



The City of Lester Prairie Comprehensive Plan



Vision Statement:

**A small-town community where
residents respect the past, thrive in the
present, and look to the future.**



Adopted October 2017



**Prepared by the Lester Prairie
Comprehensive Plan Task Force and
the Mid-Minnesota Development
Commission**

Lester Prairie Comprehensive Plan

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*Prairie Days held annually
in Lester Prairie, Minnesota*



Chapter One: Introduction to the Lester Prairie Comprehensive Plan

This document establishes a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lester Prairie, Minnesota. The primary purpose of the Plan is to provide direction for growth and development by outlining the goals, objectives, and policies formed by the community. It is to be used as a guide to the type and character of physical development in the city over the next twenty years (2017-36). The Plan is divided into the following chapters:

1. **Introduction** – Chapter One provides an introduction to the community and provides an outline of the process used to develop the Plan. Highlights include information on the history of the community, demographics, and future population and household projections.
2. **Community Profile** - Chapter Two examines the City's current land use, including sections on natural resources, land use, and community amenities.
3. **Goals, Objectives, and Policy Guidelines** - Chapter Three establishes the community's goals, objectives, and policies. These will help provide guidance on how day-to-day decisions should be made.
4. **Implementation** - Chapter Four outlines a future land use and implementation plan for the community. Highlights include a future land use map and a list of implementation steps that will need to be accomplished in order to properly achieve the community's long-term goals.

A. The Planning Process

The City of Lester Prairie contracted with the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) in March, 2016, to assist the community with updating the city's comprehensive plan. MMDC staff met with city staff over the first three months to begin the revision process. The second phase consisted of working with the Lester Prairie Comprehensive Plan Task Force to help identify important community issues and to review the draft goals, objectives and policies. The Task Force members are shown in Table 1A.

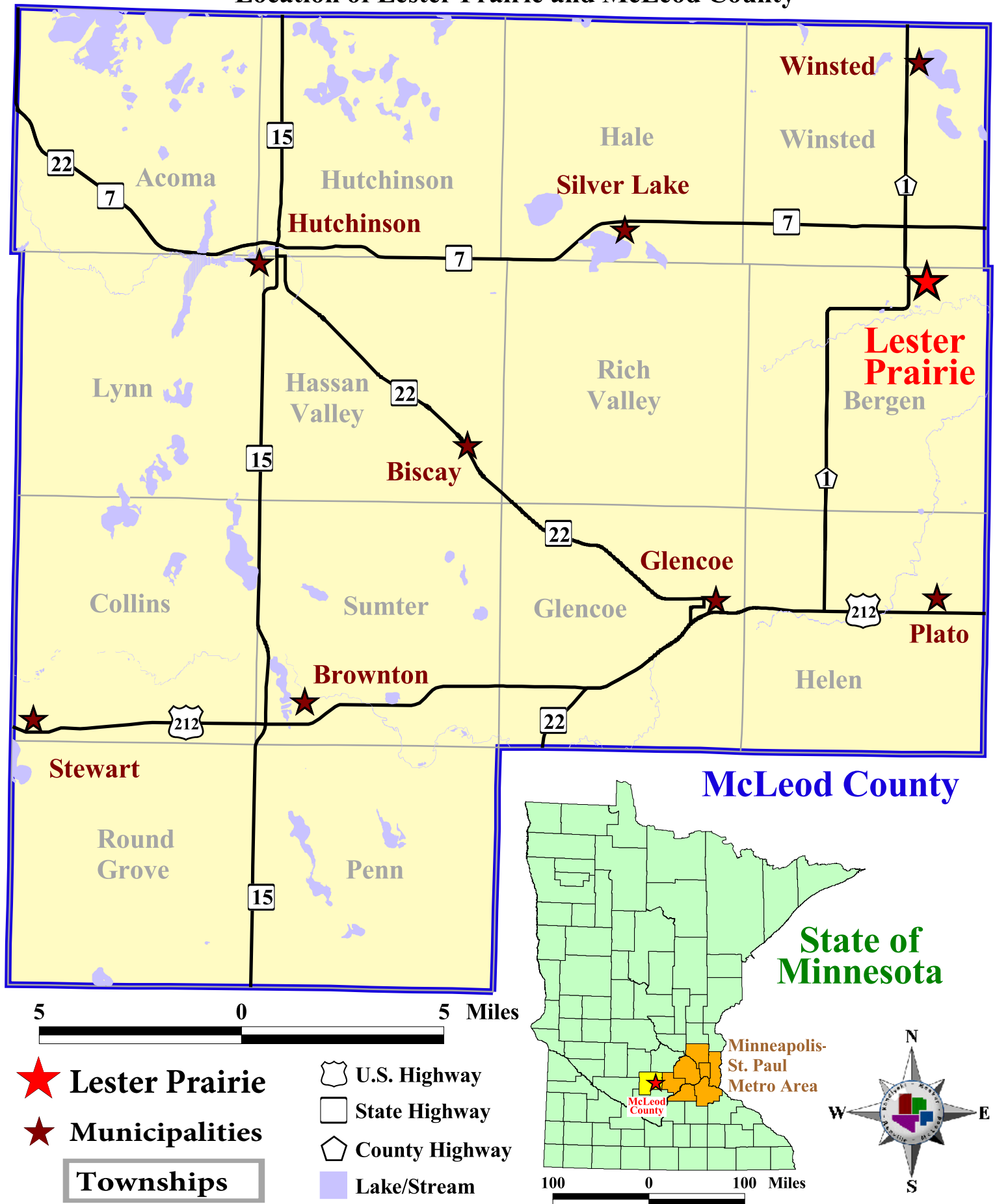
**Table 1A: Lester Prairie's
Comprehensive Plan Task Force**

| Name | Representing |
|-----------------|--|
| Eric Angvall | Mayor of Lester Prairie |
| Troy Feltmann | Park Board Member and Business Association President |
| Fred Blaser | Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman |
| Jeremy Schmidt | School Superintendent |
| Brooke Weise | Finance Officer First Community Bank Lester Prairie |
| Jennifer Ross | Local Business Owner |
| Don Artmann | Local Business Owner |
| Ralph Machemehl | Retired Business Owner, Legion and Lions Club Member |
| Francis Burch | Bergen Township Supervisor |
| Nathan Schmaltz | Winsted Township Supervisor |
| Adam Birkholz | Lester Prairie Community Development Coordinator |
| Matthew Johnson | Mid-Minnesota Development Commission |

B. Location of Lester Prairie

The City of Lester Prairie is located in eastern McLeod County, approximately 40 miles west of the Minneapolis - St. Paul Metropolitan Area (refer to Map 1A). Carver County is located approximately one mile east, and the South Fork of the Crow River flows along the southern edge of the community. The city is located one mile south of Minnesota State Highway 7 in Bergen Township, with direct access to McLeod County Roads 1, 9 and 23.

**Map 1A:
Location of Lester Prairie and McLeod County**



C. A Brief History of Lester Prairie

With a history that spans more than 110 years, Lester Prairie is the youngest community in McLeod County. It might have been the serenity of the beautiful prairie land amidst the “Big Woods,” or the fringe of timber that once served as a lakeshore that attracted John and Maria Lester to the area. Whatever the reasons, the Lesters arrived in the area August 17, 1856, pitched their tent, and became the first residents of what is now Lester Prairie. Maria Lester was the first Caucasian woman to set foot in the region and it was in her honor that the village was named.

A short six years later, the aftermath of the Sioux Uprising of 1862 left their village in ruins. Like most area residents, the Lesters were in Hutchinson at the time so their children could attend school during the winter months. The uprising left them with only the clothes on their backs. The village was not much to behold until December 1886, when the Great Northern Railroad brought its Hutchinson line through the village. Land was purchased and the town was platted December 30, 1886. C. A. Ingerson, the first depot agent, began selling lots in a handcar house posed as a depot. From that point on, the town boomed. Growth was so rapid that a census was taken to incorporate the village. At that time, 180 persons called Lester Prairie their home. Incorporation became official September 8, 1888 and the first election was October 1 of that year. E.A. Schubert was elected the town’s first mayor.

Population growth usually coincides with business growth and this was the case for Lester Prairie. In 1887, August Logering opened a general store. Paul Weise and John Kuhlmann took over the store in 1902. An inventive and progressive team, they erected a new building in 1914, which stands today and now houses Angvall Hardware and Mercantile. George Chambers owned and operated a lumberyard located at the corner of Juniper Street and Central Avenue. In 1888, he became the town’s first postmaster, setting up a post office in the lumberyard. Carl Klinkenberg came east from South Dakota to open a hardware store in 1890. William Jenike opened a wagon shop, Herman Schwartz a thirst parlor, Gustav Milbrath and Henry Hageman a grain elevator, and Otto Fillbrandt became the town blacksmith in 1891.

A fire department was first organized in 1890, but was a rather dormant operation until the water tower went up and water mains were installed in 1896. In 1892, a 32 x 70 foot building was erected and Lester Prairie had its village hall. Almost 90 years later, the city hall was torn down and the present city hall was built in its place. With the town expansion, businesses and residents alike needed a place to bank. The State Bank of Lester Prairie opened its doors in 1893 with a paid up capital of \$10,000. Neither New Germany, Mayer, nor Winsted had a bank, so Lester Prairie had its share of the banking business. The bank moved to Winsted in 1932 and Farmer State Bank, (now First Community Bank) which opened for business in 1913, became Lester Prairie’s sole bank.

This growing community was also in need of a school. The first school was located across from the village hall, but in 1901, a brick schoolhouse was built on the north end of town that housed eight grades and four years of high school. In 1917, 22 students attended high school and 100 were in elementary grades. Though not the same building, the present school is located in the same spot.

Agriculture, of course, was the mainstay of the area and the elevators in the town skyline reflected that. In addition to Milbrath and Hageman's elevator, L. T. Sowle Elevator Co. erected a grain elevator and Eric Anderson established a creamery in 1892. It wasn't until 1912 that the Farmers Cooperative Elevator Co. of Lester Prairie was formed with about 180 members. Due to demand, a feed mill was built in 1925. The need for grinding and mixing feed continued to rise and the co-op built another feed mill in 1941. Even in the early 1980s, total feed sales surpassed \$3 million a year. However, changing times saw the demise of the elevator and it was torn down in 1997.

Lester Prairie has seen much change since the Lesters first arrived here in 1856. Though it is not the same stretch of prairie that their eyes first beheld, it has become a great small-town community that still sits amidst the peaceful farmlands.

Skyline of Lester Prairie in 1897



D. Demographics

One of the more important aspects of developing a comprehensive plan is to determine what trends exist among the city's population. This should include information on historical, current, and projected population data. This information is important because it can be used to help determine the type of future growth the community should expect. The population growth of the city will have a great impact on a wide variety of planning issues the community will need to address.

Table 1B reports the population statistics for Lester Prairie and McLeod County from 1930 to 2015. The data from 1930 through 2010 was provided from the U.S. Census. The 2015 numbers were provided from the Minnesota State Demographer's Office as part of their annual population estimates.

