



## 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary provides information on the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update. This Plan updates the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to this current time. Base information, goals and objectives have been reviewed and if relevant, incorporated in this update. This update is ordered similarly to the 2007 plan for ease of review and comparison to see the changes that have taken place in the City of Isanti over a time span of 13 years. Each section of the update contains recent and relevant information in a concise manner, with additional goals providing recommendations for current times and looking forward 10 years to 2030.

### *Past Economic Conditions Affect Comprehensive Plan Projections*

As a review of the document is made, it must be stated that there were two major economic events that affected development within the City of Isanti. These events were the Great Recession and the Housing Foreclosure Crisis. The recession greatly slowed new development and stalled significant job growth for a number of years in the City of Isanti. Coupled with the financial recession was the foreclosure crisis which caused significant abandonment of single-family homes in the City of Isanti. Isanti County itself had one of the highest rates of housing foreclosures in Minnesota. At the height of the crisis, 12% of the owner-occupied housing stock in the City was affected. The City worked tirelessly with property managers and lending institutions to maintain vacant housing and homes during the crisis. Proactively, the City implemented a federally funded grant program to assist qualifying new owners with financing and repair of foreclosed homes. Over time both the financial and foreclosure crisis eased and with the improving economy, new commercial and housing construction began again. However, with such tumultuous times, the development and growth projections for the City of Isanti in the 2007 plan were not realized. This update takes this into account and provides a new path towards the future.

### *Planning Boundary / Joint Planning*

This update follows the “planning boundary” as described in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. Overall, planning within this area is sufficient for the time period of this update. It is recommended in development of a new Comprehensive Plan in 2030, that progression of development into the planning area be evaluated and any change in adjacent governmental jurisdictions be taken into account. It is further recommended that joint planning with adjacent Townships, the City of Cambridge, Isanti County and natural resource organizations would assist the City of Isanti to achieve its development goals; with protection of the City’s unique natural environment that extends beyond present and future city boundaries.

## *Project Process*

City staff have worked with the Planning Commission on the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update. Public input has also been gathered as a part of this update. At the beginning of the process in May, 2019, updated plan Community Vision, Goals and Strategies were prepared and placed on the City Website for public comment. A Facebook poll was also taken at that time to identify community wants and desires. In January, 2020, an Open House was held as part of the regular monthly Planning Commission Meeting to overview the Comprehensive Plan Update and gather public input. Public comment from all these outreach efforts has been included in the Comprehensive Plan Update.

## *Chapter Highlights*

Below are chapter highlights from the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update. Applicable additional goals are also listed.

### Chapter 1: Community Vision, Goals and Strategies

The Chapter contains the City Mission Statement, Community Vision Objectives and overall Goals. Sections with specific goals include: General Community, Intergovernmental Coordination, Community Appearance and Livability, Natural Resources, Growth Management, Land Use, Community Facilities, Parks and Open Space and Transportation. These sections and plan goals should be reviewed periodically. They should also be considered with any Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Community and Economic Development planning and projects.

### Chapter 2: The Community

Chapter 2 discusses past and current community conditions and demographics. Demographics regarding population and household trends are reviewed and projections are given through the planning period. Based on analysis of the demographic data the City will continue to grow more diverse in population and the following goals/strategies are as follows:

- Recognize the assets of citizens of all ages, incomes, faiths and cultural heritages.
- Continue to find ways to educate the public on cultural, economic, faith, age-based and other diversity issues.
- Encourage increased interaction and communication between citizens of all ages, faiths, cultural heritages and incomes.

The next section overviews City facilities that include: City Hall, Isanti Community Center, Isanti Indoor Arena, Public Safety Building, Public Works Maintenance Facility and Utility Treatment Plants. There is also information on Schools in Isanti and Churches to recognize them as community social institutions. Goals/strategies for this section are as follows:

- Consider facility planning for future City needs. Identify sites for future public facility locations.
- Create conceptual future master plans for planned growth areas that will identify, map and preserve future utility corridors.

The final section of Chapter 2 is a brief discussion of Intergovernmental Organizations and relationships regarding city growth. Optimal for the City is use of orderly annexation agreements and extra-territorial planning through Tiers. These both allow proper staged planning for future urban development. To gain acceptance and implementation, there will need to be an open dialogue between Isanti Township, Isanti County and the City, with follow through regarding policies as urban development proceeds. Goals/strategies are as follows:

- Work with adjacent Townships, Municipalities and the County to ensure that planning goals, objectives and policies are understood and accepted.
- Communicate and educate local officials regarding City development projects that affect adjacent Townships, Municipalities and the County.
- Work with adjacent local governments to identify areas where collaboration and consolidation could reduce overall cost and increase the effectiveness of local government.

### Chapter 3: Housing and Neighborhoods

This Chapter focused on housing development in the City. Housing is the single greatest land use in the City of Isanti. Of that, the largest housing classification in the City is single-family owner-occupied housing. People are drawn to Isanti due to its small town feel, semi-rural environment and ability to get single family housing at a lower price point than urban housing markets closer to the twin cities metropolitan area. Regarding the age of housing in the City, the largest amount of housing was built in the time span from 2000 to 2018. There was also a significant amount of housing built in the 1990s. Major housing development in those time periods occurred in the south, western and northwest areas of the City. Also, with the extension of utility and street infrastructure, housing development began on the east side of Highway 65. As residential housing areas are now nearing completion on the west of Highway 65, major housing development will shift to the east side. This is anticipated to happen in the term of this comprehensive plan update. The land use plan recognizes that and land use is guided for housing development in those areas.

Regarding housing type, the demand for single-family housing in Isanti will continue within the timeframe of this update. Market rate starter, transitional, and “move up” single-family housing is being constructed. Recent starter housing is a mix of split level and one level patio homes. The split-level homes often have an unfinished lower level, allowing the purchaser to expand the home’s square footage to meet owner housing needs. The single level patio homes appeal to both first time home buyers and senior citizens who need transitional housing. Larger “move-up” single-family homes are being constructed to meet the needs of growing and relocating families.

There is also a need for multi-family housing in the City. The last market rate apartment complex was built in 2008. The most recent housing study, performed in 2015, determined that more housing was needed in the area, as multi-family housing vacancy rates were very low. Since that study more multi-family housing has been built in the area, but not in the City of Isanti. There has been much discussion regarding the need for “life-cycle housing” in the City and multi-family housing fills gaps by providing first housing for younger households and transitional housing for seniors. Part of the issue in Isanti is the amount of land available for multi-family housing. Ideally, these developments are near commercial corridors. Potential sites for mixed use of commercial and multi-family residential have been identified in the updated land use map. It is further recommended that the housing study be updated to assist in defining and verifying current housing needs.

Development of housing subdivisions with natural areas and amenities is important to creating a unique and desirable community. Existing woodland areas, wetlands and wildlife corridors should be retained as a part of development. Public open space to preserve natural amenities, through land donations, easements or partnerships with associations, should be part of the planning process for residential development.

Additional goals/strategies from this Chapter are as follows:

- Continue to study housing goals, needs and resources. Watch for changing housing market conditions and opportunities/projects to meet City housing needs and create life cycle housing choices for residents.
- Create desirable neighborhoods through inclusion of natural amenities, parks, sidewalk and trail systems. Include natural systems in planning so that these amenities and wildlife corridors are maintained.
- Encourage a diversity of housing units through architectural design styles, building placement, density and lot size to create unique neighborhoods in the City.

## Chapter 4: The Economy

The City has achieved major economic goals, with location of a Medical Clinic, Pharmacy, and Hotel in the City. There has also been substantial industrial growth, with location of the Ever Cat Biodiesel Facility and SnoBear USA in the Industrial Park. The location of the growing City on a major highway corridor; combined with proactive economic development efforts have assisted in achieving these goals. Commercial development has advanced in business districts on the southeast and southwest sides of the US Highway 65 and Heritage Boulevard (CSAH 5) Intersection.

Employment opportunities have increased in the City since the Great Recession. Overall though, 59% of Isantians in the workforce still commute to jobs outside of the City. Surveys have shown that if local jobs are available at competitive wage rates (factoring in commuting costs), citizens would rather work here. Most workers travel by car to work, with some using carpools. While it is not anticipated that there will be new public transit options by bus or rail in the time period of this update; the City should stay informed of such efforts.

The City needs to continue to be involved and deliberate in economic development to maximize opportunities to gain new industrial and commercial development. In our region there is substantial competition for projects. Commercial and industrial development should be planned to complement existing land uses, natural amenities and growth patterns of the City. Planning efforts to date have placed the City in a good position for near term commercial and industrial growth. The Industrial Park has lots ready for development. Commercial corridors have been developed next to US Highway 65. Commercial lots are available in that corridor that have full access with utilities. More detailed planning for both industrial and commercial areas will need to take place as available lots are developed. The Industrial Park could be expanded to the north and northwest, with a potential for a rail served industrial park. In the next 10 years, there will need to be planned efforts and targeted investment by the City to make development happen.

The City's downtown area serves as the historical center of commercial development. With the synergy of the historic downtown and adjacent mixed residential and commercial uses that extend between Heritage Boulevard and Main Street, from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NW to Highway 65; consideration should be given to expansion of Isanti's definition of "downtown". Street lighting and signage could be installed to further define and identify the expanded downtown district. Development/redevelopment sites could be promoted for mixed use in the redefined district. From a marketing perspective, the area could be marketed together with events and promotions.

Additional goals/strategies from this Chapter are as follows:

- Prepare a new Downtown Plan to incorporate the historic downtown area and adjacent commercial area west of Highway 65 to tie these commercial areas together with specific lighting, signage and transportation improvements for both vehicle, non-motorized and pedestrian usage. Recognize the impact that housing and mixed use in and adjacent to this district has on sustaining the commercial viability of this new “downtown” area.
- Review commercial development needs regarding road and utility systems in the East Highway 65 commercial corridor. Consider if partnerships are necessary for development of this important commercial area. Consider mixed use with possible multi-family developments on parcels located on the east side of the commercial area.
- Look to partnerships with local and regional public entities and private firms to begin steps to develop a rail industrial park.

#### Chapter 5: Natural Resources

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan recognized the need to preserve and protect the natural resources of the area, including watercourses, wetlands, woodlands and sensitive environmental assets that either are or will be in the future, part of the City.

The City will continue to grow out into these areas over the next 10 years. Depending on land use planning, and how development proceeds, natural areas will be further altered, maintained or possibly enhanced.

Continued sustainability of natural resources remains the key for those systems remaining productive and relevant over time. An example of this would be integration of storm water systems that are designed to absorb, hold and release water, phosphorus and other chemicals in a way not to tax the capacity of receiving waters, which could include brooks, ponds, wetlands, and the Rum River.

The Chapter discusses Conservation Planning as the way to move forward with development in the City with ecological factors as a priority. Zoning tools and development codes can be designed to allow flexibility in development to retain valued natural systems. Conservation planning goals are reviewed which include: enhancement of existing parks and recreation lands, protection of public interest lands, a parks system that incorporates Isanti Brook, Spirit Book, and the Rum River, and Stormwater Management Lands.

Also addressed in the Chapter are areas integral to preservation and improvement of natural systems in the City of Isanti. These are public education, wildlife corridors, City tree/canopy programs, natural planting and stormwater gardens.

*Additional goals/strategies from this Chapter are as follows:*

- After adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update, review and update existing land use regulations, storm water regulations and development incentives to guide and support Conservation Planning Goals in land development activities.
- Develop partnerships and work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Cedar Creek Nature Reserve, Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District, local governments, and volunteer groups to achieve Conservation Planning Goals.
- Educate the public on the importance of Conservation Planning. Work on Outreach Programs with the C-I School District and other groups to get information out to the public.

#### Chapter 6: Parks, Trails & Open Space

The City has been very proactive in the development of parks and trails. With increasing growth, the City has been involved with development of recreation facilities, active and passive parks, with a variety of amenities and access to natural areas. The parks and recreational facilities operate at neighborhood, city and regional levels. The City has partnered to provide recreational amenities. The Isanti Indoor Arena (BMX) and Academy Park (Arts & Science Charter School) are examples of such partnerships. Future parks will provide additional facilities for residents, as well as continued ties to natural areas and systems. The City has developed trail systems in residential areas of the City, with connection to parks and recreational facilities. Future planning will work to continue incorporating trail corridors with natural areas. The City, Isanti County, Isanti Township and City of Cambridge partnered in development of a joint trail between the two cities. The City is committed to connecting future park facilities and to regional trail systems as opportunities present themselves.

Other recreational facilities that are available in the City include: Sanbrook Golf Course, David C. Johnson Indoor Civic Arena (hockey, civic events), Isanti Firefighters Association Rodeo Grounds (annual rodeo, civic/community events) and Martin's Landing (DNR Rum River access).

*Additional goals/strategies from this Chapter are as follows:*

- Use the Comprehensive Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan prepared and updated by the Park, Recreation and Culture Board and Comprehensive Plan Chapter 6, Parks, Trails and Open Space when determining the location of future parkland and open space as required by the Park Dedication Ordinance.



- Create an incentive-based program to encourage developers and landowners to complete the network of trails and open space. Look at investments by the City to complete trail segments and connections.
- Provide passive parkland and open space areas to enhance the quality of life in existing and future neighborhoods.
- Plan green space and trails/park areas accordingly so they may become a part of the larger multi-purpose greenway system in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 5, Natural areas.

## Chapter 7: Land Use

The land use chapter is referred to as “the heart of the Comprehensive Plan”. It provides the basis for the Official Zoning Map and is referred to when making findings for approvals to changes in the zoning, subdivision or development codes. It is also used for review of development proposals. In order for the City of Isanti to have guided deliberate development, with proper placement of transportation and utility systems, evaluation and planning for land use is necessary for the future community.

The section overviewed an updated land use inventory and evaluated the “intrinsic suitability” of land uses keeping in mind natural systems and existing land use in the planning boundaries of the City. Many of these areas had already been altered for agricultural, rural residential, recreational or rural commercial uses. These areas and natural systems (as reviewed in Chapter 5, Natural Resources) are included in the future land use plan. Land use designations that define existing and future use of land within the planning area are identified and defined.

