottonwood County Courthouse:** The Courthouse was constructed in 1904 at 900 Third Avenue on the Courthouse Square. The Courthouse is listed in the National Historic Register. Among its many features are Corinthian-style marble columns, architectural details around windows, interior decorations, and a 12-foot, gold-plated statue of the Greek goddess of justice that stands atop the Courthouse dome. There are four murals in the rotunda which represent government, justice, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion. The corner emblems of the dome are entitled history, government, art and science. There are 27 employees staffing the Courthouse.

The following offices are located in the Courthouse: County Assessor, County Auditor/Treasurer, Court Administration, Human Resources/County Coordinator, and County Recorder.

**Cottonwood County Law Enforcement Center:** The Law Enforcement Center is located at 902 5th Avenue. The center houses the Cottonwood County Sheriff's Office and the City of Windom Police Department. There are 4 cell blocks and a work release dorm that can house 21 inmates (male and female). The Law Enforcement Center is connected to the State of Minnesota's mainframe computer, so the 911 Emergency System is based in the Law Enforcement Center.

For more information, visit: [www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/sheriff](http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/sheriff)

**Cottonwood County Highway Department:** The Highway Department is responsible for providing safe roads for the citizens of Cottonwood County. The department is based out of Windom at 1355 9th Avenue. Trucks, graders, and front loaders are stored in this building.

There are also 3 outshops that support the highway department. These outshops are located in Storden, Jeffers, and Mt. Lake.

For more information, visit: [www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/highway](http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/highway)

**Cottonwood County Historical Society:** The building housing the historical society exhibits and facilities is located at 812 4th Avenue. In addition to historical exhibits, the facility includes an art gallery that displays works from area artists. The featured art exhibits are changed approximately three times a year. The building also offers meeting rooms and a catering kitchen that are available for rent. Services in the Research Library include newspapers and census records on microfilm, plat books, local history books, family files, tax records on the computer, and records of rural school students.

For more information, visit: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mncotton/cchs.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mncotton/cchs.htm)

**Cottonwood County Recycling:** The Recycling Center is located at the Cottonwood County Fairgrounds. The South commercial building is the drop-off site and has scheduled hours of operation. There are also 24-hour recycling sheds in Bingham Lake, north of Jeffers, Comfrey, Storden, Delft, Talcot Lake, Jeffers, Westbrook, and Mountain Lake. Drop-offs may also be made by appointment.

For more information, visit: [www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/landfill-2](http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/landfill-2)

**Cottonwood County Landfill:** The landfill is located on County Road 22, between County Roads 13 and 4, east of the gun club. The landfill accepts garbage/junk, appliances, tires, demolition materials, brush, and hazardous waste. These materials must be in separate loads and are charged pursuant to a fee schedule. The landfill is open specific hours on weekdays and also on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month.

For more information, visit: [www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/landfill](http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/landfill)

## **Regional Offices**

### *MnDOT Area Headquarters – District 7*

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) District 7, based out of Mankato, has an Area Headquarters located in Windom. The Area Headquarters is located at 180 County Road 26. The site serves as shops, storage, and offices for MnDOT staff. Office, inventory and heavy equipment mechanics staff are also housed in the building and support the field operations staff.

For more information, visit: [www.dot.state.mn.us/d7](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d7)

### *DNR Area Office – Windom*

The DNR office is located at 175 County Road 26 (east side of Windom) and was completed in June, 2001 and renovated in 2018. The office houses DNR Waters, DNR Wildlife, DNR Ecological Services – Prairie Specialist, DNR Trails and Waterways and DNR Fisheries. The Minnesota Conservation Corps is housed in the facility as is storage for DNR Enforcement.

For more information, visit: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/windom/index.html>

### *US Fish & Wildlife District Headquarters – Windom*

US Fish & Wildlife District Headquarters is located just east of Windom at 49663 County Road 17. The Windom Wetland Management District is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and operates in 12 Southwest Minnesota counties. Approximately 70 Waterfowl Production Areas, totaling approximately 12,000+ acres, are managed for wildlife with an emphasis on waterfowl production. Most of these units are open to hunting according to state seasons.

The Windom Wetlands Management District was established on January 1, 1990, and includes the Wolf Lake Nature Area and the Wings on the Prairie Discovery Center. The Wings on the Prairie Discovery Center is unique for US Fish & Wildlife and features a visitor center, nature trail for exploring, wildlife observation platforms, interpretive signs, and hands-on displays.

For more information, visit: [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/windom\\_wmd](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/windom_wmd)

## **Goal, Strategies & Objectives – Community Facilities**

Below is the overarching goal related to Community Facilities in and around the City of Windom with specific strategies and objectives to achieve this goal. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. The strategies and objectives in this chapter were ranked by the

Windom City Council. The ranking was based on a three-point scale (High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority). Refer to the Description of Goals and Strategy Rankings in the Planning Process Chapter for more information. The implementation of the Community Facilities goal, strategies, and objectives will be more effective if a community-based approach is used.

*Goal:* It is the goal of the City of Windom to provide quality community facilities.

*Airport Hangar Space* *Airport* *Medium Priority*  
*Strategy:* Increase hanger space at the Windom Municipal Airport to accommodate additional aircraft and possibly a sprayer business.

*Objective:* Complete 20-Year Airport Master Plan.

Maintain communication with businesses and private individuals interested in hangar space.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Federal Aviation Administration requires a 20-Year Master Plan before major maintenance or new infrastructure projects can be undertaken. The City of Windom is currently in the process of updating the Airport Master Plan. Input from businesses, individuals, emergency medical personnel, and community members will be integrated in the development of the Airport Master Plan.

The Windom Airport currently has 16 hangars for small aircraft and one larger hangar. All hangars are filled and a waiting list of pilots is annually updated. On the approved Airport Layout Plan (ALP) there are two small hangar spaces that may be completed as an “add-on” to the two newer, small hangar buildings scheduled for construction in 2019. . The ALP also shows spaces for several other hangar buildings both large and small; however, the City must complete an FAA required 20-year Master Plan before these spaces can be constructed.

The Master Plan is scheduled to be completed in 2019 pending FAA approval. Providing adequate hangar space for businesses, residential and emergency users is key to the continuing success of the airport. Inability to quickly construct hangars caused a business to locate away from Windom. The City Council has discussed the possibility of allowing privately-constructed hangars on Airport property which may be a future option; however this is also subject to the Master Plan.

*Pool Research Committee* *Park & Rec* *High Priority*  
*Strategy:* Encourage continued maintenance and restoration of public and semi-public structures in the Windom area.

*Objective:* Continue planning with the Friends of the Windom Pool Group.

Research topics for discussion at the Friends of the Windom Pool meetings.

- Replacement Options
  - Top 5 locations for a new pool

- Estimated Budget for various locations
- Remodel Existing Pool
  - Possible remodel options
  - Cost savings while adding new amenities: splash pad, zero entry, new bath houses, etc.
- Tegels Park Remodel
  - Splash Pad plus an annual investment of \$50,000 - \$75,000 in amenities (slide, kayaks, paddle boards, lily pads, water quality improvements, etc.)

Administer a more comprehensive community survey regarding options for the pool. The survey needs to include the following:

- Top five possible options
- Background information regarding the top five options
- Costs associated with the top five options (building costs and longer term transfer from the City General Fund).

Bring recommendations from the Friends of the Windom Pool Group to the Park and Recreation Commission and the City Council.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Friends of the Windom Pool Group organized in 2017 to research options regarding the Windom Pool that was constructed in 1965. The pool is in need of repair or replacement.

Two pool studies have been developed that outline the needs of the existing pool. The 2016 Pool Feasibility Study completed by USAquatics is the more comprehensive of the two studies. The study identified a number of issues with the pool and some options for reconstruction, renovation, and repurposing the area and closing the pool.

A plan is needed before potentially large expenditures are pursued. Community members and decision makers need to weigh various options. Some options have been researched by City Staff, but additional research is needed. Additional community input is also needed before a pool project can move forward.

A community survey was administered in 2015 and in 2017 regarding aspects of the pool. Past surveys have not considered all options. A more comprehensive survey is needed to provide community members with information regarding the top five possible options with background information and associated costs.

The Friends of the Windom Pool Group is leading the planning process for the pool. This is a multiple year planning process. Community input and funding will guide the direction the community takes regarding the Windom Pool.

**Strategy:** Encourage the continued improvement and development of public facilities and services.

**Objective:** Maintain an up-to-date footprint plan for the Community Center.

Improve access to public facilities and services while managing costs.

Develop a marketing plan for the Community Center.

**Existing Conditions:**

The Community Center is a community asset that provides a space for outdoor events, weddings, meetings, gym space, senior dining, senior center, and a variety of other events. The Community Center and the property around the Community Center is City owned. The entire property around the Community Center is seven acres. This does not include the 1.9 acre overflow parking lot just south of the Community Center parking lot.

The seven acres around the Community Center have been relatively unchanged since the Community Center was opened in 1999 with the exception of the new outdoor covered patio. As part of the planning process for the Windom Comprehensive Plan, the Community Center Commission was asked to develop a footprint plan. A footprint plan is a tool that can be used to guide planning for the Community Center and the City. Potential projects can be compared and discussed in regards to size, so the seven area property can be developed over time. Below is the current Community Center Footprint Plan. There are two existing scenarios.

The City owns approximately 58 acres of parks and greenspace encompassing the Community Center, Tegels Park, and the Windom Recreation Area. This does not include the 1.9 acre overflow parking lot just south of the Community Center parking lot. Together, this area provides an excellent space for recreation and leisure activities, but there are opportunities for new amenities and growth.

Individual park plans are proposed for all of the parks in Windom. Having a Community Center Footprint Plan and individual park plans for Tegels Park and the Windom Recreation Area will help City Staff and community members plan projects. We will also be able to more effectively outline growth opportunities and maintenance needs.

**Marketing:** To continue the improvement and development of public facilities, marketing needs to take a primary position. A Marketing Plan is the first step to outline potential strategies and to budget for implement. Specific goals, strategies and objectives should be established in the Marketing Plan for outdoor events, weddings, meetings, gym space, and other events. Specific marketing materials need to be developed for the different user groups.

**Weddings:** The Community Center hosts around 15 weddings a year. During meetings with the Community Center Commission, there was discussion of hosting additional weddings if an outdoor event area was developed. If additional weddings are going to be pursued, additional marketing is needed. This includes, but is not limited to, regional wedding shows, advertisements at wedding shops, an improved

presence on social media dedicated to weddings and wedding pictures (Instagram), and numerous other avenues.

**CF-Figure #7 Community Center – Total Acres**

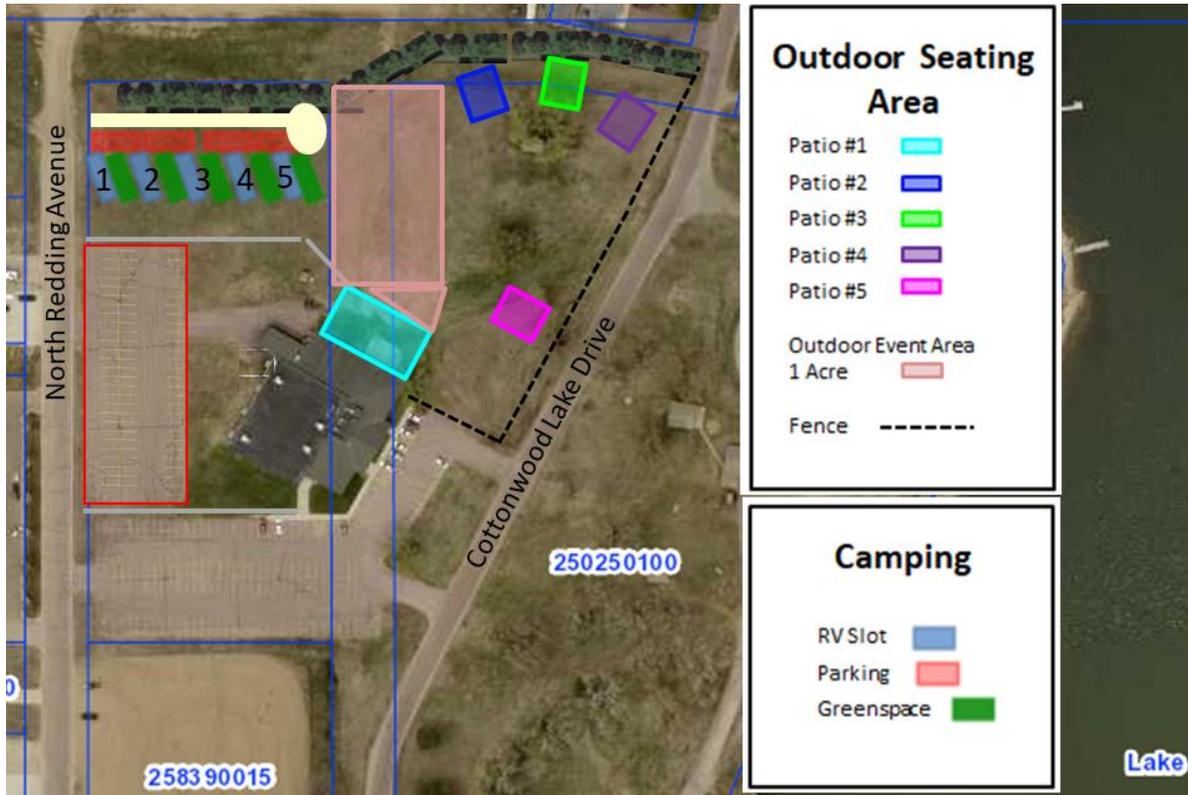


**CF-Figure #8 Community Center – Proposed Outdoor Event Space**



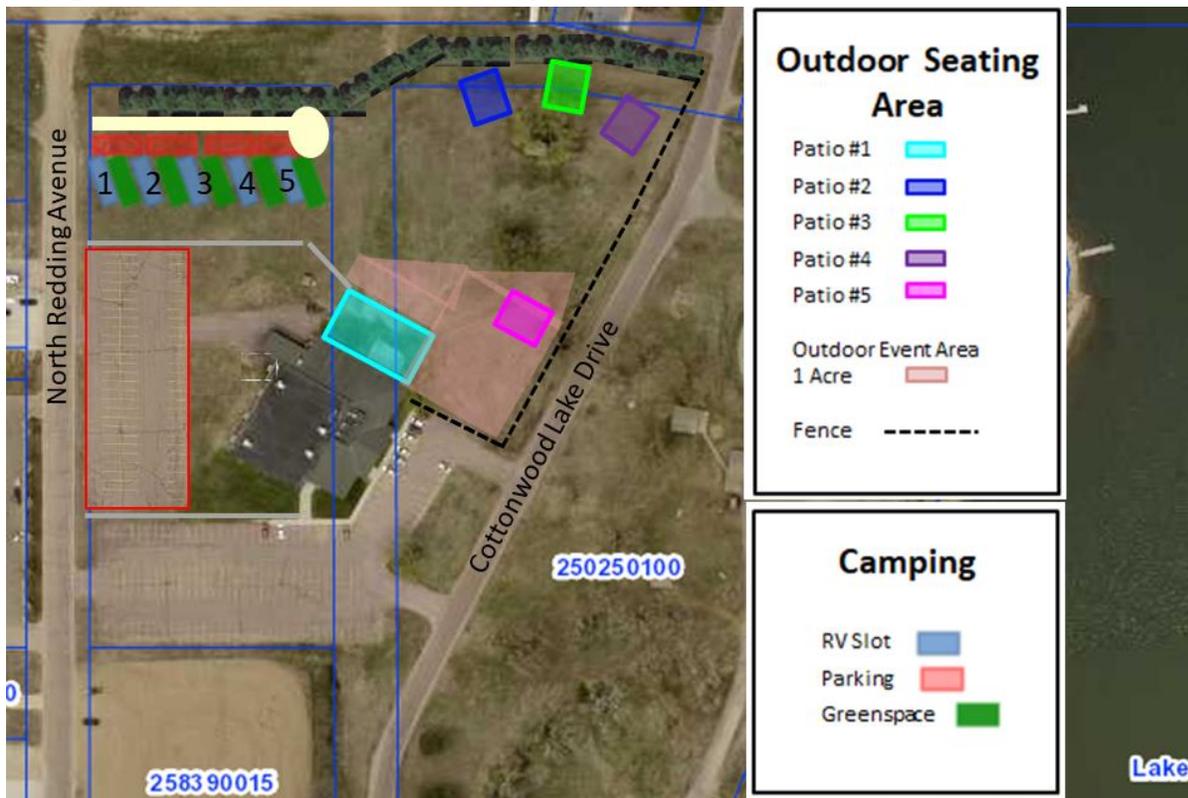
CF-Figure #9

Community Center Footprint Plan – Scenario A



CF-Figure #10

Community Center Footprint Plan – Scenario B



*Strategy:* Encourage the continued improvement and development of public facilities and services.

*Objective:* Improve access to public facilities and services while managing costs.

Develop annual work plans with main user groups.

Work directly with the user groups to market the arena and to promote livability in Windom.

*Existing Conditions:*

The Windom Arena is a regional destination for ice hockey, figure skating, horse shows, the Cottonwood County Fair, and other events. Main user groups are the Windom Hockey Association, Windom Figure Skating Club, Horse Associations and Riding Clubs, racquetball and wallyball groups, and archery groups. These groups have different needs and efficiencies can be achieved by planning and marketing with various user groups.

*Windom Hockey Association*

In 2017, the City of Windom signed a 30-year lease with the Cottonwood County Ag Society for the Windom Arena. The building is owned by the City and the property is owned by the Cottonwood County Ag Society. The long-term vision for the Windom Arena is allowing user groups at the Arena to plan.

Investments in the City-owned building and facility are underway for 2017 and 2018. The Windom Hockey Association started construction of a locker room project in 2017. The City of Windom is investing in a new compressor system and concrete coil ice sheet. The total investment in the City- owned Arena by the Windom Hockey Association and the City will be close to \$2 million.

Efficiencies can be achieved with these improvements. One example is less staff time will be spent making ice. Other efficiencies can be achieved by planning and marketing with the other user groups.

*Planning With Main User Groups*

Annual work plans should be developed with the main user groups. These work plans can identify existing arrangements that help City Staff, ways to improve efficiencies, and new partnership opportunities. Annual work plans should also address marketing the Windom Arena with the various user groups. Joint marketing is more sustainable and can help to grow the user groups and make the Windom Arena more sustainable.

*Planning – Windom Area Hockey Association*

Additional planning with the Hockey Association can occur to increase efficiencies. Developing an annual work plan with the Windom Hockey Association is the first step. This annual work plan is more than scheduling games, practices, and an ice cleaning schedule. An annual work plan could include how volunteer efforts can be planned to put in and take out the boards and glass, regular maintenance, and longer-term maintenance. An incentive plan will help to outline needs and opportunities to work together to save City Staff time and cut down on costs to the City and Windom Hockey Association.

### Marketing – Windom Area Hockey Association

Each team could identify a couple of parents to share in the responsibility to send the City Recreation Director pictures and other information to promote the Windom Area Hockey Association. Social media posts can be shared on the Windom Area Youth Hockey Association Facebook page and the City of Windom Pool, Arena, and Recreation Facebook page. Parents should be encouraged to post pictures and game information on social media to help promote livability in Windom.

### Planning – Racquetball & Walleyball Groups

An annual work plan with the racquetball and wallyball groups could work towards a more efficient operating system of this portion of the Windom Arena. The racquetball players have been requesting a swipe card entry system to the racquetball and wallyball areas. This is an option since entry to the rest of the arena can be limited.

Staff time could be saved by allowing leaders of the racquetball and wallyball groups to coordinate entry and exit and to help maintain the space. The racquetball and wallyball leaders would be responsible for the facility. Only the leaders would be given swipe cards and these cards would be reset annually. City Staff would potentially only be needed to help clean the facility, schedule events, and maintain a calendar. The schedule should outline when open racquetball and wallyball sessions are available.

### Marketing – Racquetball & Walleyball Groups

Finding information online regarding racquetball and wallyball is more difficult than hockey. The Windom Recreation Director can work with the leaders of the racquetball and wallyball groups to post information on the City of Windom Pool, Arena, and Recreation Facebook page or help them create and manage their own page. Racquetball and wallyball leaders and players should be encouraged to post pictures and game information on social media to help promote livability in Windom.

### Planning – Windom Figure Skating Club

The figure skating club already helps to setup and takedown Ice Show fixtures. Other opportunities to partner and develop volunteer efforts will present themselves during planning sessions.

### Marketing – Windom Figure Skating Club

The Windom Recreation Director can work with the figure skating club to post information on the City of Windom Pool, Arena, and Recreation Facebook page or help them create and manage their own page. Parents should be encouraged to post pictures and other information on social media to help promote livability in Windom.

### Planning – Archery Groups

The archery range does not present a convenient way to add a swipe card entry system. There are most likely strategies to increase the archery group's responsibilities to help maintain their space and to increase efficiencies at the Windom Arena. These efficiencies will be identified and discussed during planning sessions.

### Marketing – Archery Groups

Information regarding the archery range is difficult to find online. Use of the archery range can be increased through marketing.

### Planning – Broomball:

Broomball has increased since the studio rink was added. There are regular groups that play broomball. A league could be researched to help increase use of the arena. Marketing is critical to make more people aware that broomball is an option.

### Planning – Horse Associations and Riding Clubs

Horse shows are held during spring and summer months. Horse Associations and Riding Clubs reserve the arena for horse shows, clinics, and group riding events. Open riding is also available, but you must provide a copy of a negative Coggins test for your horse and a copy of your horse liability insurance before you transport your horse to the arena.

### *City, County & School Collaboration*

### *All Departments*

### *High Priority*

*Strategy:* Encourage the continued collaboration between the City, Cottonwood County, and Windom Public Schools.

*Objective:* Pursue joint effects to deliver quality services at a more economical rate.

### *Existing Conditions:*

The City of Windom, Cottonwood County, and Windom Public Schools have a history of collaboration. Joint government meetings are held quarterly to increase the coordination between the City of Windom, Windom Public Schools, and Cottonwood County. These meetings provide an opportunity to plan projects together and learn about upcoming projects that other entities are working on. The success of Windom is dependent on the shared success of all three public entities.

### *Additional Opportunities for Partnership*

- Financial participation with economic development in Cottonwood County.
- Increased financial participation from Cottonwood County regarding the Windom Library.
- Increase coordination between the City and School regarding Community Education and the City Recreation Department.

### *Economic Development*

The City of Windom and the City of Mountain Lake have staff dedicated to economic development. City economic development staff work with existing and new businesses to plan projects, seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life by creating and/or retaining jobs, and work towards growing the local tax base. These economic development initiatives also benefit Cottonwood County.

City economic development staff have worked with Cottonwood County on past projects and County Commissioners have been willing partners. Past projects have been planned and discussed at joint government meetings. Increased coordination and potential support from the County for economic development initiatives could be discussed.

Improvements could come in the form of a County Economic Development liaison, a County project priority list, and a dedicated line of financing towards economic development. County Commissioners have a unique perspective and are able to provide input from county residents and not just one city. A liaison from Cottonwood County could be added to the Commissions/Boards for Economic Development Authorities of cities in Cottonwood County and/or the economic development arm of the smaller cities, if this is desired.

A countywide priority list could be developed annually by the County Commissioners. This list would assist city economic development staff in coordinating more effectively with the County. Increased coordination between the County and its cities could yield a better return regarding investments in economic development.

A dedicated line of funding would provide an additional resource for infrastructure, marketing, and other economic development initiatives. These funds could be used as a match along with city funds. Other smaller counties in Greater Minnesota have created joint economic development offices with cities in their counties, so providing some direct funding for economic development is customary.

### Libraries

In Development Region 8 libraries are funded in vastly different ways. In Windom the library is primarily supported by the City. Out of the nine counties that make up Development Region 8, five of the counties have a county library in the county seat.

Nobles County operates the Nobles County Library in Worthington with support from the City of Worthington. Jackson County operates the Jackson County Library in Jackson with support from the City of Jackson. Cottonwood County provides a minimum cost share towards the Windom Library, Mountain Lake Library, and Westbrook Library.

**F-Table #1 County Libraries – Development Region 8**

County	County Library
Cottonwood County	No
Jackson County	Yes
Lincoln County	No
Lyon County	Yes
Murray County	No
Nobles County	Yes
Pipestone County	No
Redwood County	No
Rock County	Yes

## Community Education & Recreation

Windom Public Schools oversees the Community Education programming. Community Education in Windom has recently focused more on sports and outdoor activities. The City of Windom also has a Recreation Director. Both entities offer different programming so programming is not duplicated, but there may be economies of scale with a joint position.

*City & County Collaboration – Solid Waste & Recycling*      All Departments      Medium Priority  
*Strategy:*      Encourage and promote cooperation of City and County government to enhance waste management, yard waste composting and handling of household hazardous waste.

*Objective:*      Continue to operate the City’s compost site for grass and leaves.

Promote public education on yard waste composting.

Continue existing efforts to reduce household hazardous waste and continue programs at the County Landfill.

Continue e-waste collections and recycling.

Continue communitywide spring clean-up activities.

Improve the marketing of solid waste and recycling services.

Improve the marketing and promotion of composting.