Table 1B:
Lester Prairie and McLeod County's
Population since 1930

| Year | City of Lester Prairie | Change | | McLeod County | Change | |
|-------|---------------------------|--------|------|------------------|--------|-----|
| | | # | % | | # | % |
| 1930 | 442 | N/A | N/A | 20,522 | N/A | N/A |
| 1940 | 423 | -19 | - 4% | 21,380 | 858 | 4% |
| 1950 | 663 | 240 | 57% | 22,198 | 818 | 4% |
| 1960 | 966 | 303 | 46% | 24,401 | 2,203 | 10% |
| 1970 | 1,162 | 196 | 20% | 27,662 | 3,261 | 13% |
| 1980 | 1,229 | 67 | 6% | 29,657 | 1,995 | 7% |
| 1990 | 1,180 | -49 | -4% | 32,030 | 2,373 | 8% |
| 2000 | 1,377 | 197 | 17% | 34,894 | 2,864 | 9% |
| 2010 | 1,730 | 353 | 27% | 36,651 | 1,757 | 5% |
| 2015* | 1,693 | -37 | -2% | 35,930 | -721 | -2% |

** 2015 data as estimated by the Minnesota State Demographer's Office.*

Table 1B reveals that Lester Prairie and McLeod County have experienced an overall population increase since 1930. The only loss for both the city and the county was estimated to occur between 2010 and 2015 (the city also had some population loss in 1940 and 1990). The city's data is also displayed in Figure 1A. Notice the City's highest growth in total number of people occurred between 2000 and 2010 (a gain of 353 people).

One of the best ways to judge the City's rate of population growth is to compare the growth rates experienced by similar communities. Table 1C does this for some of Lester Prairie's neighboring cities. The statistics show that, when compared to neighboring cities, Lester Prairie has experienced "below average" population growth since 1970. However, due to Lester Prairie's close proximity to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area, the City of Lester Prairie's population could explode in a relatively short period of time.

Figure 1A: Historic Population Levels

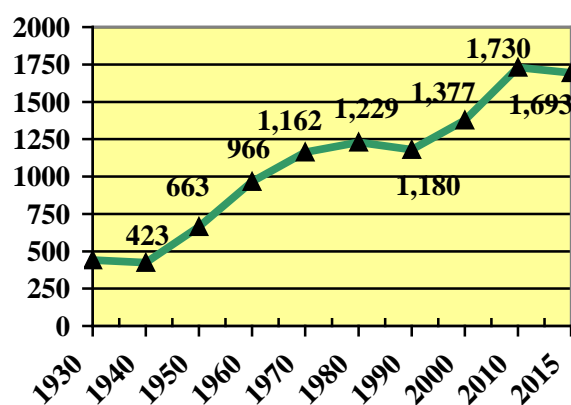


Table 1C: Population Data for Lester Prairie and Neighboring Communities (U.S. Census & State Demographer)

| City | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2015 | Change | Percent |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| Delano | 2,480 | 2,709 | 3,837 | 5,464 | 5,864 | 3,384 | 136% |
| Glencoe | 4,396 | 4,648 | 5,453 | 5,631 | 5,540 | 1,144 | 26% |
| Hutchinson | 9,244 | 11,523 | 13,080 | 14,178 | 14,170 | 4,926 | 53% |
| Lester Prairie | 1,229 | 1,180 | 1,377 | 1,730 | 1,693 | 464 | 38% |
| Montrose | 762 | 1,008 | 1,143 | 2,847 | 3,110 | 2,348 | 308% |
| Silver Lake | 698 | 764 | 761 | 837 | 810 | 112 | 16% |
| Waconia | 2,638 | 3,498 | 6,814 | 10,697 | 11,752 | 9,114 | 345% |
| Winsted | 1,522 | 1,581 | 2,094 | 2,355 | 2,303 | 781 | 51% |
| McLeod County | 29,657 | 32,030 | 34,898 | 36,651 | 35,930 | 6,273 | 21% |
| Minnesota | 4.1 Mil | 4.4 Mil | 4.9 Mil | 5.3 Mil | 5.5 Mil | 1.4 Mil | 34% |

Population by Age Groups

Table 1D compares Lester Prairie's and Minnesota's population by age groups according to the 2010 Census. Notice that Lester Prairie has slightly more people under the age of 18 than the statewide average (28% compared to 24% statewide). In addition, the community has slightly more people ages 25 to 44 (29% compared to 26% statewide). This suggests that many families have made the decision to raise their children in Lester Prairie.

**Table 1D:
City and State Population by Age Groups in 2010**

| <i>Age Group</i> | Lester Prairie | | Minnesota Percent | Percent Difference |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Number | Percent | | |
| Under 18 | 484 | 28% | 24% | 4% |
| Ages 18-24 | 132 | 8% | 10% | -2% |
| Ages 25-44 | 507 | 29% | 26% | 3% |
| Ages 45-64 | 404 | 23% | 27% | -4% |
| Ages 65 & Over | 203 | 12% | 13% | 1% |
| Totals | 1,730 | 100% | 5.3 Mil | N/A |

Additional Social & Economic Conditions

Some additional 2010 Census information regarding Lester Prairie's residents is summarized below:

- Slightly over half of the population were females (50.5%) compared to males (49.5%).
- The median age of residents is 34 years.
- Ninety-four percent (94%) identified their race as white. Most people identified their ancestry as German (56%), followed by Norwegian (12%) and Swedish (5%).
- Eighty-seven percent (87%) of citizens over the age of 18 had at least a high school degree. Twelve percent (12%) had a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the households are family versus non-family households.

Household Numbers

An increase in a city's population almost always means an increase in the number of households. Table 1E shows how the number of households in Lester Prairie has increased as the community grew in population since 1980. Knowing the total number of people and households is important because an average city household size can be determined (i.e., the average number of people living in each household). Notice that between 1980 and 2015, the average household size in Lester Prairie decreased by 0.3 people per household, going from 2.91 to 2.61 people. This trend is important because it shows that even more housing units will be needed in the future to accommodate the community's growing population.

Table 1E: Lester Prairie's Household Size (1980-2015)

| Year | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2015* |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Population | 1,229 | 1,180 | 1,377 | 1,730 | 1,693 |
| Households | 422 | 446 | 516 | 654 | 648 |
| Household Size | 2.91 | 2.65 | 2.67 | 2.65 | 2.61 |

* 2015 data as estimated by the Minnesota State Demographer's Office.

Population Projections

Table 1F shows population projections that are based on historic, fast, and very fast annual rates of growth. The historic projection is based on Lester Prairie's actual population growth since 1980. The fast projection is based on the city growing 125% of its historic rate over the next 20 years. Likewise, the very fast population projection is based on the city growing at 150% its historic growth rate. Either of the latter two scenarios could occur, simply based on Lester Prairie's close proximity to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area. At a minimum, the fast growth rate projection should be used for planning purposes. Overall Table 1F shows that Lester Prairie can realistically expect between 621 and 932 new residents by 2035.

Table 1F: 20-Year Population Projections for Lester Prairie (1,693 residents in 2015)

| City Population Projections | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | Increase |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| Based on Historic Growth (100% historic) | 1,804 | 1,974 | 2,144 | 2,314 | 621 |
| Fast Growth Rate (125% historic) | 1,832 | 2,045 | 2,257 | 2,470 | 777 |
| Very Fast Growth Rate (150% historic) | 1,860 | 2,115 | 2,370 | 2,625 | 932 |

Household Projections

The information presented in Table 1F is needed to help estimate Lester Prairie's future household projections. By dividing the population estimates by the city's projected average number of people per household (2.6 people), Table 1G presents a range of household estimates for Lester Prairie. Based upon Lester Prairie's historic rate of population growth, the community can expect to gain between 242 and 362 households by the year 2035.

**Table 1G: 20-Year Household
Projections for Lester Prairie (648 households in 2015)**

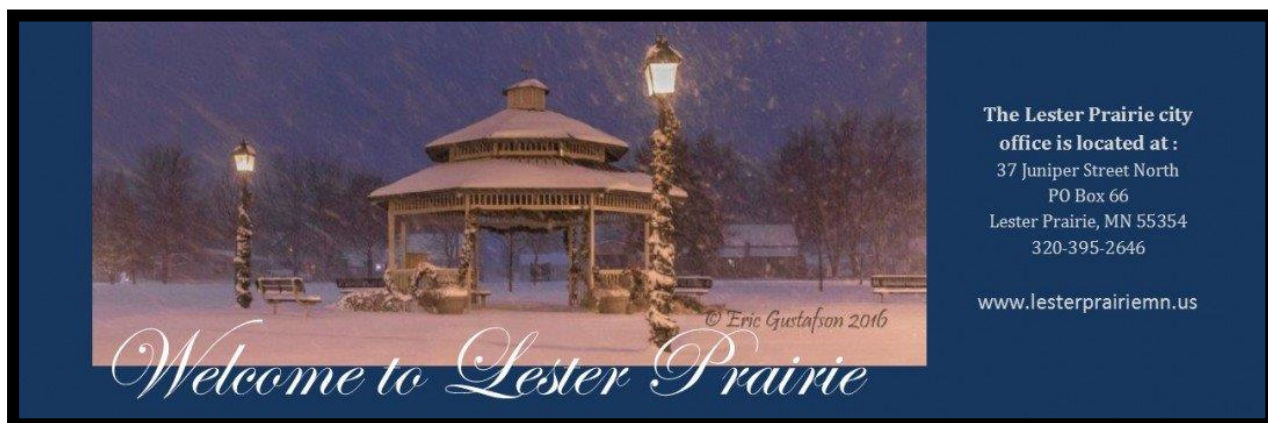
| Projections (2.6 people per unit) | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | Increase |
|--|------|------|------|-------|----------|
| Based on Historic Growth (100% historic) | 694 | 759 | 825 | 890 | 242 |
| Fast Growth Rate (125% historic) | 705 | 786 | 869 | 950 | 302 |
| Very Fast Growth Rate (150% historic) | 716 | 813 | 912 | 1,010 | 362 |

A Note about Population Projections...

A population projection is a well-informed estimate about how many people could potentially live in an area in the future. One of the best indicators used to make a reliable estimate is the area's historic level of growth. For example, if a community has grown by 200 people over the last 20 years, it is often a "safe" estimate to assume that the City will gain another 200 people over the next 20 years. This is often referred to as a "historic-based population projection".

The difficult part of making population projections is determining whether past trends will continue and, if not, how they will change. The future population of a community derives from its present population, plus births and net migration, minus any deaths. Therefore, any factor that influences births, deaths, or migration will alter the projected population. In addition, the community's population can also change simply by altering its boundary through annexation. Finally, several things can affect the community's attractiveness to both current and potential residents. For example, the ease and cost of commuting to employment areas, employment opportunities within the community, local housing supply and housing costs, and the community's overall aesthetics (lakes, scenery, etc.) can all affect how a community grows.

As a result of the complexity of making population projections, they should only be viewed as *estimates*. To help compensate for their uncertainty, the population projections used in this chapter provides a range of possibilities.



Downtown Square Park, Lester Prairie, Minnesota

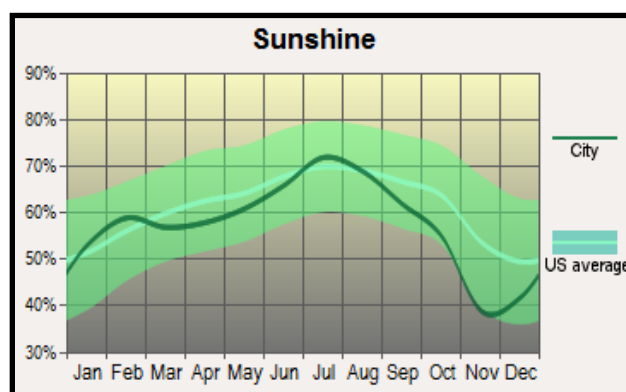
Chapter Two: Lester Prairie Community Profile

Chapter Two provides a profile of Lester Prairie, including sections on climate, water resources, transportation, land use, parks and recreation, and the school district. Lester Prairie is located on the western edge of what used to be the “Big Woods.” Today, only small groves of trees remain, as agricultural land dominates the surrounding area. Lester Prairie has numerous natural amenities, however, especially due to the beautiful South Fork of the Crow River following through the community. Growth in Lester Prairie needs to be planned in harmony with the area’s vast natural resources.