Existing growth patterns are also reviewed in this Chapter. At the time of this update, the City is in a growth mode with significant new commercial and residential development. Much of the existing land use planning remains relevant and will continue to be so through the time period of this update. Guidelines for basic planning provisions and physical character of the City are included in this section. City utility system capacities were also reviewed and should also be sufficient for planned growth/service areas in this time period. It is recommended that utility capacities be evaluated again in the next 5 years as growth patterns during this comprehensive plan update’s time period become clear. Utility plant or system updates should include increased capacities if warranted. Utility planning information is included in the Appendix of this comprehensive plan update.

The Future Land Use Map has been reviewed and updated. Future land use designations are also in the plan document.

*Additional goals/strategies from this Chapter are as follows;*

- Consider goals listed in the Basic Planning Provisions section in reviewing development and redevelopment projects.
- Look for mixed use opportunities for land adjacent to major general commercial corridors and expanded central business district that could include high density multi-family residential.

### Chapter 8: Transportation

As recognized in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, adequate transportation systems in the City are critical to the vitality and growth of the City. The City has two major road corridors that go through it. US Highway 65, is a north/south four lane highway that provides access to the Twin Cities metropolitan area to the south and Heritage Boulevard (Isanti County Highway 5), which provides an east/west highway connection through the County. This Chapter reviewed these major corridor road systems and the interrelation of the City road systems. Roadway jurisdictions and classifications are also reviewed. Besides the major roads, most City streets function either as local streets serving adjacent businesses and residences, or minor collectors which serve to route local traffic to major road systems. The City of Isanti receives assistance for its minor collector road maintenance and rehabilitation costs through MnDOT's municipal state aid road system. Local road systems and their access and use are also reviewed. The existing functional transportation plan was also reviewed. This planning includes roadways and collector street improvements that most likely will be developed beyond the scope of this planning update.

The Chapter also reviewed multi-modal transportation systems that include; the local sidewalk and trail system, regional trail systems, comments on non-motorized traffic crossing of US Highway 65. The section discusses other multi-modal systems that include local bus service, metro bus connection, park and ride facilities and sharing. Included is future potential for commuter rail.

As a final note in this section, it is recommended that collaborative efforts by the City, local and state jurisdictions are continued. This includes multi-modal transportation planning as well.



## Chapter 1: Community Vision, Goals & Strategies

### Introduction

The initial goals were formulated from ideas and input from Citizens that participated in the Comp Plan Community Kick-off Meeting and Goals and Policies Workshop and adopted as a part of the 2007 City Comprehensive Plan. In 2019 and 2020, the Community Vision and Goals were reviewed and updated with Planning Commission and Community input. Those Community Vision objectives and Goals are incorporated in this Chapter.

The City also adopted a City Mission Statement in 2020. This provides an overall vision for the community and services to its citizens.

### City Mission Statement:

#### Mission:

To provide a safe healthy vibrant community and manage our resources to enhance the quality of life. We are dedicated to cost-effective governance, professional management and excellent public services.

#### Vision:

To support and engage the community through leadership, professionalism and integrity to ensure Isanti continues to be a community for generations.

#### Core Values:

Leadership: To encourage innovation, creativity, and initiative.

Service: To be fair, friendly, helpful and customer-service oriented.

Ethics and Integrity: To be truthful, accountable, responsible, professional, and with good moral standards.

Collaboration: To recognize that our people are our most valuable resource.

Community: To respect and promote our community and share opportunities to succeed.

Stewardship: To consider the long-term consequences of actions, protect our assets, and invest in the future.

### Community Vision:

#### A Place with a Unique Character and Small-town Atmosphere

The City shall strive to maintain the small-town atmosphere that makes Isanti a welcoming place to be. Isanti's small-town character will help forge an identity for the City and will help create a unique destination for visitors.

#### A Place that Recognizes the Importance of Natural Resources

The community recognizes the need to preserve the Rum River and other natural resources in the City. These resources add value to the community and should be enhanced and protected to ensure that they can be enjoyed for generations to come.

#### A Place that Values its Residents, Community Facilities and Community Involvement – Opportunities

The City will continue to enhance and provide community facilities that meet the needs of current and future residents. The City will be a place with community gathering spaces and recreational opportunities that provide places for community engagement, participation and a healthy lifestyle for all of Isanti's residents.

#### A Place with a Growing and Thriving Downtown

The Downtown should strive to function as a focal point for business and retail opportunities to serve a variety of needs in the community. The Downtown should be seen as a place for people to gather and congregate. Downtown should be a place that is pleasant for residents and visitors, and should provide the basic necessities and everyday needs to its residents.

#### A Place with a Variety of Housing Types

The community recognizes the need to provide its residents with a range of housing options. It is important that residents have the opportunity to stay in the community throughout the lifecycle.

#### A Place with Well Planned Developments

The City must be thorough in its planning process to ensure that development occurs in the best possible places. The planning process must be diligent in order to meet the needs of residential, commercial and industrial development.

#### A Place with High Quality Services

The City will strive to provide its residents with a high level of services. The City also needs to balance the distribution of City services with the desire to keep taxes reasonable. Contiguous and orderly growth will help improve efficiency and maintain costs of service to the City.

#### A Place with Employment Opportunity

The community wants to see Isanti as a place that is not only a great place to live, but also a great place to work. The community would like to see more prospects for employment in Isanti so that residents will not have to work elsewhere and spend large quantities of time commuting.

#### A Place Where an Effective Transportation System is Available

The City will strive for the most effective, safe and coordinated transportation system possible. The Community expects that the transportation system will move people around the City efficiently and avoid congestion. Connections between neighborhoods and commercial areas need to be made with sidewalks and trails to provide alternative methods to move around the City.

## **General Community Goals**

### Community Goal #1 – Promote community spirit, unity and diversity.

#### Strategies:

- Recognize the assets of citizens of all ages, incomes, faiths and cultural heritages.
- Continue to find ways to educate the public on cultural, economic, faith, age-based and other diversity issues.
- Encourage increased interaction and communication between citizens of all ages, faiths, cultural heritages and incomes.
- Support and coordinate City events that promote pride and a “sense of community”
- With new residents transitioning into the City, find a way to engage them on an annual basis.
- Find ways through events or neighborhood associations to strengthen relationships between residential property owners to build community and enhance public safety.

### Community Goal #2 – Maintain and enhance a friendly and caring small-town atmosphere

#### Strategies:

- Continue to provide community gathering opportunities to encourage resident interaction and support.
- Work with schools, houses of worship, and service organizations to keep residents involved and participating in community events.
- Maintain and enhance existing community gathering spaces to ensure residents have adequate places to congregate and meet.

### Community Goal #3 – Encourage citizen participation and education in all aspects of City government, planning and community life.

#### Strategies:

- Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision-making processes.

- Educate and communicate this Plan’s overall goals, policies and recommendations to the public, particularly regarding the growth management and sustainable development concepts to be embodied in the Plan.
- Continue to seek out creative ways to communicate local government activities and information to the public through means such as newsletters, city web sites/social media, neighborhood associations and other community groups.
- Coordinate and participate in programs that teach local government leadership skills to residents, area business owners, and non-profit managers.
- Encourage volunteerism, participation in community activities and acceptance of community leadership positions by citizens of all ages, faiths, cultural heritages, and incomes.
- Seek partnerships with community coalitions and interest groups to share resources and energies in order to address community problems and opportunities.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination Goals**

Intergovernmental Coordination Goal #1 – Promote on-going shared planning among all Isanti County jurisdictions.

Strategies:

- Work with adjacent townships, municipalities and the County to ensure that planning goals, objectives and policies are understood and accepted.
- Communicate and educate local officials regarding needed planning and zoning ordinances and policies.
- Promote information sharing between the City and surrounding townships, municipalities and county, and encourage their participation in City issues of shared concern.
- Communicate and educate local officials regarding City development projects that affect adjacent townships, municipalities and the County.
- Maintain communications and collaborate where appropriate with state and regional agencies involved in planning issues that affect the City.

Intergovernmental Coordination Goal #2 – Actively explore opportunities for all jurisdictions, agencies and public organizations in the County to share services and resources to reduce or eliminate duplication and improve efficiency.

Strategies:

- Explore development of joint governmental ventures regarding the delivery of services in the areas of administrative services, emergency services, public safety, public utilities, solid waste, and technology.
- Work with adjacent local governments to identify areas where collaboration and consolidation could reduce overall cost and increase effectiveness of local government.
- Continue participation in the Isanti County Initiative for Collaboration, Leadership and Efficiency (ICICLE).

### **Community Appearance and Livability Goals**

Community Appearance and Livability Goal #1 - Maintain and enhance the appearance, integrity, heritage, identity and local character of the City's built environment.

Strategies:

- Create and strengthen the appearance of key transportation corridors (Hwy 65, Heritage Blvd, Whiskey Rd, CSAH 23), through streetscape improvements, design standards, zoning, trails, street lighting, sidewalks, signage and other tools.
- Develop and enforce development design, performance and site planning incentives, resources and standards to ensure quality development.
- Plan for amenities on secondary City access routes (3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NW, Cajima, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, CSAH 55, Palomino Rd SE, Railroad Avenue, South Passage, Townsedge Road). Create and identify locations for community gateways that will encourage legibility and identity within the City.
- Work with local historical organizations to create and maintain an inventory of historic community resources.
- Prepare and/or adopt appropriate guidelines or regulations for the use or reuse of historically significant properties.
- Support the efforts of local historical organizations to promote the preservation of historically significant places and records where practical and economically viable.



- Explore methods and funding options to uphold the general appearance of older buildings and neighborhoods through their maintenance and upkeep.
- Continue programs to encourage compliance with city codes for upkeep of commercial and industrial buildings/sites and residential neighborhoods/housing stock.

Community Appearance and Livability Goal #2 – Enhance community and neighborhood livability.

Strategies:

- Ensure new developments are connected to existing development through the efficient use of streets, sidewalks, trails, utilities and infrastructure.
- Encourage quality and appropriate development of housing, shopping and employment in proximity and proper density to each other.
- Encourage the integration of multi-modal access including parking, sidewalks and bike paths within new developments.
- Explore the need for a high school to serve existing and future residents,
- Encourage a variety of types of neighborhood designs, including neo-traditional, conservation, and other alternative designs.
- Encourage availability of locally grown food and support for the Farmers Market.

Community Appearance and Livability Goal #3 – Maintain adequate active and passive open space to meet the needs of the community.

Strategies:

- Require the integration of parks, green space and natural amenities within new developments to ensure that residential neighborhoods have adequate access to park facilities.
- Enhance the quality of life and safety of residents by establishing bikeways, walkways and other multi-use paths in developing areas.
- Work to link area parks, neighborhoods, natural amenities, and community facilities through the development of local and regional trails.

- Continue to support and create new forms of funding for equipment, improvements, and maintenance of new and existing neighborhood parks and recreational facilities.

## **Natural Resources Goals**

Natural Resources Goal #1 – Protect, conserve and enhance natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas within the City and its planned growth areas for the community’s long-term environmental and economic benefits.

### Strategies:

- Avoid wetlands, native species (endangered and threatened), sensitive areas and other significant natural resources during development.
- Minimize the impact of urban development on wetlands, rivers, forested areas and other environmental features.
- Create a greenway corridor and natural areas plan that is tied to the land use plan and links environmentally sensitive areas, stream and river corridors, trail corridors, institutions, parklands and neighborhoods.
- Encourage maintenance of wetlands and natural drainage systems when accommodating new growth and reestablishing wetlands and natural drainage systems within developed areas when opportunities arise.
- Work with the DNR to ensure that Rum River Scenic Areas and Easements are maintained.
- Work to protect endangered, threatened and rare species and their habitats. Ensure that existing wildlife corridors are maintained.
- Continue implementation of Wellhead Protection Program, MS4 Stormwater, and Rain Garden Programs, with public education on the programs and how citizens can assist with program objectives.
- Consider adopting a tree preservation policy and planting program. Work to diversify tree species in the urban forest and encourage a tree canopy in appropriate urban areas.
- Identify aggregate resources within the City and its planned growth areas and develop strategies to ensure the ability to extract them in the future.

Natural Resources Goal #2 – Conserve, restore, and enhance natural resource systems within the City’s boundaries.

Strategies:

- Work with adjacent local governments, developers and residents to restore and enhance natural resource systems that may have been degraded or altered.
- Utilize the Natural Resources Inventory prepared as a part of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and expansion.
- Communicate and coordinate with surrounding townships and municipalities to ensure that natural resource corridors and connectivity are protected and maintained.

## **Growth Management**

Growth Management Goal #1 – Provide clearly defined growth management areas that are contiguous with existing development.

Strategies:

- Utilize the Natural Resources Inventory, projections and service capacity to designate areas for contiguous and efficient growth opportunities.
- Work with residents, land owners and developers to develop land in a contiguous and efficient manner.
- Adopt a land use plan that clearly identifies areas suitable for growth and efficient services in appropriate densities.

Growth Management Goal #2 – Guide growth in areas suitable for urban services and preserve agricultural land uses to the greatest extent possible.

Strategies:

- Work with large land owners and farmers to plan for future growth and appropriate phasing of development.
- Identify key agricultural areas that should be preserved or enhanced.
- Maintain low densities within areas outside the growth areas to ensure opportunities for future extension of City Services.

- Ensure that land outside the growth area is well planned for and phasing for development is considered.

## **Land Use Goals**

Land Use Goal #1 – Support the compact, efficient and orderly growth of all urban development including residential, commercial and industrial areas.

Strategies:

- Identify planned growth areas outside the current City boundaries (Urban Service Areas). Work with Isanti County and Isanti Township on expansion of USA tiers as the City develops.
- Work with Isanti Township to develop new orderly annexation agreements for the planned growth areas. Maintain regulations for low densities within those areas until such time as urban development can be facilitated.
- Require that properties served by City water and sanitary sewer be located within the City.
- Coordinate with surrounding townships and the County to create conceptual master plans for planned future growth areas that will promote connectivity to existing and future transportation systems and contiguous natural resource corridors.
- Encourage a balanced strategy of “infilling” within the City, with annexation and development of new areas in stages. Discourage “leap-frogging”.

Land Use Goal #2 – Achieve availability and adequacy of municipal services to ensure a high quality of life for all existing and future residents.

Strategies:

- Work with adjacent townships to plan for the extension of services and growth into areas contiguous to existing development.
- Plan to develop and provide all municipal services prior to initiating annexation.
- Avoid premature development of rural areas before City services are available, thus preserving agricultural character.

