



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document, written collaboratively and informed by current and projected trends, that will steer the course of land use and development in the City for the next 25 years. A Comprehensive Plan is a physical plan, but a good comprehensive plan also includes elements that reflect the philosophy and values of its community and draws upon citizen engagement to define those values. A comprehensive plan, with the help and input of community feedback, sets a 20-30 year vision for a community's future and outlines community priorities through maps, goals, and action items. In the Twin Cities region, a Comprehensive Plan also indicates that a community is mindful of regional policies and how the community fits into those policies.

It is typical during Plan development to evaluate current goals and past efforts and decide what elements should be retained or modified in a plan update – and what new elements need to be added. At minimum, a Comprehensive Plan will include chapter or sections on land use, housing, parks and trail systems, transportation and transit, infrastructure, and plan implementation. Additional plan sections, such as sustainability and resiliency, economic development, and social equity, can enhance the future vision for the city.

Why are we doing a Plan update right now?

Every city in the Twin Cities Metro Area updates their comprehensive plan every 10 years. The next round of comprehensive plan updates is due in December 2018. The Metropolitan Land Planning Act, a state law first passed in 1976, requires local governments in the Twin Cities metro area to prepare and adopt local comprehensive plans. The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning authority that sets the regional planning standards for local metro plans and reviews those plans upon submission to ensure that they are compatible with regional planning efforts. The Metropolitan Council has specific planning authority when it comes to transportation, regional park systems, water resources, and housing policy. The Metropolitan Council also provides guidance and resources to local communities to help them develop plans that are based on reasonable population and household forecasts and sound land use planning practices.

Who uses a comprehensive plan?

Decision-makers use the Comprehensive Plan every day through tasks such as zoning administration and setting the City's budget to ensure that the choices that a city is making are in alignment with the vision laid out in the Plan. A Plan helps to outline when new investments in infrastructure will be needed, and what types of policies should go into effect to anticipate the needs of a growing and changing community.

BLAINE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS

OLD (2030) GOAL	PROPOSED 2040 GOAL
The MUSA boundary will be amended to include all of the remaining parcels, with the exception of property in AG Preserve and the 160 acres of land in the far northwestern corner of the City (NW Quarter of Section 6), to reflect the City's policy that all developable property in Blaine can ultimately and in an orderly and sustainable manner be served with city sewer and water. The City will consider MUSA for the 160 acres in the far northwest corner as part of the next overall comprehensive plan update or sooner if requested by a majority of the area's property owners.	The City's policy is that all developable property in Blaine can ultimately, in an orderly and sustainable manner, be served with city sewer and water. The City supports adding to the MUSA the 160 acres in the far northwest corner of Blaine to allow the possibility of connection to municipal sewer and water services.
The Comprehensive Plan will maintain the existing mix between single-family, commercial and industrial land uses. Emphasis will be placed on fostering industrial and professional/corporate office business development wherever appropriate and decreasing emphasis on retail- commercial development.	Maintain flexibility in land use districts to respond to market conditions regarding the mix of industrial, commercial, and high density residential in key locations.
Where appropriate, the City will encourage increased density through appropriately designed townhouses and apartments, a variety of single family detached-style homes with clustering, varying lot sizes, and shared open space.	The City recognizes varied housing densities as a means of accommodating community growth. The City will encourage increased density through appropriately designed and located townhouses and apartments, a variety of single family detached-style homes with clustering, varying lot sizes, and shared open space.
The City will continue to discourage additional private septic rural development in order to preserve the remaining undeveloped areas for future urban development through MUSA designation and existing zoning ordinance restrictions.	The City will continue to discourage additional private septic rural development in order to preserve the remaining undeveloped areas for future urban development through MUSA designation and existing zoning ordinance restrictions. (No change)

<p>Redevelopment will be encouraged and supported for areas that are obsolete or blighted, and where such redevelopment is to foster job growth and increase property values as well as create a more positive community image. The plan will include specific targeted areas such as the University Avenue corridor, the older industrial park located in the area of 105th Avenue and Nassau Street as well as select areas along Highway 65 and others, including residential</p>	<p>The City will encourage and support development of underutilized areas, particularly where such redevelopment fosters job growth, increased property values, and a positive community image. The plan will include the target corridors of University Avenue and Highway 65, as well as the locations identified as target redevelopment sites in this Plan.</p>
<p>The City will continue to implement practices to improve the image along major roadway corridors relating to building design, architecture and materials, signage, land use and landscaping.</p>	<p>The City will continue to review and revise regulation relating to building design, architecture and materials, signage, land use and landscaping to improve the visual landscape along major roadway corridors.</p>
<p>The City will continue programs and strategies to address aging commercial, industrial and residential structures. The strategy will focus on community education, reviewing existing zoning and code standards dealing with maintenance standards, encouraging the local financial community to provide financial programs in addition to public resources to encourage maintenance, and utilizing code compliance only where appropriate.</p>	<p>Improve and revitalize aging commercial, industrial and residential structures.</p>
<p>(No 2030 goal)</p>	<p>The City prioritizes the incorporation of community amenities and functional gathering spaces, where feasible and sustainable, into proposed development.</p>