**Figure 2A: Days of Sunshine in
Lester Prairie (% on average)**

A. Climate

The City of Lester Prairie is located in the continental climate zone, which is characterized by a wide range of temperatures between summer and winter. The average high temperature is 72 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer, while the average low is 16 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. The average annual rainfall for the community is 25 inches, with the majority coming in late spring and summer.



Winter sees an average snowfall of 34 inches. According to Figure 2A, the number of days the sun shines in Lester Prairie closely follows the national average (*Source: www.city-data.com*).

B. Water Resources

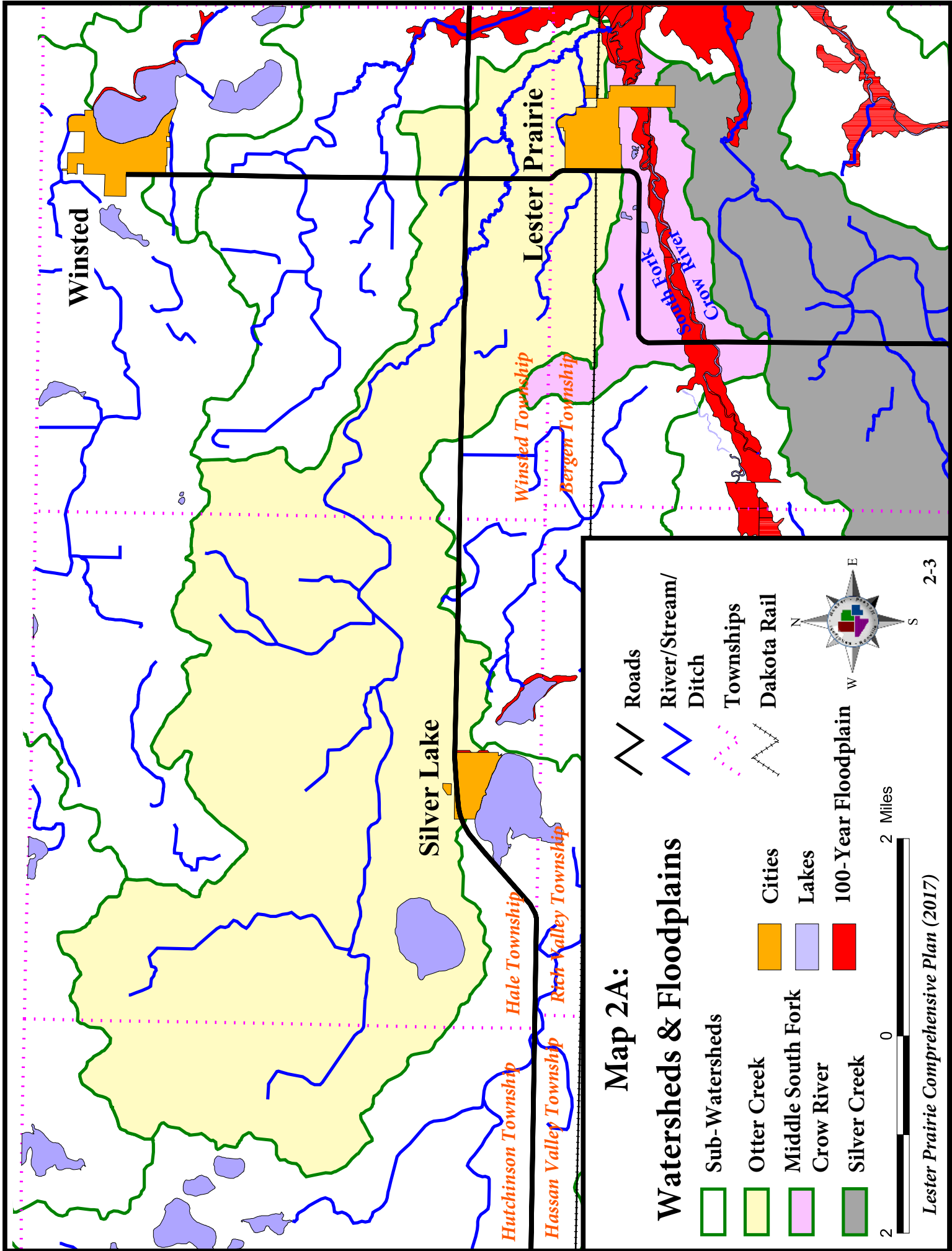
Surface Water ~ The City of Lester Prairie is located within the Otter (Sucker) Creek, Middle South Fork of the Crow River and Silver Creek Minor Watersheds, which are part of the South Fork of the Crow River Major Watershed (identified in Map 2A). Within the area surrounding Lester Prairie, there is a 100-year floodplain, which is illustrated in Map 2A and described in more detail later in this Chapter.

Ground Water ~ The area is covered by ground moraine deposits of glacial drift material to an approximate depth of 200 feet. Aquifers within this glacial drift are of two types: bedrock and outwash aquifers (refer to Map 2B). Lester Prairie has both types of aquifers in the area, however most of the community covers an outwash aquifer. Outwash aquifers are preferred due to them having a higher amount of gallons per minute (g.p.m.) capacity.

Floodplain ~ Map 2A highlights the presence of a 100-Year Floodplain adjacent to the South Fork of the Crow River. The floodplain, however, is mostly contained along the banks and nearby upland areas of the river.





South Fork of the Crow River ~ The South Fork of the Crow River starts west of Cosmos in Meeker County and flows east and north for approximately 100 miles to the City of Rockford. Here it joins with the main stem of the Crow River, then flows 25 miles to the City of Dayton where it empties into the Mississippi River. The South Fork of the Crow River was formed by post-glacial drainage. The Crow River watershed's topography is made up of glacial moraines, outwash plains, and till plains. The upper part of the South Fork drains flat prairie land that contains lakes, ponds, and marshes. The river channel lies only slightly below adjacent lands and the gradient is not more than one foot per mile. While the gradient increases below Hutchinson, the floodplain remains fairly broad as it passes through Lester Prairie. The South Fork Crow River and its adjacent wetlands, floodplain, vegetation, slopes, and soils, all provide a number of benefits to Lester Prairie. These benefits include stormwater holding areas (minimizes flooding and allows for groundwater recharge), fishing, canoeing/kayaking, and natural habitat for wildlife viewing and seasonal hunting.

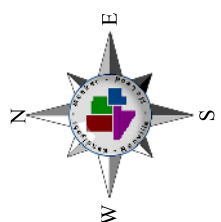
South Fork Crow River Watershed – Lester Prairie is located within the South Fork Crow River Watershed, which spans approximately 818,428 acres. The watershed is located in south-central Minnesota and encompasses parts of Kandiyohi, Renville, Meeker, McLeod, Sibley, Wright, Carver, and Hennepin counties. The South Fork Crow River joins with the North Fork Crow River at Rockford, and then joins the Mississippi River near Dayton. The majority of the watershed is within the Western Cornbelt Plains ecoregion, with a small portion extending into the North Central Hardwood Forest ecoregion. In addition to Lester Prairie, other major cities include Willmar, Hutchinson, Delano, and Glencoe.



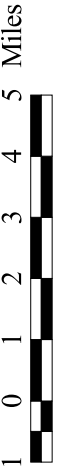
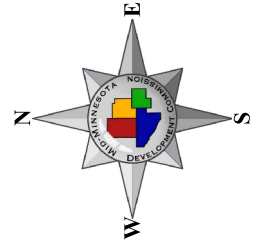
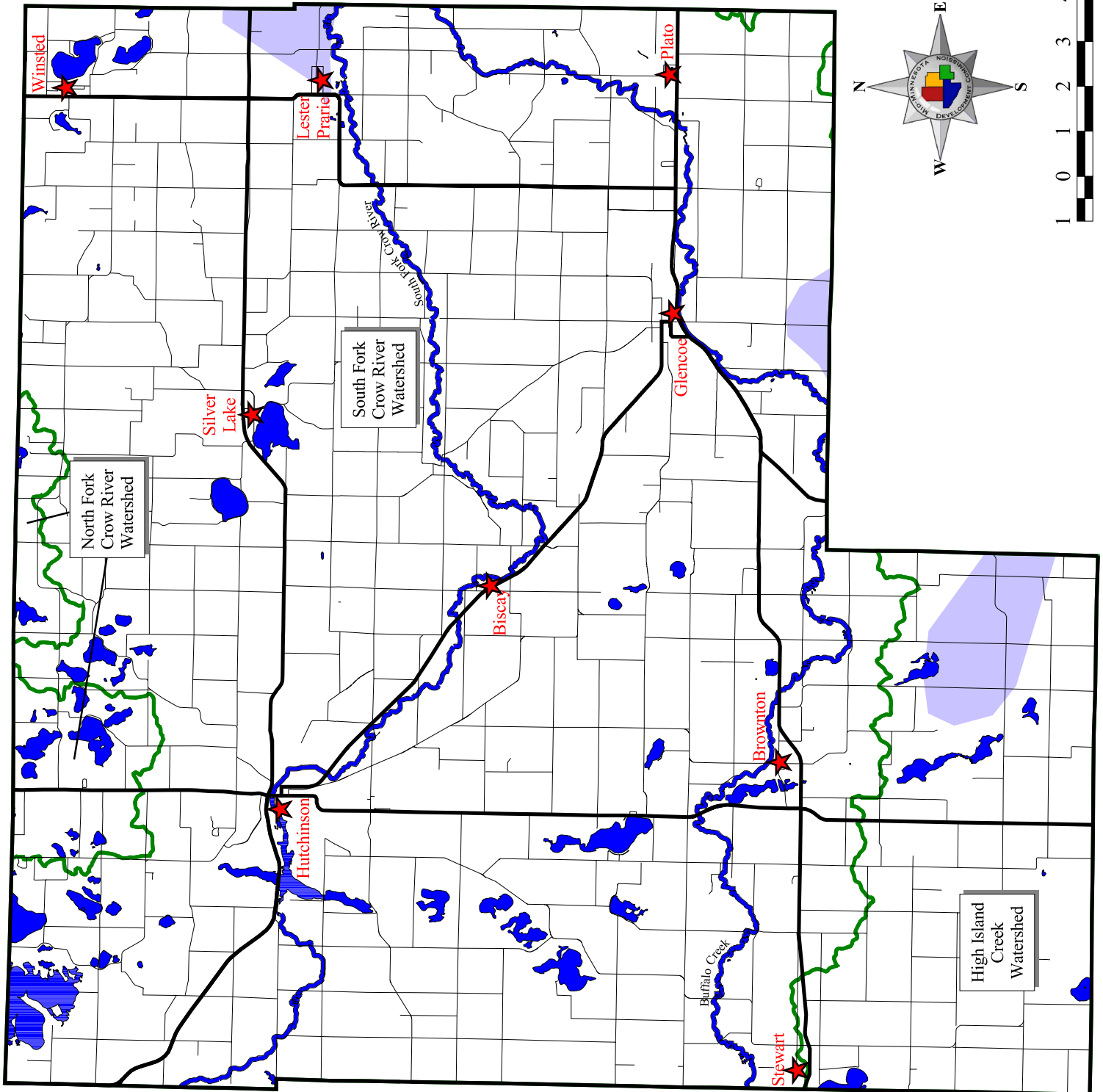
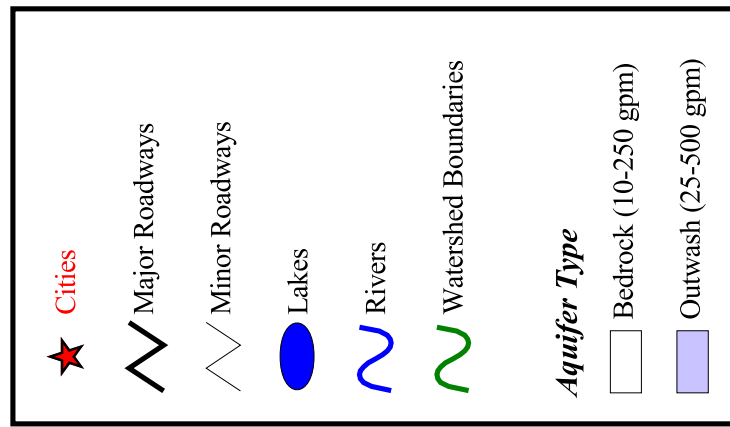
Map 2A:

Watersheds & Floodplains

- | | |
|--|--|
| Sub-Watersheds |  Roads |
| Otter Creek |  River/Stream/ Ditch |
| Middle South Fork |  Townships |
| Crow River |  Dakota Rail |
| Silver Creek | |
| Cities | |
| Lakes | |
| 100-Year Floodplain | |



Map 2B: Aquifer Types

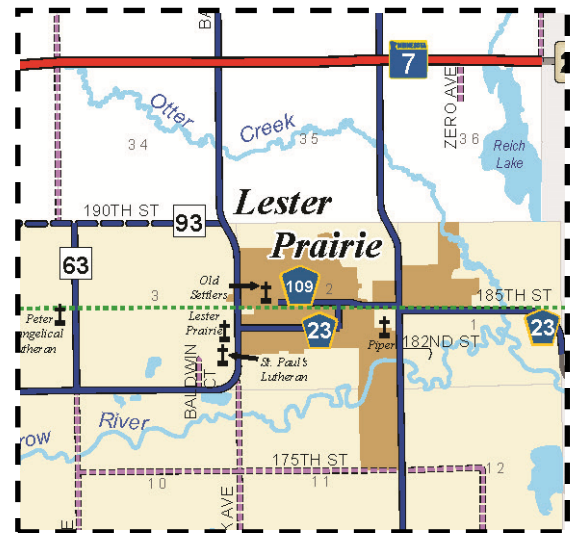


C. Transportation

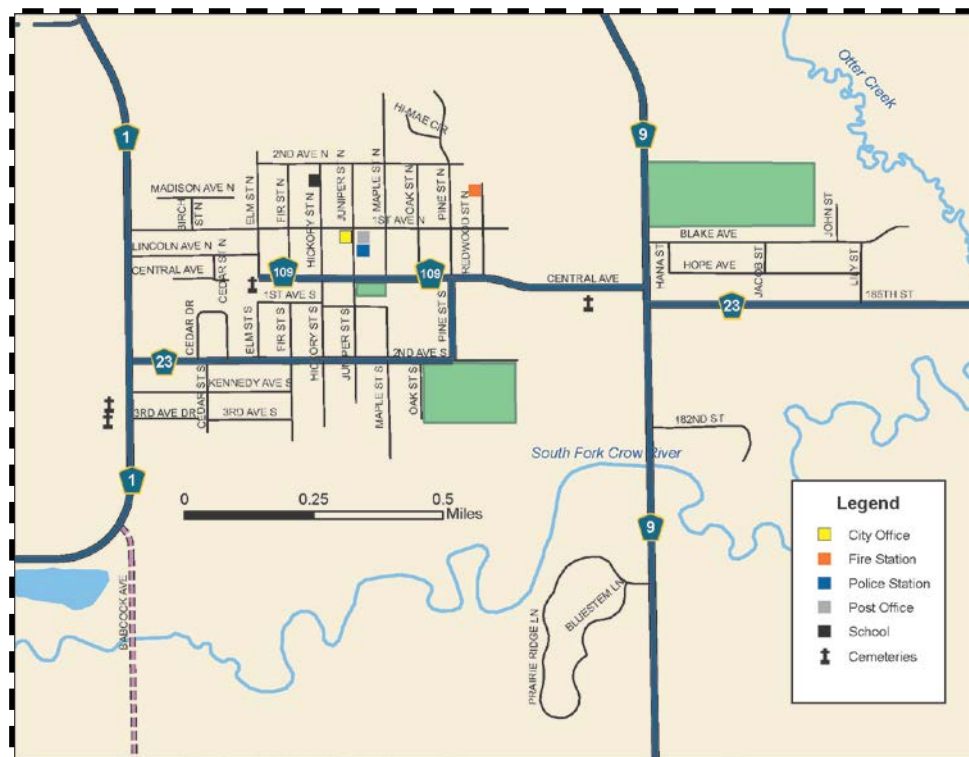
Lester Prairie's transportation network has two key components, the streets and sidewalks within the City and the highways that serve the community (refer to Maps 2C, 2D and 2E). The layout and maintenance of streets and highways in Lester Prairie has a significant impact on the location of existing land uses and the overall growth of the community.

Four paved McLeod County highways serve Lester Prairie. McLeod County Highway 1 (old Minnesota Highway 261) and Highway 9 serve as Lester Prairie's links to the City's principal arterial highways, U.S. Highway 212 to the south and Minnesota Highway 7 to the north. McLeod County Highway 23 is a nine-ton road that goes through Lester Prairie and provides a connection between Highway 1 (western edge of City) and Highway 9 (eastern edge of City). County Road 109 also serves the downtown area, but is limited to being approximately ½ mile in length.

**Map 2C: Lester Prairie's
Nearby State and County Roads**



Map 2D: Lester Prairie's Local Roads



McLeod Functional Classification

- Interstate
- Other Freeways & Expressways
- Principal Arterial - Other
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local
- County Boundary

Legend:

- INTERSTATE TRUNK HWY
- U.S. TRUNK HWY
- STATE TRUNK HWY
- COUNTY STATE AID HWY
- COUNTY ROAD

Map Labels: ACOMA, HUTCHINSON, HALE, WINSTED, LYNN, HASSAN VALLEY, RICH VALLEY, BERGEN, COLLINS, SUMTER, GLENCOE, HELEN, STEWART, BROWNTON, ROUND GROVE, PENN, NEW AUBURN, GREEN ISLE.

Lester Prairie Comprehensive Plan (2017)

D. Land Use

Lester Prairie's current land use closely corresponds with how the community is zoned (refer to Map 2F). A brief definition of each zoning district is provided along with a description of where they are located throughout Lester Prairie:

(A) Agricultural District – The purpose of the A-Agricultural District is to provide for restrictions on urban uses in certain areas of the City until sanitary sewer and water utility services are available. There is one large AG zoned district in the northeastern part of the City.

(R – 1) One and Two Family Residential District – The purpose of the R-1 District is to provide for single and two unit dwellings and directly related, complementary uses at appropriate locations within the City. The majority of Lester Prairie is zoned R-1.

(R-2) Multiple Family Residential District – The purpose of the R-2 District is to provide for and establish medium density residential neighborhoods and directly related complementary uses at appropriate locations within the City. Twelve separate R-2 districts can be found on Map 2E.

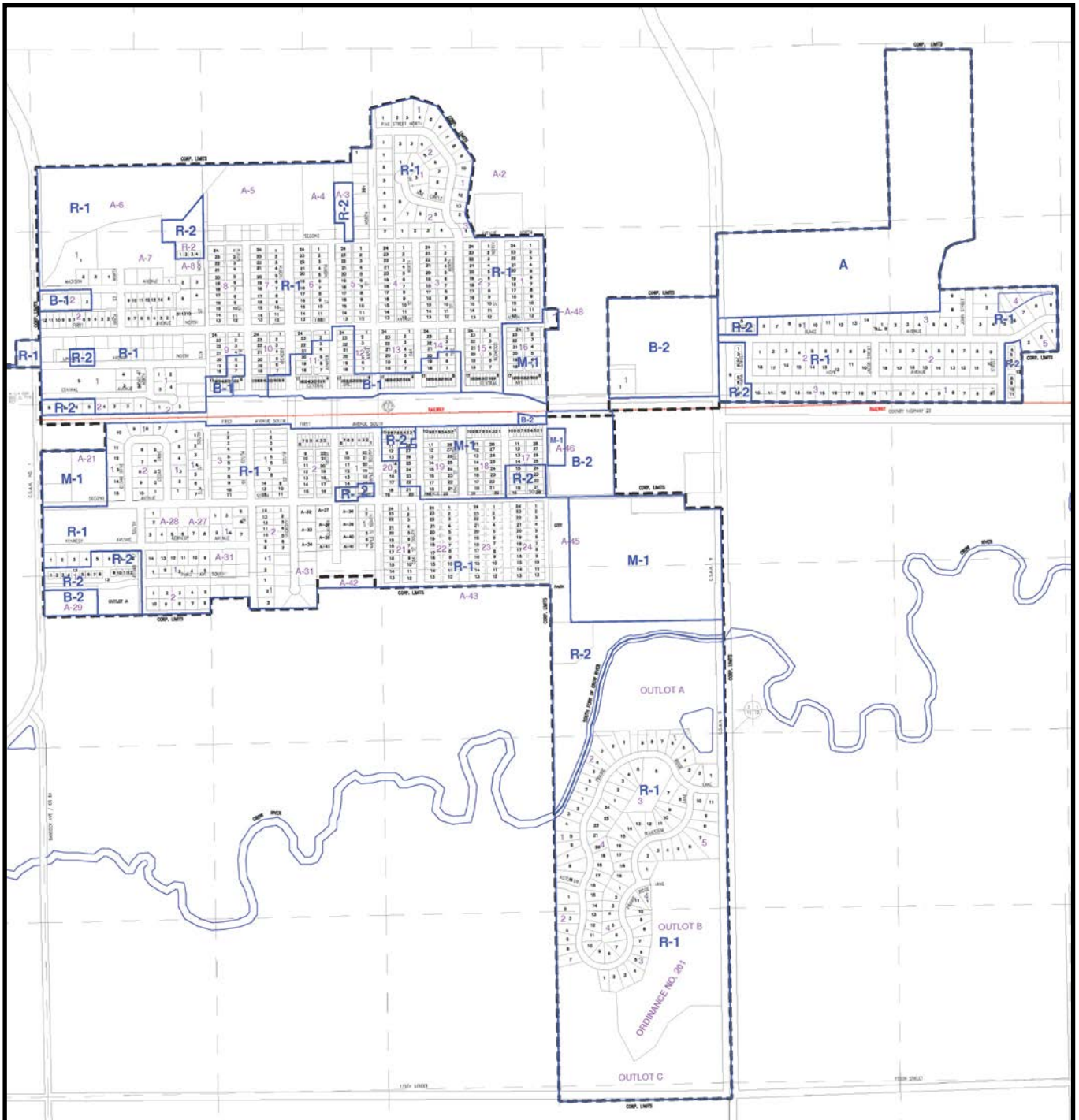
(R-3) High Density Residential District – The purpose of the R-3 District is to provide for high density housing and directly related complementary uses at appropriate locations within the City. Currently there are no R-3 zoned properties in the City.