- Prepare utility facility and trunk line plans that are in conformance with the land use plan.

Land Use Goal #3 – Plan land uses and implement standards to promote quality development and minimize land use conflicts.

Strategies:

- Prepare and adopt a land use plan that designates land use areas and guides development to appropriate areas in order to ensure desirable land use patterns and to minimize conflicts.
- Require transitions between incompatible land uses through appropriate planning practices and zoning standards.
- Prepare performance design and/or development standards for commercial and industrial development.
- Design and/or locate industrial and commercial developments to avoid adverse impacts on residential areas, while continuing to promote compatible, contiguous development patterns.
- Achieve a balanced mixture of land uses through the implementation of zoning and other tools.
- Follow the US Constitution and State Statutes in all matters related to the acquisition of private land for public uses.

Land Use Goal #4 – Identify adequate, appropriate and accessible locations for future commercial, business and industrial development.

Strategies:

- Protect and enhance the investment in existing commercial and industrial businesses when planning for future land uses.
- Explore commercial and industrial opportunities along the Highway 65 Corridor. Preserve commercial areas with developed or planned road systems and infrastructure for high density commercial development that provides tax base and jobs. Protect these commercial areas from low density and undesirable development.
- Protect and encourage development and redevelopment of the downtown that is consistent with the City's historic character. Plan for future redevelopment to add to and sustain the commercial core. Encourage development of mixed-use buildings.

Land Use Goal #5 – Support development that enhances community character and identity.

Strategies:

- Promote and provide high quality housing in areas surrounding the golf course. Utilize natural features and the golf course in subdivision design.
- Prepare and adopt master plans for all community growth and redevelopment areas prior to development.
- Locate appropriate senior housing opportunities in close proximity to services and community amenities, and commercial corridors.
- Establish lot sizes and other performance standards that support or enhance the community vision.
- Embrace conservation development practices to conserve and enhance natural resources and add interest and natural amenities in to subdivision design.

Land Use Goal #6 – Create healthy, livable neighborhoods designed to foster and support a sense of community.

Strategies:

- Successfully integrate parks, open spaces and natural areas into the community fabric.
- Establish man-made amenities and integrate with natural areas within planned neighborhoods.
- Works with property owners and developers to encourage walkable neighborhoods and a more sustainable neighborhood form.

## **Housing Goals**

Housing Goal #1 – Promote a variety of housing types in Isanti for existing and future community residents.

Strategies:

- Continue to study housing goals, needs and resources. Update housing studies periodically. Watch for changing housing market conditions. Identify opportunities and support projects to meet City housing needs.
- Work with State and Federal Housing Agencies, local lenders, builders and other organizations to identify programs and resources to help Isanti meet its housing goals.
- Encourage public-private partnerships to expand affordable housing opportunities.
- Encourage the appropriate dispersion of housing types throughout the City. Placement should align with appropriate housing densities and setbacks.
- Encourage an adequate supply of senior housing options to meet the needs of the City's expanding aging population.
- Examine zoning and other development standards to ensure they do not unreasonably hinder the provision of affordable housing.

Housing Goal #2 – Create a high-quality environment in all residential neighborhoods.

Strategies:

- Enforce building, nuisance and property maintenance codes to ensure continued maintenance of the existing housing stock. Update codes as needed.
- Encourage infill housing where appropriate. Encourage extension of infrastructure to allow infill housing to occur.
- Examine housing development patterns, land use plans and zoning periodically to ensure that an appropriate mix of housing is developed.

## **Downtown Goals**

Downtown Goal #1 – Identify the function of Downtown Isanti and improve the viability of the redevelopment district.

Strategies:

- Prepare and implement a Downtown Development Plan that integrates design standards that support its historical character.
- Renovate and rehabilitate existing downtown buildings. New buildings should match the historic downtown. Encourage mixed use buildings.
- Provide safe, adequate and convenient parking to support downtown growth.

Downtown Goal #2 – Work to improve the economic vitality of downtown Isanti to provide services for current and future residents.

Strategies:

- Identify businesses and services that are most appropriate for downtown to attract more residents and visitors.
- Encourage the development of small, independently owned businesses and services to maintain the small-town character of Isanti.
- Encourage destination commercial businesses and community facilities to draw visitors to the downtown.
- Encourage development that is complimentary to community facilities and events to encourage activity in the downtown.
- Structure redevelopment and incentives to support multi-modal and transit developments in the historic downtown district. Consider land banks for future park and ride lots and potential rail transit facilities in the BNSF rail corridor.

Downtown Goal #3 – Expand the “Downtown District” to include commercial areas east of Highway 65, adjacent and between Main Street and Heritage Boulevard.

- Utilize street lighting, traffic corridors, sidewalks, trails and signage to unify the “Downtown District”.



- Work with organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce or Tourism Bureaus to promote and market the “Downtown District” as a commercial, historic and destination district.

## **Economic Development Goals**

Economic Development Goal #1 – Maintain, develop and grow industrial and commercial opportunities in the City to increase the number of jobs and diversify the tax base.

Strategies:

- Expand the number of service providers and commercial shopping opportunities to meet the needs of the existing and future community.
- Realize the opportunities to attract and support new businesses and community facilities.
- Explore the expansion of the industrial park to increase the community’s tax base and provide employment opportunities.
- Market existing “shovel ready” industrial park lots for new industrial development that enhances both the tax base and provides new jobs.
- Provide adequate space and location for professional services to meet the community’s future needs.
- Explore the recruitment of industrial ventures that will provide spin off benefits to existing Isanti businesses.
- Attract and retain high valued land uses. Protect open commercial land that has infrastructure in place for high density commercial development.
- Take the lead role in coordinating and streamlining economic development initiatives and programs within the City.
- Target resources and programs to attract businesses that have an emphasis on job creation. Target businesses that meet or exceed livable wage requirements and/or address other community needs.
- Continue to support or expand local business retention and expansion initiatives. Work with local business start-ups to build their businesses and expand locally.

- Recognize the fundamental linkage between housing and economic development. Work to match housing availability with employee housing needs.
- Promote the rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing commercial facilities by continuing to pursue and make available various financial programs and assistance.

Economic Development Goal #2 – Promote efficient, planned commercial and industrial expansion within the City’s growth areas, accessible to public infrastructure and transportation.

Strategies:

- Identify key commercial and industrial development opportunities within the City’s planned growth areas in locations with access to major transportation systems.
- As opportunities for financial incentives or a key industry present themselves, work to develop a rail served industrial park.
- Ensure the appropriate provision of street and rights-of-way in new commercial and industrial developments.
- Encourage compact and mixed-use commercial developments that will make efficient use of infrastructure and resources.

Economic Development Goal #3 – Enhance the character of the City’s commercial and industrial developments.

Strategies:

- Develop and adopt architectural, design or other development standards such as landscaping, screening and other standards within the City’s commercial and industrial districts.
- Encourage the provision of open/green space within commercial and industrial development.
- Encourage historic preservation to enhance the character of commercial areas with historical significance.
- Assist businesses in locating local, regional, state, federal and private resources that will provide rehabilitation assistance.

## **Community Facilities Goals**

Community Facilities Goal #1 – Work to provide the services and facilities required to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of Isanti citizens in an equitable and cost-effective manner.

Strategies:

- Work with adjacent townships and municipalities to prevent premature urban development within the planned growth areas that are located beyond the City's long-term ability to provide services, such as sanitary sewer and water.
- Create conceptual master plans for the planned growth areas that will identify, map, and preserve future utility corridors.
- Encourage the protection of public health by requiring any on-site sewage systems to conform to state requirements for siting, design, construction and maintenance.

Community Facilities Goal #2 – Promote the expansion and development of the community's green infrastructure which consists of parkland, environmentally sensitive areas, river and stream corridors and trail facilities throughout the City and its planned growth areas.

Strategies:

- Explore all federal, state and other funding opportunities for local and regional parks, open space and trail acquisition, development, and maintenance.
- Identify locations in the planned growth areas that would be strategic parkland resources.
- Continue to require the dedication, acquisition and maintenance of parkland in the planned growth areas to meet future park needs of the community.
- Continue to implement the City's Comprehensive Park Plan.

Community Facilities Goal #3 – Ensure that placement or expansion of community facilities at current locations take into account anticipated future population growth and the needs of existing and future residents.

Strategies:

- Explore rebuilding the community center to adequately service existing and future residents.
- Consider facility planning for future City facility needs. Identify sites for future facility locations.
- Provide additional year-round recreational opportunities and facilities.
- Maximize opportunities to share facilities between the City, local schools, other governmental and non-profit organizations.
- Explore the feasibility and potential locations for a new high school.

## **Parks and Open Space Goals**

Parks and Open Space Goal #1 – Adopt and maintain a parks, open space and trail plan to meet Isanti’s current and future needs.

Strategies:

- Provide parks and open spaces to serve residential neighborhoods and the community.
- Continue work to develop an efficient and well-kept park and trail system.
- Update the Park Comprehensive Plan to ensure that current and future needs of the residents are met.

Parks and Open Space Goal #2 – Provide and maintain a trail system with connectivity to the City sidewalk system, County trail system and State trails.

Strategies:

- Provide and maintain trails that meet the needs of current and future residents.

- Continue to work with Isanti County, adjacent Townships and municipalities to develop linkages to County and Regional Trail Systems.
- Encourage trail connectivity to promote active healthful living.
- Plan for future development of a separated bicycle and pedestrian access across Highway 65 that links the City and connects local and regional trail systems.

## **Transportation Goals**

Transportation Goal #1 – Provide a safe, efficient and adequate transportation system that serves both access and mobility needs.

Strategies:

- Use the functional classification system to define and plan existing and new roadways.
- Develop and utilize access management guidelines.
- Require the provision of safe and adequate access to all properties through the implementation of subdivision regulations.
- Create safe sidewalks, trails and bus stops and incorporate appropriate safety features into all transportation improvement projects.
- Pursue traffic devices and road improvements to increase capacity and access to existing arterials and major road systems. Plan for phased traffic improvements on Heritage Boulevard/CSAH 5 and Highway 65 Access points based on traffic volumes and access needs.
- Develop a dedicated plan for road improvements to provide access to the East Highway 65 Commercial Properties.

Transportation Goal #2 – Create and provide excellent north-south and east-west connections and movements throughout Isanti.

Strategies:

- Prepare and implement a transportation plan with a hierarchy of community roadways providing excellent north-south and east-west movements throughout the City.

- Work with County and Township Officials on traffic improvements on road corridors that serve the City and adjacent Townships.
- Provide the best available access to Main Street to serve adjacent commercial and downtown areas.
- Provide safe and convenient vehicle crossings at key locations along the Highway 65 Corridor.
- Successfully integrate the east and west sides of the Highway 65 Corridor through transportation and open space linkages and pedestrian paths.
- Plan for a dedicated pedestrian and non-vehicular connection across Highway 65 with connections to City and Regional trail and sidewalk systems.
- Continue to provide access points to support economic development by increasing direct transportation connections and movements to commercial and industrial areas.

Transportation Goal #3 – Maintain a transportation system that is coordinated and cost-effective.

Strategies:

- Continue to work with surrounding municipalities, townships, County and State to ensure an integrated regional transportation system.
- Schedule future transportation projects in capital improvement programs.
- Connect streets in developing areas to the existing network of streets and reflect the existing street character and design standards.
- Achieve concurrency between development and the municipal improvements and services needed to support it.
- Create conceptual master plans of the City's growth areas that identify future transportation corridors. Identify how the future transportation corridors will interact with regional transportation systems.
- Work to preserve future transportation corridors both by acquiring needed right-of-way in advance when possible, and through the use of official mapping.
- Continue to explore all Federal, State and other funding opportunities for local and regional transportation projects.

Transportation Goal #4 – Coordinate transportation with land use planning and environmental protection.

Strategies:

- Consider the impacts to neighborhoods when planning new or upgrading existing roadways.
- Support transportation projects that align with the compact, orderly development of the City and local /regional transportation plans.
- Design transportation systems to avoid, where possible, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas and consider Minnesota Wild and Scenic or other state rules.
- Identify and consider the costs of lost environmental benefits for proposed transportation projects.

Transportation Goal # 5 – Establish a strong multi-modal transportation plan to meet the communities current and future needs.

Strategies:

- Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure when planning changes, additions, or maintenance to streets, sidewalks, bridges, paths or other public facilities.  
Develop a Bike/Alternate Transportation Plan for the City.
- Encourage bike parking facilities at parks within neighborhoods, and at retail/commercial developments.
- Maintain the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the City.
- Continue to maintain a commitment for improved local and regional transit services to support the community's transit needs.
- Encourage sidewalks and separated pathways along all arterial and collector streets when developing residential and commercial areas through the City's subdivision regulations.
- Promote the connectivity of alternative transportation systems and plan for connection to community and recreational facilities.

- Ensure the provision of adequate arterial roadways and design local streets and subdivisions to discourage driving at unsafe speeds and to promote pedestrian and bicycle use.
- As opportunities avail themselves, explore commuter rail and mass transit options for commuters from Isanti to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.



## Chapter 2: The Community

### Introduction / Current Conditions:

The City of Isanti has gone through significant change since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan was completed. The plan at that time recognized that residential growth was slowing, but it did not anticipate the Great Recession. The Great Recession effectively stopped residential growth and placed the City in a protective mode, as many single family homes were vacated as a result of foreclosures. At the height of the foreclosure crisis in April, 2010, 171 homes representing 12% of the owner occupied housing stock were at some point in the foreclosure process. Since that time, those homes have been re-sold to new owners and substantial residential growth has returned to the City. Most of the residential lots that were developed in the early 2000's that were still vacant after the Great Recession, have been built on. Development of new residential subdivisions is taking place to add lots. Commercial and industrial development has continued, providing the City with new amenities (ex. Medical Clinic) to serve the growing City and employment opportunities for residents.