### *Existing Conditions:*

The City of Windom and Cottonwood County have collaborated on waste management and recycling for a number of years. The City and the County offer a number of services regarding waste management. For more information, refer to the Cottonwood County’s Solid Waste Department’s website:

<http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/>

<https://www.windom-mn.com/community-information/recycling/>

Convenient access and marketing of solid waste and recycling services is critical to running successful programs. Minnesota does have a higher than average recycling rate, but overall Americans recycle only 34.6 percent of all the waste they create.<sup>53</sup> The City can help make a difference through educational campaigns.

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<sup>53</sup> EPA. Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: Facts and Figures. Accessed: 5/21/18. Available: <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/advancing-sustainable-materials-management-0>

# TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMALL CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR PLANET!

## WHEN YOU *THROW* SOMETHING AWAY, **WHERE DOES IT GO?**



## BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

**YOU CAN** DRAMATICALLY  
REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF TRASH  
THAT IS THROWN AWAY BY  
**TAKING A FEW EASY STEPS:**

**REDUCE**  
THE AMOUNT OF  
MATERIALS  
YOU USE, WHICH



**REDUCES**  
THE AMOUNT  
OF WASTE  
YOU CREATE.

**REUSE**  
MATERIALS  
WHEN POSSIBLE



**RECYCLE**  
WHENEVER  
POSSIBLE



**RETHINK**  
THE MATERIALS

**YOU USE**

**AND THOSE**

**YOU THROW AWAY**

BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE'RE USING AND HOW TO REDUCE THE WASTE WE PRODUCE, WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLEANER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT.

**IN STORES:**

- Shop for products **made with recycled materials.**
- Buy items with **less packaging.**
- Buy refillable, **reusable containers.**
- Bring **reusable cloth or canvas bags** to the grocery store.
- Buy only **what you need** or **what you know you will use** (applies to food as well).

## AT HOME:

- Use **energy-efficient light bulbs** and **rechargeable batteries**.
- **Reuse plastic bags.**
- Ask to **be removed from paper mailing lists.**
- Don't throw anything away that can be **reused or repaired.**
- For unwanted used electronics, **try upgrading the device to continue using it.** Otherwise, **donate or recycle it.**
- **Print on both sides of paper** (and use recycled paper) **or do not print at all.**
- **Compost** your food scraps and yard waste.

CF-Figure #12

### City Initiative – Composting



54

Marketing and promoting composting is one of the easiest ways for a city to decrease the amount of material entering the landfill. In 1990, the estimated total amount of municipal solid waste entering the landfill was 145.3 million tons. In 2014, the estimated total amount of municipal solid waste entering the landfill dropped to 136 million tons. In Windom the amount of municipal solid waste entering the landfill is unknown.

*Community Engagement & Volunteerism*

All Departments

High Priority

**Strategy:** Increase the opportunity for community volunteerism with city projects.

**Objective:** Formally recognize individual working groups to help plan community projects.

Maintain a list of projects that could benefit from community volunteers.

Clearly outline opportunities for community members and service organizations to assist or lead city projects.

<sup>54</sup> EDA. Infographic about MSW in the US in 2014. Accessed: 5/21/18. Available: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/advncng\\_smm\\_infogrphc-2014-sm.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/advncng_smm_infogrphc-2014-sm.pdf)

*Existing Conditions:*

There are a number of goals and strategies outlined in the Windom Active Living Plan, Windom Bikeable Communities Workshop Plan, and the Windom Comprehensive Plan that will only be achieved with support from community members. It is critical for City Staff to clearly outline ways for community members to volunteer and how public/private partnerships can be formed. There are examples from communities in Region 8 (Southwest Minnesota) that have established working relationships with service organizations to assist in maintaining existing facilities.

One of the best examples is how the Lakefield Lions Club has helped to maintain Sparks Park which is a nature area with a number of trails winding their way through the woods, over a creek, and around a pond. The trails in the park were maintained and expanded with help from the Lakefield Lions Club. The Lakefield Lions Club also built a bridge in Spark Park to expand the network of trails.

There are projects that have been suggested, but it takes a group to plan, fundraise, and implement a project. City Staff with support from existing boards and commission are planning and implementing projects, but additional work can be done by community members to speed up projects. Possible projects include:

- Outdoor event area at the Community Center
- Dog Park
- Mayflower Park Mountain Bike Trail
- US Fish and Wildlife Connection Trail
- East Cottonwood Lake Trail – USFW
- Bike Loop: River Road – CR 15 – US 71

*Cultural Diversity*

All Departments

Medium Priority

*Strategy:* Encourage the development of cultural diversity.

*Objective:* Develop additional recreational programming targeting people of color (non-white).

*Existing Conditions:*

The importance of immigration is evident if Southwest Minnesota wants to maintain or grow our population. From April 2010 to July 2016, Southwest Minnesota experienced a loss of 3,941 people. “Though the 23-county planning region enjoyed a natural increase – more births than deaths – of 5,410 people, Southwest Minnesota suffered an out-migration of 12,330 people who left to live elsewhere. Lost in the shadow of that outflow, however, was the region's international net in-migration of 2,993 new foreign-born Minnesotans, which helped offset some domestic losses.”<sup>55</sup> Refer to page 11 and 12 for race distribution figures in Windom.

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<sup>55</sup> DEED. Regional Newsletter January 2018. Accessed: 2/6/18. Available: <https://mn.gov/deed/data/locallook/southwest/southwest-blog.jsp?id=1045-325071>

“The number of immigrants in the region increased by 22.1 percent from 2010 to 2016, outpacing the statewide growth rate of 16.3 percent.”<sup>56</sup>

**CF-Table #2** **Immigration & Growth**

Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Population Change in Southwest Minnesota, 2010-2016							
2016 Population Estimate	2010-2016 Estimated Population Change	April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016					
		Vital Events			Net Migration		
		Natural Increase	Births	Deaths	Total	Inter-national	Domestic
391,702	-3,941	+5,410	29,235	23,825	-9,337	+2,993	-12,330
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program</i>							

Recreational programming in Windom has primarily focused on active recreation (organized sports, playground equipment, etc.). This serves a number of residents, but a large sector of the population is left out. Newer populations to a community may not be aware or are not accustomed to organized sports.

To attract people to Windom, programming at community facilities and organized sports need to actively seek out input from new members of the community. Over half of the new immigrants to Southwest Minnesota were from Latin America and Mexico. Worthington has seen a significant increase of community members from Latin America and Mexico, and Worthington has allocated additional funding to recreational programming targeting these populations.

The City of Worthington invested \$1.2 million into Buss Field to completely renovate the soccer fields on this property. These soccer fields were prone to flooding, so soccer players would often complain they were running into holes in the dirt.<sup>56</sup> This is an example of how neighboring communities are investing in facilities and programming for immigrant populations or expansion of recreational opportunities.

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<sup>56</sup> The Globe. Worthington received \$50,000 grant for Buss Field. Access: 2/6/18. Available: <http://www.dglobe.com/news/4238348-worthington-receives-50000-grant-buss-field>

# CHAPTER 9: Infrastructure

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## Introduction

The availability and adequacy of Windom's infrastructure are vital elements necessary for the achievement and maintenance of a quality community environment. For the purposes of this document, infrastructure will be defined as the basic facilities, equipment, and installations needed for the functioning of a city. Such facilities would include streets, water, sewer, storm sewer, electricity, gas, etc. (Although streets are part of a city's infrastructure, they are addressed in detail within the "Transportation" section.)

## Real Return on Investment – Infrastructure

Infrastructure is one of the core responsibilities of government, but the Real Return on Investment has to be estimated and evaluated. Infrastructure is an investment in your community which helps to drive growth. As investment in infrastructure occurs, decision makers have a responsibility to not only evaluate the costs on a specific project but alternatives, the costs of extending infrastructure in other locations, and how likely is additional growth to occur from this investment.

There are 4 principals that can help decision makers evaluate investments in infrastructure.

1. *Infrastructure is a liability, not an asset*
  - a. Infrastructure has a useful life and regular maintenance of the system will help to extend the useful life. At some point the system will need to be overhauled or replaced. Infrastructure is a liability, but infrastructure also helps to drive growth. The tax base supporting the new infrastructure needs to direct the infrastructure investment. The actual wealth or tax base created has direct investment in infrastructure.
2. *Smart Growth reflects costs associated with multiple lifecycles*
  - a. Growth needs to be productive over time. Multiple lifecycles of an infrastructure project should be considered. Costs associated with repair and replacement of a project need to be considered. New revenue from the project must be sufficient to cover the costs associated to repair and replace.
3. *Positive Externalities impact the Return on Investment regarding infrastructure*
  - a. All of the benefits of an infrastructure project may not be recoverable. There may be benefits associated with time savings, personal property maintenance, safety, and pollution mitigation. These benefits along with recoverable benefits (property taxes, fees, and assessments) impact the return on investment regarding infrastructure.
4. *Cities can't easily walk away from past investments*
  - a. Infrastructure investment is a tool to grow a community, but unproductive developments are liabilities. Planners and decision makers do not have a crystal ball, but realistic assumptions regarding growth need to be utilized. The following questions need to be asked?
    - i. If infrastructure is going to be extended for a business, is it likely that other growth will follow? One business cannot support the costs associated with repair

and place, and cities also cannot easily walk away from the infrastructure investment for the one business.

- ii. Is there a parcel with existing infrastructure that will offer similar opportunities? Incentives need to consider the cost of new infrastructure. An underutilized existing lot has greater potential than extending new infrastructure for a new development.

Land Use decisions impact the returns on investment in infrastructure. A more compact development helps to decrease the cost of public infrastructure. If more people are living within a neighborhood, the fixed costs of infrastructure in that neighborhood can be spread across more people.

## Public Good

Infrastructure generally is defined as a public good. Public goods have two distinct characteristics: nonexcludability and nonrivalrous consumption.

Nonexcludability means that the cost of keeping nonpayers from enjoying the benefits of the good or service is prohibitive. An example is a fireworks show. People can watch the show from their property without directly paying for the fireworks show. There is a free rider problem, so there is a chance the good or service will be under produced, since the one directly paying for the good or service may not be able to charge consumers.

Nonrivalrous consumption is when the consumption of a good does not diminish the ability of other people from using it. A national park is often used as an example, provided people do not damage the park (littering, etc.). This is only true up to a point, if too many people try to use the park at once it becomes congested and is no longer nonrival.

Nonexcludable is generally considered the more important of the two aspects of a public good. "One of the best examples of a public good is national defense. To the extent one person in a geographic area is defended from foreign attack or invasion, other people in that same area are likely defended also. This makes it hard to charge people for defense, which means that defense faces the classic free-rider problem."<sup>57</sup>

In regards to city streets it would be very costly to exclude people. It would also be very costly to have multiple streets owned by different entities. City streets are an example of why government typically supplies transportation infrastructure.

Express lanes and toll roads are two examples of transportation infrastructure being privatized. Privatization can be a more cost effective option, but oversight has to occur since the private entity most likely will have monopoly power. Prices and service areas will have to be overseen.

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<sup>57</sup> Library of Economics and Liberty. Accessed: 11/2/15. Available: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/PublicGoods.html>

This mix between public and private is referred to as a semipublic good. Infrastructure discussed in this chapter is either provided by government or a semi-public entity. The semi-public entity may be a for-profit business or a non-profit business, but there is oversight from the government.

Conformance to high standards of service should always be encouraged in every aspect of the infrastructure system whether public or private. Competition is the key element in ensuring goods and services are delivered in a quality and competitive manner. If competition does not exist the next best option is to compare service and cost to a similar entity.

### Water System

The water distribution system in Windom is comprised of 4 essential categories (supply, treatment, storage, and distribution). The following is a brief description of these categories:

#### Water Supply

The water supply in Windom is served by a series of eight (8) shallow drift wells varying in depth from 87 to 142’ deep located in the Windom well field near Cottonwood Lake. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permits Windom to draw 420 million gallons from the well system. The City has identified a maximum of 375 million gallons from the well system, so the aquifer is able to recharge and remain sustainable.

**I-Table #1 Wells – Windom**

Well Number	Year Installed	Depth	Well Diameter (casing)	Capacity (GPM)	Status (Active, Standby or no longer in use)	Controlled By
1						
2						
3A	1973	90’	12”	250	Active	Controlled by telemetry
4	1954	87’	8”	250	Active	Controlled by telemetry
5	1954	109’	10”	175	Active	Controlled by telemetry
6	1969	121’	10”	325	Active	Controlled by telemetry
7*	1977	142’	12”	500	Active*	Manually
8	1991	135’	20”	600	Active	Controlled by telemetry
9	1997	110’	10”	200	Active	Controlled by telemetry
10	1998	125’	12”	1,000	Active	Controlled by telemetry

\*Due to the close proximity of well #7 to the old landfill, MDH (Minnesota Department of Health) has placed restrictions on this well. Well #7 is a recovery well.

#### Water Treatment

The City of Windom has a water filtration plant used for treatment. This plant, put on line in 1998, replaces an outdated smaller plant. The new plant has 4 iron and manganese removal filters. When built, this plant was projected to meet the City’s 20-year demand. According to Bolton-Menk Engineering, the water treatment plant can be tripled on the existing site.

The plant is capable of processing 3.3 MGD (Million Gallons per Day). In 2017, the City’s daily demand was approximately .707 MGD. The five year average is .728 MGD.

### Water Storage

The water storage in Windom is composed of 2 elevated storage tanks and 1 ground storage tank. The 3 tanks combined have a capacity of 1,800,000 gallons. The elevated storage tank located on Cottonwood Lake Drive near the water treatment plant holds 1,000,000 gallons of water, the elevated storage tank located on the end of Norway Avenue holds 500,000 gallons of water, and the ground storage tank (also referred as the clear well) located under the treatment plant building holds 300,000 gallons of water.

Control of the storage system is fairly straightforward. The ground storage tank receives water directly from the treatment plant on demand. The water towers feed and pressurize the distribution system simultaneously. When the water elevation in the towers reaches a predetermined level, the sensor, which is connected by telemetry, sends a signal to the water plant. When the water plant receives this signal, the pumps start to simultaneously refill the towers.

**I-Table #2 Water Storage Capacity – Windom**

Storage Type	Storage Capacity (gallons)	Year Built	Year Painted
Elevated Storage (east water tower)	1,000,000	2000	2017
Elevated Storage (north water tower)	500,000	1994	2017
Ground Storage	160,000	1998	NA
Total	1,660,000		

When assessing storage needs there are two basic rules of thumb which can be used to determine storage adequacy.

- a. Minimum storage should be at least 42 gallons/capita. (40 gallons x 4,646 persons = 195,132 gallons)(2010 census)
2. The municipal water supply should have a minimum water storage capacity equal to the average daily water usage. (1,800,000 storage vs. 728,000 five year average demand per day)

It is necessary to maintain these standards in order to provide adequate fire flow demand, stabilize the system, and provide emergency storage in case of failures occurring in the municipal wells or during power outages. Currently, the City of Windom meets both of these guidelines.

### Water Distribution

The water distribution system consists of approximately 40 miles of water main varying in size from 6” to 12”. Older 4” mains were replaced during the 2013 street project. The water mains are made from cast iron, ductile iron, or polyvinylchloride (PVC). The condition and flow characteristics are virtually unknown, however, the unlined, cast iron pipes are assumed to have poor characteristics and the PVC, fair to good characteristics.

The City has 300 fire hydrants; these hydrants are color coded to assist the fire department on the volume of water they can extract from the water main. Red shows a rate of 500 GPM or less, orange shows a rate of 750 GPM or less, and green shows a rate of 1,000 GPM or more.

### 2017 Water Plant Upgrades

In 2017, a Water Treatment Facility Rehabilitation was completed. The rehab upgraded the 20 year old equipment, involving completely new underdrains and filter media (anthracite/sand). Meters, valves, and piping were also upgraded for a more efficient backwash.

### Sanitary Sewer System

The City of Windom utilizes a treatment plant system for sanitary sewer. The original sanitary sewer system was constructed in the 1940's with a trickle filter system. In 1973, a two-stage biological treatment plant was constructed. In 1995, the treatment plant was updated to an activated sludge (inorganics and biosolids) process. The activated sludge process consists of extended aeration, removal of ammonia, chlorination and dechlorination. The inorganic grit is hauled out to the landfill and the biosolids are land applied.

Upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment plant and at the Main lift station were completed in 2013. The total project costs were around \$2.6 million. The project addressed pumps, controls, generator, and some pretreatment work.

The treatment plant is designed to handle an average wet weather flow of 1,830,000 gallons per day. The average flow in 2017 was approximately 934,000 gallons per day.

The sanitary sewer system consists of approximately 539 manholes, 28 lamp holes and forty (40) miles (211,200 feet) of sewer main consisting in size from 8" to 21" and a depth of 4' to 32' with an average depth of approximately 12'. The sewer mains are constructed of vitrified clay (VCP), reinforced concrete pipe (RCP), and polyvinylchloride pipe (PVC).

**E-Table #3**

**Sewer Mains – Windom 2017**

Sewer Mains	Percent
PVC	70
Reinforced Concrete	15
Vitrified Clay	15

\* Estimates – based on staff

### Lift Stations

There are five lift stations. The Main lift station is located on Drake Avenue and 4th Street. Wastewater from the entire town is collected and pumped to the treatment plant from this lift station. This lift station is a wet-well/dry-well type three 110 horsepower submersible pumps with a standby generator. The generator and the submersible pumps were replaced in 2012.

The Rolling Green lift station is located on Des Moines Drive and 6th Street. Wastewater from the Rolling Green area is collected and pumped through a force main across the river. This lift station has two 10

horsepower submersible pumps with a standby generator. These submersible pumps were put on line in 2002.

The Vold lift station is located on 9th Avenue and 16th Street. Wastewater is collected from northwest Windom and pumped through a force main to 1st Avenue. This lift station has two 18 horsepower submersible pumps with a standby generator. These submersible pumps were put on line in 2004.

The River Road lift station is located on River Road and Country Club Drive. Wastewater is collected from Country Club Drive and an extension of River Road. This lift station has two 4 horsepower submersible pumps. This lift station does not have a standby generator, but the need is limited at this lift station. These submersible pumps were put on line in 1993.

The North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP) lift station is located on Opportunity Drive and Commerce Boulevard. The lift station was constructed in 2013. This lift station has two five horsepower submersible pumps. This lift station does not have a standby generator. Infrastructure in the NWIP was designed for attachment of a portable generator.

#### Inflow & Infiltration

Inflow and Infiltration exists to some degree in all sanitary sewer systems. Infiltration is a result of either groundwater entering the sanitary sewer system through leaking pipes and manholes or rainfall percolating through the ground and entering the sewer system through foundation drains and/or coming through poorly constructed service connections.

Inflow and Infiltration can have a number of negative effects on a sewer system. Grit can be carried into the system, dilution can hinder treatment, and overloading can damage processing equipment. Extensive inflow can quickly cause a system to exceed capacity of the sewer system and cause wastewater to back up in basements. Elimination of excess Inflow and Infiltration in addition to saving tax dollars, can lower the costs of operating the system, reduce the threat of basement flooding, eliminate grit from the system, and eliminate the need for bypassing the sanitary sewer system.

The City of Windom has and will continue to remove this threat by the replacement of old sewer pipes through street improvement projects. Approximately fifty percent (50%) of this problem comes from public sewers and fifty percent (50%) comes from private sewers. The City can only repair and replace sewer pipes on public property and has limited control on private property.

#### Wastewater Plant Upgrades

In March 2017, advertisements for bids were called for a Water Treatment Facility Rehabilitation project. The description of work is outlined below. The project consists of but is not limited to the following major items:

- A. Insulation of new direct filter backwash piping including pneumatic controls valves, electrical, and control updates.
- B. Removal and replacement of the fiber media and media retention cap.

- C. Miscellaneous piping changes including the removal and replacement of the surge relief valve and two flow meters along with electrical and control updates.
- D. Alternate bid for removal and replacement of five flow meters at four separate Well Houses required piping changes and electrical and control update.

**I-Table #4 Excess Capacity – Windom 2017**

Water System	Capacity	Demand	Excess	Notes
Existing Wells	1,025,000	728,000	297,000	gallons per day
Water Treatment	3,300,000	728,000	2,572,000	gallons per day
Water Storage	1,660,000	728,000	932,000	gallons per day
Wastewater Treatment	1,130,000	939,000	191,000	gallons per day

### Fire Flow Requirements

Water usage for fire demand is a vital consideration in the design of a water supply and distribution system. Fire demand varies greatly from normal usage in that an extremely large quantity of water is required from a single demand point (fire hydrant) in a very short time. The quantity of water used for fires is almost negligible when compared to other annual usage categories, but because of the extreme rate of usage during an emergency situation, fire demands frequently govern design.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is an independent ratings organization which rates fire protection services for communities and rural properties. A municipal water distribution is considered adequate if it can deliver either the maximum hour flow rate or the required fire flow rate with peak daily demands, whichever is greater. The minimum ISO recognized fire flow is 500 gallons/minute and the maximum for a single fire is 12,000 gallons/minute.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) recommends that a system the size of Windom’s be capable of delivering a fire demand of 500 GPM to 3,500 GPM for varying durations, depending on the rate of demand. Commercial and industrial users have shown that 2,000 GPM is usually a sufficient flow rate to operate their sprinkler systems. Residential areas require a flow rate of 500 GPM to 1,500 GPM, dependent upon the housing spacing. Available fire flows are checked at various locations in the system for both the existing system and the saturation design system.

In 2011, the daily demand averaged out to be approximately .68 MGD. This is down from a 2006 high of 1.13 MGD. The reduction was caused by the introduction of an industrial (non-potable) well dug for POET Biorefining. Prior to the introduction, POET’s average daily usage was approximately .4 MGD. This reduction in water usage alleviated concerns that the City’s aquifer was being depleted.

As previously stated, fire demands govern design. The Minnesota Department of Health and Insurance Rating Companies require that all mains providing fire protection shall be at least six inches in size. Where long lengths of pipe are necessary, eight inches or larger mains should be used. Authorities also indicate that the use of dead-ended six inch (or smaller) water mains should avoided if used to provide fire protection. These regulations are only for new construction and are not mandatory for existing systems. In summary, it would be in the best interest of the City to upgrade the water distribution system when

possible. This, in turn, will decrease the ISO grading schedule deficiency points, as well as enhance the overall functioning of the system.

### **Storm Sewer Collection System**

The storm drainage system in the City of Windom serves nearly the entire City. The system is comprised of a network of lines varying in size from 12" to 60" in diameter. The majority of the water collected in the drainage system is deposited to the Des Moines River.

There are approximately 118 manholes in the storm sewer system. Manholes in the older parts of town are constructed of mortar and brick, while newer manholes are of precast construction. The storm sewer system has, for the most part, served the City adequately.

However, there are areas that periodically flood during heavy rainfalls. Flooding has occurred during various occasions on 18th Avenue from River Road to the North end of the City limits line. This is due to the runoff of steep hills to the North of this area.

Not all of Windom's sewer collection system is served by sewers, some areas use surface drainage. There are areas where the surface drainage is then served by sewers and a couple areas that are not. Horkey's addition is one of the areas that are served only by surface drainage without any major problems. Another area that has drainage problems is the Cottonwood Lake area.

The City should maintain high standards and plan for future expansion of the storm sewer as new development occurs. This can include surface drainage systems. Such planned action will help prevent many unforeseen problems that may normally occur in areas not served by a storm sewer collection system.

### **Electric Utilities**

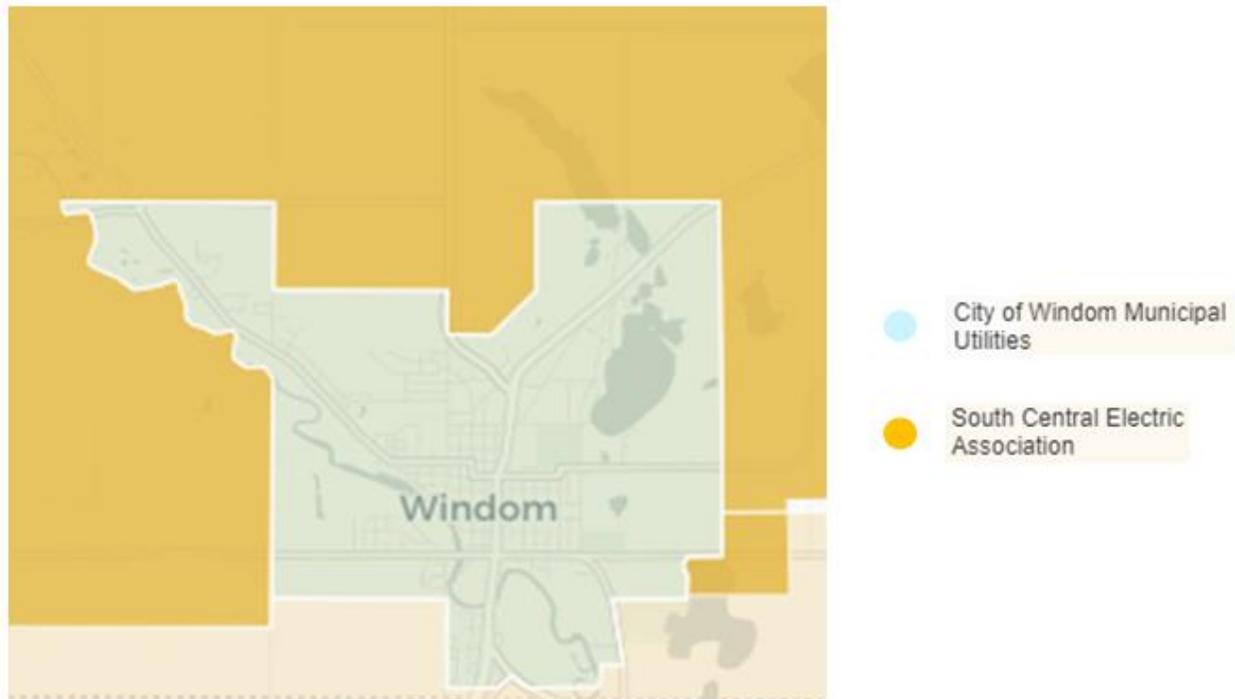
The City of Windom is served by Windom Municipal Utilities and South Central Electric Cooperative. The Windom Municipal Utilities serves the entire City, except the North Windom Industrial Park. The City currently purchases power from Western Area Power Agency, Xcel Energy, and Central Minnesota Power Agency. Windom Municipal Utilities also owns and maintains a municipal generation (peaking) power plant.