(B-1) Central Business District – The purpose of the B-1 District is intended to serve as the downtown shopping district for the city. A wide range of retail service, office, governmental, institutional and limited residential uses are permitted. Development standards recognize the special parking, pedestrian and building location needs of an established downtown business district. Notice on Map 2E that in addition to the main downtown B-1 zoning district, two smaller B-1 districts exist.

(B-2) Highway Commercial District – The purpose of the B-2 District is to provide for neighborhood shopping areas outside the downtown area. These districts include as well, much of the strip commercial property, major streets and highways of the City. The uses permitted are intended to accommodate the general retail consumer and the needs and services of the automobile traveling consumer. Currently there are four B-2 zoning districts.

(M-1) Manufacturing District – The purpose of the M-1 District is to provide for light industrial, manufacturing and processing uses in suitable areas. Lester Prairie currently has five M-1 zoning districts.

Map 2F: Lester Prairie's Zoning Districts



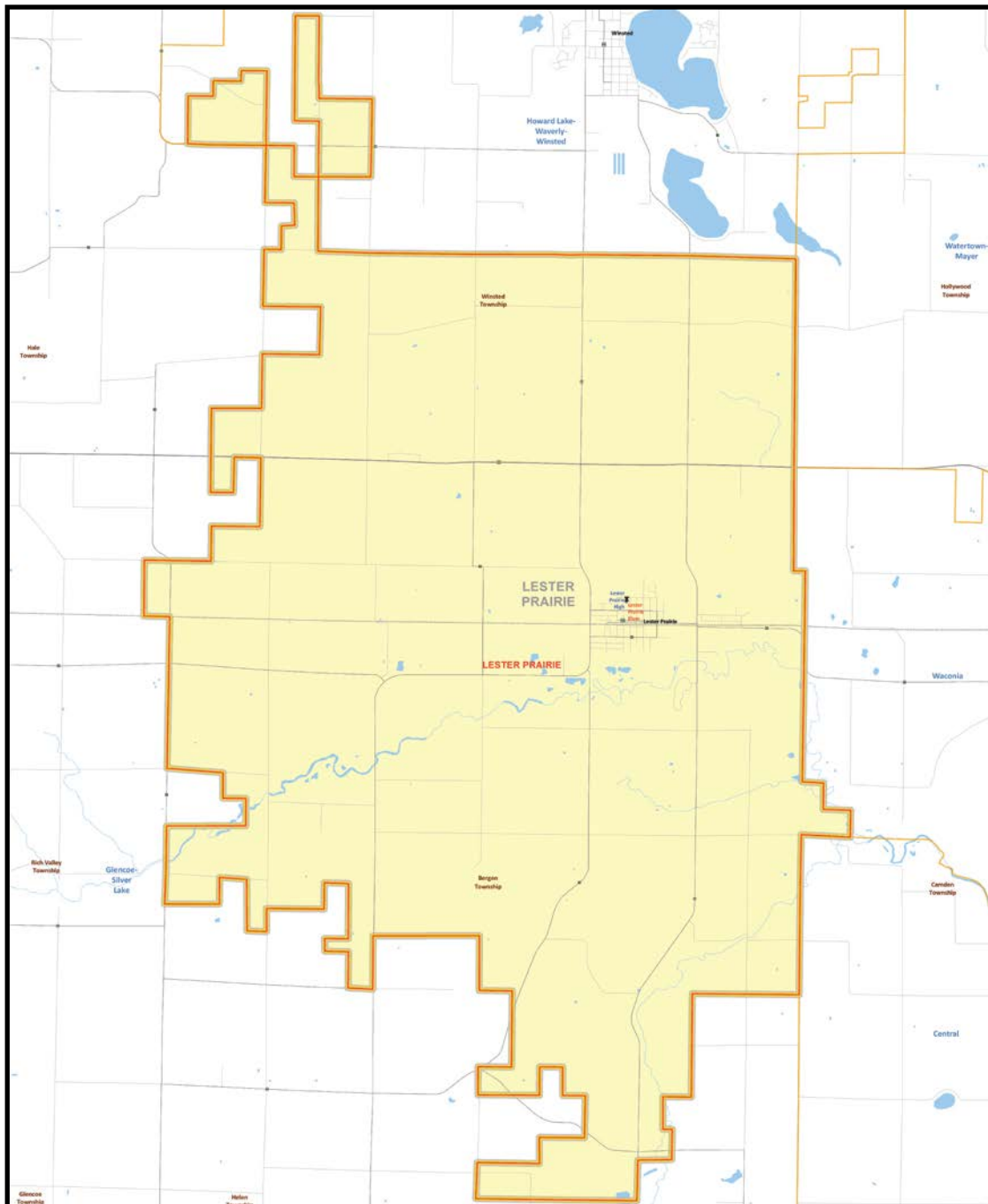
A - Agricultural District
R-1 - One and Two Family Residential District
R-2 - Multiple Family Residential District
R-3 - High Density Residential District

B-1 - Central Business District
B-2 - Highway Commercial District
M-1 - Manufacturing District

E. Lester Prairie School District (ISD #424)

Independent School District 424 is a K-12 facility located at 131 Hickory Street North, a residential neighborhood in Lester Prairie (refer to Map 2G). Currently there are 427 students who attend the school, with approximately 31 students graduating annually. The elementary school averages 19 students per teacher. The community of Lester Prairie is very supportive of the school, both fiscally and in the educational process.

Map 2G: Lester Prairie School District (ISD #424)



F. Parks and Recreation

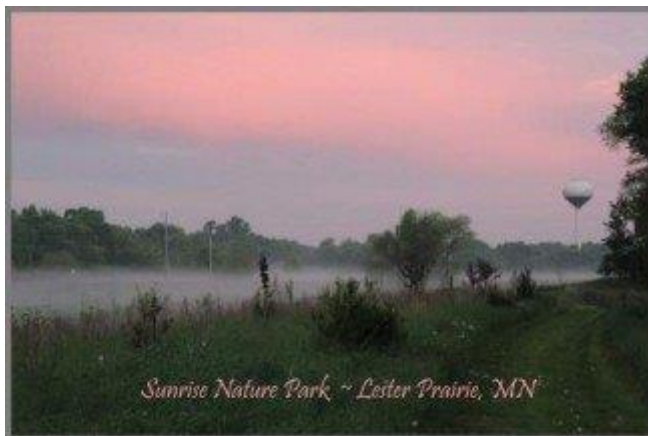
The City of Lester Prairie has made having parks and recreational opportunities a priority throughout its development. As a result, the community has a number of high-quality parks. Each park is briefly described:

Main Park –

The Main Park located on Second Avenue South is the largest park. During the summer you will notice a great



deal of activity at this park; the Lester Prairie High School, Legion and Little League utilize the ball-fields. The park also features a large playground area. The City swimming pool is located at this park area which offers open swim as well as Red Cross Swimming Lessons. A tennis court, volleyball court and basketball half court are located on the west side of the park. An enclosed shelter is available for rent and utilized by a number of individuals for functions such as family reunions, birthday parties, graduations, etc. There is also an open shelter available on a first come first serve basis. During the fall the Lester Prairie School's football teams can be found utilizing the football field.



Sunrise Park – This park is the cities nature park. It consists of 42 acres of land that includes natural habitat. The park has been designated an official wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. There is a walking trail in the park that allows individuals to enjoy the outdoors. This trail needs work but is currently usable. It is a great place to look at different plants, trees and flowers, as well as viewing animals. A few plants you may find in the park

include; goldenrod, prairie coreopsis, coneflowers, iris, sunflowers, prairie rose, butterfly weed, black and brown-eyed susans. The park also includes a variety of prairie grass, such as Indian grass, switch grass, bluestem, Canada wild rye and wheatgrass. There are no motorized vehicles allowed in the park. Establishing cross-country skiing trails in Sunrise Nature Park during the winter months is currently being discussed.

Prairie Ridge Park – This park is located along the Crow River in the Prairie Ridge Development. It features a playground area which can be accessed via a paved walkway.



Central Square Park – This park is located on Central Avenue in the downtown section of Lester Prairie. The park features a gazebo, park benches and a Veteran's memorial monument. The veteran's memorial features the names of many people who served in the military and have a connection to Lester Prairie. During the winter months, there is also an ice skating rink located in this area.



The Dakota Rail Regional Trail

Lester Prairie is fortunate to be located along the Dakota Rail Regional Trail (refer to Maps 2H & 2I). Sections of the Dakota Rail Regional Trail, which extend westward from the Minneapolis suburbs along Lake Minnetonka, have been opening since June 2009. The trail occupies the former Dakota Rail corridor, which ran for a total length of 44 miles to Hutchinson, Minnesota, before being abandoned in 2001 (refer to Maps 2H & 2I). That same year, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA), Carver County and McLeod County jointly purchased the corridor with the goal of establishing a rail-trail.



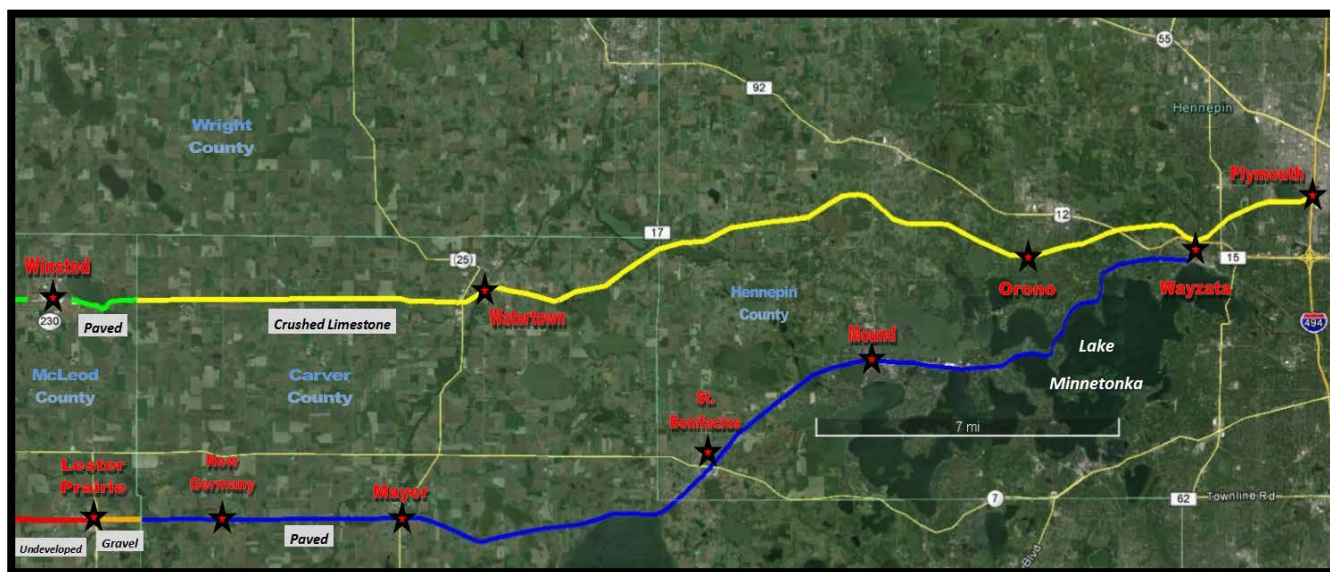
The trail is paved for 26 miles from its eastern terminus in Wayzata westward through Hennepin and Carver County to the Carver/McLeod County line. Cities along this portion of the trail include Orono, Minnetonka Beach, Spring Park, Mound, St. Bonifacius, Mayer, and New Germany. From the county line the trail is rough gravel in McLeod County to Hutchinson, except for the 1.3 mile section into Lester Prairie that was recently improved through the efforts of local residents. This section was officially opened on September 12, 2015.