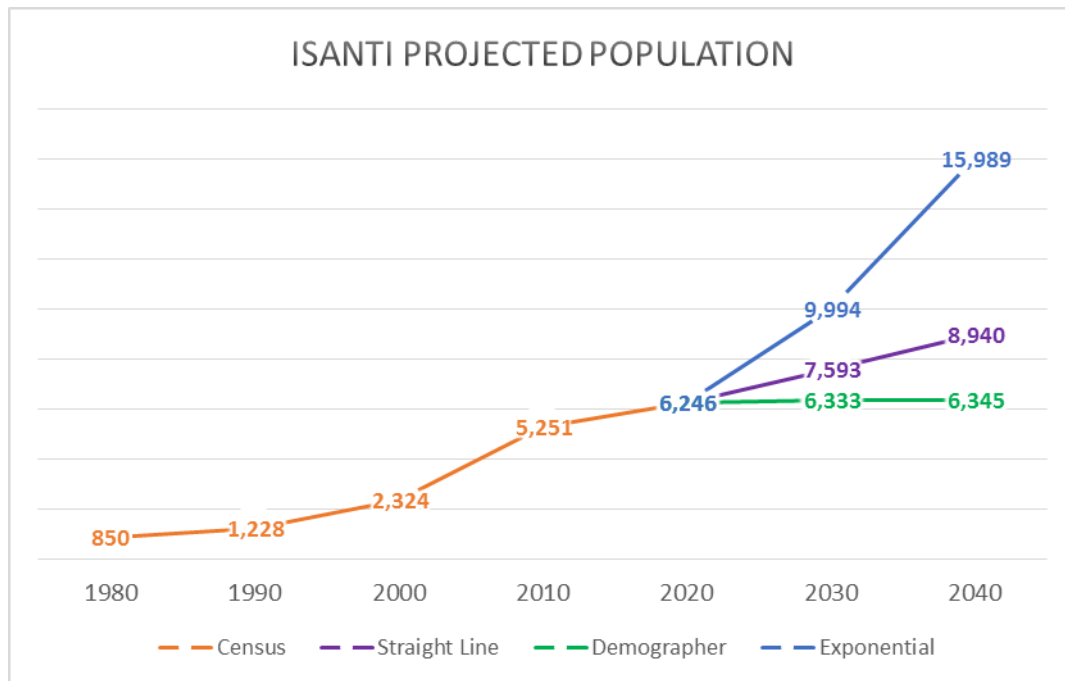
This Chapter focuses on existing conditions and trends with population and households. These projections are used as the basis for comprehensive plan elements to ensure the validity of the plan. The Chapter describes those living in Isanti now and those projected to be living in the City in 2030 through the use of demographics and research. This Chapter also provides updated information on City facilities that serve residents and finishes with a review of intergovernmental relationships that affect the City of Isanti.

### Population Trends:

A review of past populations and future projections summarize what has occurred and what range of growth can be expected for the City of Isanti. In order to get accurate projections, research had to be undertaken to review census and demographic information, coupled with building permit and registered voter numbers. Based on this research, population projections can be made through the next 10 years and beyond.

Below is Figure 2-1, displaying the projected population for the City through 2040. The graph shows the State Demographer's estimates, a straight-line projection, which is a projection based on the average number of people added per decade and a line showing exponential growth, which is based on the percentage of growth per decade, both since 1980.

Figure 2-1



The State Demographer has projected lower growth for the City of Isanti, although the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area is projected to continue fast pace growth, with an increasing demand for housing. Staff believes that the more realistic projection of population is near the straight line projection. The variable will be household size, which is expected to move downward. As with any projection, the number should be updated as new population data becomes available.

### Household Trends:

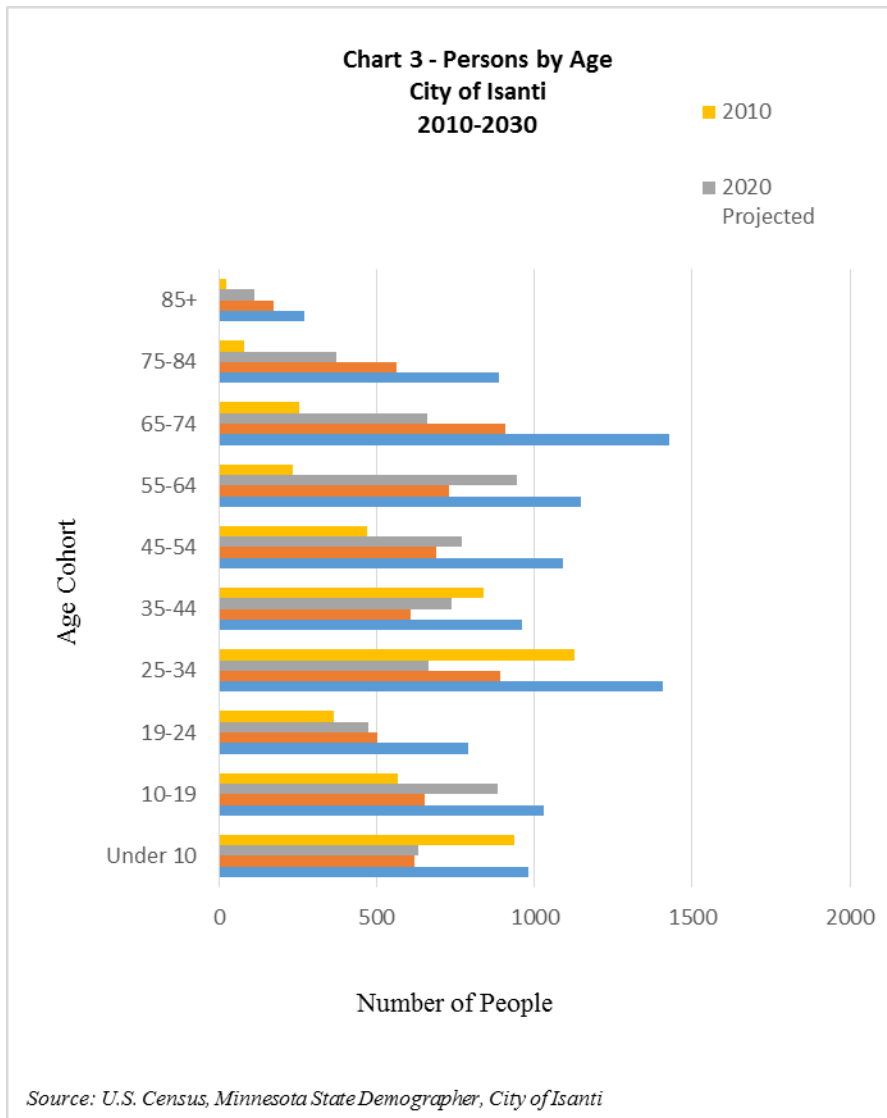
Household size is tied to changing population groups over time, as well as the availability of suitable housing. With Isanti's proximity to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Highway 65 access, and lower housing prices, make Isanti a desirable place for young families. This reflects in current higher than average household size. Over time those household sizes will decrease, as there will be an increasing Senior population in the City. The availability of adequate housing for growing families and Seniors will also play a role in ultimate household size. The table below shows our projected range for Persons Per Household in the next 10 years.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Household Size</u> | <u>Persons Per Household</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 2005        | 2.83                  | 1,608                        |
| 2010        | 2.79                  | 1,882                        |
| 2015        | 2.78                  | 1,977                        |
| 2020        | 2.77                  | 2,255                        |
| 2030 low    | 2.45                  | 2,585                        |
| 2030 mid    | 2.45                  | 3,099                        |
| 2030 high   | 2.45                  | 4,079                        |

Using the mid-range forecast, Isanti would gain an average of 84 households per year for the next 10 years.

### Population by Age:

A review of population group ages shows the trend of Isanti's population over time. Below is Figure 2-2 which displays the population age group by age and years. As you see in the blue lines, for the next 10 years, Isanti is projected to retain a large cohort of age grouping that reflects younger families and an increasing Senior population. The increased Senior population reflects the aging of baby boomers. It also reflects in-migration of Seniors to Isanti from rural areas, as they prefer a small town environment yet desire to be closer to their families in the metro area. The graph also reflects the aging of the millennial generation. The development of additional "step-up housing" for millennials will be needed to retain those populations in the City. Additionally, improvement and maintenance of community facilities, such as parks and recreational facilities, will be needed to attract and retain families in Isanti.



### Other Demographic Characteristics:

As Isanti is projected to continue its growth, the City will also become more diverse. Their needs and the emphasis to have an inclusive community should be included in policy considerations. In 2000, the City of Isanti was 97% percent white. That number has decreased to 94.7% in 2018. Hispanics make up the next highest percentage of population (3.2%), followed by those identifying as two or more races (2.3%).

### Goals/Strategies:

Several community goals are listed in Chapter 1 that reflect the changing population and demographics in Isanti. Consideration of the goals will help to build a unique and desirable community to live in and assist in meeting the needs of a changing citizenship. Listed below are those that correlate to the demographic change in the City.

- Recognize the assets of citizens of all ages, incomes, faiths and cultural heritages.
- Continue to find ways to educate the public on cultural, economic, faith, age-based and other diversity issues.
- Encourage increased interaction and communication between citizens of all ages, faiths, cultural heritages and incomes.

### Community Facilities:

The Community Facilities section of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan overviewed public buildings, their functions and services, private and public schools, churches and private services in the City. As the City grows, these facilities need to be reviewed periodically to evaluate the need for expansion or renovations to serve the needs of new residents. A review of the City's demographics over time will also assist in determining if changing needs warrant changes in City services and facilities. This Comprehensive Plan Update will focus on the City's facilities, their current status and what may be required during this planning time period.

### City Hall

Isanti City Hall is located at 110 First Avenue NW and was constructed in 2005. It has a large City Council Chambers that is used for city meetings and related events. The City Offices were constructed to be internally expanded to meet the needs of a growing City. To meet new needs the parking area was expanded in 2014 to include public parking behind City Hall and to connect to an upgraded parking lot at the Isanti Community Center. From a facility planning standpoint, the existing building should be adequate to house City administrative staff through 2030.

### Community Center

The Isanti Community Center continues to serve as a location for City programs, civic organizations and private events. Activities range from City Movie Nights in the fall/winter, meeting space for service club and youth organizations, to daily Senior Dining. The facility is highly utilized by the community. The community center was renovated in 2014, with interior, building and parking lot upgrades. As those improvements and the building continues to age, capital improvement planning should be done for any needed repairs, with consideration of a future expansion or a new facility. This building, as well as future site land needs, should be evaluated and included in future facility planning.

### Isanti Indoor Arena

The Isanti Indoor Arena was constructed in 2015 and is the home of Rum River BMX. The arena is 73,000 sq. feet in size and developed for bicycle motocross racing. This facility was built by the City based on a partnership with Rum River BMX, which has a long-term use lease with the City. It is the premier enclosed bicycle motocross facility in the State. The facility also contains park restrooms for the adjacent Bluebird Park and an ice-skating warming facility for the City pleasure rink.

### Public Safety Building

The Isanti Police Department and Isanti Fire District share this building. The Isanti Fire District has a lease with the City for their space, and utilizes it for District administrative offices and housing of emergency response apparatus and vehicles. The Police Department moved into the facility in 2006, with a newly remodeled main staff room and office space. The current Police Department space, while adequate for current operations, is fully used by the current staff. The building itself, constructed in 1982, is structurally sound but is aging with maintenance needs. This building should also be included in future facility planning.

### Public Works Maintenance Building

This building houses the Public Works Department that provides a myriad of services to the City, from snow removal, parks and street maintenance, to utilities that are not located elsewhere. The primary building is over 20 years of age and is in good condition. As operations have expanded and more equipment added; interior renovations have been made to make the building more functional. Also, the need for more heated and cold storage has been planned for and a new building will be constructed on site within the time period of this comprehensive plan update. This building is also planned to serve off-site storage needs for the Police Department.

### Utility Treatment Plants

The City's sewage treatment plant was originally constructed in 1997. It is a combination mechanical and aerated pond facility, and has been recently updated through consolidation of primary treatment operations at the main plant site. While it is anticipated that the capacity of the current plant is adequate for near term needs, the increasing standards for treated water discharge in the Rum River, and potential need for land currently used for treatment ponds for future industrial use are leading to more plant upgrades and consolidation of the facility in a smaller site. That will require upgrading the treatment facility to a full mechanical plant. That project is being planned for within the time period of this comprehensive plan update.

The City's water treatment plant, built in 2009, provides filtration and processing for City water to meet State standards. The facility has had some improvements since it began operations. The plant should provide adequate finished water production for this planning time period. However, as the City expands east and south the need for water pressure and storage may prompt the need for a new water tower. Engineering studies will need to be done to provide guidance on placement of a new water tower.

### Schools in Isanti

Schools included in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan included: Isanti Primary School, Isanti Intermediate School and Isanti Middle School. All are facilities of the Cambridge-Isanti School District. Since that plan was prepared, a facility addition/performance area was added at the Isanti Middle School, internal improvements were made at the Isanti Primary School and parking areas have been modified to improve traffic flow and utilization at all three schools. No additional new District facilities have been developed in Isanti.

### New Schools

### Arts & Science Academy

The Arts & Science Academy, a K-8 educational facility, was founded at 903 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Court NE in 2014 with 12 classrooms. Since then, the Academy added a separate Middle School which includes both classrooms and a combination cafeteria/gymnasium at 1005 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE which opened in 2017. The schools have approximately 360 students. The student teacher ratio is 12 to 1. The Academy partnered with the City of Isanti in development of Academy Park located at 901 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Court NE, which serves the school when in session and is a public park facility for the neighborhood.

### St. Scholastica HSC Academy

St. Scholastica Academy is a private Catholic school with grades 1-12, located at 207 Whiskey Road NW. It opened in 2016 and has approximately 45 students with a student teacher ratio of 8-1. The Academy utilizes classrooms and cafeteria facilities located in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church.

### Churches

Churches in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan included: Elim Baptist, Faith Lutheran, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, and Harvest Christian Evangelical. Since then Elim Baptist has become New Hope Community Church. Harvest Christian Evangelical has moved and their facility has been re-opened as The Journey New Life Church.

### Goals/Strategies:

After a review of City facilities and the 2007 plan regarding other community facilities, the following goals/strategies from Chapter One are included here for additional consideration in this planning time period.

- Consider facility planning for future City facility needs. Identify sites for future facility locations
- Create conceptual future master plans for planned growth areas that will identify, map and preserve future utility corridors.