There are many different size lines in the Municipal Utility. For this plan they have been broken down into two groups, primary lines and secondary lines. The primary line voltage is 13,800 volts. The secondary line voltages range from 120 volts to 480 volts.

The Electric Department has converted many overhead lines to underground lines. In 2017, the City's distribution system is believed to have 75 percent of its lines underground and 25 percent overhead. The conversion of overhead lines to underground lines will continue on an annual basis.

**I-Figure #1**

**Electric Utility Map – Windom**



**Natural Gas**

Natural gas in the City of Windom is served by Minnesota Energy Resources. The natural gas system contains approximately 45 miles of gas mains within the City with sizes ranging from one and a quarter inch to six inches. Service lines range between a half inch to four inches. The one and a quarter inch gas mains are continuously being upgraded to two inch mains.

Typical natural gas pressures for residential customers in Windom range from ounces to 2 pounds. Commercial and industrial pressures range from ounces to 75 pounds.

**Fiber & Broadband (Internet Providers)**

Currently, there are 2 Tier 1 Telecommunication Providers/Carriers (CenturyLink & Zayo Group) going through Windom. There are also numerous Tier 2 and Tier 3 Telecommunication Providers/Carriers with 11 different fiber routes. Windom is on the informational highway connecting Omaha to Minneapolis – St. Paul.

In 2005, the City of Windom finished construction of a \$10 million telecommunication system. Windomnet was the first rural Minnesota city to build a municipal telecommunication system and is one of few currently. The State-of-the-art fiber optic telecommunications system is capability of fiber to the premise (home or business). The system can deliver 100 megabits per second of high speed digital information.

Other major internet service providers in Windom include: CenturyLink, Frontier, MVTV Wireless, LTD Broadband, Rise Broadband, Synkro Southwest, Back 40 Wireless, HughesNet, and Exede Internet. Satellite internet providers also include: AT&T, Verizon, Back 40 Wireless, HughesNet, and Exede

Internet. For more information visit: <https://broadbandnow.com/Minnesota/Windom>.

### **Sanitation & Recycling**

Hometown Sanitation and Waste Management provide waste disposal company in Windom. Both companies offers residential, business, and construction waste disposal. Waste disposal is left up to each individual or business to contract for their service. For more information visit <http://www.hometownsan.com/> or <https://www.wm.com/us>.

The recycling services in Windom are managed under the authority of Cottonwood County. There is a recycling drop off center at the Cottonwood County Fairground on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Waste Management also does recycling pickup. Recycling pickup is left up to each individual or business to contract for their service. For more information visit: <http://www.co.cottonwood.mn.us/county-departments/solid-waste-and-recycling/landfill-2/>.

### **Call Before You Dig**

Gopher State One Call (811) is a one call notification system established to inform all Minnesota underground facility operators of intended excavation. The service has no cost to Minnesota residents in locating utility lines (electric, sewer, water, gas, telephone, etc.). They notify the utilities in the area that come out and mark the location of the buried lines. If an individual citizen is going to do any digging, whether the placement of trees or a construction project, it is their responsibility to find the location of the lines before any digging occurs.

### **Goal & Strategies – Infrastructure**

Below is the overarching goal related to the infrastructure in the City of Windom. Broad strategies were developed to guide infrastructure planning. More specific strategies and objectives were also developed to increase planning and efficiencies regarding infrastructure. The City Administrator will lead departments in achieving the overarching goal. Refer to the Description of Goals, Strategy, and Objectives Section of the Planning Process Chapter for more information.

*Goal:* It is the goal of the City of Windom to provide quality and affordable public utilities for residential and business needs.

### **Strategies – Guiding Principles:**

- Improve and maintain the availability of municipal water, sewer, and electrical services to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and industries.
- Provide community-wide facilities and services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Locate facilities and distribute services in an equitable manner thereby providing access to all residents.
- Encourage the development of facilities and services to meet the needs of present and future residents, including all age groups and special populations (elderly, handicapped, etc.)

- Cooperate with energy providers in maintaining adequate and reliable sources of energy to meet present and future demands.
- Facilitate the efficient utilization of existing sewer and water lines, and discourage the extension thereof into areas where assessments could not be levied or would have to be deferred for an extended period of time.
- Encourage extension of public utilities only to areas contiguous to the existing system as opposed to leap-frog extensions.
- Consider and evaluate the adequacy and costs of public services during the review process for rezoning proposals and conditional use permits.

### Specific Strategies

#### *Electric Utility Grid*

Electric Dept.

*Strategy:* Harden the electric utility grid in Windom.

*Objective:* Continue the conversion of the electrical service from overhead to an underground system.

Develop a priority list for burying overhead lines.

#### *Existing Conditions:*

Burying electrical lines where it is feasible helps to harden the local electrical grid. The Windom Electric Department has an annual goal to bury approximately 7,000 to 9,000 feet of electrical distribution lines and electrical service lines. In 2017, approximately 70 percent of electrical distribution lines and electrical service lines are underground in Windom. This does not include transmission lines.

The Windom Electric Department has coordinated past projects with street projects and buried lines in areas of higher need. The areas of higher need were determined by Windom Electric Department staff. Additional planning would help to plan out projects and make the City more competitive for grants.

A priority list for burying line can be mapped out and labeled high priority, medium priority, and low priority. Definitions of variables impacting the priority rankings need to be available to the public to help create a more equitable system. Electrical lines that are buried are generally more aesthetically pleasing, and will contribute to the marketability of a property.

#### *Inflow & Infiltration*

Water / Wastewater Dept.

*Strategy:* Decrease inflow and infiltration in the sanitary sewer system in Windom.

*Objective:* Continue to reduce Inflow and Infiltration in the sanitary sewer system.

Develop an Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Plan.

*Existing Conditions:*

A sanitary sewer system has three major components that include: base sanitary flow (wastewater), groundwater infiltration, and rainfall derived inflow and infiltration. “Virtually every sewer system has some infiltration and/or inflow. However, infiltration and inflow may be considered excessive when it is the cause of overflows or bypasses, or the cost to transport and treat exceeds the cost to eliminate it. In cases where the inflow and infiltration may not be considered “excessive” from a cost-to-eliminate perspective but causes health or environmental risks, corrective actions are required.”<sup>58</sup>

The Windom Water/Wastewater Department has been active in minimizing inflow and infiltration. Past projects have been planned in conjunction with street projects and when it is more cost effective to access wastewater infrastructure. This has resulted in inflow and infiltration reductions, but a more in-depth plan should be developed.

An Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Plan will increase accountability by tracking past project and setting goals related to inflow and infiltration reduction. The Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Plan should be a living document. Projects will be checkoff when they are completed, and new projects will be added when they are developed.

An up-to-date plan will also help when apply for grants and sharing information regarding past and future projects with the Utility Commission, local elected officials, and city administration. An effective Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Plan that is implemented will reduce wastewater treatment costs over the long-term, decrease the risk of sanitary sewer overflows and backups that release raw sewage into the environment and homes, and increase accountability.

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<sup>58</sup> EPA. Guide for Estimating Infiltration and Inflow. Accessed: 1-31-18. Available: <https://www3.epa.gov/region1/sso/pdfs/Guide4EstimatingInfiltrationInflow.pdf>

# CHAPTER 10: Energy

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## Introduction

The primary focus of the energy chapter is to identify personal energy units and renewable energy systems that could potentially be installed within the City of Windom. Personal energy units are small scale energy producing devices designed to power a specific device or something as large as a home. It is important to consider possible conflicts regarding personal energy units and renewable energy systems. Addressing these conflicts before there is an issue may help to maintain orderly development. This section will address policy regarding solar panels, wind turbines, and geothermal energy units installed within city limits.

## Solar

Solar energy can be harnessed in two ways, solar thermal or photovoltaic. Solar thermal technology uses the sun's energy, rather than fossil fuels, to generate low-cost, environmentally friendly thermal energy. This energy is used to heat water or other fluids, and can also power solar cooling systems. Photovoltaic (PV) is a method of generating electrical power and can be used to power a water pump or light in a garden to larger panels powering a house and contributing to the power system. Both thermal and PV require a solar panel to collect the energy.

The Windom City Code recognizes three types of solar energy systems. Below are the different types and regulatory requirements.

- 1) *Solar thermal systems*
  - a. Requires a building permit
- 2) *Rooftop and building mounted solar collectors*
  - a. Requires a building permit
- 3) *Ground mounted and freestanding solar collectors*
  - a. Requires a conditional use permit

Landscaping lights and other similar solar panel products are allowed without permits. These solar panels are classified as providing power for itself and would not require a permit. Contact the Development Department with City of Windom to get information regarding the permitting process.

## Wind

Wind turbines also come in a variety of sizes. Small turbines can be used to power aeration systems on ponds and lakes and larger turbines have been installed within city limits to power schools and other public facilities. Wind Energy Conversion Systems require a conditional use permit in all zoning districts as outlined in the Windom City Code. Contact the Development Department with City of Windom to get information regarding the permitting process.

## Geothermal

There are some legal issues raised by geothermal energy resources that include questions of ownership and allocation of the resource. Other concerns arise in regards to emissions as a result of fluids being drawn deep within the earth. These emissions may result in unpleasant smells.

There are both open and closed loop geothermal systems. Open-loop systems allow the mixture of gases, notably carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>), to be released into the air.<sup>59</sup> There is often a notable smell of rotten eggs that can exist when an open-loop systems emits.

Closed-loop systems are more common and better for the environment. Closed-loop systems contain all of the gases and fluids it extracts from a well and re-injects them after it removes the heat.<sup>59</sup> In this system essentially nothing is lost and there is no odor in the air. The drawback is the closed-loop system is more expensive than an open-loop.

Geothermal is not mentioned in the Windom City Code.

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<sup>59</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists. Environmental Impacts of Renewable Energy Technologies. Accessed: 1/19/16. Available: [http://www.ucsusa.org/clean\\_energy/our-energy-choices/renewable-energy/environmental-impacts-of.html#.Vp5SVvkrJFE](http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_energy/our-energy-choices/renewable-energy/environmental-impacts-of.html#.Vp5SVvkrJFE)

# CHAPTER 11: Present Land Use

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## Introduction

Land use in the City of Windom is dictated by the Des Moines River, Cottonwood Lake, Union Pacific Railroad, US Highway 71, and Minnesota Highway 60. As connections to and from Windom have changed, land use and investment around the community have changed. The City has the responsibility to work with its residents and businesses to create a community where people want to live and invest.

Land use directly impacts a city's return on investment regarding infrastructure. Cities need to balance compatibility with infrastructure costs and what is realistic. As growth occurs and areas of the City are redeveloped, compatibility drives new investment.

Compatibility is determined through investment preferences, zoning, and building regulations. The last major update to Windom's Zoning Map was in 2005. Changes have been made since 2005, but in-depth analysis into compatibility has not been undertaken.

As part of the planning process for this chapter, an in-depth analysis on land use within the City was conducted. An analysis of the existing land uses in Windom enabled City Staff and the Comprehensive Plan Committee to evaluate the geographical elements of the community with the purpose of identifying both assets and deficiencies. This information has been used to identify nonconforming land uses and to help develop a future land use map and policies.

This chapter outlines elements in regards to present land use and the next chapter includes the future land use map.

## Livability & Investment

The livability and viability of a community are largely dependent on the pattern of its many, varied land uses. Transportation efficiency, accessibility, and the quality of life for the City's residents are determined in many cases by arrangement of land uses. The classification of a specific land use affects how a community can use that area of land. The classification of land uses in turn affects investments, activity levels, and health. It is critical to consider health, livability, and active living when analyzing current land uses and making future land use decisions.

Excessive development regulation also needs to be considered. Investment is discouraged through costly, difficult, and overly complex development regulations. Zoning and development policies need to be tailored for individual cities, and they need to be updated and amended as demands change. Zoning and development policies are in place to ensure land uses are compatible, to help maintain property values, and to assist with orderly development.

## Investment, Zoning, Compatibility & Clustering

Investment preferences along with zoning will help to encourage compatibility within the municipal boundaries. Investment will occur where there is a potential return. A longer term investment will likely consider compatibility and clustering to ensure a positive return.

Zoning is the process of dividing sections of the city into zones in which certain land uses are permitted or prohibited. Individual zones allow for similar and compatible uses. This helps to encourage clustering which impacts the return on investment for public and private entities.

Clustering can help to maintain property values by minimizing conflicts and increasing efficiency. When similarly-oriented businesses cluster together, there are economies of scale for the customers, businesses, and the City. Similarly-oriented businesses should be encouraged to locate near each other.

Businesses in the same industry locate close together, so they can take advantage of economies of scale in intermediate inputs. Multiple businesses can support an input supplier and infrastructure that is a significant cost for the business and City. These costs can be shared across multiple businesses, so these businesses and the City can be more efficient.

Firms in different industries locate close together, so they can benefit from sharing intermediate inputs, large labor pools to draw from, and positive externalities from shopping. Positive externalities from shopping occur when an individual goes shopping for one specific item and the shopper sees something nearby and purchases that as well.

Customers also benefit by having a number of goods and services in one location. Customers do not have to travel to buy different goods and services, and customers can compare similar goods more efficiently. The economics of clustering helps cities minimize infrastructure costs and limit sprawl.

Helping to promote clustering of businesses not only makes economic sense in most cases, but helps to promote an active lifestyle. If the majority of customer-oriented businesses are located in the Central Business District, then it would be convenient to walk from shop to shop. Connectivity helps to encourage physical activity and is a positive externality of clustering and compact development. Having a compact business district will help to make the community healthier and more sustainable.

### Hierarchical Order Zoning

Windom utilizes Hierarchical Order Zoning. As an example of Hierarchical Order Zoning, multi-family dwellings are permitted uses in Zoning Districts R-3 and B-1 and are conditional uses in higher level zoning districts (R-2 and B-3). This helps to encourage clustering of similar uses and provides flexibility compared to single-use zoning. Existing land uses in Windom are classified into the following categories:

- **Residential – R-1**
  - The “Single-Family Residential District” is designed for low-density single-family residences and provides certain private and public facilities and services that are compatible with the neighborhood.
- **Residential – R-2**
  - The “Urban Residential District” is designated for land that is presently developed in predominantly urban residential lots. The purpose of this district is to permit the

continuation and limited expansion of the more densely populated established sections of the City.

- **Residential – R-3**
  - The “Multi-Family Residential District” is designated for apartment complexes, townhouses, retirement complexes and other innovative multi-family developments.
- **PUD**
  - “Planned Unit Developments” (PUD) is established to provide comprehensive procedures and standards designed for planned unit developments (both district and conditional use) to allow the development of neighborhoods or portions thereof incorporating a variety of residential types and non-residential uses. Recognizing that traditional density, bulk, setbacks, use, and subdivision regulations which may be useful in protecting the character of substantially developed areas, may be appropriate to control development in less developed areas. Specifically, the PUD process, by allowing variation from the strict provisions related to setbacks, height, lot area, width and depth, and yards is intended to encourage innovations in residential development and creative use of land, etc.
- **Business – B-1 (Neighborhood Business District)**
  - The “Neighborhood Business District” is intended to identify suitable compact areas within the City for the maintenance and development of commercial service nodes which offer convenience services and retail goods to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The commercial clusters may have limited operations which serve patrons in automobiles, subject to issuance of a Conditional Use Permit, but are primarily pedestrian oriented for the convenience of local residents.
- **Business – B-2 (Highway Business District)**
  - The “Highway Business District” is designed to provide areas for commercial establishments that offer a broad range of goods and services largely to accommodate automobile-oriented customers. Uses would be primarily highway-oriented, provide compact and convenient shopping areas, and means of safe access and egress to abutting roads and highways.
- **Business – B-3 (Central Business District)**
  - The “Central Business District” is designed for providing the core service and retail businesses ample space to develop and allow those services to be accessed conveniently by residents and other customers. All businesses and services located in this district shall be of beneficial nature to the City and promote orderly development and generate economic use of land.
- **Industrial – I-1**
  - The “Light Industrial District” provides space for the establishment of warehousing and light industrial development.
- **Industrial – I-2**

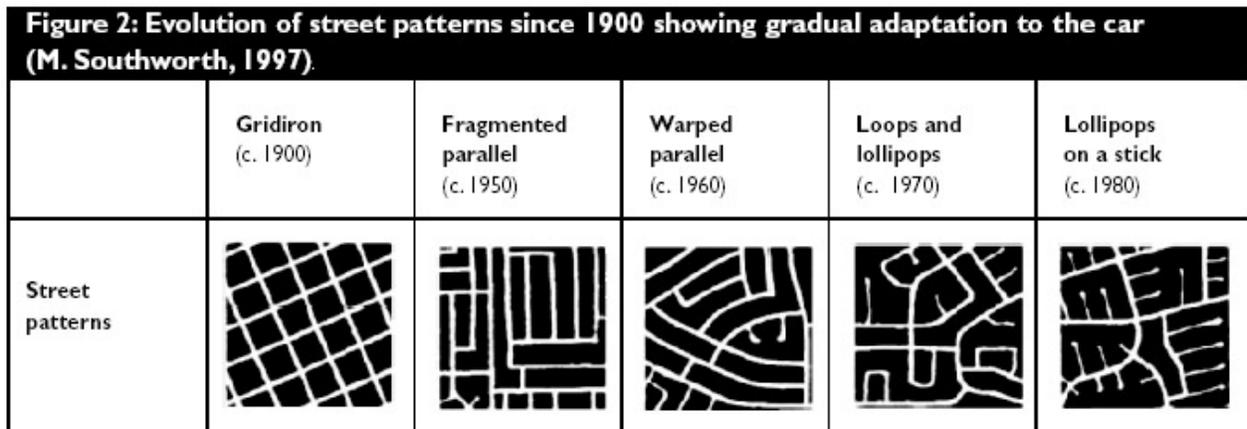
- The “Heavy Industrial District” provides space for a wide variety of industrial establishments which may operate to their maximum advantage without adversely affecting other nearby similar or dissimilar uses and activities.
- **Agricultural-Open Space District – A-0**
  - The “Agricultural-Open Space District” is intended to provide a district which will allow suitable areas of the City to be retained and utilized for low density residential, open space and/or agricultural uses, prevent rapid urbanization and provide economy in public expenditures for public utilities and service.
- **Airport Zoning**
  - Development and land use within and around the Windom Municipal Airport shall be regulated by the City of Windom-County of Cottonwood Joint Airport Zoning Board and the Windom Municipal Airport Zoning Ordinance.

### Efficient City Growth

Land Use decisions impact the returns on investment in sewer, water, roads, parks, and other infrastructure. A more compact development helps to decrease the cost of public infrastructure. If more people are living within a neighborhood, the fixed costs of infrastructure in that neighborhood can be spread across more people.

Compact efficient development is not only more efficient in regards to infrastructure, but it helps to increase connectivity and social cohesion. Traditional grid developments can help to increase connectivity, promote walking and biking, and decrease the costs of public infrastructure. The figure below shows how connectivity decreased as the gradual adoption of the car changed developments.

**T-Figure #1 Residential Street Pattern Design Comparison**



Residential Street Pattern Design<sup>60</sup>

This shift from the square grid development has taken place over the past half a century. This shift can be seen by older developments being more compact and walkable compared to newer developments

<sup>60</sup> Residential Street Pattern Design. Accessed: 2/12/18. Available: <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html>

being more spread out and more auto-dependent. This sprawl has a number of unintended consequences related to health, connectivity, community interaction, and return on investment regarding infrastructure.

Land use development is a complex process that affects a city's return on investment regarding infrastructure, a community's economic health, and a community's physical health. Land use decisions have long term impacts, so land use decisions should not be made without considering all of the potential impacts. Growth can happen in a manner where infrastructure is planned and all costs are considered. Efficiency should be a top priority along with connectivity with existing local and regional infrastructure, goods and services.

**LU-Table #1 Comparing Smart Growth & Sprawl**

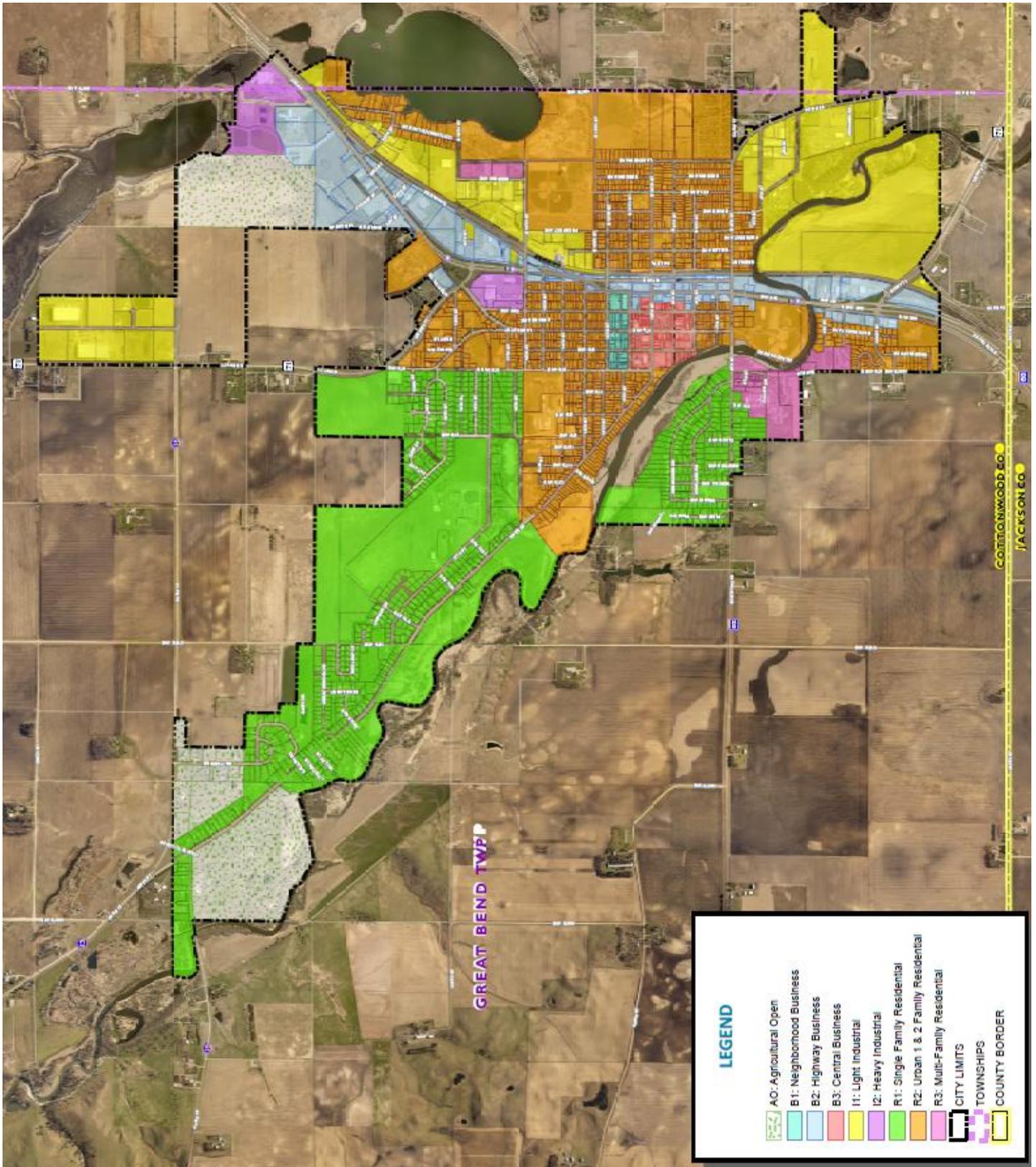
	<b>Sprawl</b>	<b>Smart Growth</b>
Density	Lower-density, dispersed activities	Higher-density, clustered activities
Growth pattern	Urban fringe (greenfield) development	Infill (brownfield) development
Land use mix	Homogeneous (single-use, segregated)	Mixed land uses
Scale	Larger scale; larger blocks and wider roads; less detail since people experience the landscape at a distance, as motorist	Human scale; smaller blocks and roads; careful detail, since people experience the landscape up close, as pedestrians
Public services (schools, parks, etc.)	Regional, consolidated, large; requires automobile access	Local, distributed, smaller; accommodates walking access
Transport	Automobile-oriented; poorly suited for walking, cycling and transit	Multi-modal; supports walking, cycling, and public transit
Connectivity	Hierarchical road network with numerous dead-end streets, and limited, unconnected walking and cycling facilities	Highly connected (grid or modified grid) streets and nonmotorized network (sidewalks, paths, crosswalks, and shortcuts)
Street Design	Streets designed to maximize motor vehicle traffic volume and speed	Streets designed to accommodate a variety of activities; traffic calming
Planning process	Unplanned, with little coordination between jurisdictions and stakeholders	Planned and coordinated between jurisdictions and stakeholders
Public space	Emphasizes private realm (yards, shopping, malls, gated communities, private clubs)	Emphasizes public realm (streets, walking, environments, public parks, etc.)