Lester Prairie Dakota Rail Trail Grand Opening

Photo Source: Herald Journal

**Map 2H:
Dakota Rail Regional Trail (East)**

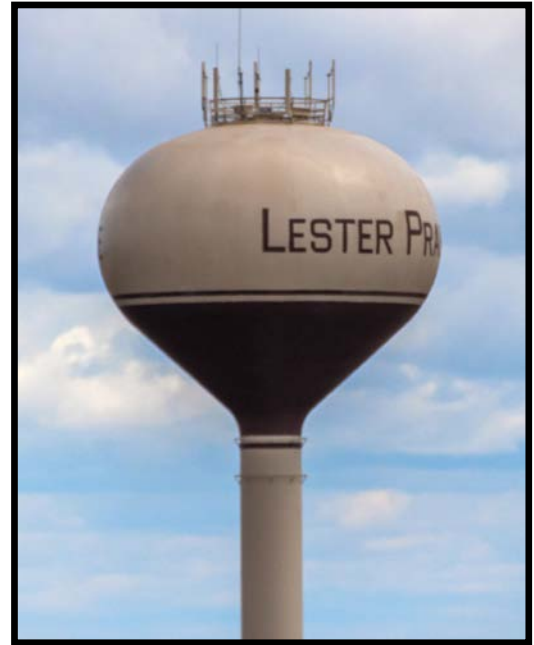


**Map 2I:
Dakota Rail Regional Trail (West)**



G. Public Utilities

- The water treatment plant was constructed in 2012 with the capacity to treat 504,000 gallons per day or 350 gallons per minute.
- In 2015, the average daily water use was 117,333 gallons with a one day max of 304,000 gallons. This resulted in operating at 25% of capacity.
- The waste water treatment plant is designed to handle capacity through 2025 or designed to serve a population of 3,200. The plant currently is operating at 30% capacity in the treatment process and at 80% in bio-solid storage.
- In 2015 the waste water treatment plant treated an average of 89,000 gallons per day with a max of 139,000 gallons.



Lester Prairie Volunteer Fire Department/First Responders



Located at 36 Redwood Street North, the Lester Prairie Fire Department has approximately 30 volunteer members. Firefighting techniques have changed, but the Lester Prairie Fire Department has maintained its commitment to protecting the community since 1892, and has developed so well that it has achieved a Class 6 insurance rating for the city.



Chapter Three: Goals, Objectives and Policies

This section of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the City of Lester Prairie's Goals, Objectives and Policies. They will be used to help guide land use and planning decisions by those responsible for Lester Prairie's future. This includes not only the elected officials, but also city staff, citizens and community stakeholders. The main purpose is to have an official document that describes what the community's priorities are so that everyone responsible for Lester Prairie's future knows what to expect.

The goals have been organized into seven topic areas with corresponding objectives and policies. These goals, objectives and policies are important because they constitute the land use plan for the community and serve as the basis for the ordinances used to implement the plan. Collectively they help to clarify how decisions should be made by City officials on a day-to-day basis. The community's seven goal areas are listed below (*not ranked in order of priority*):

- 1. Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization**
- 2. Transportation & Trails**
- 3. Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space**
- 4. Residential and Housing Development**
- 5. Land Use, Public Facilities and Infrastructure**
- 6. School District and Area Youth**
- 7. Community Engagement**

Throughout the plan, goals, objectives, and policies are defined in the following way:

Goals: Idealistic statements intended to be attained at some undetermined future date. Goals are purposefully general in nature.

Objectives: Statements designed to achieve a goal. Objectives always begin with an action verb (i.e., promote, expand, design, etc.) and can be measurable if a date, dollar amount, or similar value is identified. **The objectives are highlighted in yellow throughout the chapter.**

Policies: Statements that describe how the objectives will be achieved. Policies can be divided into two types: ones that support how decisions should be made on behalf of the city, and ones that represent a commitment by the City to perform an action. The later ones are commonly referred to as 'action steps.'

Vision Statement:

A small-town community where residents respect the past, thrive in the present, and look to the future.

Goal 1:

Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization

“To improve the economic well-being of Lester Prairie by offering high quality employment opportunities, sustainable growth, new capital investments, tax base enhancements, and improved quality of life.”

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective A: Create a successful business climate with policies and programs that promote economic development.

Policy A1: Creative financing tools, such as tax increment financing, tax abatement, revolving loan funds, and state and federal programs should be offered to businesses.

Policy A2: Ensure an efficient and reliable business permitting process.

Policy A3: Businesses should be given available resources to expand or improve their operations.

Policy A4: The City should coordinate efforts with the Lester Prairie Business Association in supporting economic growth in the community.

Policy A5: The City should create an Economic Development Authority (EDA) to foster a variety of business retention and economic development activities.

Objective B: Develop real estate and land use opportunities to attract business.

Policy B1: Redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial developments should be a priority.

Policy B2: Development of an industrial park with infrastructure should be made available for industry.

Policy B3: Encourage the development of a range of housing opportunities to accommodate the community's growing workforce and aging population.

Objective C: Develop infrastructure needed by businesses including roads, water, sewer, and broadband technology.

Policy C1: Continue to identify, construct and maintain infrastructure systems and facilities required to promote and sustain a positive economic climate.

Objective D: Develop a marketing strategy to promote Lester Prairie as a location with great business opportunities.

Policy D1: Create an Economic Development Plan and make it a priority to aggressively implement the plan.

Policy D2: Marketing strategies should be used to promote the use of goods and services currently produced or provided in the City.

Policy D3: Efforts should be made to promote the post-college return of area youth.

Policy D4: Actively coordinate with local and regional government and economic agencies to develop and implement countywide and shared economic development policies.

Objective E: Promote Lester Prairie and the downtown area as a great place to work, shop, dine and entertain.

Policy E1: Create a theme for Lester Prairie to promote the community.

Policy E2: Promote the growth and development of the downtown area.

Policy E3: Work with citizens and the business community to ensure that downtown Lester Prairie attracts customers by making it a great aesthetically and pedestrian-friendly place to visit.

Policy E4: The City should meet with local organizations periodically to discuss tourism issues and strategies.

Policy E5: Promote local businesses and locally-produced goods and services.

Policy E6: Work with McLeod County and MnDOT to encourage motorists to access Lester Prairie from State Highway 7.

Objective F: Achieve a diversified economic base that provides livable wages.

Policy F1: An inventory of existing businesses should be created, and periodically updated, and an analysis should be made that examines future needs.

Policy F2: Actively recruit and retain businesses, especially supporting emerging sectors that create quality, good paying jobs like biotech industries and advanced manufacturing businesses.

Policy F3: A diversified tax base offering a wide variety of employment opportunities at different education and skill levels should be promoted.

Policy F4: Attempts should be made to attract business and industry that would complement the services and products produced by existing businesses.

Policy F5: Efforts should be made to attract and retain industrial and commercial businesses that pay a livable wage.

Policy F6: The City and private enterprise should work together to achieve and retain a skilled and highly trained labor force.

Goal 2:
Transportation & Trails
“To have a safe and comprehensive transportation network that serves residents, visitors and the business community.”

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective G: Monitor, plan, and maintain the existing street infrastructure by making adequate improvements to replace worn or obsolete components of the system.

Policy G1: Realize necessary transportation system improvements in a cost-effective and timely fashion.

Policy G2: As a priority, the City shall preserve its existing transportation system in the highest order of operating condition.

Policy G3: The City will continue to maintain pavement and permanent right-of-way fixtures associated with the roadway system using routine inspections and maintenance and by developing a street rehabilitation program coordinated by the Lester Prairie Maintenance Department.

Objective H: Plan and provide for a wide range of transportation options, increasing connectivity within the street network and developing complete streets that accommodate multiple forms of transportation.

Policy H1: Improve access and linkage between housing, employment, recreation, and businesses in Lester Prairie.

Policy H2: Work with MNDOT and McLeod County to ensure local needs are considered as part of regional transportation plans.

Policy H3: The City will continue to develop a transportation network that is cost-effective.

Policy H4: The City will review all plans for development/redevelopment to determine their impact on the transportation system.

Policy H5: The City shall emphasize having quality street signs that are both informative and aesthetically pleasing.

Policy H6: The City's land use development standards will promote safe and efficient access to the transportation system.

Policy H7: The City will minimize the number of private access points to minor arterial and major collector roadways as part of the development review process.

Policy H8: When new/redevelopment proposals are received, the city shall require connectivity of collector and local streets (including their pedestrian facilities) and trails between residential developments and other land uses.

Policy H9: Conduct a feasibility study that examines how to establish better east-west corridors through the community between County Roads 1 & 9.

Objective I: Cultivate a healthy community where walking and biking is safe and convenient.

Policy I1: The City will create and maintain a sidewalk inventory/plan to determine the best locations and practices for sidewalk placement and to ensure that all sidewalks meet American Disability Act (ADA) standards.

Policy I2: The City will continue to support trail connectivity among local, regional, and state trail systems, with the priority of paving the Dakota Rail Trail to Hutchison.

Policy I3: Work with the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to develop an active living transportation plan for the community.

Policy I4: Create a trail to Prairie Ridge Development.

Objective J: Plan, design and maintain public parking to support parks, trails and businesses.

Policy J1: Encourage the use of shared parking facilities for multiple buildings to provide safe and efficient access to buildings and to lessen the impact of vehicles and parking.

Policy J2: Develop a trailhead for parking and access to the Dakota Rail Trail.

Goal 3:
Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space
“To improve quality of life by protecting and enhancing the Community’s natural resources and parks for all to enjoy.”

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective K: Protect and enhance the community’s natural resources.

- Policy K1:** Recognize that protecting natural resources before they deteriorate saves money in the long-run.
- Policy K2:** Encourage maintaining wetlands and natural drainage systems when accommodating new growth and reestablishing wetlands and natural drainage systems through redevelopment projects.
- Policy K3:** Require sedimentation and erosion control techniques during development and redevelopment projects and continue to encourage innovative techniques, such as rain gardens, and other low impact development and best management practices.
- Policy K4:** Require the management of stormwater runoff in accordance with local and state requirements, as well as drainage needs.
- Policy K5:** Encourage the use of two-cell stormwater treatment design that both treat stormwater and provide quality wildlife habitat.
- Policy K6:** Work with community organizations to create a strong urban forestry program to diversify the local tree species to limit impacts from disease or insects (notably the emerald ash bore).
- Policy K7:** Support the expansion of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency.
- Policy K8:** Require all areas of urban development to be served by public facilities.

Objective L: Develop and maintain quality parks, trails, and open spaces.

- Policy L1:** Recognize in land use decisions that quality parks, trails, and open spaces enhance people’s quality-of-life and increase property values.