### Intergovernmental Organizations and Relationships

As recognized in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, City boundaries will continue to grow and change as new residential and commercial/industrial development extends to areas beyond the present corporate boundaries. The City recently completed annexation of a number of residential parcels that were surrounded by City boundaries. It is anticipated that future annexations to the City will be petitioned by their property owners at the time of development. Coordination of such annexations and planning with Township and County officials would be optimal. The City has an orderly annexation agreement with Isanti Township for certain property in the existing Tier 1 zoning area. The City will be moving beyond the Tier 1 area in the future so joint planning with the County and Township is not only desired, but necessary. Expansion of the Tier 1 area should be explored.

Participation with Isanti County, Isanti Cities and the Cambridge-Isanti School District in the Isanti County Initiative on Collaboration, Leadership and Efficiency (ICICLE) organization may also assist with joint development planning. Communication and



relationships will assist in cohesive planning and development in future years. Opportunities for shared services should also be reviewed and considered if they would improve city services to the citizens of Isanti

Goals/Strategies:

The following goals/strategies should be considered in light of the information in this Chapter:

- Work with adjacent Townships, municipalities and the County to ensure that planning goals, objectives and policies are understood and accepted.
- Communicate and educate local officials regarding City development projects that affect adjacent townships, municipalities and the County.
- Work with adjacent local governments to identify areas where collaboration and consolidation could reduce overall cost and increase the effectiveness of local government.

## Chapter 3: Housing and Neighborhoods

### Introduction:

Development of new housing continues in the City of Isanti, although not at the rate or diversity of housing types of the early 2000s. Since the Great Recession, development has centered on construction of single-family houses on vacant lots or Outlots that either were already developed or had ready access to City roads and utilities. The amount of existing residential lots has been reduced as of the writing of this Chapter from 440 in 2011 to 50 lots. With the development of those lots and current housing market needs for new lots, there have been two new single-family subdivisions developed in 2018 and 2019. Homes built in the last several years range from small single level patio homes and split levels, which appeal to first time and senior buyers, to larger multi-level homes for second or third time buyers. Regarding rental housing, no new facilities have been built in Isanti since the second Evergreen Apartment building was constructed in 2008. The last senior housing project, Prairie Senior Cottages, was built in 2010. It should also be noted that the City took substantial efforts during the Great Recession to work with foreclosed and successor owners to maintain and stabilize vacant single-family housing in the City of Isanti. At the height of the foreclosure crisis in April 2010, the City was monitoring the condition and status of 171 homes, which at the time represented over 12% of that housing stock.

As a part of the development of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, the City in conjunction with the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund (GMHF), developed a Housing Action Plan, which set housing goals and an action plan. With the change in the economy and severe recession, potential plans to work with GMHF on the action plan were not feasible. A review of the past GMHF housing plan indicates that some housing planning recommendations are still relevant in the planning period of this comprehensive plan update. Additional housing studies were performed in the East Central Region, which included the City of Isanti.

This Chapter will address the following regarding Housing: Framework and Assumptions, Existing Conditions, and Analysis and Recommendations.

### Framework and Assumptions:

Housing is the single greatest land use in the City of Isanti. With Isanti's location on urban fringe of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, the desire and demand for low density residential housing will continue within the timeframe of this update. New residents are drawn to Isanti for the "small town feeling" and semi-rural area. They desire to have a single-family home with a larger lot. A number of the new homes have unfinished space. This reduces the entry price for new owners. Most owners plan to complete the finishing of their home to increase the usable square footage. This builds equity and value in the home. This also allows the option for them to purchase a larger home. With completion of western and northwestern subdivisions, single family residential development will continue to spread east of Highway 65 in the next decade. This expansion will be based on the economy and market for new housing. Another factor will be the cost of new infrastructure.

There is also a continued demand for both multi-family rental and senior housing units in the City. The last market rate apartment building was constructed in 2008. Vacancy rates for multi-family units were below market averages in the last housing study. The need for senior housing, both owner occupied and multi-family continues. This need has been somewhat addressed by the housing market with construction of single level patio homes in the City. Seniors are also purchasing larger single-family homes in order to provide accommodations for other family members. Multi-generational use in homes is not uncommon. The need for both multi-family and senior housing was recognized in the 2015 housing study.

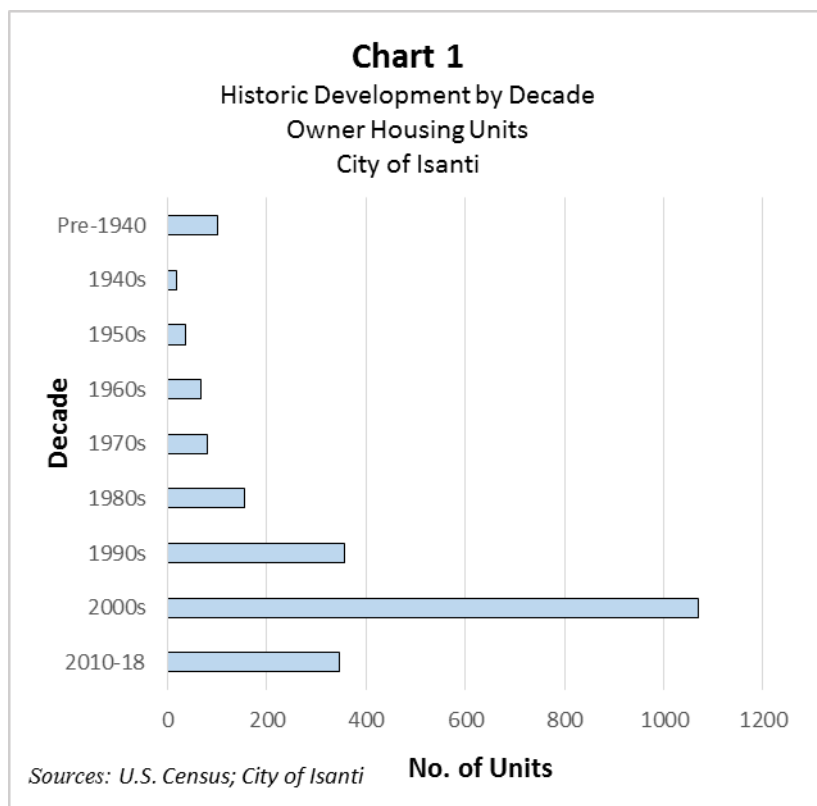
As recognized in the 2008 Comprehensive plan, housing quality, type and neighborhoods are an important indicator of quality of life. That indicator, coupled with household size and other demographic indicators, are used by commercial developers and locators in decisions whether to locate in a community. City residents not only supply customers for the business, they are also potential employees.

### Existing Conditions:

This section contains both historic trends of development, building trends and market values and how they relate to current and projected housing needs in the City of Isanti.

### Development by Decade

As you see in the following chart (Chart 1), the historical pattern of residential growth in the City of Isanti is shown. Housing development in the time period of the 1940s to the 1970s was very low, with 201 units over those 4 decades. The pace of housing development was greatest in the time period of 2000-2010, with over 1,000 units constructed. That time period coincides with low fuel prices, favorable financing, and consumer demand. This also fueled development of alternative housing types in Isanti, including townhomes, condominiums and apartments. Large areas of the west and northwest side of Isanti were subdivided and developed, or planned for development in the near future.

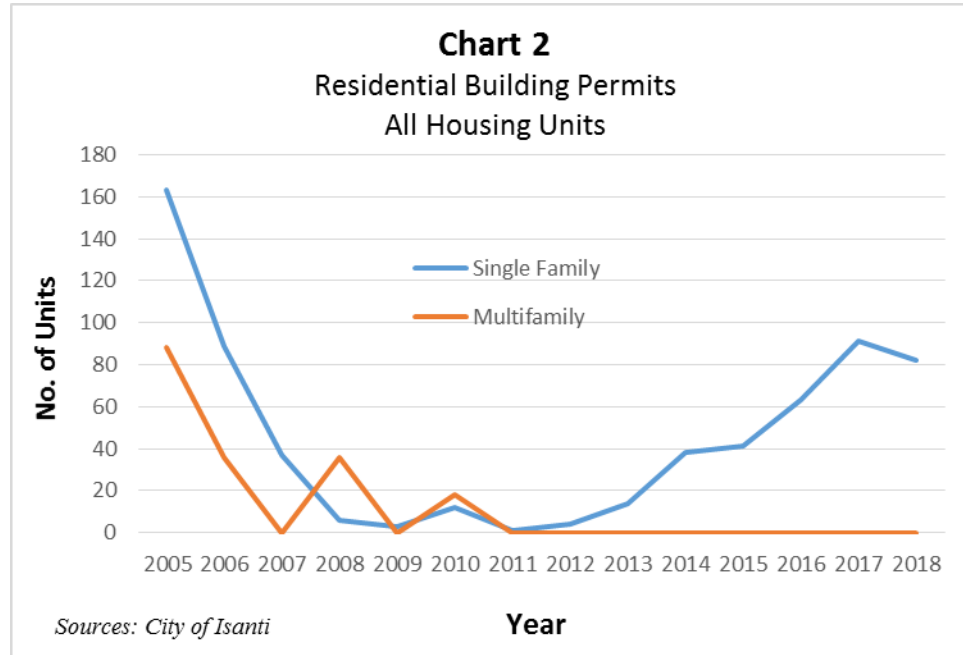


The 2008 Comprehensive Plan noted a slowing of the development of housing, but anticipated a rebounding and continued growth, with a projection from 2005 forward of over new 1,000 households in the City by 2015. The Plan could not have anticipated the Great Recession which basically halted housing development. In the depth of the foreclosure crisis in the City in 2011, only 1 new single-family home was constructed that entire year. It would take until 2014, with the construction of 38 new single-family homes that the City would meet its revised housing projections (30 units annually/utility connections). As discussed, single-family housing development has rebounded in the City with 346 homes built since 2010, with most constructed in the past 3 years. Senior housing

needs, beyond independent living, were also partially addressed with development of Prairie Senior Cottages in 2010, adding 18 housing units for those requiring assisted congregate housing services.

### Residential Building Permits

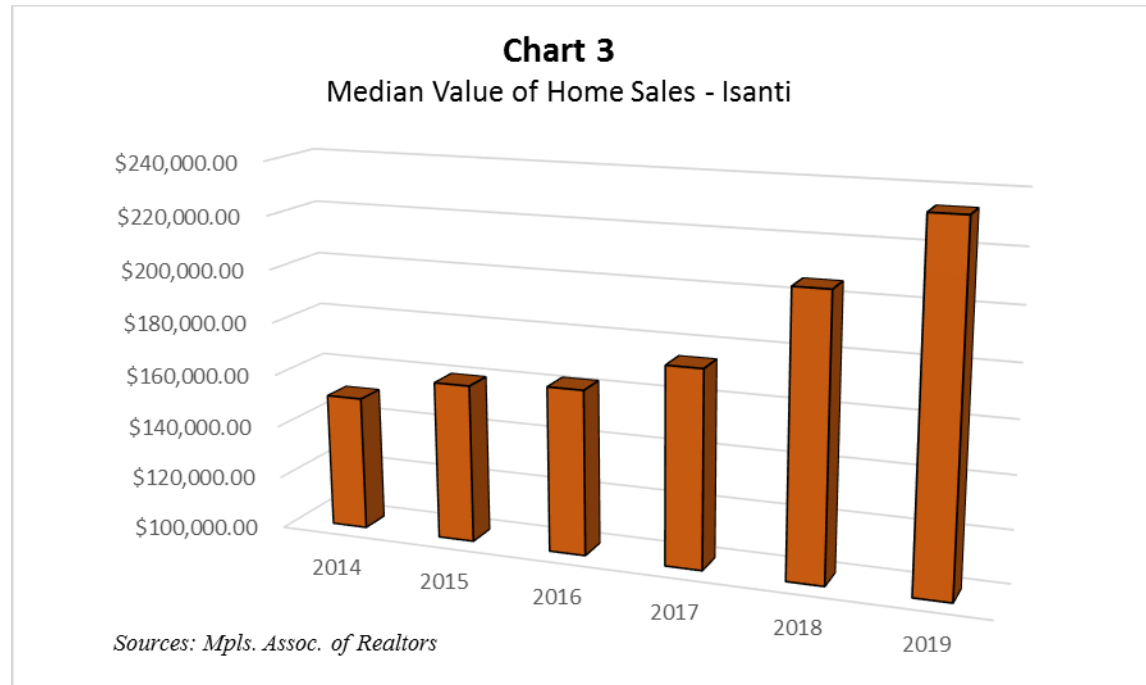
Chart 2 shows Residential Building Permits for all housing units since 2000.



The graph reflects the change in the total number of housing permits which peaked in 2005. From 1990 to 2000, residential building permits averaged 30 to 35 units. From 2000 to 2004, Isanti averaged 150 to 160 units per year. During those years, townhouses represented 25% of the new housing units produced. Housing production since 2010 has been single family homes, which have ranged from smaller one level patio homes to larger multi-level homes. Within the past 3 years, there have been larger homes built (1200 sq. ft. plus) as a percentage of all homes built for that year.

### Median Home Sales

Chart 3 shows the median sale price of housing units sold in Isanti from 2014 through 2018.



As you can see in the chart, housing values have trended higher since 2014. In 2018, the single family housing market in the City of Isanti recovered to the level of the highest median value in 2005, when median values were just under \$200,000. This is due to the creep of higher metro values north and a reduced inventory of existing houses on the market. Values in 2019 have continued to rise, but signals of a slowing housing market are temporing those increases.

With the housing market regaining former values, the issue of housing affordability may become an issue in the next 10 years. The 2015 East Cental Housing Study recognized this. Their study shared that 33% of housing owners and 46% of renter households were paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs in Isanti County. The City should consider tracking this indicator to guide community and economic development decisions in the next decade.

## Housing Real Estate Market

Listed below are notable aspects of the residential housing market in Isanti..

- The Isanti housing market continues to be sizable, with 1,034 units marketed in the past 3 years.
- Single family home median values have increased from \$177,900 in 2016 to \$220,000 in 2018.
- The single family housing market includes starter and senior housing with building square footages averaging 1000 sq. ft. on the main level to larger move-up homes with 1230-1300 sq. ft. on the main floor, with total finished square footage over 2500 sq.ft.
- In recent years single family homes with larger square footages on multiple floors have averaged 44 % of the housing market.
- No townhomes have been built in the post recession time period. Builders have shared that the market is not there for this housing product.
- Existing homes requiring major updates (roofs, windows and doors) are being improved as the value of such properties is increasing.