Source: Victoria Transport Policy Institute<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Victoria Transport Policy Institute. Smart Growth Policy Reforms. Accessed: 2/12/18. Available: [http://www.vtpi.org/smart\\_growth\\_reforms.pdf](http://www.vtpi.org/smart_growth_reforms.pdf)

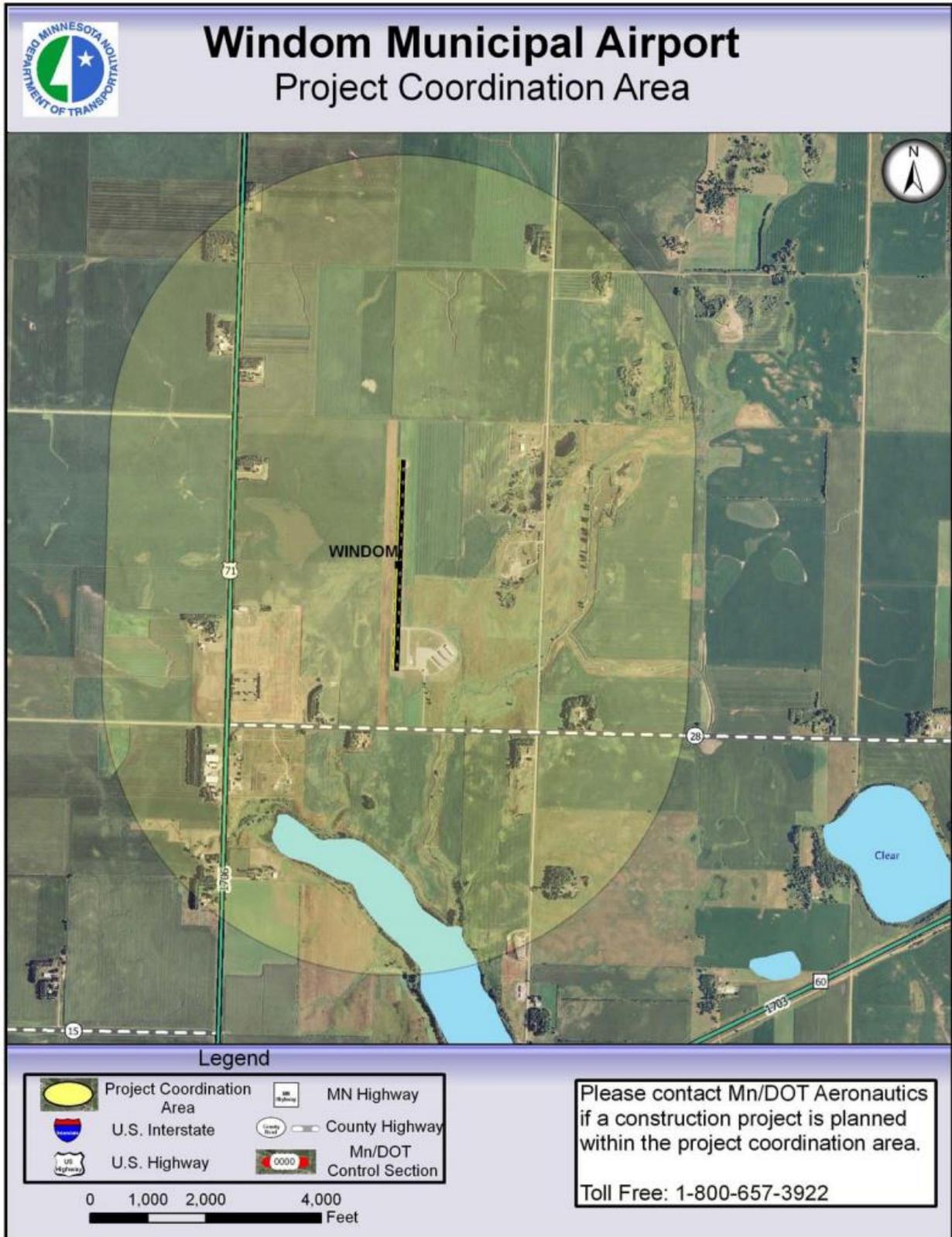
LU-Figure #1

Zoning Map - Windom



LU-Figure #2

Airport Influence Area Map - Windom



Mn/DOT - Office of Aeronautics

Updated: 1/1/2010

## Residential

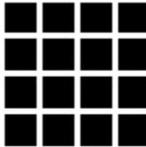
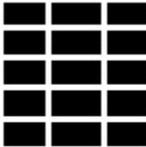
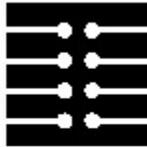
Generally, a city will develop around a central focal point like the main transportation corridor or central business district and continue to expand outwards. This was the case for Windom which developed around the railroad corridor, the Downtown Square, and the Highway 60/71 corridor.

Historically, older residential developments resembled traditional grid development. This is true for old neighborhoods in Windom and around the Downtown Square. These traditional square grid developments are the most efficient type of development in regards to infrastructure. With square grid development, dead ends in the sewer and water system can be avoided; there are typically higher population densities, so the cost of infrastructure per lot can be minimized; there are also health benefits associated with compact square grid developments.

Traditional grid development also increases connectivity and promotes walking and biking. Promoting compact developments will make it more convenient to walk and bike which has lasting health benefits. As you move to the right in the figure below, connectivity decreases and you move towards a more car-dependent development. This shift from the square grid development has taken place over the past half a century. This shift can be seen by older developments being more compact and walkable compared to newer developments being spread out and auto-dependent. Land use and the design of the community have a significant impact on the health of the community and the return on investment for infrastructure.

**LU-Figure #3 Comparison for Area Used for Streets**

**Figure 1: Comparison of area used for streets, among five typical patterns**

					
	<b>Square grid</b> (Miletus, Houston, Portland, etc.)	<b>Oblong grid</b> (most cities with a grid)	<b>Oblong grid 2</b> (some cities or in certain areas)	<b>Loops</b> (Subdivisions - 1950 to now)	<b>Culs-de-sac</b> (Radburn - 1932 to now)
<b>Percentage of area for streets</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	<b>27.4%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
<b>Percentage of buildable area</b>	<b>64.0%</b>	<b>65.0%</b>	<b>68.6%</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>76.3%</b>

Residential Street Pattern Design<sup>62</sup>

Residential developments in Windom have extended out in numerous directions. More recent residential developments include: River Bluff Subdivision in southern Windom; several developments along the Des Moines River; west side of Cottonwood Lake, and around the High School/ Middle School. Overall,

<sup>62</sup> Residential Street Pattern Design. Accessed: 7/14/15. Available: <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html>

residential development in Windom has occurred in an orderly manner, but Windom's housing supply has not kept up with demand.

Demand for housing in Windom is documented by a Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate which was finalized on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. This study identified a 3.7 percent vacancy rate in Windom. In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom to confirm a vacancy rate below 5 percent. In November 2016, the vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3 percent. A healthy vacancy rate is around 5 percent.

The Housing Study identified a need for 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade. The Housing Study identified the need for single-family homes, duplexes, quads, and multi-family units to accommodate market rate housing, seniors, higher-income families, and lower-income families. The Housing Study was completed prior to Fast Global Solution's expansion and the opening of Prime Pork creating 500 new jobs (as of May 2018) (two of Windom's larger employers). As such, since 2014 the housing market has tightened and the demand for units has grown.

Our local housing market is getting tighter and less affordable as demand increases. New employees are struggling to find affordable homes to purchase or available rental opportunities. This affects lower-income individuals to a greater extent as a larger percentage of their income goes towards housing.

Several new housing developments are currently being discussed. Planning efforts are focusing on multi-family and the potential of a new market-rate apartment. Several developers are interested in building the market-rate apartment, and the City is working with the developers on a possible location. There are also several developers interested in building other housing products that include: townhomes, higher-density senior cottages, four-plexes, and single-family spec houses.

### **Commercial**

Commercial activity in Windom was originally centered along the railroad corridor and the Downtown Square. More recently, commercial activity has shifted as a result in transportation investments in Highway 60. Windom is midpoint along a four-lane highway network connecting Omaha, Nebraska, and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. More business development is now centered along Highway 60 and Highway 71.

There are two main commercial districts in Windom. These commercial districts include: the Central Business District (Downtown Square) and the Highway Business District. The Highway Business District is comprised of four distinct districts that include: the East Highway 60 Business District, the Central Highway Business District, North Highway 71 Business District, and the South Highway Business District. There are also some dotted commercial and industrial developments throughout the community and just outside city limits. These are generally old businesses.

### Central Business District – Downtown Square

The Central Business District is located around the Downtown Square. This area is zoned B1 and B3. The area is bordered by 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue west, and Highway 60/71 to the East.

The Downtown Square consists of retail, service businesses, and professional office space. The focal point of the Downtown Square is the Cottonwood County Courthouse and greenspace around the courthouse. The Downtown Square does have some vacancies, but investment continues to occur. Additional investment should be encouraged, but overall the Downtown Square is a lively central business district in Greater Minnesota.

**LU-Figure #4 Central Business District – Zoning Map**



### Highway Business Districts

The Highway Business Districts are divided into four distinct districts along Highway 60 and Highway 71. These districts include: the East Highway 60 Business District, the Central Highway Business District, North Highway 71 Business District, and the South Highway Business District. These highway business districts have distinct road characteristics and various business types.

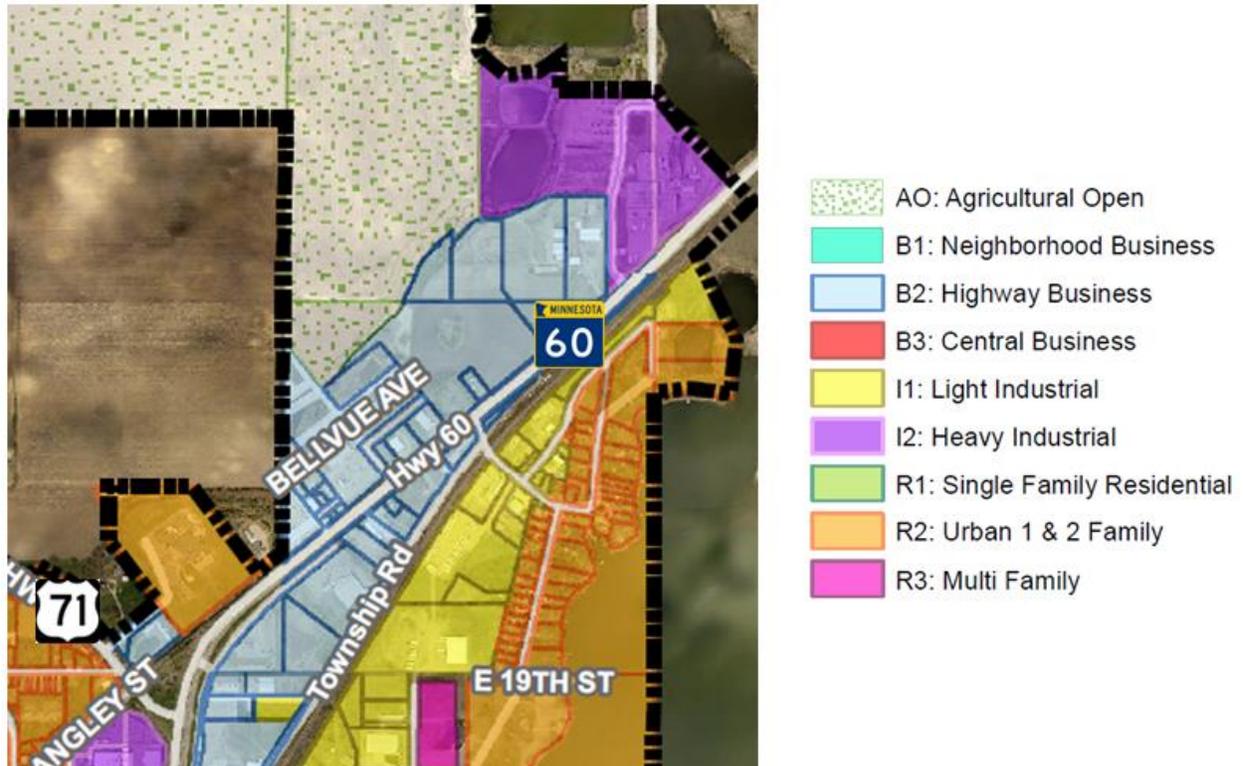
The Highway Business District consists of retail, service businesses, professional office space, agricultural businesses, and industrial businesses. These industrial businesses are generally old businesses. Streets

and alleys generally act as an effective buffer between businesses and other uses. Overall the Highway Business District along Highway 60 is compact, and there are few conflicts between land uses.

#### East Highway 60 Business District

The East Highway 60 Business District is the commercial area along Highway 60 northeast of Highway 71 continuing to Prime Pork and city limits. The East Highway 60 Business District is four-lane highway with urban and a portion of urbanizing roadway. The speed limit is 40 to 45 miles-per-hour.

**LU-Figure #5 East Highway 60 Business District – Zoning Map**

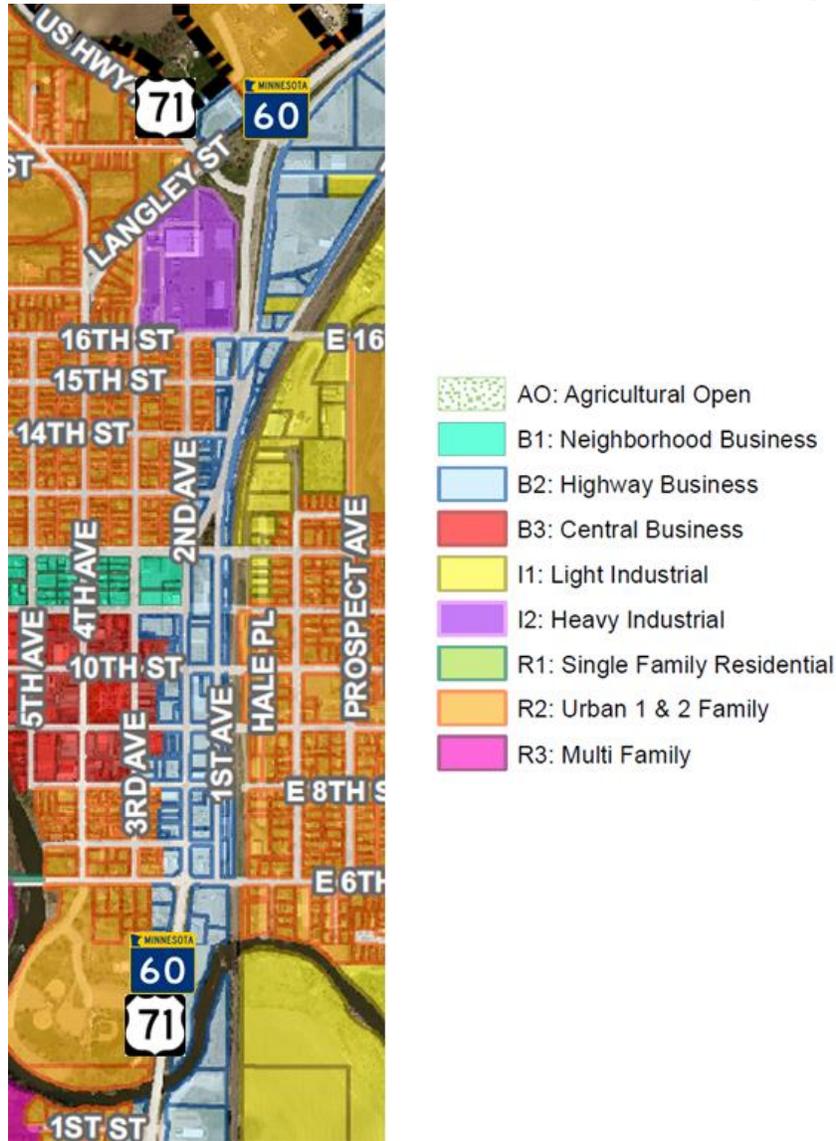


#### Central Highway Business District

The Central Highway Business District is the commercial area along Highway 60 and 71 from where Highway 71 merges with Highway 60 (at the north junction by Toro) and continuing to the bridge over the Des Moines River to the south. The Central Highway Business District is four-lane highway with urban roadway. The speed limit is 30 miles-per-hour.

LU-Figure #6

Central Highway Business District - Zoning Map



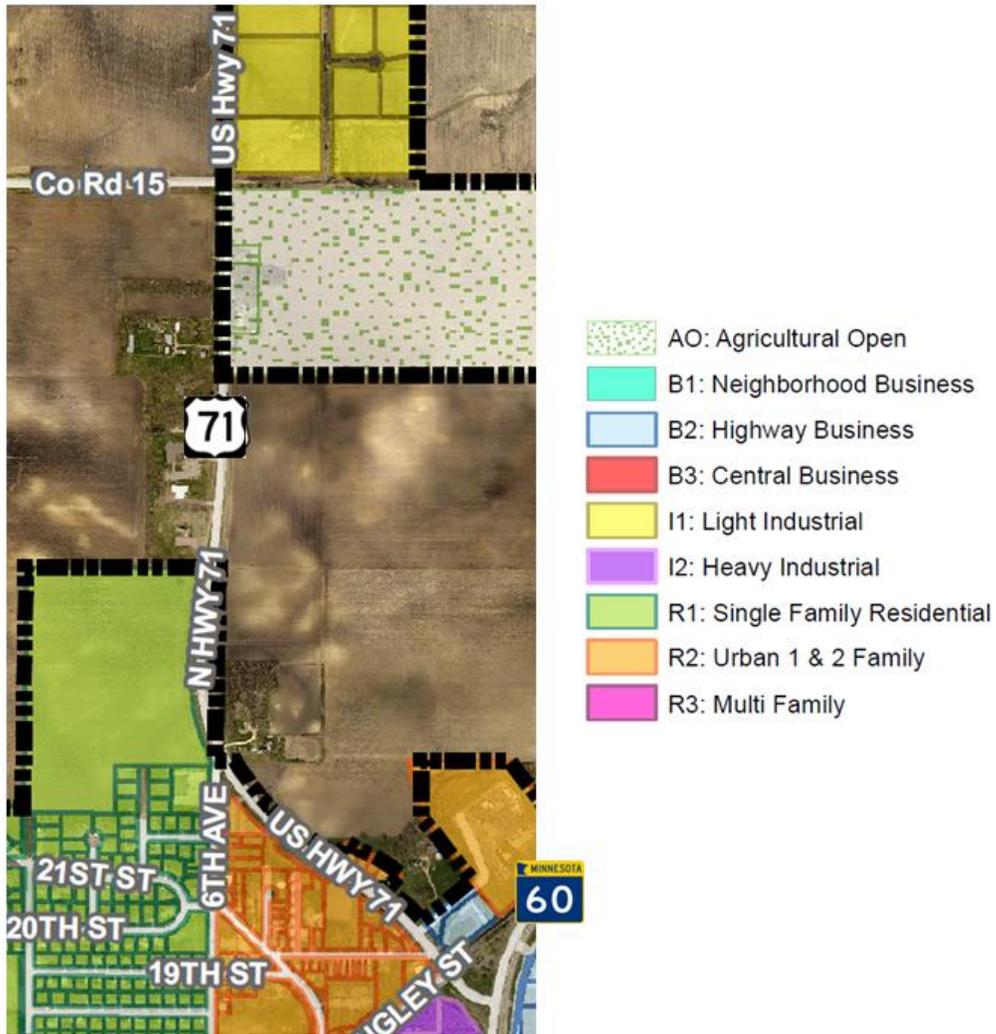
North Highway 71 Business District

The North Highway 71 Business District is the commercial area along Highway 71 from the north junction with Highway 60 to the North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP). There are several residential and commercial properties along with agricultural open space in this district. This area is a more rural area with a speed limit between 45 and 60 miles per hour.

The majority of North Highway 71 Business District is not within city limits. The City has not forced annexation. Before properties can access city service, they have to annex into the City.

LU-Figure #7

North Highway 71 Business District - Zoning Map

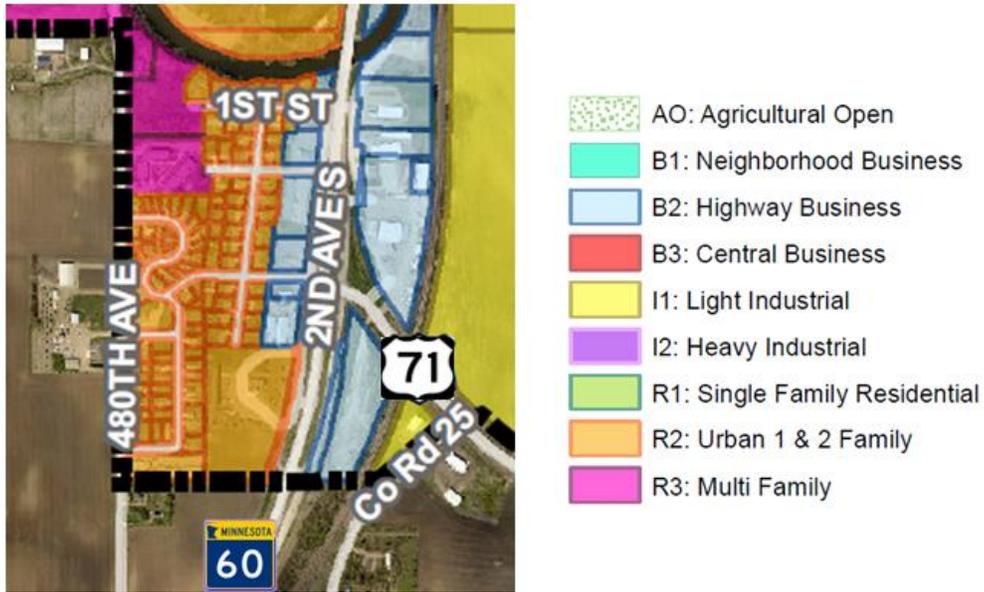


South Highway Business District

The South Highway Business District is the commercial area along Highway 60 and Highway 71 from the bridge over the Des Moines River at the north to city limits on the south. The South Highway Business District is four-lane highway with urban and a portion of urbanizing roadway. The speed limit is 30 to 45 miles-per-hour.

LU-Figure #8

South Highway Business District – Zoning Map



**Industrial**

**North Windom Industrial Park**

The main industrial area in Windom has been in transition since the establishment of the North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP) in 2013. The NWIP is located three-fourths of a mile north of Windom on Highway 71. Phase I of the NWIP consisted of 76 acres with 12 lots ranging in size from 2.28 acres to 7.52 acres. Only four of the original 12 lots are still remaining. An additional 80 acres are now available as part of Phase II (Spring 2018).

There are four additional industrial areas in Windom that include: Main Toro Property (16<sup>th</sup> Street), the Main Prime Pork Property (John Caldwell Drive), Windom Industrial Park (Carl Schneider Business Park), and the South Windom Industrial Park (County Road 26).

LU-Figure #9

North Windom Industrial Park – Available Lots



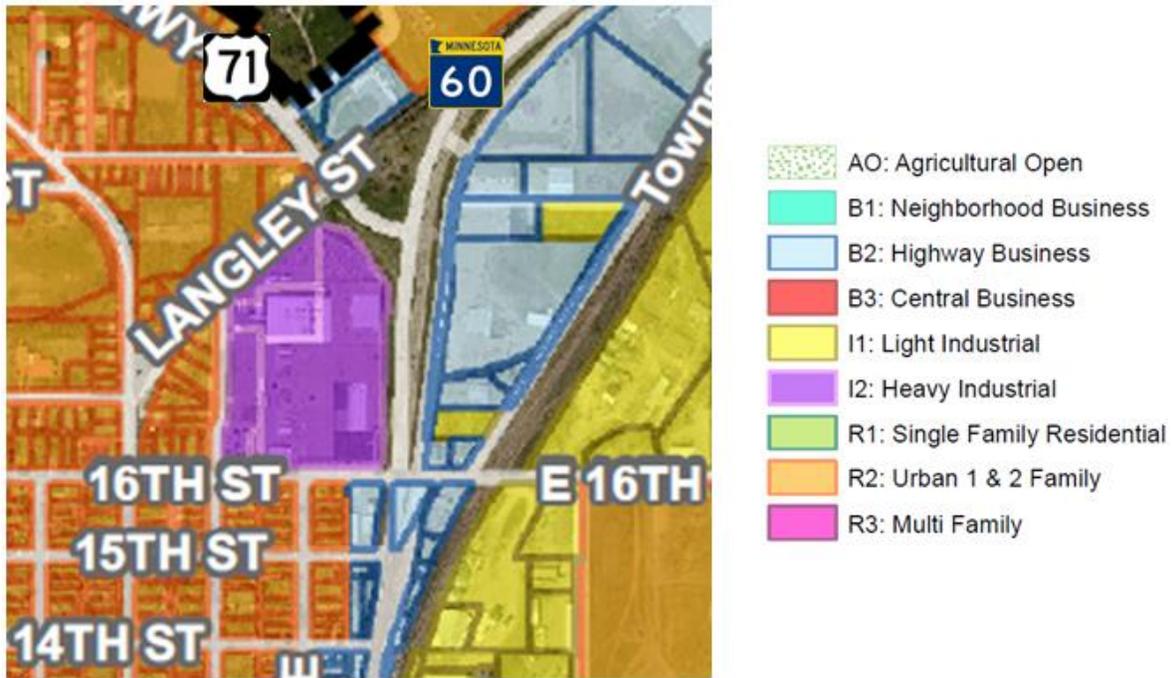
Main Toro Property – Windom

Toro is a long-term industrial business and employer in Windom. Toro’s main plant in Windom is located at 174 16<sup>th</sup> Street. This property borders 16<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Langley Street, Highway 71, and Highway 60. The buildings on this property occupy approximately 7 acres and the entire property is approximately 13.7 acres.