- Policy L2:*** Develop, adopt and implement a Lester Prairie Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan. Review annually and update as needed.
- Policy L3:*** As part of the parks plan, enhance the use of the South Fork Crow River in the community.
- Policy L4:*** As part of the Park's Plan, promote the development and use of Sunrise Nature Park.
- Policy L5:*** Evaluate facility development and maintenance practices in the development of the park, trail and open space system plan.
- Policy L6:*** Ensure the continued availability of a community swimming pool.
- Policy L7:*** Develop and maintain a five-year capital improvements plan. Ensure that park, trail, and open space needs are budgeted.
- Policy L8:*** Beautify the park system by integrating gardens and public art into park design.
- Policy L9:*** Ensure park access for all residents by providing neighborhood parks within an easy walk from their homes.
- Policy L10:*** Acquire land that fulfills needs based on growth, provides trail connections, or secures a unique site or facility.
- Policy L11:*** Ensure that planting trees and vegetation continue to be a priority in new and redevelopment projects.
- Policy L12:*** Engage volunteers in the restoration, maintenance, and preservation of the park system.
- Policy L13:*** Provide a well maintained, safe, and continuous trail system that leads to increased usage.
- Policy L14:*** Implement a long-term renewal plan based on a computer inventory of the system, lifecycle cost analysis, and condition assessment of all park facilities.
- Policy L15:*** Build quality facilities that can be adapted to new uses as community needs change.
- Policy L16:*** Continue to provide for regular operations and maintenance of existing park and trail system components through the annual budget.

Policy L17: Work with all levels of government to secure funding for park development, maintenance, and operations.

Policy L18: Create and support concerts, festivals, athletic events, and celebrations that can be enjoyed by the entire community.

Policy L19: Provide recreation opportunities that support active lifestyles for workers before, after, and during their workday.

Policy L20: Provide opportunities for self-directed recreation throughout the parks.

Policy L21: Accept parkland dedication only if it is consistent with the City's development plans and the City's parks plan.

Policy L22: Evaluate the quality and usability of land for parks, trails, and open space being proposed for parkland dedication by the developer.

Policy L23: Apply official controls such as parkland dedication requirements to ensure that appropriate and developable park land is provided with new development. Whenever possible the land dedication should reflect the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Objective M: Promote Lester Prairie as a great place to access the Dakota Rail Trail.

Policy M1: Create events that emphasize accessing the Dakota Rail Trail from Lester Prairie, such as a community bicycle event (i.e., "The Dakota Rail Ride, Dakota Rail Days, etc.).

Policy M2: Continue to work with McLeod County and various stakeholders to work towards the completion of the Dakota Rail Trail all the way to Hutchinson.

Policy M3: Work with stakeholders to develop a trailhead to access the Dakota Rail Trail in Lester Prairie. The trailhead should have at a minimum adequate parking, lighting, an informational kiosk, benches, a bike rack, a portable toilet and a drinking water fountain if feasible.

Policy M4: Work with McLeod County and Bergen/Winsted Townships to establish trail loops between the Dakota Rail and Luce Line Trails.

Goal 4:

Residential and Housing Development

“To preserve and facilitate the development of a mixture of housing types, densities, and cost-ranges that help make Lester Prairie a great place to live.”

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective N: Facilitate the development of safe, affordable and abundant housing.

Policy N1: Lester Prairie should provide opportunities for people at all stages of life to find adequate housing in the community.

Policy N2: Develop a housing study to assess housing goals, needs, and resources.

Policy N3: Encourage public-private partnerships to support housing needs.

Policy N4: Monitor changing housing market conditions.

Policy N5: Maintain zoning and subdivision regulations that allow for the construction of a variety of housing types and price ranges.

Policy N6: Encourage infill housing on vacant lots in residential zones.

Policy N7: Ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place for future housing developments.

Objective O: Create high-quality residential neighborhoods.

Policy O1: Protect property values by updating city codes and properly mitigating nuisances.

Policy O2: Private landowners and developers will be encouraged to improve the image of their property and neighborhoods.

Policy O3: Work with property owners to encourage and/or provide incentives to rehabilitate older or under-used properties.

Policy O4: Create zoning regulations that allow neighborhoods to remain orderly and safe.

Policy O5: Support the development of strong identifiable neighborhoods.

Policy O6: Update the subdivision ordinance to require active living components in new developments with sidewalks, trails, access to parks, green space, etc.

Goal 5:

Land Use, Public Facilities and Infrastructure

“To ensure that decisions regarding public facilities and infrastructure reflect the community’s best long-term needs.”

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective P: Make educated decisions on public facilities and infrastructure expenditures.

Policy P1: Explore all feasible options and costs and weigh short-term versus long-term needs prior to making public facility and infrastructure decisions.

Policy P2: Development will be limited to the extent that it can be adequately served by the existing or planned public facilities. New development will not be permitted to exceed the existing or planned capacity of local roads or utilities. When development requires local extension of roads or utilities, such extension may be the full responsibility of the developer, not the general tax payer.

Policy P3: Create a trunk sanitary sewer system plan covering existing sanitary sewer trunks and future sanitary sewer trunk needs.

Objective Q: Provide adequate and safe water supply.

Policy Q1: Create a water system plan for planning the City’s future water needs. The plan should require all trunk water mains be designed to meet all future water needs. The future water system plan should also account for water storage, fire protection, pressure needs, water conservation, water supply and water treatment.

Policy Q2: Lift stations should be designed to increase capacity as development occurs. Long lasting components which are difficult to replace such as the wet well, piping, and force main should be sized for the ultimate development capacity. Installation of components with shorter service life such as pumps can be staged to enhance efficiency.

Objective R: Limit inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system.

Policy R1: The City creates and enforces an ordinance that prohibits discharge of sump pumps into the sanitary sewer system. When identified, the City requires that such discharges be redirected.

Policy R2: The City should require all developers to install drain tile along streets or in rear easements with services provided for each lots' sump pump discharge. The drain tile discharges to the surface water system. Property owners should be encouraged to connect to these types of drainage systems.

Policy R3: Sanitary sewer system is periodically televised to assess condition and identify problems for repair. In addition, the sanitary sewer system located in street reconstruction project areas are televised before the project begins and repairs are performed concurrent with the street reconstruction project.

Objective S: Make land use decisions based upon the City's current and projected long-term needs.

Policy S1: Work with stakeholders to help identify all relevant issues prior to making land-use decisions.

Policy S2: Work with McLeod County and Bergen/Winsted Townships to help make land use and zoning decisions that reflect the City's long-term needs.

Policy S3: Emphasize the need to develop orderly annexation agreements so that all stakeholders have clear expectations.

Policy S4: Ensure that all annexations follow the procedures established in Minnesota State Statutes Chapter 414 (Municipal Boundary Adjustments).

Goal 6:
School District & Area Youth
*“To continue to make Lester Prairie a great place for
families to raise and educate their kids.”*

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective T: Work with the Lester Prairie School District to identify mutually beneficial community assets, activities, programs, and events.

Policy T1: Work with the School District to share community facilities. Work together to leverage community resources to support the District’s priorities.

Policy T2: Work with the School District to increase programming/activities through the Community Education Program.

Policy T3: Assist with promoting the Lester Prairie School District by improving the coordination between both organizations.

Policy T4: Meet annually in July to review the five-year strategic plans for both the City and the School District. Try to cooperate on priorities and implementation funding.

Policy T5: Jointly examine street lighting near the school and update as needed.

Policy T6: Collaborate on improving transportation, roadways, parking, sidewalks and/or trails to the school, by creating a Safe Routes to School Plan for the community.

Objective U: Promote the theme of Lester Prairie being a safe and kid-friendly community.

Policy U1: Create signs that identify Lester Prairie as a “Kid-Friendly Community.”

Policy U2: Support and develop programming for youth in the community.

Policy U3: Ensure that zoning policies don’t prohibit home-based business opportunities, such as child care facilities.

Policy U4: Continue to place an emphasis on quality parks and trails for families to enjoy.

Policy U5: Address pedestrian issues so that children have safe places to travel between key destinations.

Policy U6: Promote the concept of “safe neighborhoods” to encourage residents to do their part in promoting a safe community.

Policy U7: Realize that addressing youth concerns also addresses many of the concerns of senior citizens.

Policy U8: Ensure that adequate lighting is placed in public areas.

Policy U9: Enhance crosswalks throughout the community.

Policy U10: Examine parking policies to ensure safe routes and to help create clear sight lines at intersections.

Policy U11: Work with law enforcement to minimize speeding, distracted driving, and local crime rates.

Policy U12: Expand participation in the Lester Prairie Youth Task Force.

Goal 7:
Community Engagement
*“To involve citizens and key stakeholders in the decision-making process
so they have a vested interest in the community’s future.”*

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES:

Objective V: Seek input from citizens and stakeholders regarding key community issues and projects.

Policy V1: Host an annual community event to encourage citizens to come to City Hall and provide input on current issues.

Policy V2: Try to make important community decisions equitable by ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to provide input.

Policy V3: Identify “quality-of-life” benefits prior to making important local decisions.

Policy V4: Enhance the community’s online presence to better interact with and inform residents and stakeholders.

Objective W: Encourage citizens to actively participate in making Lester Prairie a great place to live, work, shop and enjoy the outdoors.

Policy W1: Ask citizens to assist with fundraising efforts on key community projects.

Policy W2: Develop programming partnerships with groups and organizations that provide life-long learning.

Chapter Four: Future Land Use Plan & Implementation Priorities



Photo Source: Herald Journal

This Chapter establishes a Future Land Use & Implementation Plan for the City of Lester Prairie. Section A describes the community's 20-year future land use plans. The primary feature is Map 4A, which identifies Lester Prairie's urban growth area. Section B outlines several key projects and priorities that should be implemented in order to accomplish the goals, objectives, and policies identified in Chapter Three.