## Rental Housing

Since the Great Recession there has not been construction of new market rate or subsidized multi-family apartment buildings or seniorassisted congregate housing in Isanti since 2010. There have been proposed market rate and senior assisted living proposals in Isanti since that time, but none have constructed. The 2015 East Central Minnesota Housing Study determined that market rate rental vacancy rates were very low (1.3%) and that additional rental housing in Isanti was needed. In a healthy rental market vacancy rates average 5%.

There has been much discussion in the past regarding the need for rental housing in Isanti. In a community that addresses life cycle housing for all age groups, rental housing is needed for the following residents:

- Seniors who desire to downsize and reduce home maintenance responsibilities and desire to remain in the City.
- Newly employed households that need housing but cannot afford to relocate here and buy a home.

- Newly formed households of adults that were raised in the community and need affordable housing. These households may move up to starter homes and it is in the City's interest to retain them.
- Households that need to downsize due to economic reasons and desire to remain in the City since they may have family members in the school system, and/or are closed to extended family.

Another part of the rental housing equation is availability of land for development. There is limited land for development of multi-family housing in Isanti. Areas near commercial and transportation corridors should be evaluated for suitability for multi-family housing. Since population numbers and residential density are strong considerations by commercial developers, the City needs to consider how these land uses could work together as the City develops.

### Other Housing

Past housing plans and studies have shown the need for senior assisted and congregate housing. Isanti has one facility that serves this need. Other facilities have been developed in adjacent cities to address these needs. These developments often serve residents of all income levels and a financial subsidy is needed to assist in their development. The City will need to consider the need for such facilities in Isanti and its policies for financial subsidies, if it is to provide for these housing facilities in the community. Demand for this housing option, with ancillary services will increase in the next decade as the population ages and seniors increase in numbers.

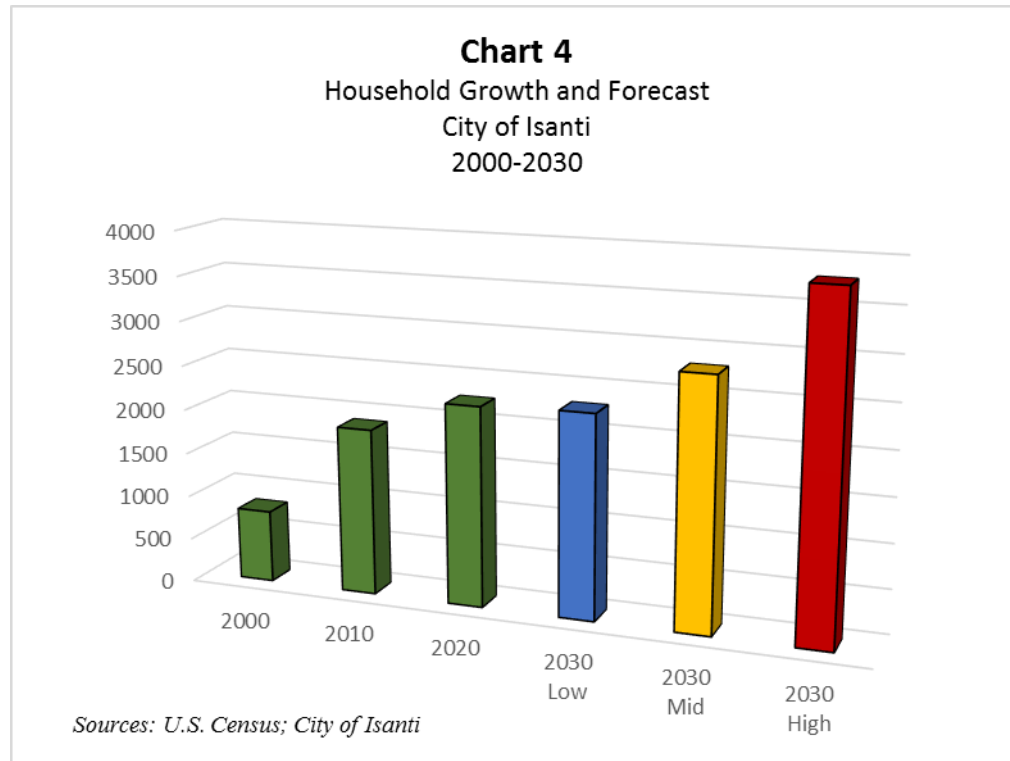
### Neighborhoods/Housing Developments

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan addressed neighborhood patterns and housing developments in the City of Isanti. Through past land use planning by the City, new subdivisions and neighborhoods have been developed in a phased planned method that was also dependent on available land, street and utility systems. Unless specifically guided as a Planned Unit Development, most lots are in the 10,000 to 12,000 sq. ft. range in size. The majority of housing in these neighborhoods is single-family housing. While there was development of townhouses in the early 2000s, most of the remaining land guided for that use was later developed as single family housing, with the majority one level patio or split level homes.

Residential neighborhoods have been developed in the northwest, west and southwest areas of the City. There is some room for expansion within the City limits in the south and southwest areas, but the remainder of the areas described



above will be filled with new single family housing within the first 5 years of the next decade. There are areas on the east side of Highway 65 that are available for single family housing development. This will be further reviewed in this comprehensive plan update under land use.



### Analysis and Recommendations

So far in this Chapter, the existing housing, market conditions and locations have been reviewed. Chart 4 above shows projected growth of households in the City. New housing will be needed to accommodate these new households. Since the Great Recession, single family housing has been built on existing and newly platted lots. Recommendations for the guidance of housing in the next decade are as follows:

- In the 2008 comprehensive planning process, there was much concern regarding neighborhood quality and design. This is still a concern today, with new residents desiring single family neighborhoods with larger lots and a “small town feel” in the City. Demographics show that the need for single family housing, both starter and second homes, are needed in the City. Land use guidelines for housing types, lot sizes, and coverages should be reviewed to ensure quality design. Diversity through planned unit developments should continue to be considered and used to create unique neighborhoods that are desirable and attractive. The emphasis

should be balanced housing development, with a continued push towards construction of larger second homes or executive homes.

- There is a continued need for multi-family housing in the City. This type of housing ranges from market rate apartments to senior congregate housing. The 2015 housing study should be updated. Data from the update would assist in verifying housing needs. The location of multi-family housing should be near major transportation corridors. There may be opportunities to place such housing adjacent to commercial areas. This density of housing may assist with development of those commercial areas. This should be taken into consideration with land use planning near the Highway 65 and Heritage Boulevard commercial corridors. The Downtown area should be also looked at for expansion of housing, especially first floor commercial redevelopment with upper-level housing.
- Conservation development is important in the City of Isanti. In considering new residential development, Isanti's natural areas, systems and those amenities should be incorporated through subdivision design or planned developments. Existing wooded areas, wetlands and wildlife corridors should be retained as a part of development. Public open space to preserve natural amenities, either through land donations, easements or associations, should be part of the planning process for development of those areas.
- Utility system capacities and facility planning should to be incorporated in the phasing of residential development. The current wastewater and water treatment plants have capacity for additional residential growth, but this capacity and expansion of existing or new utility systems should be in conjunction with a phased plan for residential growth.
- The City should consider an update to the 2008 Housing Action Plan to set priorities for housing development in the next decade. This planning effort would first require an update to the 2015 housing study.

#### Goals/Strategies

- Continue to study housing goals, needs and resources. Watch for changing housing market conditions and opportunities/projects to meet City housing needs and create life cycle housing choices for residents.
- Create desirable neighborhoods through inclusion of natural amenities, parks, sidewalk and trail systems. Include natural systems in planning so that these amenities and wildlife corridors are maintained.

- Encourage a diversity of housing units through architectural design styles, building placement, density and lot size to create unique neighborhoods in the City.
- Monitor condition of existing housing. If market prices stabilize or decline, the City may need programs to assist with renovation of older housing in the community. Multi-family housing building conditions should also be monitored with rental license renewals.

## Chapter 4: The Economy

### Introduction:

The City of Isanti has had good economic growth since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Through its Economic Development Authority (EDA), the City has achieved major economic goals, with location of a Medical Clinic, Pharmacy and Hotel in the City. There has also been substantial industrial growth, with location of the Ever Cat Biodiesel Facility, featuring a new process for production of biodiesel, and recruitment and relocation of SnoBear USA in the City from an adjacent state. Commercial development has also continued, with new development on the south side of the Highway 65 and Heritage Boulevard intersection, with location of a new Coborn's Grocery Store, containing a pharmacy, and an O'Reilly Autoparts store on the east side of Highway 65. Commercial development on the west side of Highway 65 includes an Allina Medical Clinic, Best Western Hotel and redevelopment of the former Riverside Market site with a Kwik Trip Store. The City has received recognition of its economic development efforts with awards from the Economic Development Association of Minnesota.

With its location along a major highway corridor and continued growth in population and households, the City has the ability to draw a variety of commercial businesses. Its location also continues to be attractive to industrial development. Installation of roads and infrastructure on the east side of Highway 65 have opened substantial tracts of property to commercial development. There are also lots developed and ready for commercial development on the southwest side of highway. Recent development of the Allina Clinic and Hotel could assist with getting infill development on those lots in the next decade. There is also open commercial land available on the northwest side of the intersection.

The City has and continues to be involved and deliberate in economic development. Opportunities range from new commercial businesses locating in Isanti to potential location of a large industrial expansion. With those opportunities, there is substantial competition in our region for commercial and industrial projects. In the next 10 years, there will need to be planned efforts and targeted investment by the City to make development happen. Depending on the project, there may also be regional and state assistance. Those developments provide local jobs, shopping and tax base for the growing City. Commercial and industrial development should be planned to complement the existing land uses, natural amenities and growth patterns in the city.

### Existing Conditions:

Past planning efforts have placed the City in good position for commercial and industrial growth. While a majority of land in the city limits is guided for residential development, a substantial portion has infrastructure for commercial development. There is also substantial acreage available in the Industrial Park. The City also owns undeveloped land adjacent to the BNSF railroad that has been preliminary planned for a possible rail industrial park. Regarding commercial uses, with the changing retail and office commercial environment a market study may be necessary to refocus City recruitment efforts. Local industries should continue to be contacted on an annual basis regarding both possible expansion opportunities, as well as what ancillary businesses could be recruited to enhance their production capabilities. As noted in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, a majority of residents are still commuting for jobs outside the City, with the majority heading into the metropolitan area. Local job growth provides opportunities for new employees, if the jobs can be created at wage levels that would be attractive to commuters.

### Employment in Isanti:

The potential workforce in Isanti is described as those residents between the ages of 16 and 65. That would include 65% of City residents. Of those potential employees, 1525 or 38% are in the local labor force. The following table shows the categories of Isanti businesses and industries where residents were employed in 2014 and 2019. The largest employers in 2019 were in Education & Health Services, Trade, Transportation & Utilities, and Manufacturing.

Table 1

City of Isanti  
Employment by Industry

|                                   | <u>2014</u> |       | <u>2019</u> |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Construction                      | 5%          | 50    | 5%          | 86    |
| Manufacturing                     | 17%         | 172   | 13%         | 253   |
| Trade, Transportation & Utilities | 14%         | 147   | 35%         | 678   |
| Financial Activities              | 3%          | 34    | 4%          | 76    |
| Education & Health Services       | 27%         | 281   | 30%         | 588   |
| Leisure and Hospitality           | 22%         | 220   | 9%          | 163   |
| Other Services                    | 8%          | 77    | 2%          | 40    |
| Public Administration             | 4 %         | 45    | 2%          | 46    |
| Workforce population              | 100%        | 1,026 | 100%        | 1,930 |

Source: Mn DEED / City of Isanti

### Travel and Commuting:

As noted in the last comprehensive plan, many residents continue to commute to the Twin Cities metro area for their work. In a recent DEED report, in our region 59% of workers commute to employment outside of the area. Commute times average 35 minutes. Of those commuting, 82% are driving their own vehicle, 12% carpool with others, 1% take mass transit, and 5% work from home. The percentages of those traveling alone and carpooling has little to no change over the past 10 years. Mass transit options and links are available to connect to metro transportation in Anoka County, but the timeframes and availability is limited. It is uncertain in the next 10 years if mass transit options will improve. The City should continue to work with neighboring communities and regionally to increase transportation options. Planning should also continue for future carpooling parking locations, in conjunction with consideration of future passenger rail options. A growing trend that should be recognized is the number of employees that work from home. For many who do this, it is a combination of work from home and work in the office. Whether fully or part-time from home, this reduces the cost of commuting and encourages the economic benefit of buying more locally. With continued improvement in technology, the number of workers that spend at least part of the work week in their home will continue to increase in the next 10 years.

### Income:

The table below shows the current incomes of Isanti residents in 2017. As portrayed in Table 2, 23.9 % make less than \$40,000 a year, 49.1% make between \$40,000 and \$100,000 a year, and 26.99% make over \$100,000 a year. Regionally, Isanti continues to have higher income levels than neighboring communities. Economic opportunity locally and in the adjacent metropolitan area lend to higher income levels. This is significant in both recruitment of commercial and local services and labor force potential for industrial firms looking to relocate.

Table 2

City of Isanti  
Household Income

| Income                | Households   | Percentage  |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Less than \$10,000    | 84           | 3.85%       |
| \$10,000 to \$20,000  | 103          | 4.73%       |
| \$20,000 to \$30,000  | 140          | 6.44%       |
| \$30,000 to \$40,000  | 194          | 8.89%       |
| \$40,000 to \$50,000  | 246          | 11.29%      |
| \$50,000 to \$60,000  | 198          | 9.07%       |
| \$60,000 to \$75,000  | 259          | 11.86%      |
| \$75,000 to \$100,000 | 368          | 9.07%       |
| \$100,000             | 589          | 26.99%      |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>2,181</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Source: US Census

As shown in Table 3, supportive of previous discussion, the median income of Isanti in 2017 is \$83,103. This is 121% of the State median income. This is a continuing and increasing trend from the data that was collected from 2006, where the median income of Isanti was \$58,419, 110% of the State median income of \$53,106.