The streets act as a buffer around the facility and have served as an adequate buffer.

LU-Figure #10

Main Toro Property - Zoning Map



#### Main Prime Pork Property - Windom

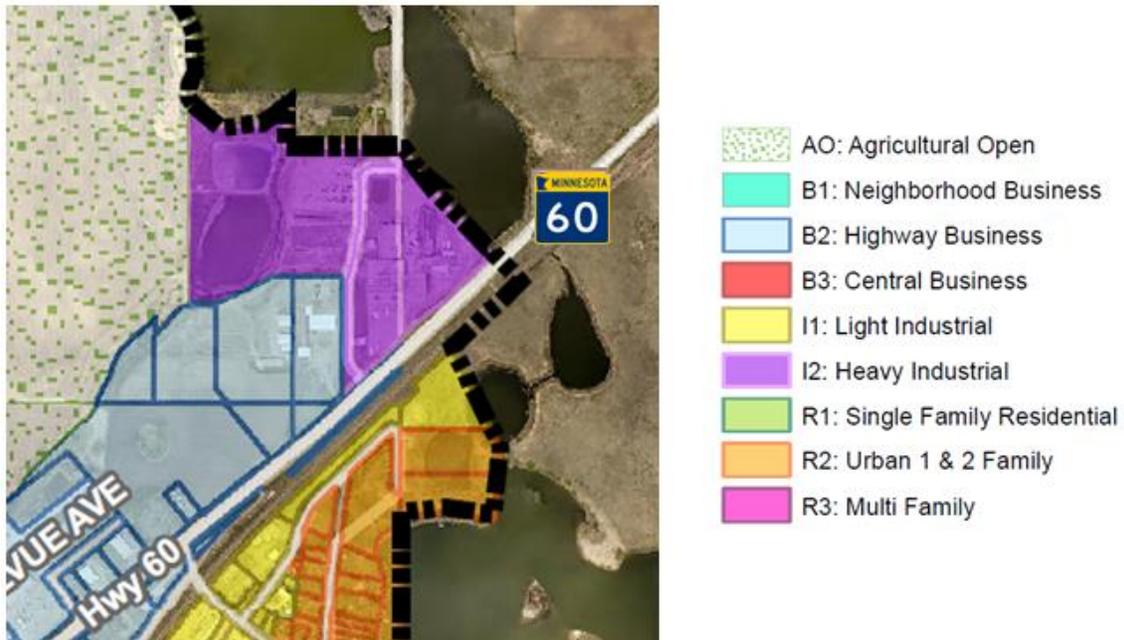
Prime Pork is a new pork processing business that purchased, renovated, and expanded the old PM Beef – Windom facility. This plant is located at 2850 Highway 60 East. This plant was originally operated as Caldwell Packing. The property has been utilized on a long-term basis as either a beef or pork processing plant and has been a major employer and industrial business in Windom.

Prime Pork became fully operational in the Spring of 2017. As of June 2018, Prime Pork has created 500 jobs. Prime Pork currently operates one shift and a second shift is not anticipated at this time according to company officials.

The Main Prime Pork Property is on the edge of Windom along Highway 60. There are multiple street and land uses that create an effective buffer. Warren Lake acts as a buffer to the north. John Caldwell Drive acts as a buffer to the south along with other similar uses and supporting businesses; Highway 60 and the railroad tracks act as a buffer to the east; farm ground acts as a buffer to the west.

LU-Figure #11

Main Prime Pork Property - Zoning Map



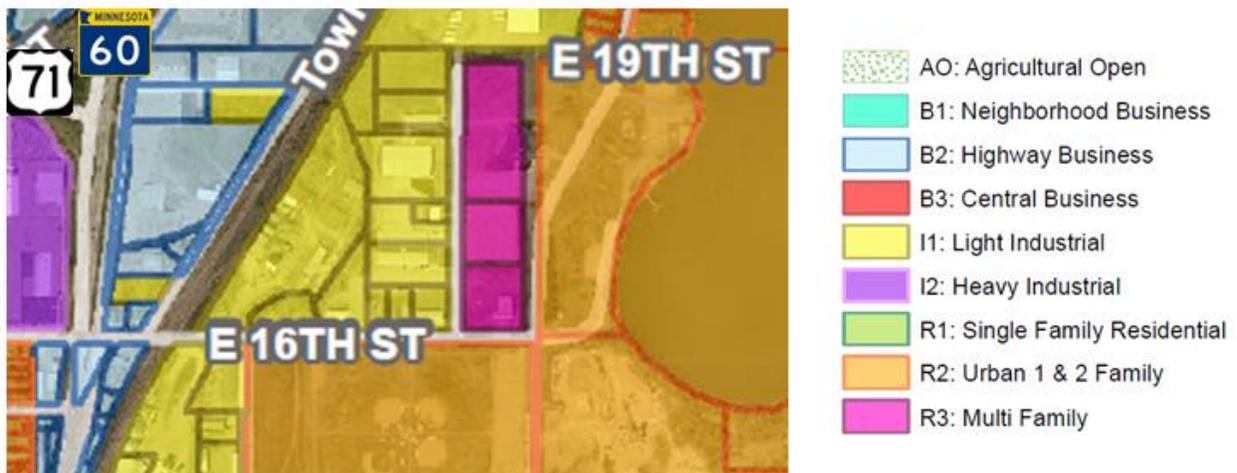
Windom Industrial Park – Carl Schneider Business Park

The Carl Schneider Business Park is located on west side and north end of North Redding Avenue. The Carl Schneider Business Park is primarily warehousing with some light industrial businesses. North Redding Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Street act as a buffer between the Carl Schneider Business Park, Community Center, and the 58 acres of greenspace owned by the City. Parks in this area include Tegels Park, Windom Recreation Area, and the greenspace around the Community Center.

The east side of North Redding Avenue was rezoned from light industrial (I-1) to residential (R-3) in 2017. North Redding Avenue, 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and existing street right-of-way act as effective buffers between I-1 and R-3.

LU-Figure #12

Carl Schneider Business Park - Zoning Map

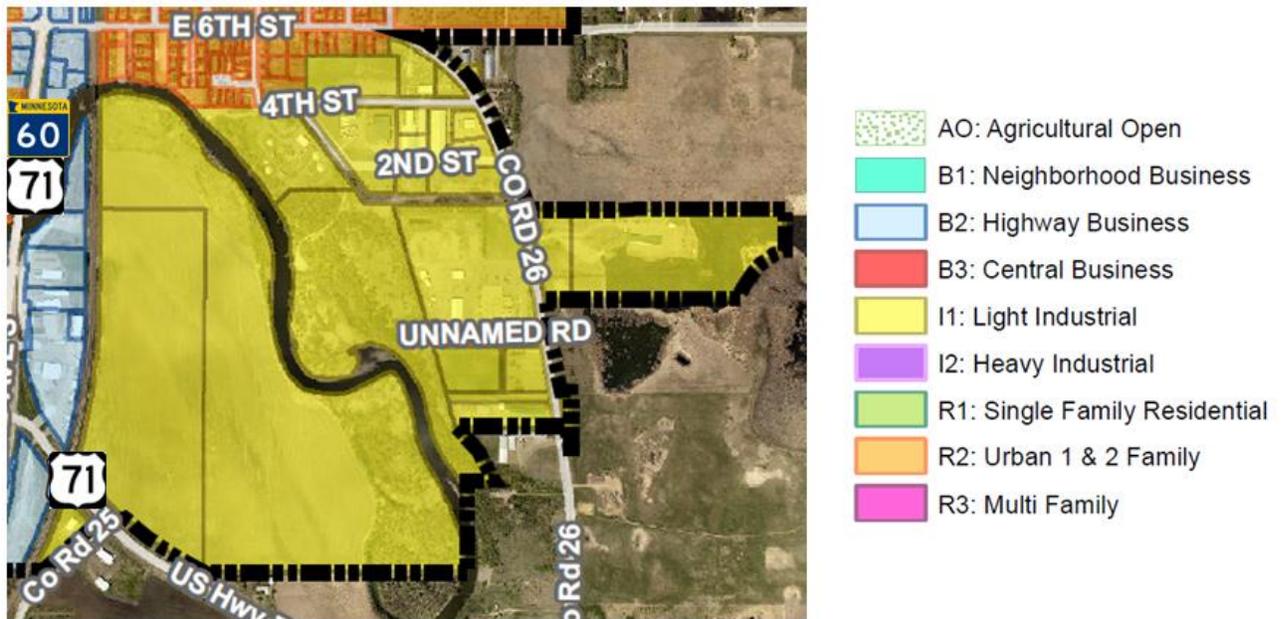


### South Windom Industrial Park – County Road 26

The South Windom Industrial Park is an older industrial and business district in Windom. The South Windom Industrial Park is located along County Road 26 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The South Windom Industrial Park is primarily warehousing, distribution, and office space.

Room for growth of industrial businesses in the South Windom Industrial Park is limited. There is an existing 20,160 square foot building for sale or lease. There is also a vacant property that could be developed, but fill would be needed. There are opportunities for development and redevelopment, but industrial growth in Windom is preferred in the North Windom Industrial Park.

**LU-Figure #13 South Windom Industrial Park – Zoning Map**



### Nonconforming Land Uses

Compatibility is not absolute, so community members may disagree in regards to types of land uses that are compatible and land uses that are not compatible. Compatibility is ultimately determined by the Planning Commission and the City Council. The Planning Commission is comprised of eight members with two members from each precinct. The City Council is comprised of five voting members and a nonvoting mayor. Actions by the Planning Commission must be approved by the City Council before they are implemented. Recommendations from the Planning Commission help City Council members make educated decisions that reflect Windom’s zoning ordinances and policies. The final decision is made by the City Council.

*Zoning should not be static. As demand and uses change, zoning should also change. Zoning can help to guide investments in infrastructure, so new investments in infrastructure are planning for specific types of land uses.*

Most nonconforming land uses are often a result of businesses predating zoning and zoning updates. It is critical to work with businesses in locations that do not conforming to existing zoning. Nonconforming

land uses can result in disinvestment and a declining tax base in that area. Infrastructure may not be sized appropriately, so efficiency and the return on investment in regards to infrastructure may not be positive in areas with nonconforming land uses.

There can also be health risks associated with the location of an industrial business next to a residential area or park. The types of traffic and emissions in industrial areas can sometimes be hazardous if individuals are exposed to these factors on a regular basis. Noises from industrial areas are also a contributing factor for separating nonconforming land uses.

Another health risk is roadway safety. Industrial truck traffic does not mix well with pedestrians. Separating land uses will help to decrease conflicts and safety issues.

Several properties were identified as nonconforming land uses. “A nonconforming land use is a use of property that was allowed under the zoning regulations at the time the use was established but which, because of subsequent changes in those regulations, is no longer a permitted use.”<sup>63</sup> A nonconforming land use may also be the result of a business existing prior to zoning, extension of city limits, and limited zoning regulations.

### Buffers

A buffer between nonconforming land uses can help to increase safety, health, and livability. A street or other physical barrier can act as a buffer. A buffer can also be vegetation, landscaping, and screening. A landscaped buffer is a fairly recent development in zoning, but it can be effective. A landscaping buffer provides space, obstructs undesirable views, and in other ways reduces the impact of one use upon another.

When analyzing compatibility, the Planning Commission and City Council need to discuss and answer the following questions:

- Are we establishing a hierarchical order?
- Are we separating uses with streets or other physical barriers?
- Are we establishing a landscaping buffer?
- Is the site plan acting as a buffer?
- Are there safety issues regarding transportation? (mixing residential and industrial)
- Are we connecting this land use decision with the Future Land Use Map?

### Agricultural

The municipal boundary of Windom is bordered by agricultural land. Use of this agricultural land is largely controlled by Cottonwood County Planning and Zoning. There are also agricultural lands controlled by the City of Windom. These sections of Agricultural Open Space within the municipal boundary of Windom include: Windom Country Club property, property around Matthew Drive, North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP) Phase II, and property between Highway 60 and the NWIP along Warren Lake.

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<sup>63</sup> MRSC. Nonconforming Uses, Structures, and Lots. Accessed: 2/12/18. Available: <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Development-Regulations/Nonconforming-Uses-Structures-and-Lots-Regulatio.aspx>

Adjacent agricultural land should be incorporated around Windom to ensure orderly and planned development. Other cities in Southwest Minnesota have incorporated or acquired agricultural land to ensure orderly and planned development. Refer to the Future Land Use Map for additional Agricultural Open Space recommendations.

**LU-Figure #14**

**Agricultural Open Space – Windom**



**Vacant or Underutilized Property**

There are properties in Windom that are underutilized in regards to space. A few of these properties are commercial, have infrastructure, and could be developed. There are also a couple larger commercial properties that have infrastructure and could be split to encourage additional investment. The majority of these commercial properties are not for sale, but these and other properties should be pursued for development to help increase the return on investment in regards to infrastructure and to help grow our local tax base.

There is a high demand for property along Highway 60. We need to work with these local property owners to connect them with developers and possible projects. All projects may not be compatible with the current landowners' plans, but inquiries with property owners should continue. Existing landowners will be able to compare projects and potential revenue. This will hopefully lead to the development and redevelopment of underutilized properties over time.

There are also numerous vacant residential lots in Windom. The majority of these lots have not been utilized for new residential construction due to the locations and the potential return on investment. Some of these residential properties could be developed by the Windom Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA).

## Summary

Windom is a regional hub in Southwest Minnesota. Minnesota Highway 60 and U.S. Highway 71 are the two primary transportation corridors in Windom that provide connections to national shipping networks. These transportation corridors are driving investment and growth in Windom.

Windom is growing and is projected to grow even more. Since the Fall of 2016, Prime Pork, a new pork processing facility in Windom, created 500 jobs (June 2018). Fast Global Solutions, a manufacturing company in Windom, has a goal to double its workforce by 2020. Fast Global currently employs approximately 174 workers and will level off around 300 employees by 2020. Numerous other smaller businesses have reported that they are hiring additional employees.

As these businesses grow, the demand for goods and services in the community grows and changes. This increased demand results in new business start-ups, business expansions, and “creative destruction”. As “creative destruction” occurs, more efficient businesses take the lead and this overwhelming positive process leads to a stronger local economy.

This Present Land Use Chapter focused on community design and land use. Community design is just one element, but it plays a critical role in the return on investment regarding infrastructure, encouraging physical activity, and a livable community. The design of a community has a direct impact on the health of a community including physical health and economic health.

When making future land use decisions, planning is a critical step. The Windom Comprehensive Plan will be a guide. Individual development plans are also critical. Individual development plans can be more in-depth and can evolve when the project changes. The goals, strategies, and objectives in this plan have outlined paths to help create a more efficient and livable community.

By planning and creating a livable community, we are facilitating economic growth. “When people are there, people invest.”<sup>64</sup> Decision makers need to view livability, parks, trails, and amenities as vital tools in economic development. Attracting and retaining residents is key to a strong and stable economy.

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<sup>64</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 11/2/15. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

# CHAPTER 12: Future Land Use

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## Introduction

Windom is one of the few communities in Southwest Minnesota that is growing and is projected to grow. The Minnesota State Demographic Center shows that the population in the City of Windom is projected to increase by 4.4 percent from 2010 to 2020. Numerous studies also support this projection including the City's housing study, the School's enrollment figures and projections, along with recent and planned business growth.

## Growth

Overall, market value in Windom grew by 19.2% over the past year to \$284.3 million in 2017 (S&P Global Ratings). From 2016 through 2017, Windom EDA saw a number of large projects and a number of expansions. Prime Pork invested nearly \$80 million in Windom to create a state-of-the-art pork processing facility. Other new projects include: Windom Wash (a full-service truck wash), Duffy's Bar and Grill (a new family-friendly restaurant), New Vision Co-op's new grain storage and scale, a new building for the Fulda Area Credit Union, and numerous other projects.

Windom is located along Minnesota Highway 60 which (as of Fall 2018) will provide a 4-lane connection between Minneapolis – St. Paul, Minnesota, and Omaha, Nebraska. This location offers excellent shipping routes and connectivity to national shipping networks. There is currently an average daily traffic volume of 12,000+, and MnDOT predicts another 5,000+ when the last section of the 4-lane expansion project is completed in 2018.

Visibility for businesses and our workforce is driving growth in Windom and along Highway 60. Future land use decisions need to balance business growth with local connectivity, through traffic, and livability. Traffic calming is a must, so drivers know they are entering city limits.

Changing the environment between the East Highway 60 Business District, the Central Business District, and the South Highway Business District will help to calm traffic. A posted speed limit and enforcement can be enhanced through changing the environment to delineate the change from a highway atmosphere to an urban atmosphere where pedestrians will be present. Refer to the section of commercial districts for descriptions of the highway business districts.

## Primary Focus

At this time housing is the primary economic development issue in Windom. The availability of housing restricts business growth. Businesses and local realtors continue to indicate a tight housing market in Windom. Once a worker is offered a job, finding adequate housing becomes a significant barrier to living in Windom.

Our demand for housing is documented by a Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis and Demand Estimate which was finalized for the City of Windom on May 13, 2014, by Viewpoint Consulting Group. This study identified a 3.7 percent vacancy rate in Windom. In October and November of 2016, Viewpoint Consulting Group resurveyed the rental properties in Windom to confirm a vacancy rate

below 5 percent. In November 2016, the vacancy rate in Windom was 2.3 percent. By industry standards, a healthy vacancy rate is around 5 percent.

The goal of the City Council and Economic Development Authority of Windom (EDA) is to increase the supply of housing. The Housing Study identified a need for 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade. The Housing Study identified the need for single-family homes, duplexes, quads, and multi-family units to accommodate market-rate housing, seniors, higher-income families, and lower-income families. The Housing Study was completed prior to Fast Global Solutions' expansion and the opening of Prime Pork creating 500 new jobs (June 2018) (two of Windom's larger employers).

To illustrate the lack of new multi-family housing construction, the last new multi-family development (more than 4 units) was constructed by the Windom EDA in 2001. As our businesses grow, our housing market is getting tighter. This is causing rental and housing prices to rise and affects lower income individuals at a disproportionate rate.

### Planning

Planning is critical to ensure healthy growth, a positive return on investment regarding infrastructure, and to retain and attract people to Windom. The built environment should warrant significant planning and comparing options, since streets and other infrastructure are a 30-plus year investment. The needs of the built environment will likely change over that 30-year period, but there are core elements that will remain.

"Whether it comes from formal research or simple observation, the evidence keeps piling up. Lots of people want to live and work where they can walk more and drive less."<sup>65</sup>

- A clear majority of people – 60 percent – favor neighborhoods with a walkable mix of houses and stores rather than neighborhoods that require more driving between home, work and play according to the latest Community Preferences Survey from the National Association of Realtors.
- A survey by the American Planning Association found that 56 percent of millennials and 46 percent of baby boomers want to live in more walkable neighborhoods with a mix of uses.
- Half of the respondents to an Urban Land Institute survey said that walkability is either the top priority or high priority when deciding where they want to live. A little more than half – 52 percent – said they want to live where they don't need to use a car so often.

Future land use decisions should be based on connectivity and creating an environment where people want to be.

- "If a place is more walkable, people will spend more money locally."<sup>66</sup>
- "The best walkable communities have short blocks, frequent intersections, and are well connected."<sup>66</sup>
- "Sidewalks need to be separate from roads, have no connection gaps, and be wide enough for people to walk side-by-side."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> National Association of Realtors. The Walkable Demand. Winter 2017. Accessed:4/3/17. Available: [http://www.oncommonground-digital.org/oncommonground/winter\\_2017\\_walkable\\_neighborhoods?pg=4#pg4](http://www.oncommonground-digital.org/oncommonground/winter_2017_walkable_neighborhoods?pg=4#pg4)

## Background

A Future Land Use Map can be considered one of the most important features of the Comprehensive Plan. The main concept of the Future Land Use Map is to simply depict the general direction of land uses which the City should seek to achieve over the long term. The ideas and concepts derived from each chapter of the plan are used to determine the most appropriate spatial distribution of land within the City and surrounding area. The Future Land Use Map is not only used as a means for developing land on the City's fringes, it is also used as a way of achieving stability and orderly land use transitions in established areas of the City.

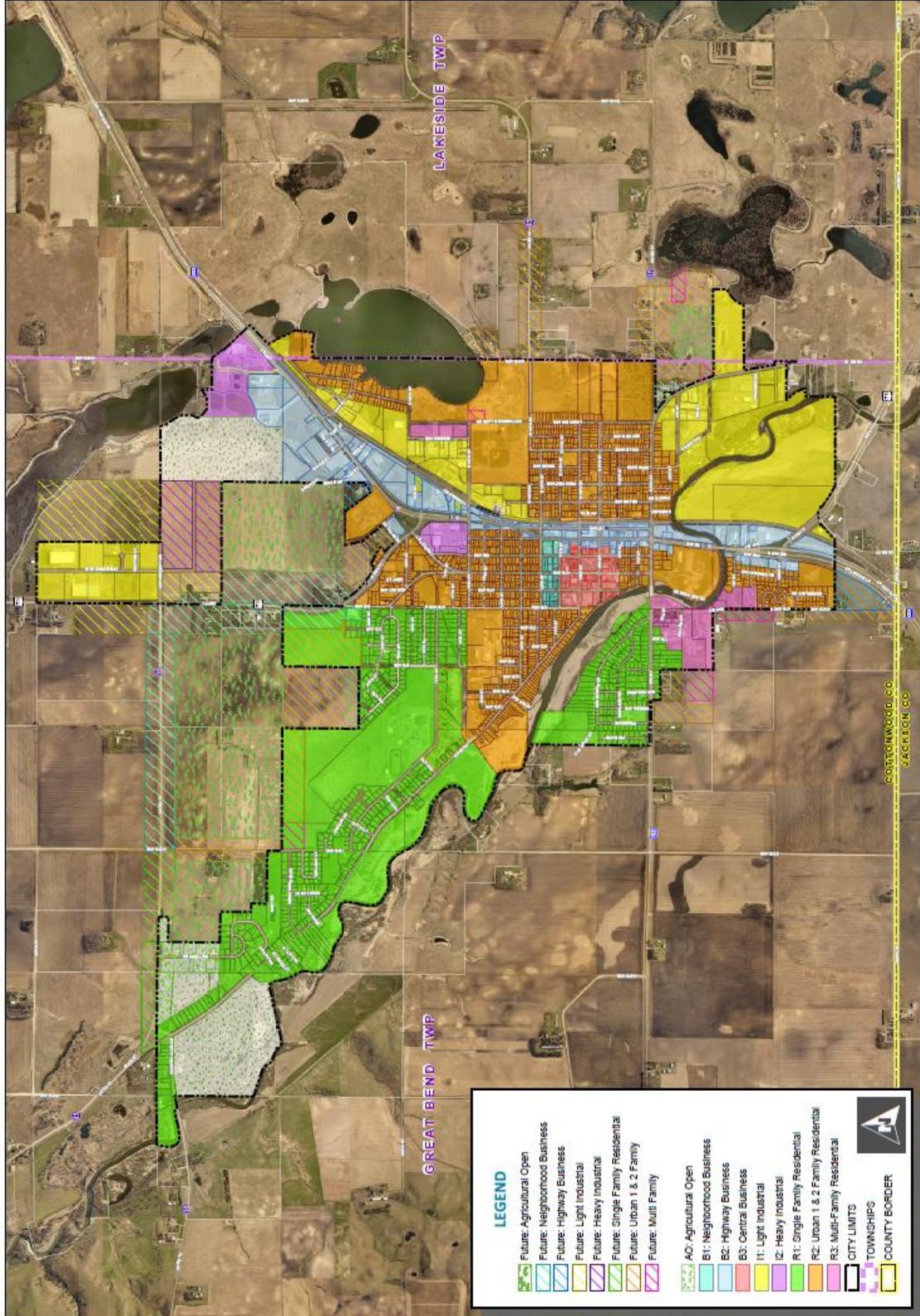
If the momentum of new development is entirely focused on open space and other vacant areas around the City's outskirts, it will become more likely that private sector disinvestments and blight will occur in the older areas of the community. A concentrated effort should be made to redevelop properties and promote infill development. Other efforts may include demolition and beautification of blighted areas either through natural screening or elimination of the problem.