HOUSING GOALS

OLD (2030) GOAL	PROPOSED 2040 GOAL
The City is committed to maintaining affordable life-cycle housing in our community.	<i>Collapsed into another goal</i>
Recognizing the change in demographics that will continue to occur in future years, the City will continue to encourage development and redevelopment of different types of senior housing within the community.	<i>Collapsed into another goal</i>
The City Council supports the goal of providing housing opportunities, which meets the needs of all generations and income levels, particularly entry level housing for families.	Provide housing opportunities which meet the needs of all generations and income levels, particularly varying types of independent and assisted senior housing.
The City will support development of multi-family housing projects, which are appropriately located and well designed. The City will create quality multi-family development, which respects open space, tree preservation and wetlands, creates positive community impacts and has access to services and transportation.	The City supports the development of well-designed and appropriately-located multi-family housing projects when these developments improve access to affordable housing and transit, creative positive community impacts, and preserve natural resources.
(No 2030 goal)	The City supports flexibility in zoning and development in order to encourage a wide variety of housing options and types within Blaine.
(No 2030 goal)	The City supports taking actions that lead to improvement and maintenance of the quality of the existing housing stock
(No 2030 goal)	As housing preferences change, the City supports the development of housing that meets the needs and preferences of the population today.
(No 2030 goal)	Preserve the manufactured housing communities within Blaine as important affordable housing option.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

OLD (2030) GOAL	PROPOSED 2040 GOAL
Promote preservation of the natural environment to protect trail and greenway corridors, preserve and conserve open space, provide appropriate public access, and offer environmental education opportunities. New development areas such as Pheasant Ridge Business Park and Finn Farm development should be designed to take advantage of the open space and wetland areas and enhance those areas as amenities for the community.	Promote preservation of Blaine's high value natural resource areas for public enjoyment through passive and active recreational opportunities.
No 2030 Goal	Promote and protect natural resources areas in the review and approval of new development
The City will develop and promote policies as well as Best Management Practices which address environmental concerns, including: recycling, conservation, water quality, flooding, wellhead protection, open space, pollution, toxic wastes, wildlife, wetlands, and woodlands and low impact development standards for new development and redevelopment where appropriate.	Become a more sustainable city by continuing to focus on programs and policies that advance environmental enhancement.
No 2030 Goal	Elevate the importance of both maintenance and management of existing natural resources and open spaces.
A plan, both physical and financial, should be developed for the large 500-acre City owned wetland/natural area lying north of 109th Avenue. The area should be examined for development of trail linkages, nature demonstration areas, wildlife viewing, and passive natural recreation opportunities including wetland, animal and plant habitat restoration.	Continue a plan to develop the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary, including the inclusion of amenities and linkages to trails.
No 2030 Goal	Conserve drinking and groundwater resources through a mixture of conservation practices, incentives, and/or regulation.

PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION GOALS

OLD (2030) GOAL	PROPOSED 2040 GOAL
The City will strive to provide a wide spectrum of opportunities for community residents of all ages and diversity to participate in quality, effective, and engaging recreational and educational activities and programs.	Provide a wide spectrum of opportunities for community residents of all ages, incomes, abilities and interests to participate in quality, effective, and engaging recreational and education activities and programs.
The City will develop strategies for development of new parks as residential growth demands, improvement of existing park facilities that provides for a diverse use of park resources and financing strategies to accommodate future park improvements and long term maintenance as residential development declines and park dedication fees are exhausted.	Focus on the improvement, enhancement, increased programming, maintenance of and connections to, existing park and trail facilities, especially Aquatore Park and the Wetland Sanctuary.
The City will continue to pursue the planning and development of a community center/senior center to provide adequate and fiscally responsible facility and program space.	<i>Moved to Action Item</i>
The City will develop strategies to complete urban sections, identify natural corridors, future trails and sidewalks that will join people to parks, open spaces, schools, neighborhoods, regional facilities, employment centers and community destinations in an accessible and interconnected system.	Develop better walking and biking connections between where residents live and where they desire to travel, including commercial areas, Town Square Park, schools, parks, neighborhoods, regional facilities, and employment centers.
No 2030 Goal	Round out the development of new park and trail facilities with new subdivision review and associated park dedication funding.
No 2030 Goal	Coordinate natural resource protection, preservation, and enhancement with opportunities for public enjoyment and recreation.
No 2030 Goal	The park system should be a place to gather, meet other residents, and improve the livability of the city.