Table 3

City of Isanti  
City and State Median Household Income

|               | <u>Isanti</u> | <u>State of MN</u> | <u>% of State</u> |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Median Income | \$83,103      | \$68,400           | 121%              |

Source: US Census

Employment:

The City has enjoyed increased local employment opportunities with growth in retail, service and industrial sectors. As of 2019, the City of Isanti is home to 182 businesses and 1,930 employees. This compares to 1,145 jobs in 2005, a 59% growth rate. In comparison, the East Central Region experienced a 6% growth rate in the same time period. Part of the lower regional growth was loss of jobs in the great recession and a continuing tight labor market due to retiring workers and fewer replacement workers. Projections for job growth in the East Central Region in the next several years are in the following categories: Healthcare Support, Healthcare Practitioners, Personal Care Services, Computer and Mathematical, Community and Social Service (Source: DEED). Addition of direct and support businesses in these categories will be advantageous in growing the local economy. The Region and City will also be facing an aging workforce, so development of a skilled workforce and succession planning will be important. The City, through its EDA as the lead agency, should continually monitor labor and employment trends and target resources to take advantage or create opportunities for economic growth.

Land Use / Growth:

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan provided direction on land use designation and development in the City. Current land uses (2019) are listed out by zoning designation in Table 4-Land Uses. The City has open space for commercial and targeted industrial growth. The future land use map is still valid and will be reviewed as a part of this comprehensive plan update. That map provides a guide for further growth of the City.

Table 4

City of Isanti Zoning / Land Use

| Land Use Category       | Gross Acreage | Percent |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------|
| CBD                     | 18.26         | 0.64%   |
| CBD Transitional        | 26.49         | 0.92%   |
| Neighborhood Commercial | 7.66          | 0.26%   |
| General Commercial      | 264.62        | 9.24%   |
| Industrial              | 226.25        | 9.29%   |

*Source: City of Isanti*

The land use plan includes the commercial and industrial zoning areas listed above in the Table. Each zoning designation has both permitted and conditional uses that serve to accommodate commercial and industrial development that are beneficial to City economic development and are included in the future land use map. A general description of these areas is made in the following sections:

Central Business District

The Central Business District (CBD) classification encompasses what is considered the traditional downtown area of the City. This is where most general commercial uses were once located. It contains historical buildings and locations. In Isanti, as with other cities, commercial use of historical buildings has shifted from a general commercial base to specialty commercial or retail, and commercial services. There is also mixed residential use; ranging from commercial buildings with second floor apartments to single family homes. The historic downtown provides both re-use and rehabilitation opportunities for commercial and mixed-use buildings. Although the core historic downtown area is located off the main vehicular traffic route, Heritage Boulevard, it retains good access to that street and is also served by an eastern controlled access connection via Main Street to State Highway 65 and Whiskey Road (CSAH 23).

Central Business District Transitional District

These sub-districts were put in to accommodate both historic commercial, housing and light industrial areas adjacent to the BNSF railroad tracks and core central business district areas. They are two district transition areas. The area on the east side of the railroad was part of the historic industrial complex for the City and the area on the west side contains a mix of historic commercial and vintage single-family housing. The districts allow current uses and provide direction for future redevelopment to accommodate mixed use commercial and public purposes.



### Neighborhood Commercial

This commercial designation is for small limited commercial areas that serve the adjacent residential neighborhoods. These are typically guided for outlying residential neighborhoods that don't have immediate access to the CBD or General Commercial area. Uses such as a small grocery store, coffee shop/deli, personal and health type services would be located here.

### General Commercial

This classification is for the highway or arterial general business district for the City that is adjacent to State Highway 65. The City is fortunate to have large segments of land guided for commercial development on the east and west side of State Highway 65. This area is guided for both retail and service commercial, and contains larger commercial lots. The most recent developments include a Best Western Hotel, Allina Medical Clinic, Coborn's Grocery Store, with a pharmacy and coffee shop, and an O'Reilly's Auto Parts store. Areas southeast and southwest of the Highway 65/Heritage Boulevard intersection have benefitted from road and utility systems that have been developed to interconnect the commercial areas to existing road systems. This area has seen the most commercial growth in the past ten years. The commercial area northeast of that intersection has the most open contiguous land with the fewest constraints on development. It will take extension of a central road system and utilities to assist in encouraging development of the area. With the change in the retail market since 2000, the hope for larger commercial development may not happen. Smaller mini mall or freestanding commercial or service specialty buildings may end up locating in this area in the future. As with past consideration of an Assisted Living Facility in that area, the City will need to periodically evaluate commercial uses that could be guided for that area. The City should also consider higher density residential development in the eastern areas of this district. This residential use would provide a buffer between the highway commercial development and low-density residential development to the east. It would assist both with the need for that housing stock in the City and provide both customer and employment base for recruitment of businesses to locate in the commercial corridor.

### Industrial

The City has industrial uses in the Central Business District Transitional areas and north of Heritage Boulevard, adjacent to First Avenue NW. Overall, the uses are light industrial and service commercial in nature. Industrial uses also located adjacent to East and West Dual Boulevard. That area also has metal fabrication and machining uses. In the early 2000's the City developed an industrial park addition just north of the Dual industrial area, that extended to Cajima Street NE and west of Enterprise Avenue NE. Since then several industrial companies have located to facilities constructed in that addition. Incubator facilities consisting of smaller "suites" in single multi user buildings were also built to entice smaller companies to locate to the park, hoping that their growth would lead to future independent facilities or location of ancillary facilities in the park. The City has achieved two landmark developments, with location of the Ever Cat Biodiesel Facility and relocation of the SnoBear USA Facility in the park. The industrial park is 62 acres in size, and at

the time of this update, 24 acres in various size parcels are still available for new facilities. There is also the potential of expansion of the park north of Cajima Street NE, as there are 32 acres of privately held land available. The City has and will continue to work with that property owner on development of that parcel.

There is also 80 plus acres of City owned property northwest of the current park on the west side of the BNSF railroad line that has been preliminarily planned as a potential future rail industrial park. Studies have been done by Isanti County and this site has been designated as the most feasible site. The question becomes whether sufficient resources from public and private sectors can be brought together for this project. A commitment by a major user would assist in gaining both public funding and railroad support to move the project ahead. Additional land could be freed up for this project with conversion of the existing wastewater pond processing plant to a mechanical plant that would take up a much smaller footprint. Development of the park is a major goal for the City's Economic Development Authority.

#### City Role in Economic Development:

Isanti has and should continue to take a lead role in economic development efforts in the City. The City Council has included economic development initiatives as a part of its annual strategic planning. Resources have been provided for proactive economic development, with activities ranging from periodic meetings with local businesses to active recruitment of new businesses and industry. The Economic Development Authority, through its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and on-going work plans, have directed staff with annual initiatives and projects. Periodically, the City has also worked with other local governments, chambers of commerce, regional economic development groups and Isanti County on economic development matters, when such membership, projects or programs would be beneficial to the City. It is encouraged in these days of limited resources, that the City continue to evaluate possible joint ventures to achieve its economic development goals.

As discussed in the past comprehensive plan, there is validity in reviewing the following areas that the City can focus on in its economic development efforts over the next decade:

#### Economic Development Contact:

It is encouraged that the City remain the primary contact for information and resources for businesses and developers. This includes information on the City, demographics and resources. The City should have information available on the Centennial Industrial Park, as well as other properties and space available in the City. Relationships with local businesses should be continued through annual business retention meetings and periodic contacts. This is crucial, as local business growth is primary in gaining local employment opportunities. In working with developers or site selectors, the City should be the involved in coordinating resources, both City and external, to assist in making projects viable. Overall, the environment for economic development needs to be positive and supportive from the policy makers to the citizens for the City to be successful in achieving economic development goals.

### Housing Development:

The City needs to be supportive in working with local developers to meet housing demands in the City. This ranges from work with developers on single family residential projects to meeting the demand for multi-family and senior assisted living housing. Increases in population in turn drive commercial demand and provide a local workforce for industry.

### Commercial Development:

The City has had recent success in fulfilling commercial development goals. Commercial goals include commercial building development/redevelopment, commercial retail businesses, and service commercial businesses. Additional study and planning should be undertaken to identify unmet commercial needs and what businesses the City can attract in the commercial sector. The Highway 65 corridor brings opportunities that Isanti should capitalize on.

### Analysis and Recommendations:

#### The Downtown

The Downtown serves as the historical center and core of commercial development. The City should work to retain existing service commercial and specialty businesses. The specialty businesses are often destination businesses, with both a local and regional draw. The draw of outside customers could provide business for existing commercial entities in the Downtown or other commercial areas of the City. City marketing efforts should seek additional businesses that complement the existing Downtown businesses or provide new commercial services that are not available in the community. The City should also consider expansion of its definition of ‘downtown’. The commercial area adjacent to the east of the historical downtown is in reality part of the “downtown”. Extension of the area from Main Street to Highway 65 and north from Heritage Boulevard to First Avenue NW could be considered. With that, transportation corridors could be designated, roadway lighting to define the new areas could be installed and development and redevelopment areas redefined. From a marketing perspective, the area could be marketed together, with events and promotions.

#### Highway 65 Corridor

As discussed in the past comprehensive plan, the southern end of Isanti along Highway 65 is the “gateway” into the City and development along there sets the tone for the highway commercial area. The City should continue to use its site plan review process to evaluate projects, buildings and site amenities. The City should also consider if it actively wants to get involved in commercial development, especially on the east side of Highway 65 from Heritage Boulevard to Cajima Street NE. The area needs to have completion of interior road and utility systems to encourage it to develop in a planned phased manner. If the

City chooses not to be involved, there could be commercial development that would be detrimental to its future development. There is also opportunity on the east end of the commercial district near 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue for multifamily housing development. This development could serve as a catalyst for further commercial development. This should be considered in City land use planning. As a final note, there are natural amenities in these areas that include woodlands, ponds and wetlands that should be factored into development plans for these corridor areas. Inclusion of these systems is a benefit to the City and the environment.

### Neighborhood Commercial

As neighborhoods develop on the east side of Highway 65, land use plans should include guidance for development of neighborhood commercial locations to provide businesses that would serve the adjacent commercial areas as discussed earlier in this Chapter. With those designations, transportation corridors, including pedestrian and non-motorized access needs to be planned for such commercial developments.

### Industrial

The City is and will continue to actively market industrial park land; “shovel ready lots” for industrial development or expanding or new industry. Opportunities are available for public and private partnerships to expand industrial development and employment opportunities in Isanti. The City should continue partnerships with regional economic development groups and State agencies to assist with development efforts, especially with the potential Rail Industrial Park Project. The City should consider direct contact and marketing to north metro firms to get leads and potential business relocations.

### Economic Development Tools

The City has and should continue the use of economic development tools, such as tax increment financing, tax abatement, and revolving loan funds to achieve economic development objectives and goals. Resources from other agencies, such as the East Central Regional Development Commission, Initiative Foundation and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development can also assist with economic development projects and initiatives.

Goals/Strategies:

Economic development goals and strategies are provided in Chapter 1. The following list are additional goals and strategies for consideration.

- 1) Look to partnerships with local and regional public entities and private firms to begin steps to develop a rail industrial park.
- 2) Prepare a new Downtown Plan to incorporate the historic downtown area and adjacent commercial area west of Highway 65 to tie these commercial areas together with specific lighting, signage and transportation improvements for both vehicle, non-motorized and pedestrian usage. Recognize the impact that housing in and adjacent to this district has on sustaining the commercial viability of this commercial area.
- 3) Review commercial development needs regarding road and utility systems in the east highway 65 district. Consider if partnerships are necessary for development of this commercial area. Consider multi-family housing development on the west side of this commercial area.

## Chapter 5: Natural Resources

### Introduction:

“Prioritize, Protect, Preserve and Conserve Natural Resources to ensure compatibility of land use planning and development”. (2008 City of Isanti Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 5, Natural Resources)

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan recognized the need to preserve the natural resources of the area, including watercourses, wetlands, woodlands and sensitive environmental features that either are or will in the future, be a part of the City. The City will continue to grow out into these natural areas in the next 10 years, and depending on land use planning and how approved development proceeds, the areas will be altered, maintained or possibly enhanced. It is not just the City that will make these decisions as new land areas are added over time, but also the current governmental jurisdictions that control zoning and current development activities. Increasing rural residential development, allowed by current planning and zoning authorities is one example of a change that is currently affecting natural systems.

Part of the past comprehensive plan effort included substantial resources being placed to study, identify and make recommendations on natural areas either in corporate limits of the City at that time, but also the future planning areas. Adjacent areas were also studied, as water courses (creeks, ponds and Rum River) wetland and woodland complexes are often interrelated with those areas. This Chapter’s intent will be to recheck the past plan for validity, report on current situations, and provide any additional goals and recommendations for this update’s time period.

Continued sustainability of natural systems remains the key for those systems remaining relevant and productive not just for wildlife and ecological systems, but also for urban systems which will be integrated over time. One example of this is the integration of storm water systems as construction of non-pervious roadway, building and lot treatments change the natural ability of the land to absorb and treat rainwater. It is possible through well designed storm water systems to absorb, hold and release water, sediment, phosphorus and other chemicals in a way not to tax the capacity of creeks, ponds, wetlands and ultimately the Rum River, which is a high valued pristine river. Another example is retaining and enhancing wildlife corridors in the City, either through retention of natural areas, improvement of passive park lands, or even conservation easements. These allow for wildlife to move through the City from adjacent rural areas to natural areas in the City and the river basin. Recognition of the need to include these items lends to development of a Conservation Planning Approach.

### Conservation Planning:

The Conservation Planning Approach was and continues to be recognized as a way to move forward with development of the City with ecological factors as a priority. This Chapter can re-affirm past discussion and recommendations, but if they are not included in updates of the zoning, subdivision and development codes, they remain words in a document to the detriment of the current and future citizens and the City as a whole. As an example of possible implementation, the City allows flexible zoning through planned unit developments, which could be used on land that has already been altered through farming activities but contains valued natural systems. It would allow the altered land to be developed to a higher density, with the land containing natural systems to be retained through easements or public dedication. This approach allows development to proceed in densities making sense for extension of roadway, utilities and private investment.

The Conservation Plan was developed by the naturalists as a part of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and is related through a series of maps and text in that document. Field work by staff for this comprehensive plan update have verified that the plan is valid and should be utilized in the time period of this update and beyond, serving as a guide for the conservation and development of the City.