### The Comprehensive Plan & Future Land Use Map Guides:

- Requests for zoning changes
- Decisions regarding existing infrastructure
- Decisions regarding new infrastructure
- Decisions regarding annexation

LU-Figure #15

Future Land Use Map - Windom



Contact the Development Department with the City of Windom for a PDF of the Future Land Use Map

## Residential

A Comprehensive Housing Study was finalized for the City of Windom in 2014 by Viewpoint Consulting Group. The Housing Study identified a need for 130 new housing units in Windom from 2014 to the end of the decade. The Housing Study identified the need for single-family homes, duplexes, quads, and multi-family units to accommodate market rate housing, seniors, higher-income families, and lower-income families. The Housing Study was completed prior to Fast Global Solution's expansion and the opening of Prime Pork which created 500 new jobs (two of Windom's larger employers). As such, since 2014 the housing market has tightened and the demand for units has grown.

The City of Windom is researching several options for a new residential development. Numerous locations were discussed as part of the planning process for the Housing Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map. The top location for residential housing is the South Cottonwood Lake Development.

### South Cottonwood Lake Development

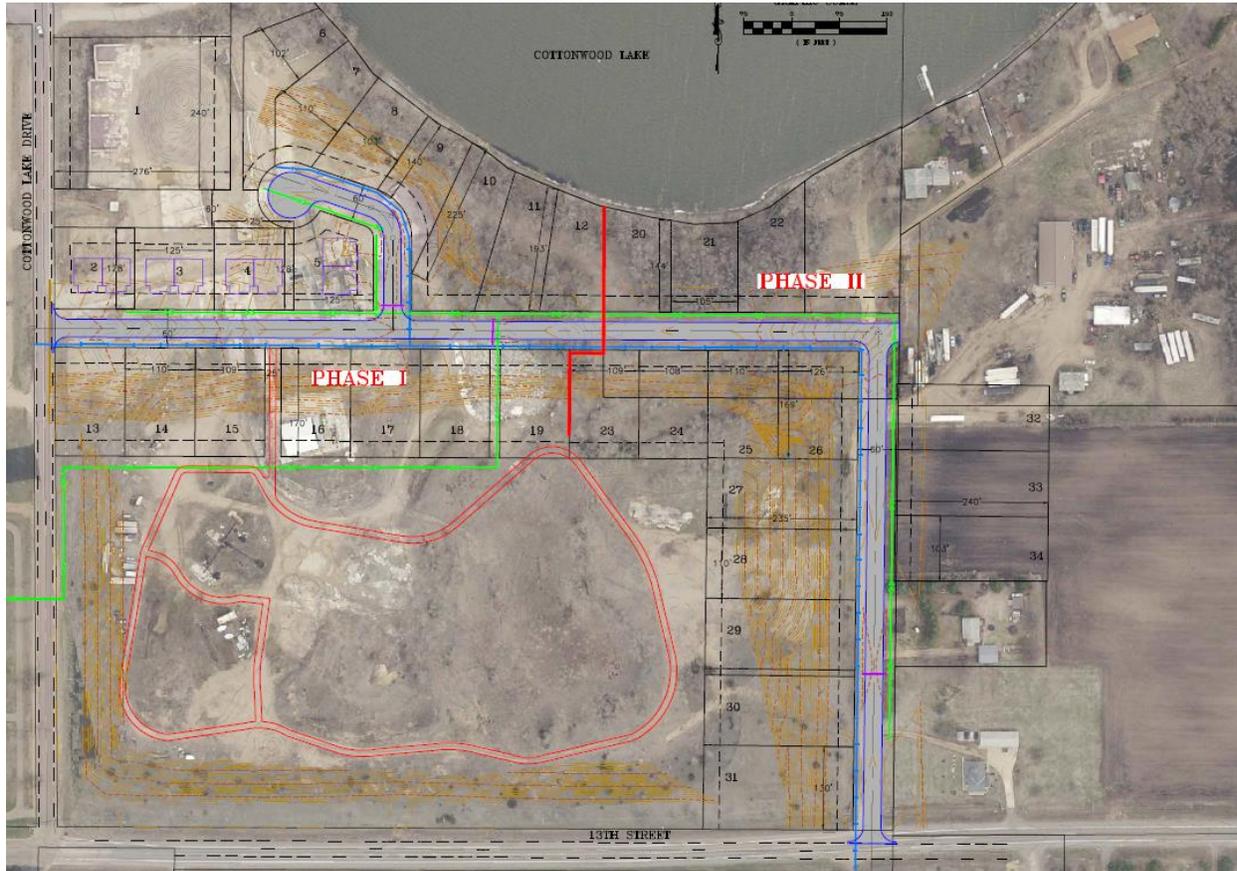
The South Cottonwood Lake Development is located along Cottonwood Lake Drive between 16<sup>th</sup> Street and County Road 13. The South Cottonwood Lake Development will likely be a Planned Unit Development that could occur in multiple phases. The proposed plan includes multi-family, lake lots, duplex lots, traditional city lots, and country lots. This plan is likely to change numerous times before the final development plan is approved by the Planning Commission.

The South Cottonwood lake Development is preferred for numerous reasons that include:

- Wellhead Protection
- Conflicting Land Use (industrial business located in a R-2 zoning district)
- Adjacent Amenities and Greenspace
- Variety of lots that could be developed
- Potential for multi-family & lake lots
- Amenities & Connectivity

**LU-Figure #16**

**Draft – South Cottonwood Lake Development – Cemstone**



Contact the Development Department with the City of Windom for a PDF of the Future Land Use Map

Timing of a new residential development will depend on Cemstone’s plans, potential locations to quarry, price of the property, etc. Currently, there are two multi-family housing developers interested in the South Cottonwood Lake Development. There is also a spec housing developer and numerous individuals interested in building duplexes and single-family homes in the development.

**Residential Development Options**

Twelve plus locations have also been researched for residential housing. The majority of these locations require large expenditures for installation of infrastructure. Extensive planning should occur before infrastructure is extended for any development.

It is very difficult for a new development to cash flow when you consider the cost of the street and other infrastructure. Utilizing existing infrastructure will help a new residential development support itself. There are several locations that could be developed that utilize existing infrastructure. Not all of the locations that have existing infrastructure are for sale or are able to be developed.

### Infill – Residential Development

Infill development is preferred, since it utilizes existing infrastructure. Infill is not always an option because developers propose the locations for their projects and not the City or EDA. Private investment drives a new development.

An infill project may not have an ideal lot size and neighboring properties may discourage investments in the property. If a private developer is not interested in an infill project, there is an opportunity for the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Windom (HRA) to develop the property as a HRA rental property. The City's Blighted Homes Demolition Program will fund the demolition of one blighted home in 2018. The five-year CIP requests \$30,000 annually for this program. The goal is to demolish three blighted properties a year and revolve revenue from lot sales to cover or partially cover demolition costs.

### Private Investment – Residential Development

It is always preferable for a private developer to fund a new housing development. This is not always an option. Street and infrastructure costs are significant, so it is difficult for private developers to receive a sufficient return on investment regarding a new residential development. This is a common problem in Southwest Minnesota where rental rates are not as high as larger communities in metro areas.

Infrastructure costs are typically a barrier to a privately-funded development, so the City and the Economic Development Authority of Windom (EDA) are often partners. This may include: working with a multiple-family housing developer to plan a development that will work for a larger apartment; working with an existing property owner to extend infrastructure so a property can be developed; providing matching funds with a private developer on a grant; providing land to help buy-down the development costs; or providing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to help the project cash flow.

If the EDA is the developer, the project cash flow is based on lot sales and tax revenue over a 30-year period. The 30 years is based on the useful life of a street before the street requires resurfacing. Projected cash flow figures include lot sales and tax revenue minus the inputs that include: price of the property, infrastructure costs, and other development costs. The EDA and City need to do extensive modeling and projections on a project to make sure the development can support itself.

For additional information regarding potential new housing developments and prospective developers, please contact the Windom EDA.

### Commercial

There are two main commercial districts in Windom. These commercial districts include: the Central Business District (Downtown Square) and the Highway Business District. The Highway Business District is comprised of four distinct districts that include: the East Highway 60 Business District, the Central Highway Business District, North Highway 71 Business District, and the South Highway 71 Business District.

### Central Business District – Downtown Square

The Central Business District is located around the Downtown Square. The area is bordered by 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue west, and Highway 60/71 to the East. There are no conflicting land uses in the Central Business District.

The Central Business District is a car-oriented area. There are multiple goals in the Windom Active Living Plan and the Comprehensive Plan to improve walkability and bikeability around the Square. Making the Downtown Square more pedestrian-friendly will help to drive investment to this area.

There have been requests to allow housing on the ground floor around the Downtown Square. Our current zoning does allow housing on the second and third floors. At this time there are no plans to change this provision of the zoning ordinance.

There have also been requests to allow overnight parking around the Downtown Square. Currently, parking is not allowed around the Downtown Square between 2am and 6am due to street maintenance and snow removal concerns. There have been discussions to allow overnight parking on the inside of the Downtown Square (around the Court House). There are seven publically-owned parking lots around the Downtown Square. A number of these lots allow for overnight parking.

**LU-Figure #17 Central Business District – Future Land Use Map**



### Highway Business Districts

The Highway Business District is divided into four distinct districts along Highway 60 and Highway 71. These districts include: the East Highway 60 Business District, the Central Highway Business District, North Highway 71 Business District, and the South Highway 71 Business District. These highway business districts have different road characteristics and business types.

### East Highway 60 Business District

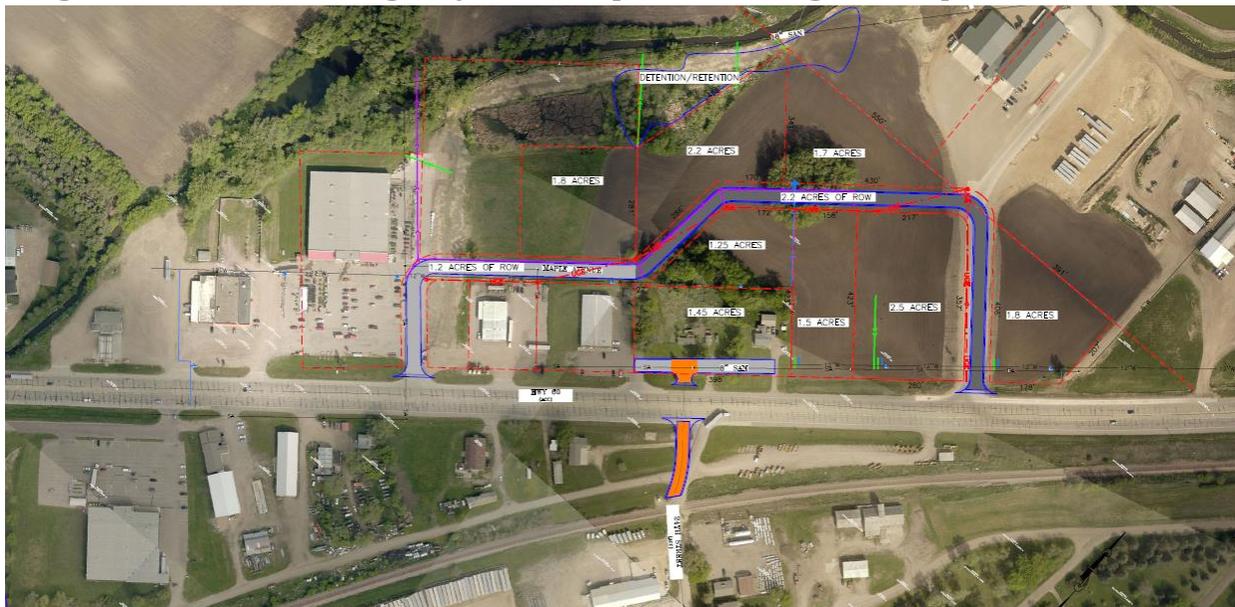
The East Highway 60 Business District is the commercial area along Highway 60 northeast of the north Highway 71 junction. This district continues northeasterly along Highway 60 to Prime Pork and city limits. The East Highway 60 Business District is four-lane highway with urban and a portion of urbanizing roadway. The speed limit is 40 to 45 miles-per-hour.

Commercial property along Highway 60 is in high demand. There is agricultural land that can be developed along the northwest side of Highway 60 between Runnings and Windom Wash, a new truck wash that was established in 2017. Infrastructure is shovel-ready to this property, but a frontage road or backage road would be needed to develop the entire property.

A Transportation Economic Development Infrastructure (TEDI) Grant application was submitted in 2017, but the project was not funded. Five businesses did submit Letters of Interest and one larger business committed to a rendering. This area should be pursued for future infrastructure grants.

A number of these lots could also be developed with less infrastructure investment by adding a frontage road. This may be a preferable option. Back lots are less desirable. Installation of a shorter frontage road would also allow for deeper lots. Any development in this area will need to utilize existing highway approaches.

**E-Figure #10 East Highway 60 Development – Backage Road Option**



**E-Figure #11 East Highway 60 Development – Frontage Road Option**



There are also other opportunities for infill development along the East Highway 60 Business District. The City owns a 3.6 acre parcel located between Shopko and Guardian Inn on the east side of Highway 60. A portion of this City-owned property is needed for water retention for the Carl Schneider Business Park, Shopko, and Guardian Inn and a portion of this property could also be developed.

The southern portion of the Shopko property could also be developed. Fill and soil balancing has already been occurred on the site, so it is shovel-ready. This location could also utilize the existing oversized parking lot and existing infrastructure. Additional soil corrections would be required on the City-owned lot and a portion of the Shopko property that could potentially be utilized for 3 retail stores. Refer to the Draft Shopping District Development Plan below.

Additional water retention will be added to the City-owned property as part of this development plan. The potential plan is to excavate sections of the City-owned property that are delineated as part of the wetland and allow that property to fill with rushes. Portions along the perimeter of the property will also be excavated to increase the water storage on the property to more than double its current capacity.

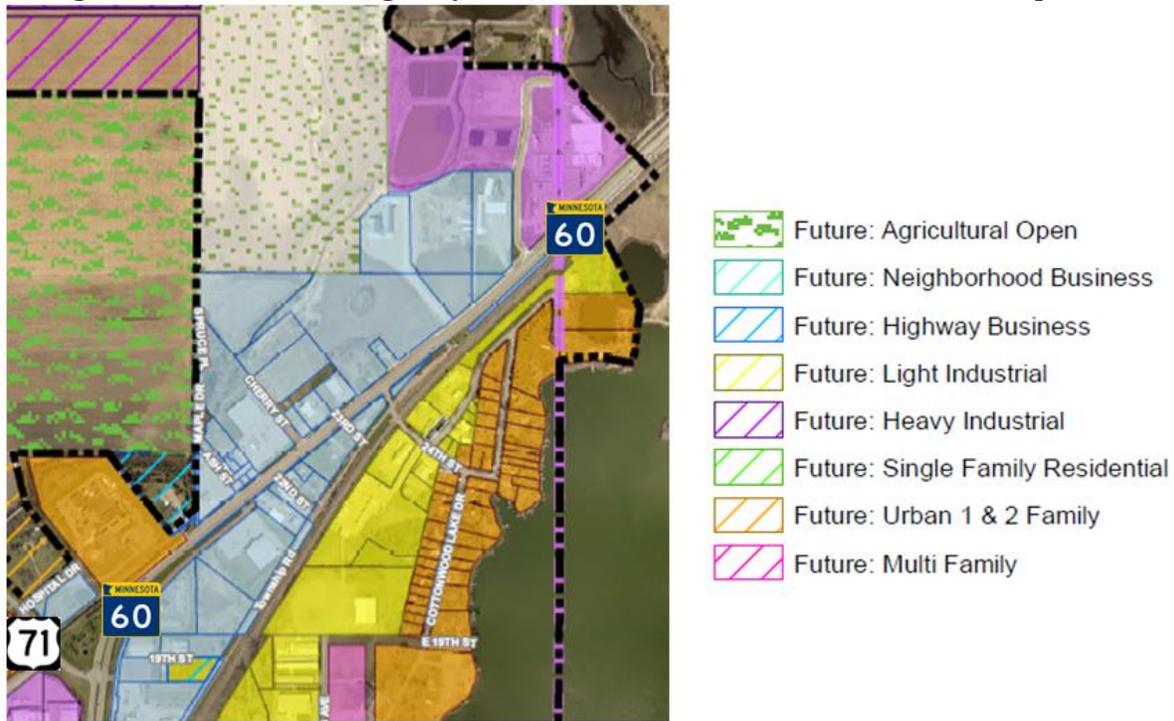
LU-Figure #20

Draft - Shopping District Development Plan



LU-Figure #21

East Highway 60 Business District – Future Land Use Map



Central Highway Business District

The Central Highway Business District is the commercial area along Highways 60 and 71 from the North junction of Highways 71 and 60 continuing southerly to the bridge over the Des Moines River. The Central Highway Business District is four-lane highway with urban roadway. The speed limit is 30 miles-per-hour.

There are two Greenfield properties that can be developed along the Central Highway Business District. These lots are shovel-ready in regards to infrastructure. The remainder of the corridor is developed.

There are opportunities for redevelopment along the corridor. The liquor store property is under consideration for redevelopment along with the development of the EDA-owned greenfield property south of the liquor store. This is a great example of how a smaller parcel and a parcel with limited access can be combined to allow a larger development to move forward.

**LU-Figure #22**

**River Bend Phase II**



**Available Commercial Property**

**EDA Owned Lot**

- Buildable Area: 1 Acre
- Lot Size: 3.1 Acres
- Highway 60 frontage 850+ feet
- Utility Infrastructure in place

**Liquor Store Lot (City Owned)**

- .61 acres

**Total Buildable Area**

- **2 Acres**

	Access Point
	Proposed - Riverbend Center
	Available Parking

**Proposed – Riverbend Center**

- 15,000 sq. feet

**Location**

- US Highway 71 & MN Highway 60

<p><b>Contact Us Today!</b> Drew Hage   Economic Development Authority of Windom   800-494-6366 507-832-8661   <a href="mailto:drew.hage@windommn.com">drew.hage@windommn.com</a></p>
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LU-Figure #23

Central Highway Business District - Future Land Use Map



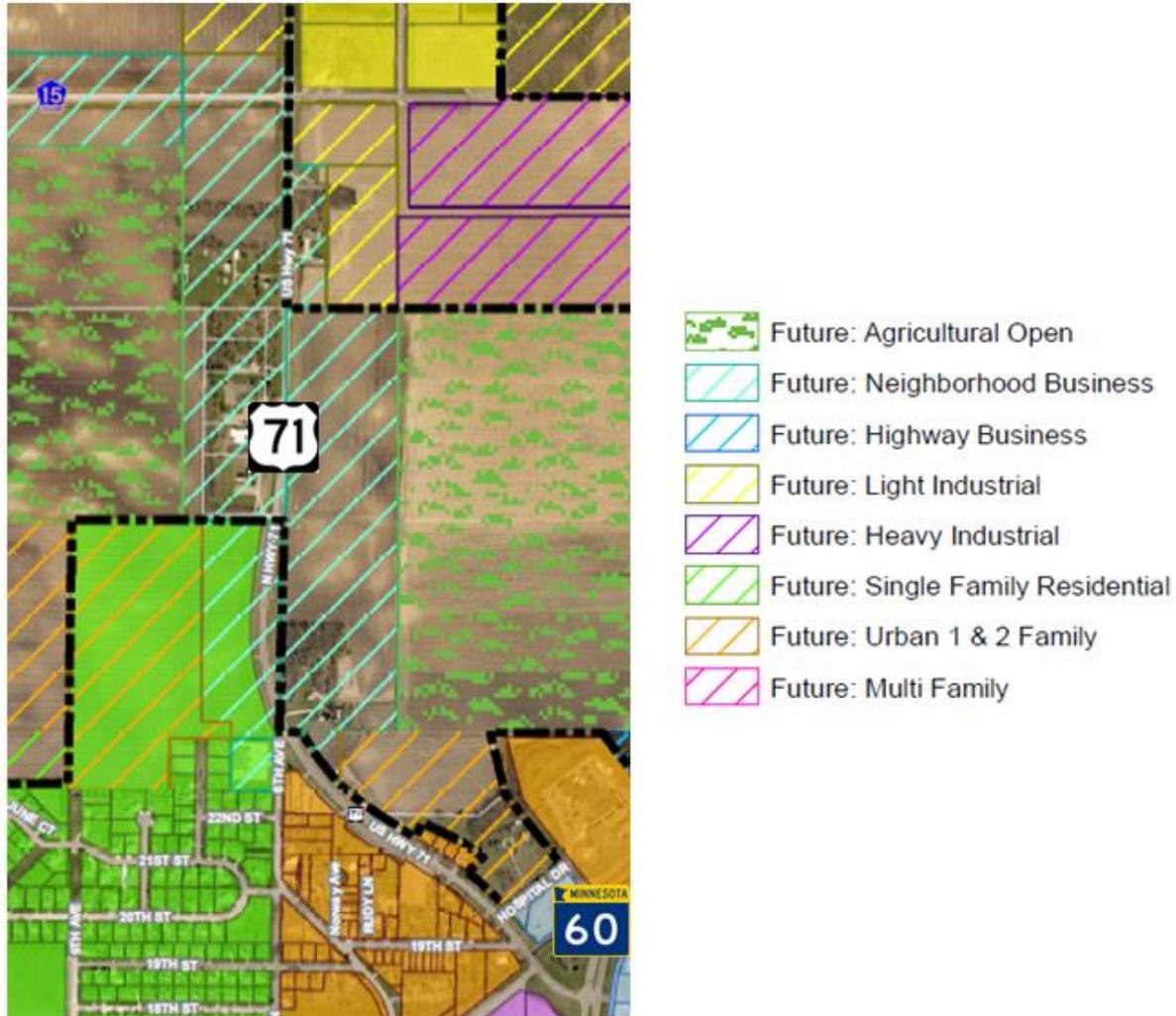
-  Future: Agricultural Open
-  Future: Neighborhood Business
-  Future: Highway Business
-  Future: Light Industrial
-  Future: Heavy Industrial
-  Future: Single Family Residential
-  Future: Urban 1 & 2 Family
-  Future: Multi Family

North Highway 71 Business District

The North Highway 71 Business District is the commercial area along Highway 71 from the north junction with Highway 60 to the North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP). There are several residential and commercial properties along with agricultural open space in this district. As this district is more rural in nature, the speed limit is between 45 and 55 miles per hour.

There are opportunities for development and redevelopment along the North Highway 71 Business District. As properties sell or are redeveloped, there are opportunities for these properties to annex and hook-up to city utilities. Properties need to be annexed into the City of Windom before City services are available.

**LU-Figure #24 North Highway 71 Business District – Future Land Use Map**



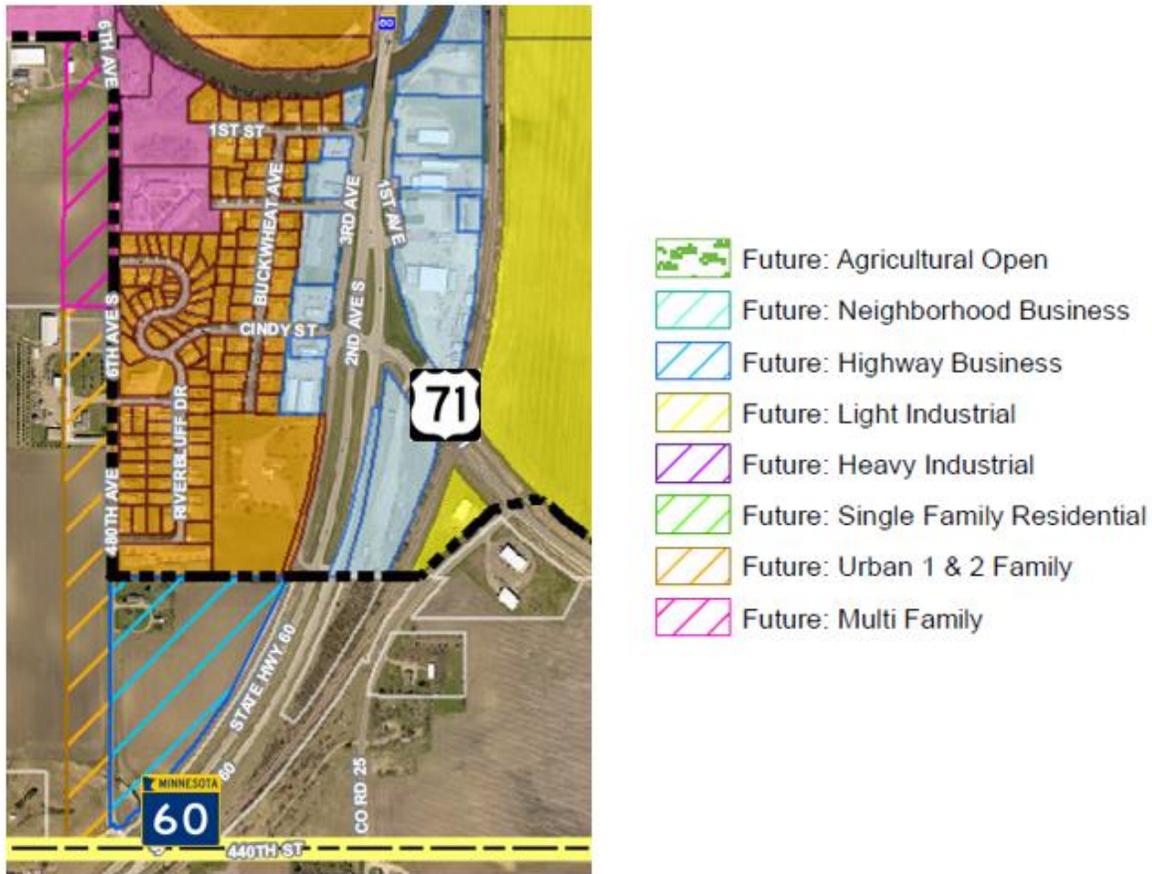
**South Highway Business District**

The South Highway Business District is the commercial area along Highways 60 and 71 commencing at the bridge over the Des Moines River and continuing to the city limits on the south. The South Highway Business District is four-lane highway with urban and a portion of urbanizing roadway. The speed limit is 30 to 45 miles-per-hour.