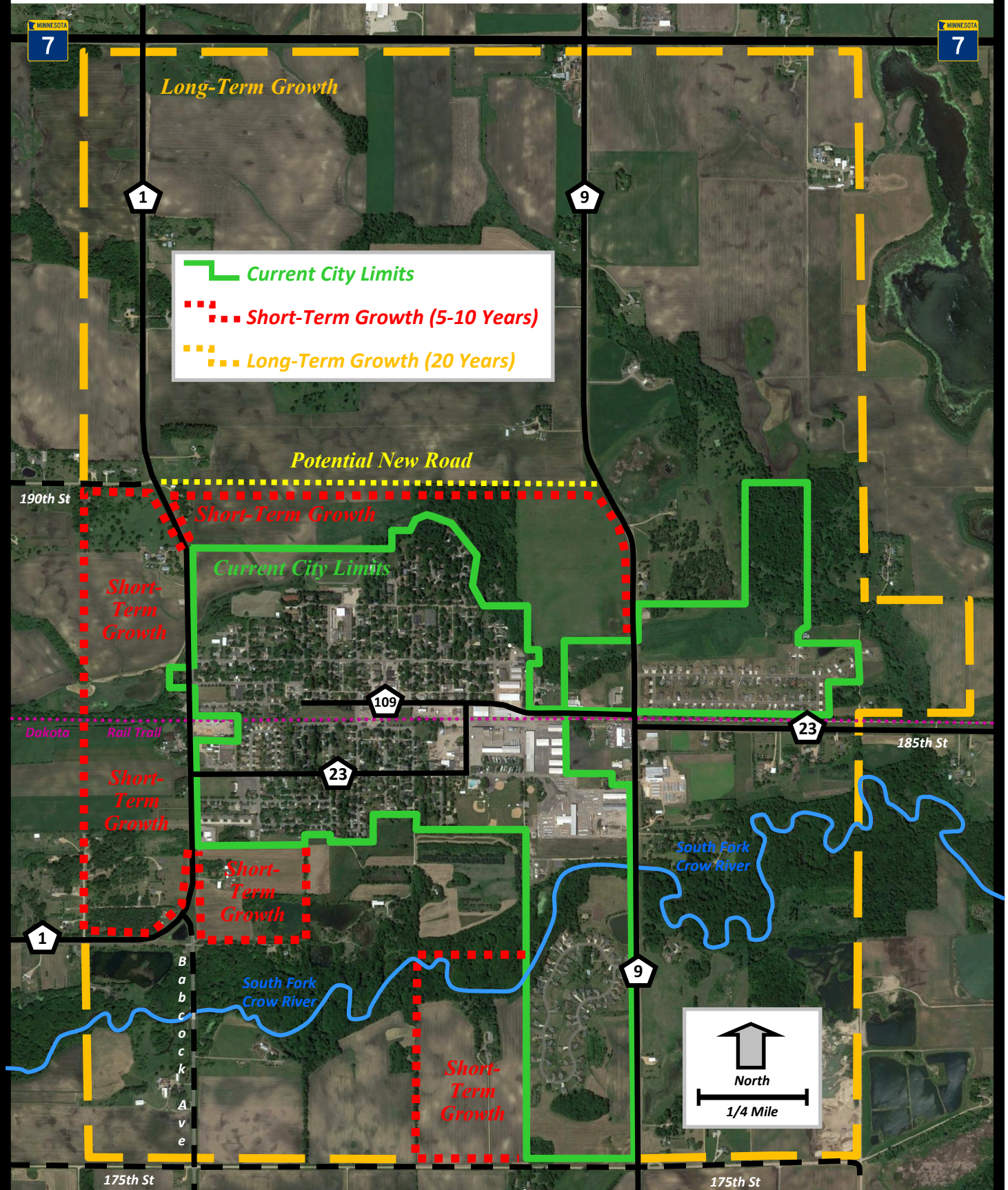
A. Future Land Use Plan

Throughout the planning process, nearly every meeting addressed the City of Lester Prairie's potential future land use in some fashion. The results of the information gathered in these meetings are presented in Map 4A.

The most important feature of Map 4A is the City's Urban Growth Area. The long-term growth area, represented by the yellow-dashed outer boundary, shows where Lester Prairie could grow over the next twenty years. This boundary is not intended to suggest the community will completely expand to this full extent, however, growth could occur rapidly at any time or in any one general direction. Overall, it is anticipated the community will take steps to grow toward Minnesota State Highway 7, between County Roads 1 and 9.

Realizing that predicting the timing of future land use development is difficult, the City decided not to identify specific periods of time that additional land would need to be incorporated. Instead, the primary purpose of the Future Land Use Map is to create a plan and conversation piece with McLeod County and Bergen/Winsted Townships on future land use development.

Map 4A: Lester Prairie Urban Growth Area



B. Implementation Projects and Priorities

This section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines the variety of action steps that are needed in order to properly implement the Goals, Objectives, and Policies outlined in Chapter Three. The section is organized in the community's seven goal areas. The policies can be divided into two main types: ones that are guidelines (i.e., ensure the continued availability of a community swimming pool); and policies that prescribe a needed action (i.e., enhance crosswalks throughout the community). Each of the seven goals has a table that identifies its key action steps. The tables also include information on if the action step is a *Short-Term (within five years)*, *Long-Term (within 10 years)*, or *Ongoing* priority. A few notes section also describes 'who' is responsible for implementation.

Goal 1: Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization

“To improve the economic well-being of Lester Prairie by offering high quality employment opportunities, sustainable growth, new capital investments, tax base enhancements, and improved quality of life.”

Although the seven goal areas are not ranked in order of priority, economic development and downtown revitalization was a main topic of conversation throughout the comprehensive planning process. The key implementation steps are summarized in Table 4A.

Table 4A:
Economic Development & Downtown Revitalization Implementation

| # | <i>Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three)</i> | <i>Short-Term</i> | <i>Long-Term</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
|----|---|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| A5 | Create an Economic Development Authority. | <i>x</i> | | |
| B2 | Develop an industrial park. | | <i>x</i> | |
| D1 | Create an Economic Development Plan. | <i>x</i> | | |
| E1 | Create a theme for Lester Prairie to promote the community. | <i>x</i> | | |
| E6 | Work with McLeod County and MnDOT to encourage motorists to access Lester Prairie from State Highway 7. | <i>x</i> | | |

Goal 2: Transportation & Trails

“To have a safe and comprehensive transportation network that serves residents, visitors and the business community.”

The second goal area focuses on ensuring the City of Lester Prairie continues to work towards a good transportation and trails network. The key corresponding implementation steps are summarized in Table 4B.

Table 4B:
Transportation & Trails Implementation

| # | Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three) | Short-Term | Long-Term | Ongoing |
|----|---|------------|-----------|---------|
| G3 | Develop a street rehabilitation program. | | | x |
| H9 | Conduct a feasibility study that examines how to establish better east-west corridors through the community between County Roads 1 & 9. | | x | |
| I1 | Create a sidewalk inventory and plan. | x | | |
| I3 | Develop an active living transportation plan. | x | | |
| I4 | Create a trail to Prairie Ridge Development | x | | |
| J2 | Develop a trailhead for parking and access to the Dakota Rail Trail. | x | | |

Goal 3: Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space

“To improve quality of life by protecting and enhancing the Community’s natural resources and parks for all to enjoy.”

The third goal area focuses on protecting and enhancing the City’s natural resources and parks. The key corresponding implementation steps are summarized in Table 4C.

Table 4C:
Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space Implementation

| # | <i>Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three)</i> | <i>Short-Term</i> | <i>Long-Term</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
|----|--|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| L2 | Develop a Lester Prairie Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan. | <i>x</i> | | |
| L7 | Develop a 5-year Capital Improvements Plan. | <i>x</i> | | |
| M1 | Create events emphasizing the use of the Dakota Rail Trail. | <i>x</i> | | |
| M2 | Complete the Dakota Rail Trail to Hutchinson. | <i>x</i> | | |
| M3 | Develop a Dakota Rail Trailhead in Lester Prairie. | <i>x</i> | | |
| M4 | Establish trail loops between the Dakota Rail & Luce Line Trails. | | <i>x</i> | |

Goal 4: Residential and Housing Development

“To preserve and facilitate the development of a mixture of housing types, densities, and cost-ranges that help make Lester Prairie a great place to live.”

Goal Four focuses on ensuring that Lester Prairie has a mix of housing options to both keep current residents and attract new ones into the community. The key ways the City intends on accomplishing this is summarized in Table 4D.

Table 4D:
Residential & Housing Development Implementation

| # | <i>Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three)</i> | <i>Short-Term</i> | <i>Long-Term</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
|----|--|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| N2 | Develop a housing study. | <i>x</i> | | |
| O1 | Update City Codes to help protect property values. | <i>x</i> | | |
| O6 | Update the subdivision ordinance. | <i>x</i> | | |

Goal 5: Land Use, Public Facilities and Infrastructure

“To ensure that decisions regarding public facilities and infrastructure reflect the community’s best long-term needs.”

The City’s fifth goal area highlights the need to ensure that public facility and infrastructure decisions are based upon the community’s best long-term needs. Table 4E lists the two main ways the City intends on accomplishing Goal 5.

Table 4E:
Land Use, Public Facilities & Infrastructure Implementation

| # | Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three) | Short-Term | Long-Term | Ongoing |
|----|--|------------|-----------|---------|
| P3 | Create a trunk sanitary sewer system plan. | x | | |
| Q1 | Create a water system plan. | x | | |

Goal 6: School District & Area Youth

“To continue to make Lester Prairie a great place for families to raise and educate their kids.”

The sixth goal area focuses on working with the Lester Prairie School District to ensure that Lester Prairie continues to be a great place for families and kids to live. The key corresponding implementation steps are summarized in Table 4F.



*Lester Prairie School District
Superintendent Jeremy Schmidt*

Table 4F:
School District & Area Youth Implementation

| # | <i>Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three)</i> | <i>Short-Term</i> | <i>Long-Term</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
|----|--|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| T4 | Annually meet with the School District to discuss priorities. | | | <i>x</i> |
| T5 | Examine street lighting near the school and update as needed. | <i>x</i> | | |
| T6 | Create a Safe Routes to School Plan for the Community. | <i>x</i> | | |
| U1 | Create signs that identify Lester Prairie as a "Kid-Friendly Community." | <i>x</i> | | |
| U9 | Enhance crosswalks throughout the community. | <i>x</i> | | |

Goal 7: Community Engagement

*“To involve citizens and key stakeholders in the decision-making process
so they have a vested interest in the community’s future.”*

The seventh and final goal area focuses on ensuring that residents and key stakeholders have a large voice in the City’s ongoing decision-making process. Table 4G highlights the main ways the City intends to accomplish this goal.

Table 4G:
Community Engagement Implementation

| # | <i>Summary of the Key Policy Statements (refer to Chapter Three)</i> | <i>Short-Term</i> | <i>Long-Term</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
|----|---|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| V1 | Host an annual community event at the City Hall to solicit feedback from residents. | | | <i>x</i> |
| W1 | Ask citizens to assist with fundraising on key community projects. | | | <i>x</i> |

C. Implementation Plan

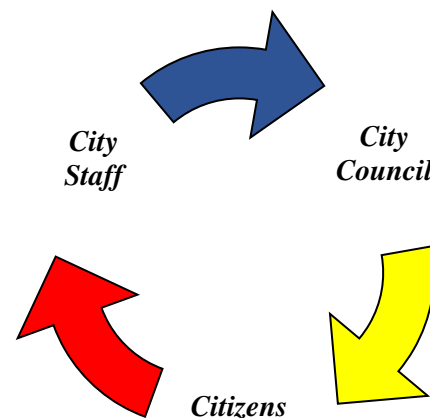
This Comprehensive Plan has identified several projects the City of Lester Prairie will need to implement to achieve the community's Goals and Objectives. A key method for accomplishing this is to put the Goals and Objectives into practice on a routine basis by City officials and City staff. In addition, the following action steps are key to the overall success of properly implementing the initiatives outlined in Chapter Three:

1. Update the City of Lester Prairie's Land Use Ordinance to accomplish the various objectives and policies; and
2. Pursue funding for and commission the projects and studies identified throughout the Comprehensive Plan; and
3. Ensure the City's budgeting process and Capital Improvements Plan reflects the priorities and implementation steps; and
4. Ensure that all citizens and stakeholders are involved in the planning and decision-making process.

Plan Maintenance – The City of Lester Prairie will ultimately change as growth occurs in the community and the surrounding area. As a result, this Comprehensive Plan should be viewed as a living document that undergoes a number of modifications as projects are implemented and priorities change. To capture these changes, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated at least once every ten years.

City Staff, Planning Commission and City Council –

The City Staff of Lester Prairie are responsible for developing programs and initiatives that will aid in implementation of the Plan's Goals and Objectives. The Planning Commission has the task of ensuring that land use requests and permits are in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the City Council is responsible to make decisions in accordance with the Goals, Objectives and Policies.



Citizens – In addition to the initial planning stage of this document, citizens need to stay involved in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. This could be achieved by providing the City staff with continued feedback on how different aspects of the plan, goals and objectives are being implemented throughout the community.