There is one greenfield property that can be developed in the South Highway Business District. There are also opportunities for redevelopment along the corridor. Several lots are only partially utilized. A property split is one option to provide additional shovel-ready properties for development.

There is an opportunity to annex property to the south and develop an existing farm field. Because infrastructure is not in place in this district, the East Highway 60 Development is preferable at the current time. The East Highway 60 Development can utilize existing infrastructure to reduce development costs.

**LU-Figure #25 South Highway Business District – Future Land Use Map**



**Industrial**

There are five industrial areas in Windom that include: the North Windom Industrial Park, the main Toro Property (16<sup>th</sup> Street), the main Prime Pork Property (John Caldwell Drive), Windom Industrial Park (Carl Schneider Business Park), and the South Windom Industrial Park (County Road 26). Industrial development in Windom has transitioned to different areas of the community with larger business footprints maintaining their original sites. Future industrial development is planned for the North Windom Industrial Park.

**North Windom Industrial Park**

The North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP) is located three-quarters of a mile north of Windom on US Highway 71. This location provides separation of land use for industrial businesses, infrastructure to handle industrial growth, and connectivity to national shipping networks. This location also offers convenient access to our regional workforce.

The NWIP is certified through the Department of Employment and Economic Development's (DEED) Shovel-Ready Program. In 2018, the EDA purchased the 80 acres south of NWIP Phase I. Infrastructure in Phase I was sized to accommodate services to the South 80 acres to provide additional shovel-ready property. This 80-acre parcel will provide industrial space for the foreseeable future.

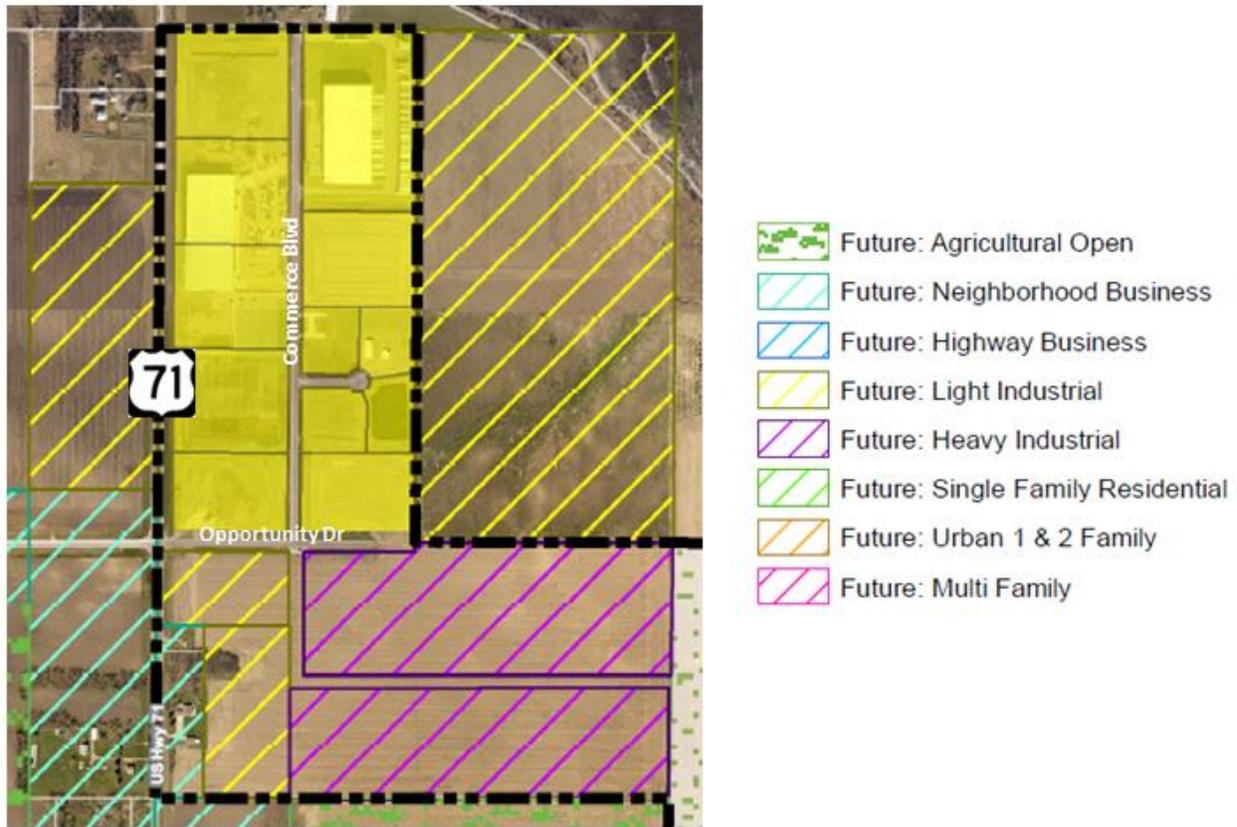
For additional information regarding potential industrial properties in Windom, please contact the Windom EDA.

**LU-Figure #9 North Windom Industrial Park – Available Lots**



LU-Figure #26

North Windom Industrial Park – Future Land Use Map



Main Toro Property – Windom

Toro is a longtime industrial business and employer in Windom. Toro’s main plant in Windom is located at 174 16<sup>th</sup> Street. This property borders 16<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Langley Street, Highway 71, and Highway 60. The buildings on this property occupy approximately 7 acres and the entire property is approximately 13.7 acres.

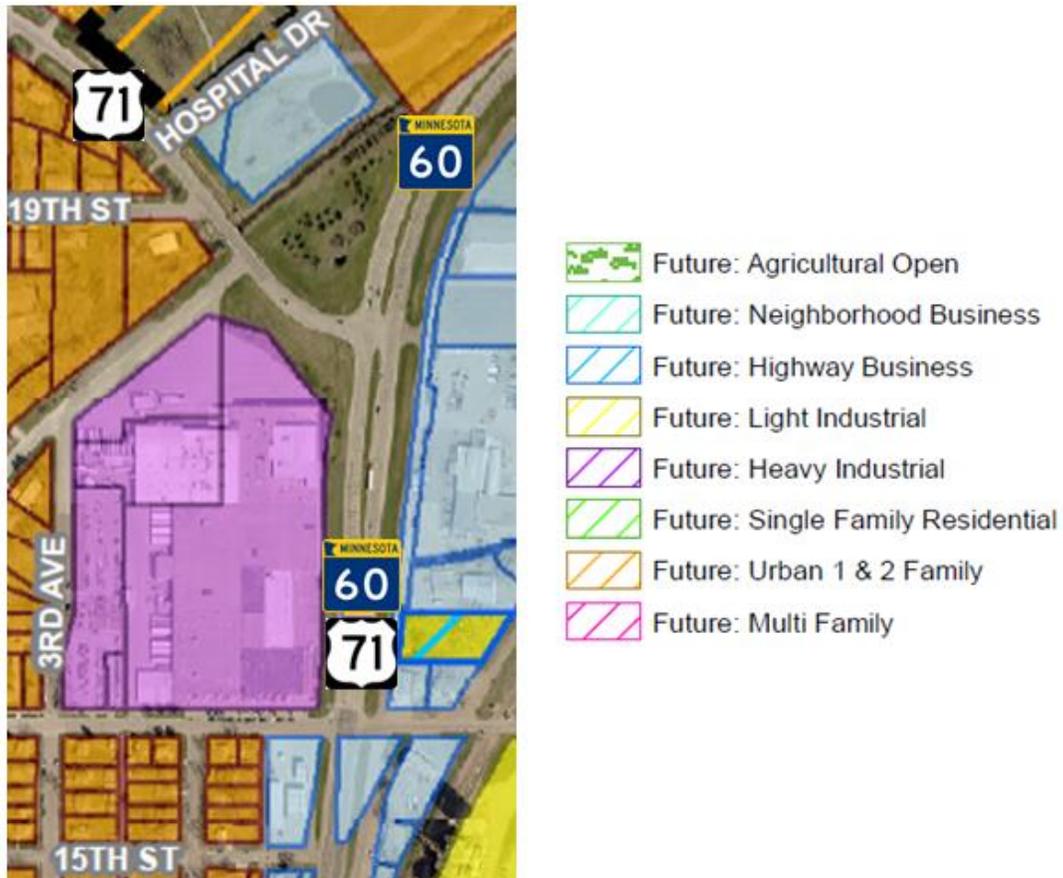
The streets around this Toro facility act as a buffer and the buffer has been considered adequate. Toro owns and rents several other buildings and properties around Windom. Their main warehousing space is in the North Windom Industrial Park (NWIP). The NWIP should be able to handle Toro’s future needs.

Future land use decisions regarding the Main Toro Property need to consider traffic flows and congestion. The intersection of Highway 60/71 and 16<sup>th</sup> Street is one of the busiest intersections in Windom. There is semi-truck traffic with deliveries and pick-ups and employee traffic at shift changes.

As part of the Highway 60/71 Corridor Study with MnDOT, the City recommended an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) Studies of Highway 60/71 and 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The goal of Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) is to select the optimal control for an intersection based on an objective analysis.

LU-Figure #27

Main Toro Property – Future Land Use Map



Main Prime Pork Property – Windom

Prime Pork is a new pork processing facility located at 2850 Minnesota Highway 60. The Company’s owners purchased, renovated, and expanded the old PM Beef – Windom facility which was originally operated by Caldwell Packing. This property has been a longtime processing plant in Windom and through the years has been a major employer and industrial business in Windom.

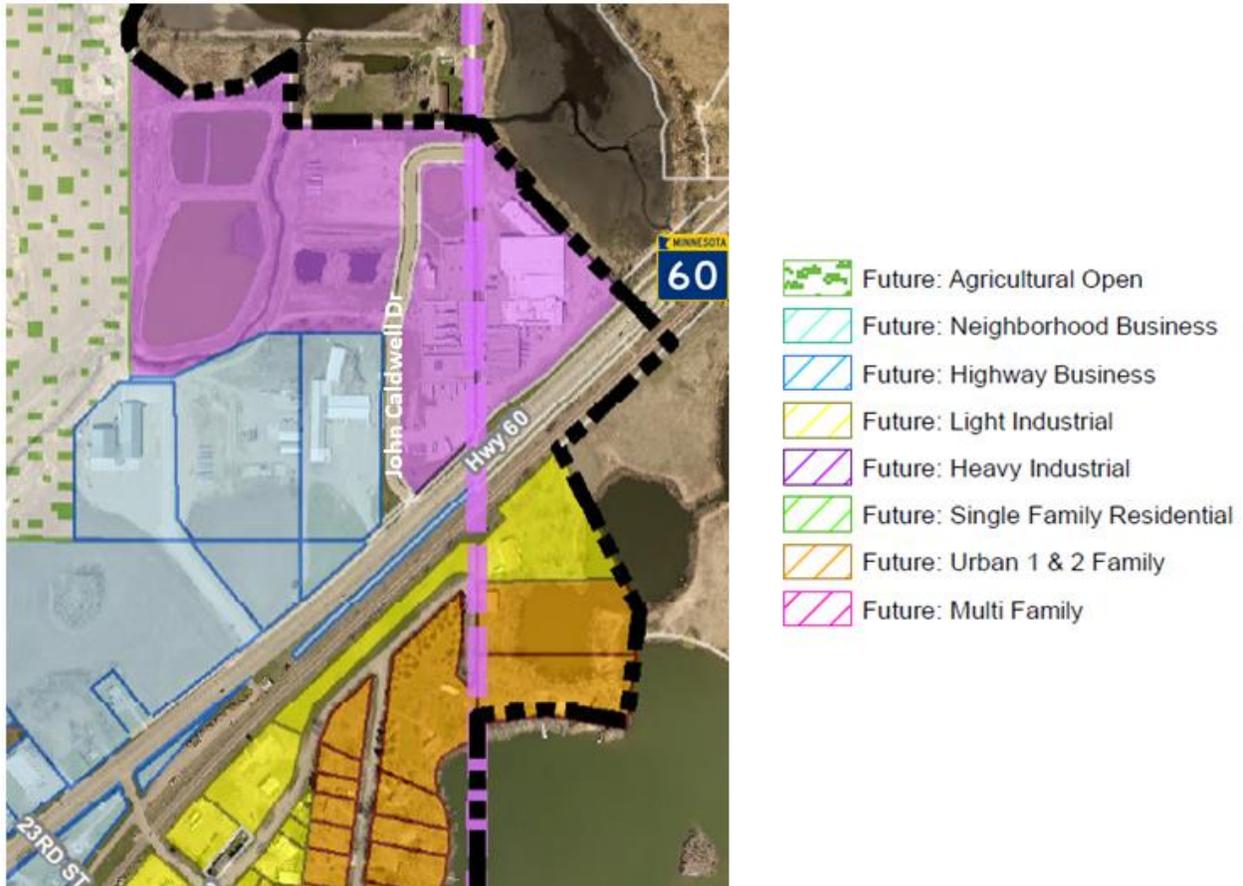
The Main Prime Pork Property is on the edge of Windom along Highway 60. There are multiple streets and land uses that create an effective buffer. Warren Lake acts as a buffer to the north. John Caldwell Drive acts as a buffer to the south along with other related businesses; Highway 60 and the railroad tracks act as a buffer to the east; farm ground acts as a buffer to the west.

Future land use decisions need to consider semi-truck stacking and connectivity for Prime Pork employees. There is limited space along John Caldwell Drive and semi-truck stacking is not allowed on Highway 60. Truck stacking on Highway 60 has not been an issue in Windom, but it has been an issue in other communities along Highway 60.

Connectivity for employees should be compared to JBS in Worthington. JBS and Prime Pork are both on the edge of town. They are both major employers and valuable assets to their communities. There are

multiple pedestrian trails leading to JBS for its employees. Pedestrian connectivity should be researched and discussed along with future land use decisions regarding the Prime Pork property.

**LU-Figure #28 Main Prime Pork Property – Future Land Use Map**



#### Windom Industrial Park Subdivision – Carl Schneider Business Park

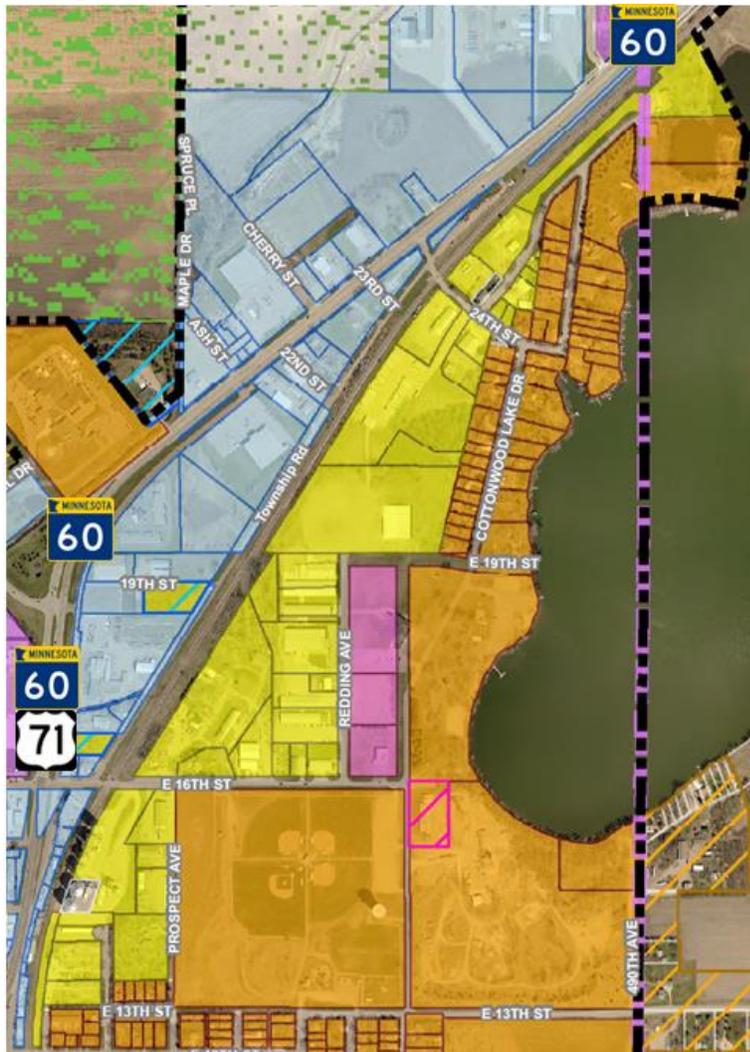
The Carl Schneider Business Park is located north of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and on the west and north sides of North Redding Avenue. The Carl Schneider Business Park is primarily warehousing with some light industrial businesses. This is still a compatible area for warehousing space and light industrial uses.

Room for growth of industrial business in the Carl Schneider Business Park is limited. There are no vacant industrial lots. There is also limited room to expand existing building footprints. There are opportunities for redevelopment, but industrial growth in Windom is preferred in the North Windom Industrial Park.

Future land use decisions in the Carl Schneider Business Park need to consider pedestrian connectivity along 16<sup>th</sup> Street and connections between parks and greenspace. The Windom Active Living Plan does identify these sidewalk and trail gaps. Refer to the figures below.

LU-Figure #29

Carl Schneider Business Park - Future Land Use Map

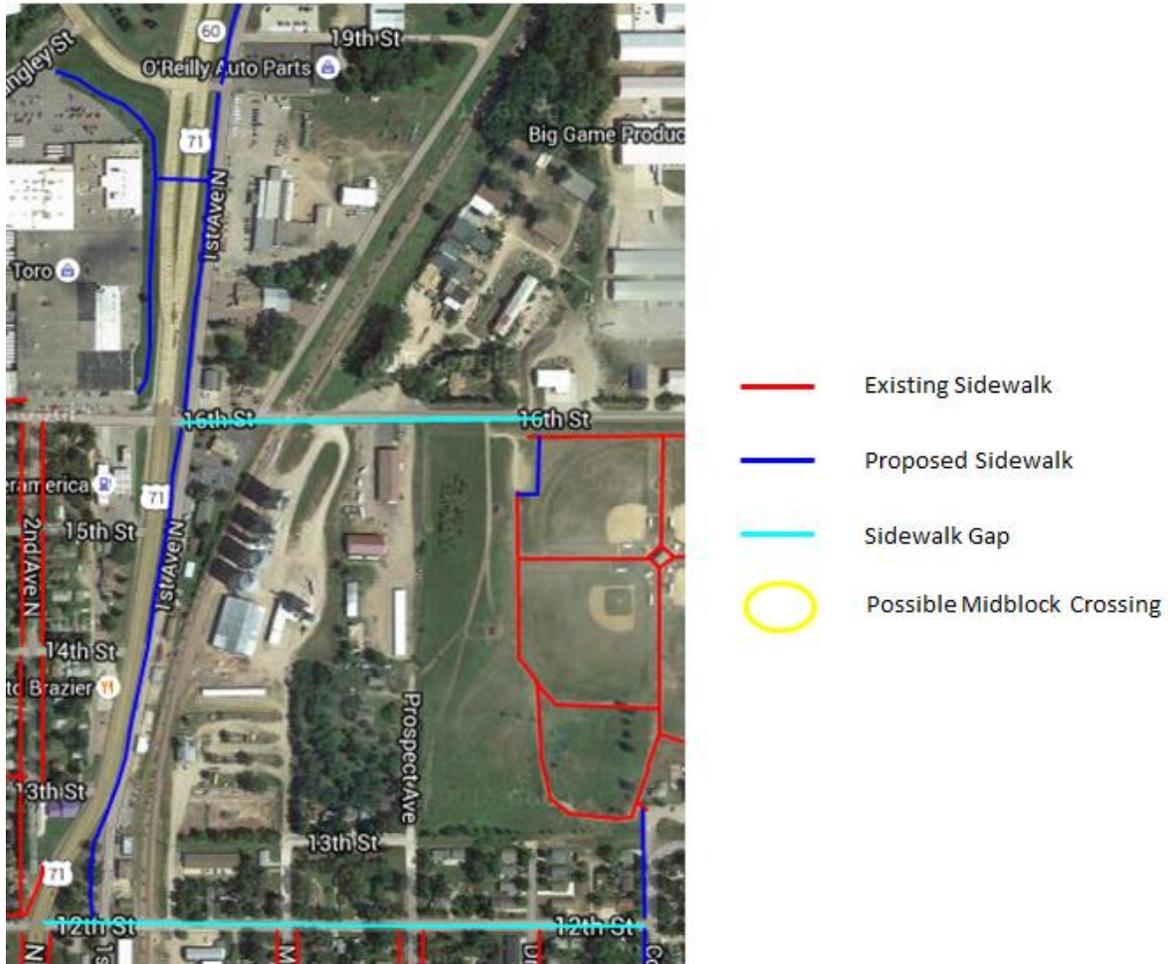


- Future: Agricultural Open
- Future: Neighborhood Business
- Future: Highway Business
- Future: Light Industrial
- Future: Heavy Industrial
- Future: Single Family Residential
- Future: Urban 1 & 2 Family
- Future: Multi Family



LU-Figure #31

16<sup>th</sup> Street Sidewalk Gap



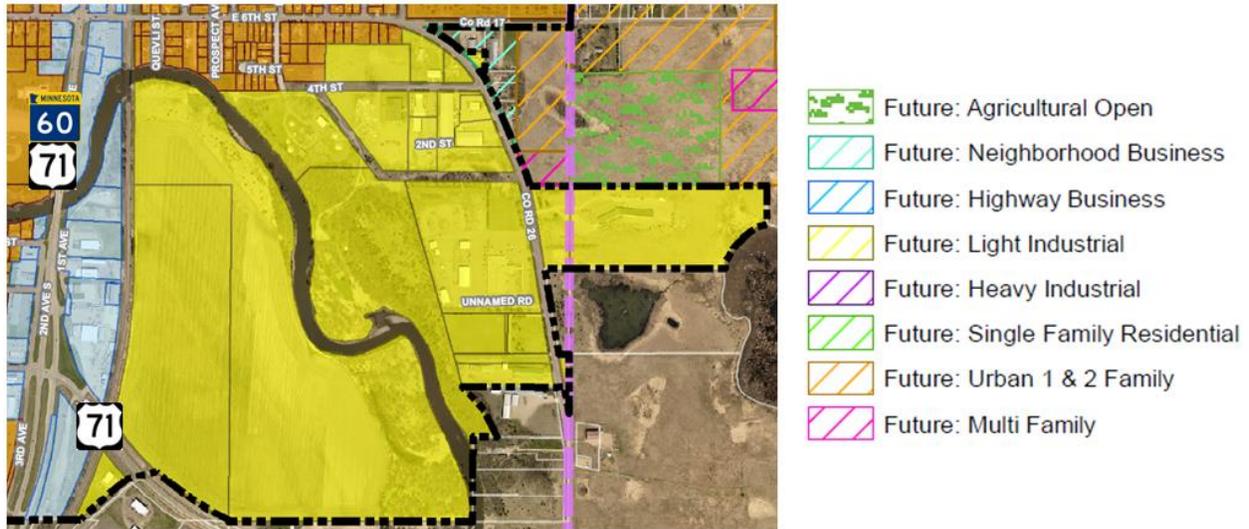
### South Windom Industrial Park – County Road 26

The South Windom Industrial Park is an old industrial and business district in Windom. The South Windom Industrial Park is located along County Road 26 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. This is still a compatible area for warehousing space and light industrial.

There are opportunities for development and redevelopment, but industrial growth in Windom is preferred in the North Windom Industrial Park. Future land use decisions in the South Windom Industrial Park need to consider semi-traffic along County Road 17. Semi-traffic along County Road 26 is not an issue, but County Road 17 goes through a residential area with homes on both sides of the road.

LU-Figure #32

South Windom Industrial Park – Future Land Use Map



**Agricultural**

The practice of including portions of agricultural land and open space within the city limits of a rural community helps to keep development contained and planned. Open space along the City limits ensures that zoning requests are made to the City before new development occurs. This procedure allows the City to manage future development and verify that it is compatible with other adjoining land uses. Sewer, water, and city infrastructure also help ensure that new development is planned and compatible.

Agricultural and open space can also be used as a buffer between non-compatible land uses.

**Annexation**

The City of Windom is surrounded primarily by agricultural land. Sections of agricultural land have already been annexed into the City as development occurs. These annexations assist the City in the process of maintaining compact and efficient future development.

The future land use map identifies multiple areas that could be annexed. Annexation will depend on development projects and demand for infrastructure. It has been the Utility Commission’s recommendation to annex properties before city services are made available. City services include but are not limited to: sewer, water, electricity, telecom, and streets.

Annexation of these areas should occur before developing the property. The Future Land Use Map is a guide for planning, development, and annexation within the City of Windom. Amendments to the current Zoning District Map should reflect land uses represented in the Future Land Use Map.

# CHAPTER 13: Plan Maintenance

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## **Monitoring, Evaluation, & Updating the Plan**

The Windom Comprehensive Plan is an official document of the City of Windom. The City of Windom will maintain the plan. The City of Windom will implement the plan with assistance and recommendations from community members, service organizations, and businesses.

As community planning occurs, updates and notes will be added to a separate planning document, Windom Comprehensive Plan Implementation Tracker. City staff will maintain the Windom Comprehensive Plan Implementation Tracker document. It is critical to allow for public input regarding implementation of the goals and strategies outlined in the Windom Comprehensive Plan.

## **Continued Public Involvement**

Successful implementation of the Windom Comprehensive Plan requires continued public input and support. There are a number of goals and strategies outlined in the Windom Comprehensive Plan that will only be achieved with support from community members. It is critical for city staff and elected officials to clearly outline ways for community members to participate in the planning process, volunteer, and how public and private partnerships can be formed.

Examples include:

- Total Population of 5,000 plus – page 17.
- Zoning, Rezoning & Compatible Land Uses – page 27
- Maintain a Competitive Tax Rate – page 72
- Planning for All Users – page 113
- Individual Park Plans – page 132.

Continued planning and public involvement will ensure proposed projects have been vetted before implementation.

## **Conclusion**

When making a land use decision and an investment in the future, it is critical to consider all the costs not just the construction costs. There are costs associated with sprawl, inactivity and negative health outcomes, and loss of community. Decision makers need to consider the function of every street, piece of infrastructure, and plot of land for long-term decisions are made.

When considering new development, decision makers need to consider parcels within the City first. This will help to encourage infill development. Infill develop will help to spread the infrastructure costs across more people and businesses.

When rebuilding a street, decision makers need to consider the opportunity costs associated with different street designs. If a street can be narrowed there are positive aspects associated with traffic calming, reducing the cost of infrastructure, and savings that could be utilized within the general fund

budget. The cost savings of narrowing the street could be used to install a sidewalk(s) and create a more livable community.

Decision makers need to consider livability, connectivity, and cost when making land use decisions. An example is, ***“When you narrow up the street lanes, cars drive slower, people feel more comfortable there. They walk across the streets, to a store across the street. And in a real subtle and cheap way you get a lot more pedestrian traffic, a lot more retail, a lot more people. And people spend money, and that’s what makes a place wealthier. When people are there, people invest more.”***<sup>66</sup>

### **G-Figure #7                      Decision Makers Checklist: Built Environment**

#### **Ask Yourself and the Decision Making Group**

- How will my decision impact private and public investment?
- How will my decision impact the general fund budget?
- How will my decision impact community health?
- How will my decision impact connectivity?
  - Compact efficient development vs. sprawl (which decreases connectivity)
- Will my decision make the community more livable (more walkable and bikeable)?
- Were all users considered when making the decision?

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<sup>66</sup> Econ Talk. Charles Marohn on Strong Towns, Urban Development, and the Future of American Cities. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: [http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles\\_marohn.html](http://www.econtalk.org/archives/2014/05/charles_marohn.html)

## Appendix A

### Long Range Plan – Strategies & Goals – April 2012

#### Strategy I

**Community Pride:** A positive image and reputation developed by a progressive and active community

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Market what we already have
- Capture the value of telecom assets
- County Seat
- Safe community
- Variety of activities available
- Numerous recreational activities
- Educate and inform the public
- Involve and invest in our youth
- Civic groups
- Reputation
- Debunk the “Leave Windom” myth
- First impressions
- Community appearance
- Vacant building needs
- Painting and upkeep
- Trash and junk image
- Clean up and enhance the appearance of the TH 60/71 corridor
- An attractive community
- Erect welcoming and directional signs
- Provide tools and resources for the community
- Annual Community Pride Day, “Spruce-Up” Week, contests (civic groups), highlight improved properties (newspaper spot), “Adopt a House” Event – for painting and yard maintenance.
- Encourage commercial property owners to refresh their building facades
- Create marketing brochures
- Community clean-ups of trash in public areas
- Volunteer to adopt a park or boulevard
- Participation in exterior enhancements (e.g. painting program) by engaging residents of all ages to participate.

#### Goals

##### 1. A progressive reputation and community pride

###### Actions:

- a. Support the goals of the Finding Windom Group
- b. Align the goals of different community groups
- c. Market amenities such as recreation programming, the Community Center, Arena, Pool, Parks, Library and Windom Recreation Area with local partners

##### 2. A positive image

###### Actions:

- a. Clean up public and private property
- b. Target the Windom public facilities and grounds as welcoming points
- c. Develop a highway corridor and streetscape plan
- d. Update City code and ordinances and consider staffing needs to administer

## Strategy II

**Community Vitality:** Create a diversified jobs base and a thriving, revitalized downtown square

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Create a new business climate
- Use broadband network as a resource
- Highway access
- Location between Minneapolis and Sioux Falls
- Agriculture assets
- High quality, cost-effective utility services
- Prepare a list of downtown business owners
- Land and open spaces
- Revitalize town square
- More family businesses
- Motel needs
- More restaurants
- Small steps matter a lot
- Partner with WADC, WACC Foundations and Businesses

### Goals

#### 1. Attract and prioritize a diversified jobs base

Actions:

- a. Seek out and find new businesses
- b. Retain and grow existing businesses
- c. Focus on jobs that reflect our agriculture influence and emphasis
- d. Maximize the value of the City's infrastructure assets (technology and transportation)
- e. Network with and support the EDA, DEED and other state/regional organizations
- f. Partner with the WADC in an economic development strategy for retail
- g. Work with MN DOT on completion of TH 60 into 4 lanes

#### 2. A thriving, revitalized downtown square and commercial corridor

Actions:

- a. Communicate with building owners to understand the reasons for vacancies and motives of the absentee landowners
- b. Develop strategies to encourage new business in the downtown area
- c. Utilize vacant store fronts building space for signage and information purposes

## Strategy III

**Organizational Culture:** Provide high quality public services

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Deliver cost-effective and efficient utility services
- Maintain quality city staff
- Internal communication
- Find ways to retain quality people, utilize employees' suggestions and abilities, and improve morale
- Public Safety services
- Parks and Parks programming
- Location of state and federal offices
- Outreach to business community
- Low cost utility services
- Certifications and training
- Student liaison to Council meetings
- Review customer service rental surveys
- Expand interactions with school district
- Improved interaction with county, school district & community groups
- Youth representative as liaison on the City Council
- Enhance and improve the website
- Look at new ways of doing business
- Cultural change underway – transitioning from old to new
- Other Facilities - Cemeteries
- Quality water services and system
- Team building and customer service training
- Hold regular meetings with other officials
- Schedule presentations to community groups

### Goals

#### 1. Deliver high quality public services

Actions:

- a. Explore ways to provide more efficient and cost-effective utility services
- b. Streamline and prioritize the services provided to the residents
- c. Provide a friendly, well-kept, and clean atmosphere for all customers, visitors, and guests at city facilities
- d. Create a plan for continuing education for staff
- e. Enhance team work among departments and build collaboration within the workplace
- f. Improve employee morale, and explore networking and appreciation\recognition events for employees
- g. Include staff input in the policy development process
- h. Evaluate current utility billing for conversion to e-payments through the City's website

**2. Build strong relationships and collaborative partnerships with other governmental offices, schools, the business community, and community groups**

Actions:

- a. Encourage student participation in local government and offer local government civic classes
- b. Expand knowledge of city government within community groups

### Strategy IV

**Public Facilities:** Maintain and upgrade public infrastructure and city facilities pursuant to a defined and prioritized plan

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Develop a maintenance plan for public infrastructure and city facilities
- Prioritize upgrades to equipment and facilities
- Work with professional staff, consultants and engineers to obtain technical input
- Prioritize capital improvements, such as fire hall, dam, community center, pool, arena, streets, water, wastewater and library
- Research resources to plan and finance capital improvements
- Seek creative financing tools
- Discuss the current assessment policy
- Explore other sources of revenue
- Citizen input concerning city services, facilities and programs.
- 2007 pool feasibility study
- Local option sales tax and franchise fees

#### Goals

**1. Implement a capital improvement plan**

Actions:

- a. Update, enhance and formalize capital improvement plan

**2. Develop resources and funding available for capital improvements**

Actions:

- a. Study and evaluate all resources for planning, financing and constructing capital improvements

## Strategy V

**Natural Resources:** Utilize and market the value and beauty of our land and geography

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Community has evolved by the river
- Utilize value of river
- Outdoor activities
- Trails and bike paths
- Meet effluent standards
- Camp sites
- Fishing
- Des Moines River
- Hunting
- Clean-up activities
- Pest control
- Weeds
- Work with Parks and Recreation Commission
- Increase use of community assets and natural areas

### Goals

#### 1. Protect Windom's natural resources

Actions:

- a. Plan an outdoor garden and wedding area on the Community Center grounds
- b. Organize a community group to assist with the planning of the Des Moines River Valley Trail
- c. Explore grants for trails, bikeways and paths
- d. Develop a plan for enhancing Island Park facilities and services
- e. Research options for pest and weed control

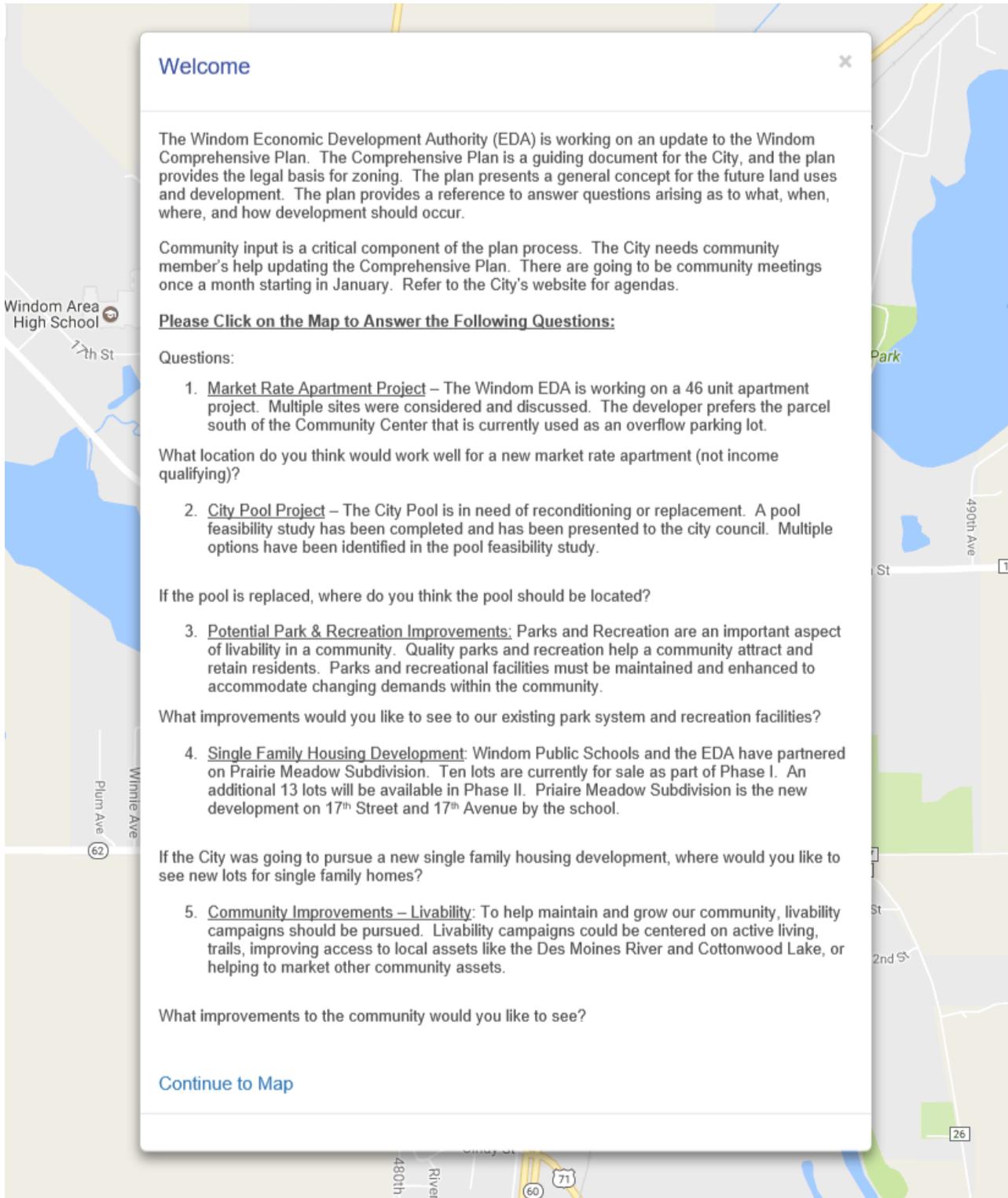
#### 2. Market Windom's geographic location

Actions:

- a. Market and brand Windom as an outdoor destination

## Appendix B

### Community Input Wikimapping – Windom Comprehensive Plan



**Welcome**

The Windom Economic Development Authority (EDA) is working on an update to the Windom Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document for the City, and the plan provides the legal basis for zoning. The plan presents a general concept for the future land uses and development. The plan provides a reference to answer questions arising as to what, when, where, and how development should occur.

Community input is a critical component of the plan process. The City needs community member's help updating the Comprehensive Plan. There are going to be community meetings once a month starting in January. Refer to the City's website for agendas.

**Please Click on the Map to Answer the Following Questions:**

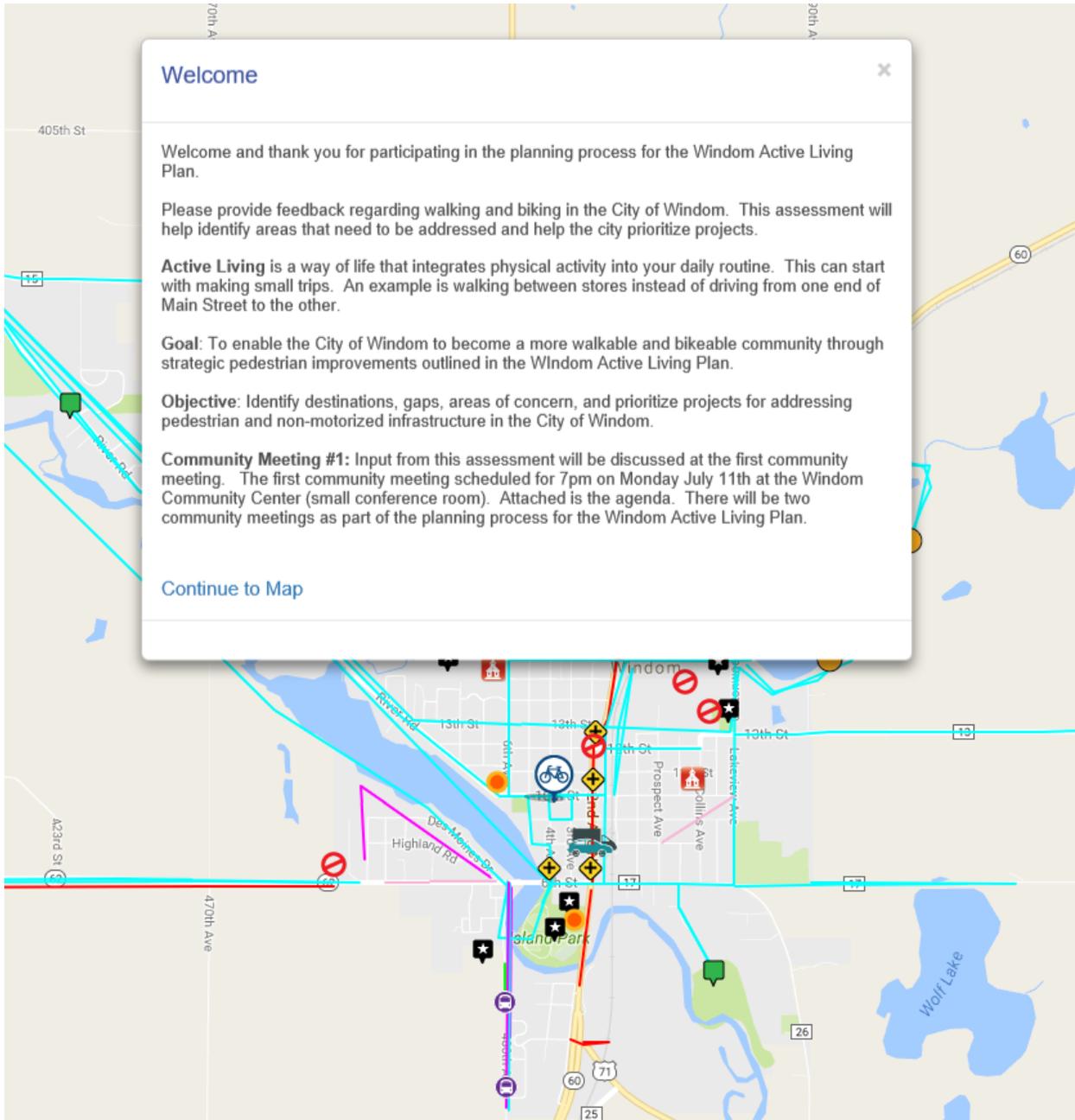
Questions:

- Market Rate Apartment Project** – The Windom EDA is working on a 46 unit apartment project. Multiple sites were considered and discussed. The developer prefers the parcel south of the Community Center that is currently used as an overflow parking lot.  
What location do you think would work well for a new market rate apartment (not income qualifying)?
- City Pool Project** – The City Pool is in need of reconditioning or replacement. A pool feasibility study has been completed and has been presented to the city council. Multiple options have been identified in the pool feasibility study.  
If the pool is replaced, where do you think the pool should be located?
- Potential Park & Recreation Improvements:** Parks and Recreation are an important aspect of livability in a community. Quality parks and recreation help a community attract and retain residents. Parks and recreational facilities must be maintained and enhanced to accommodate changing demands within the community.  
What improvements would you like to see to our existing park system and recreation facilities?
- Single Family Housing Development:** Windom Public Schools and the EDA have partnered on Prairie Meadow Subdivision. Ten lots are currently for sale as part of Phase I. An additional 13 lots will be available in Phase II. Prairie Meadow Subdivision is the new development on 17<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue by the school.  
If the City was going to pursue a new single family housing development, where would you like to see new lots for single family homes?
- Community Improvements – Livability:** To help maintain and grow our community, livability campaigns should be pursued. Livability campaigns could be centered on active living, trails, improving access to local assets like the Des Moines River and Cottonwood Lake, or helping to market other community assets.  
What improvements to the community would you like to see?

[Continue to Map](#)

## Appendix C

### Community Input Wikimapping – Windom Active Living Plan



## Appendix D

### Windom Community Survey

#### Community Assessment Survey:

Please help the City of Windom document and quantify factors that help or hinder safe walking and biking within your community.



#### Instructions:

1. On your average walk in your community, score each question on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the best and 1 being the worst). Each question has subareas that outline variables that impact the scoring of each question (questions are on the back).
2. Add comments regarding specific issues related to walking and biking you would like to address.
3. Please return to City Hall or the Windom Library. You can also complete the survey online at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/SD603269FD](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SD603269FD)

If you would like to discuss a specific route or pedestrian safety issue, please contact Drew Hage with the Windom EDA. Comments can also be added at [wikimapping.com/wikimap/Windom-Active-Living-Plan.html](http://wikimapping.com/wikimap/Windom-Active-Living-Plan.html) regarding citywide pedestrian issues (sidewalk gaps, problem intersections, areas of concern, etc.)

**Questions, contact:** Drew Hage; Windom EDA; 507-832-8661 (Office); 507-822-5918 (Cell)  
[dhage@windom-mn.com](mailto:dhage@windom-mn.com)

**On your average walk...**

**1. Did you have room to walk?**

- Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
- Sidewalks broken or cracked
- Sidewalks blocked
- No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
- Too much traffic

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**2. Was it easy to cross streets?**

- Road too wide
- Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
- Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
- View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants
- Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**3. Did drivers behave well?**

- Backed without looking
- Did not yield
- Turned into walkers (at intersections)
- Drove too fast
- Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**4. Could you follow safety rules?**

- Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen
- Stop and look left, right, left before crossing
- Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic
- Cross with the light

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**5. Was your walk pleasant?**

- Needs grass, flowers, trees
- Scary dogs
- Scary people
- Not well lit
- Dirty, litter
- Lots of traffic

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**6. General atmosphere (Summary of all categories) (10 being the best...1 being the worst)**

\_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

**7. Would you be interested in participating in a focus group regarding walking and biking in Windom? If yes, please provide your name and email.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Parks Survey

### Parks Survey

The Windom Parks Department needs community input regarding park amenities, potential new projects, and improvements that can be made.

The Parks Department is in the planning stages for the pool, tennis courts, and other park amenities.

**How often do you visit one of the parks in Windom?**

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally
- Rarely

**How would you rate the Windom Parks System?**

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
<input type="radio"/>				

**In general, what park do you visit the most?**

- Abby Park (6th Ave & 20th St - north edge of Windom)
- Dynamite Park (River Rd - next to the golf course)
- Horkey Park (Corner of County Road 13 & Great Bend Blvd)
- Island Park (4th Ave & Hwy 62)
- Jen's Park (Kalash Rd - North of Dynamite Park)
- Kastle Kingdom (near 13th St & Lakeview Ave)
- Lomens Park (Hwy 60/71 & 12th Street)
- Lions Park (Power Plant Park)
- Maple Park (17th Ave area)
- Mayflower Park (6th St & Drake Ave – South)
- Schmalz Park (6th Ave S & Highway 62 - by river)
- Tegels Park (West side of Cottonwood Lake)
- Windom Recreation Area (Cottonwood Lake Drive & 16th St area)

**Why do you visit this park? (park you visit the most)**

- Playground Equipment
- Greenspace - availability
- Exercise or Jog
- Fishing
- Play Sports
- Relax
- Walking
- Picnic
- Other
- Other (Please Specify)

**How do you get to this park? (park you visit the most)**

- Walk
- Bike
- Drive
- Other (Please Specify)

**How far do you travel to get to this park? (park you visit the most)**

- 0 to 4 City Blocks (0 to 1/4 mile)
- 4 to 8 City Blocks (1/4 to 1/2 mile)
- 8 to 12 City Blocks (1/2 to 3/4 mile)
- 12 to 16 City Blocks (3/4 to 1 mile)
- 16+ City Blocks (more than 1 mile)
- More than 5 miles

**Do you visit this park as part of your exercise or health and fitness routine? (park you visit the most)**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never
- No Opinion
- Additional Input

**Is this park normally clean? (park you visit most often)**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never
- N/A

**Do you use the bathroom in this park?**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never
- N/A
- Additional Input (bathroom clean?)

**In general, when you visit a park do you come alone or with others?**

- Alone
- With Kids
- With Significant Other
- With Others
- Other (Please Specify)

**How safe are the parks in Windom?**

	1 - Not Safe	2	3	4	5 - Safe
	<input type="radio"/>				

Additional Input

**What new amenity would you most like to see added to one of our parks?**

Community Center - Northeast portion of the property (1.7 acres)  
 Overflow Parking Lot - South of Community Center (1.9 acres)

Possible Pool Relocation  
 Community Center Property: 7 acres  
 (7 acres does not include overflow parking lot)  
 Buildable (red square): 1.7 acres  
 Pool: 1.5 – 2 acres (space needed)

- Pool (existing pool size) 
- Additional Parking 
- Landscaping (hedge row) 

Possible Pool Relocation  
 Over Flow Parking Lot: 1.9 acres  
 Buildable (blue square): 1.9 acres  
 Pool: 1.5 – 2 acres



What location do you prefer for the Windom City Pool?

	Existing Location - Island Park	Community Center - (Northeast portion of the property - 1.7 acres)	Overflow Parking Lot - (South of Community Center - 1.9 acres)	Windom Recreation Area	School
Choice #1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choice #2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (Please Specify)	<input type="text"/>				

If you were in charge of the City's budget for Parks and Open Space, how would you prioritize funding?

	Pool	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Dog Park	Recreational Trails	Kayak/Canoe Amenities	Community Garden	Amphitheater in Tegels Park	Camping in Tegels Park
Choice #1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>							
Choice #2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>							
Choice #3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>							
Choice #4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>							

Would you support an annual tax increase to pay for a new pool?

- Don't Know
- \$50 or more
- \$21 - \$49
- \$1 - \$20
- Nothing (no tax increase)
- Additional Input

What are your primary sources of information for learning about Windom Parks, Recreation Programs, and Special Events?

	City of Windom Website	Windom Recreation Guide	Social Media (Facebook)	Banners / Posters / Flyers	Citizen Newspaper or Shopper	Visits to City Hall	Visits to the Library
Choice 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choice 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (Please Specify)

What is your age? (age of survey respondent)

- 13-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+