### Conservation Planning Goals:

The following approaches should continue to be utilized to protect existing natural resource areas in present and future Isanti:

- Enhance Existing Park and Recreation Lands. The City has acquired land that are now passive parks. The natural areas that are present should be enhanced through plantings of vegetation that was native at the time of settlement. Examples of this include re-establishment of white pine stands in Legacy Park and plantings of trees and native grasses to re-establish oak savanna in River Bluff Preserve. In active recreational areas, native grasses could be established in non-mowed areas and tree canopies with native diverse species could be established or enhanced.
- Protect Public Interest Land – Public interest land is land that is held in ownership or easements by government entities such as the School District, County or State in the City of Isanti or its planned growth area. Such lands as previously identified in the conservation plan and those lands that potentially be acquired should be monitored for both potential enhancement and stabilization of natural systems on such properties.
- Future Proposed Park – The 2008 plan included a proposed “Grand Rounds” park that would be composed of private land adjacent to the Rum River, Isanti Brook and Spirit Brook and their contributing wetland / woodland areas. These lands would be targeted for acquisition through development contributions, dedications by

owners, or acquisition using public funding from local or state sources. The proposed park would provide a corridor for natural systems and wildlife that move through these flowages. Areas would be managed to enhance their natural systems. Public use could include interpretive sites that identify natural features and species and public trail systems to provide natural trails and linkages between parks and City sidewalk/ trail systems.

- Stormwater Management Lands- These lands are also addressed in the existing plan. They serve two purposes. The first is to assist in capturing increased runoff from developments, slowing release of storm water to preserve natural vegetation and slow erosion, and the second is the filtering of stormwater to capture sediments and elements that would be harmful to the waterways. Since the 2008 plan was developed, the City has established a storm water utility and storm water regulations that will assist with conservation and possibly enhancement of natural systems. The City should also review its zoning and subdivision ordinance regarding setbacks for development and buffers, to separate natural areas from development based on development density and other attributes. Other options previously discussed and applicable for consideration include: stormwater area easements, a low impact development ordinance, and closed basin ordinances. Retro-fitting of existing developments to minimize impacts of stormwater on wetlands and waterways is another option to assist in preservation.

### Land Use Regulations

Besides park, public use and stormwater management lands, private lands that will be developed for residential development represent the largest land use group where conservation planning efforts should be directed to. This would be through the development of incentives, standards and regulations regarding the density and placement of development, location of roads, and utility systems. The City had the planning tool of planned unit developments in place at the time of 2008 plan which provided for flexibility and creativity in subdivision and development design, but little else has been added since to provide guidance, incentives and regulations to achieve conservation planning goals. It is recommended that after the comprehensive plan update is approved that the past recommendations and more recent innovations in designing development with natural systems are reviewed and that new incentives, guides and regulations are developed to implement the conservation plan. Areas previously addressed that have validity and should be considered are as follows:

- Conservation Design Ordinance – Develop a conservation design and development ordinance. Review publications, American Planning Association articles, similar ordinances and regulations and design one that serves Isanti's needs.
- Conservation Design Performance Standards – These are standards based on efficient subdivision design and performance standards that allow density



development to preserve larger tracts of open space that have existing natural systems. It minimizes clearance activities and disruption of natural drainage systems. It reduces typical subdivision needs for road and utility systems, reducing impervious surface.

- Conservation Incentives – These are incentives that are placed in conservation design ordinances or regulations to provide an economic incentive for developers to follow conservation design requirements. Typically they revolve around increased density and number of lots for a developer.
- Stormwater Incentives and Closed Basins – This is subdivision design to encourage use of closed basins for stormwater impoundment or retention. If necessary, overflow to other systems or waterways would be allowed for peak rain events.
- Open Space Protection and Management – Through revised codes developers are encouraged to provide easements for trails, open space and lands with natural systems. Such developments often use Homeowner Associations (HOA) to maintain this open space and any improvements.
- Tier Land Use Districts – The City should consider expansion of extra territorial zoning and development codes beyond the current district boundaries to areas guided for urban development in the next 20 years. In order to be accepted, there will need to be an allowance for development of rural housing clusters in accordance with current densities. Standards for such housing districts need to take conservation design standards in consideration.

#### Natural Systems Enhancement – Other:

The following are other areas that are integral to the preservation and improvement of natural systems in the City of Isanti.

- Public Education – The need for “buy in” by the public, from school children to homeowners is necessary to have a successful program to retain and improve natural systems. The City should actively perform outreach activities to provide information in the schools and through public events. Forums to provide information and answer questions will greatly assist in the understanding how such natural systems are unique to Isanti and are of great benefit to the community and beyond.
- Wildlife Corridors – Wildlife have and will continue to use the stream and river corridors, wooded areas and wetlands in the City. They need safe travel routes between natural areas. The City needs to have these areas evaluated, mapped

and preserved or planned for preservation as adjacent development occurs. The City should look for resources on a regional and State level to assist with this work.

- City Tree Canopy / Program – The developed City has areas of urban forest that contribute to the natural system in the City. Urban forests contribute with air quality, costs for heating and cooling buildings, and support for local wildlife that use tree canopies. The urban forest on participating private lands and on public property should be evaluated for both tree diversity and health. Programs using local, regional and state resources could be developed to assist with this effort. The City could also use development incentives and regulations to assist with meeting local goals.
- Natural Planting and Stormwater Gardens – Development of natural plantings on private properties, as well as rain gardens, accentuate the surrounding natural systems and provide natural filtration and benefit natural species, including pollinators and threatened species in those classifications.

#### Master Plan Designs:

The attached figures and plans from the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Natural Resources Master Plan (source: AES), are incorporated in this update to serve as overlays and guides for natural system preservation and protection as the City develops in the next 10 years. Important Natural areas, Ownership and the Master Plan - Conservation figures have been updated and are included with this Chapter.

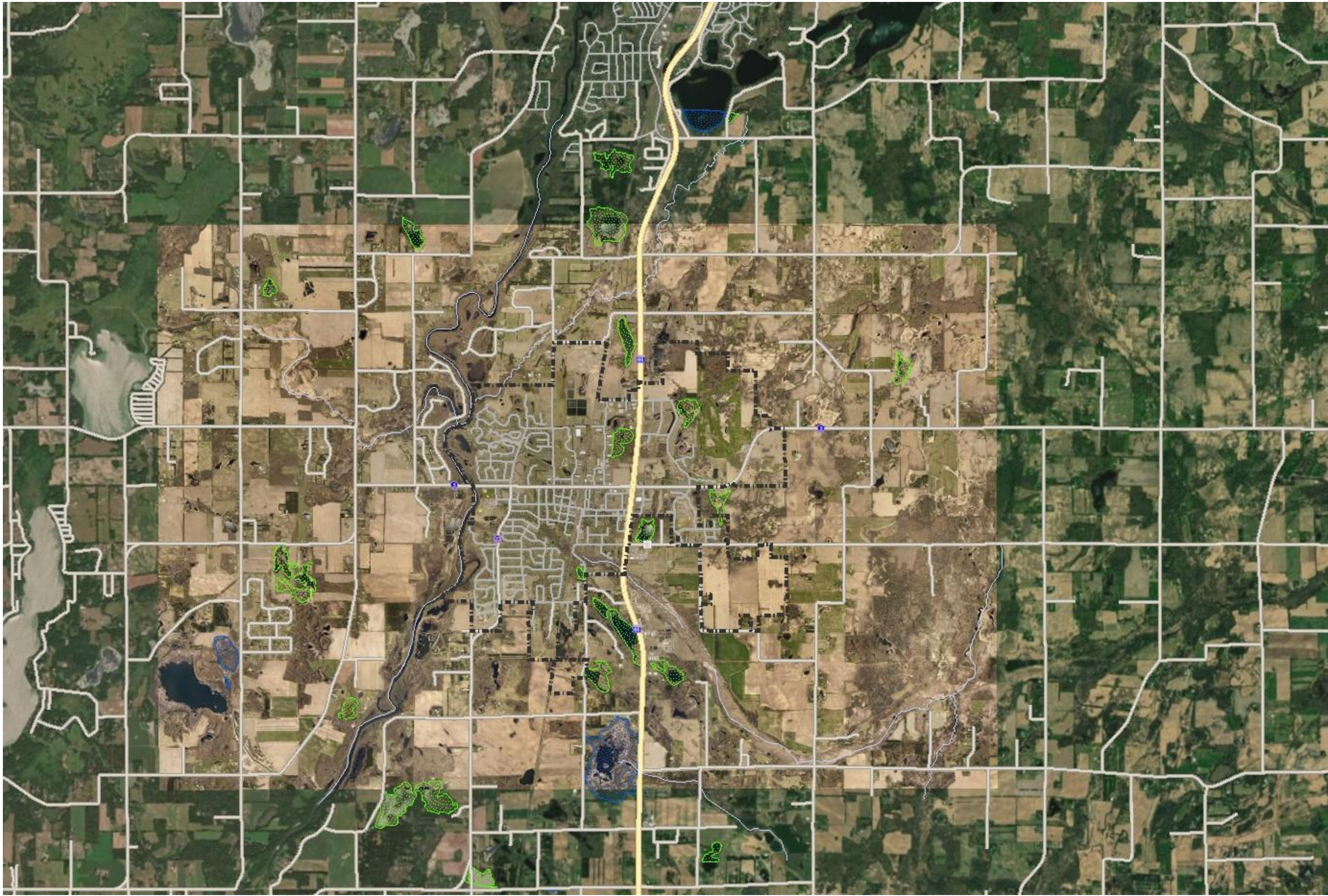
- Figure 5-1 Natural Systems Map
- Figure 5-2 Important Natural Areas
- Figure 5-3 Subwatersheds and Flows
- Figure 5-4 Runoff Potential
- Figure 5-5 Ownership
- Figure 5-6 Isanti Master Plan – Conservation Plan

Goals/Strategies:

Natural resource goals and strategies are provided in Chapter 1. The following are additional goals and strategies for consideration.

- 1) After adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update, review and update existing land use regulations, storm water regulations and development incentives to guide and support Conservation Planning Goals in land development activities.
- 2) Develop partnerships and work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Cedar Creek Nature Reserve, Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District, local governments, and volunteer groups to achieve Conservation Planning Goals.
- 3) Educate the public on the importance of Conservation Planning. Work on Outreach Programs with the C-I School District and other groups to get information out to the public.





- Legend**
- City Limits
  - Roads
    - State
    - County/Township
    - Local
    - Ramp
  - Protected Waters - Watercours
  - Protected Waters - Basin
    - Public Water Basin
    - Public Water Wetland

Figure 5-1




**Disclaimer:**  
This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data located in various city, county, and state offices, and other sources affecting the area shown, and is to be used for reference purposes only. The City of Isanti is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



# Isanti Master Plan - Important Natural Areas

**Study Area**

 Planning Boundary

 City of Isanti

**Natural Areas**

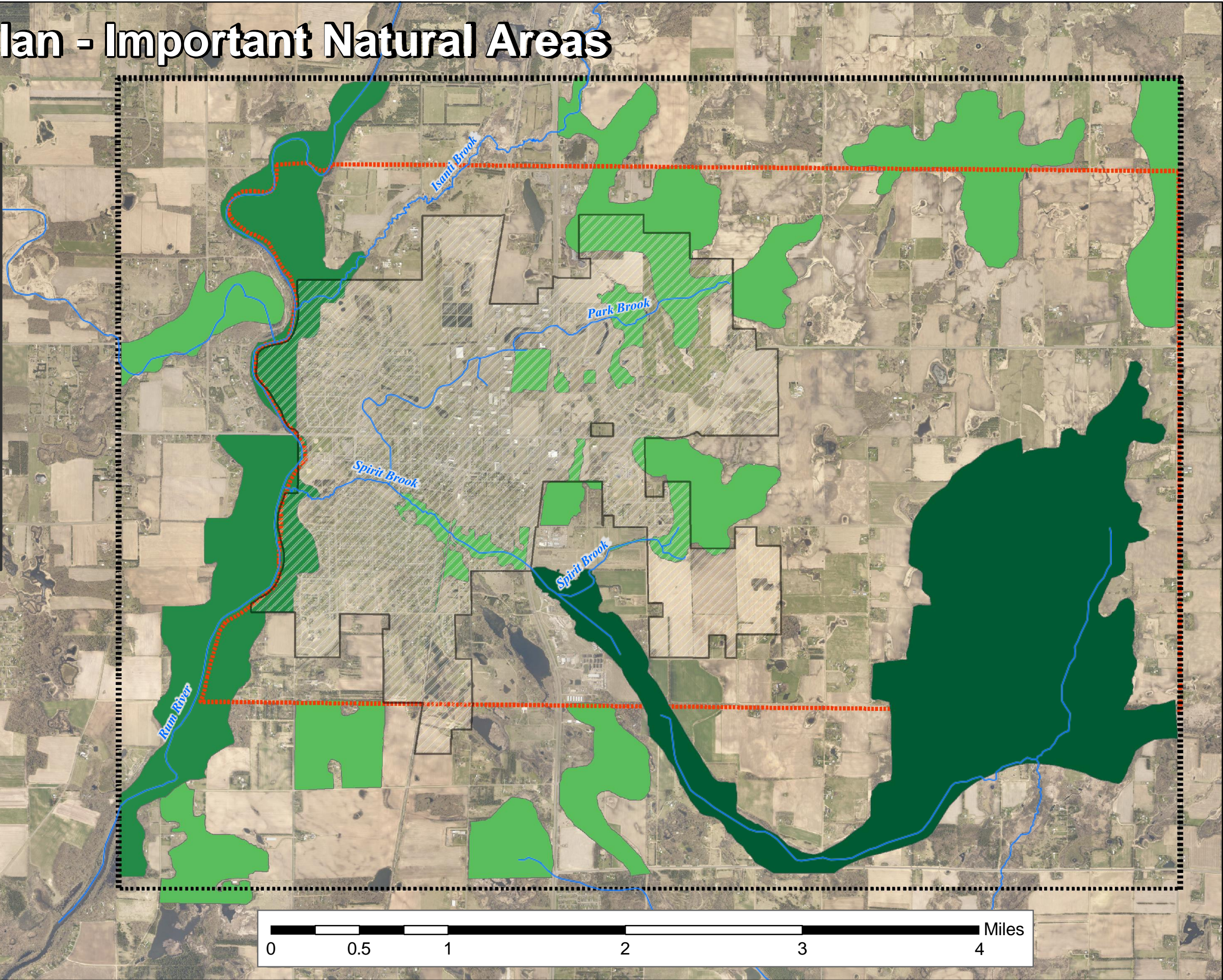
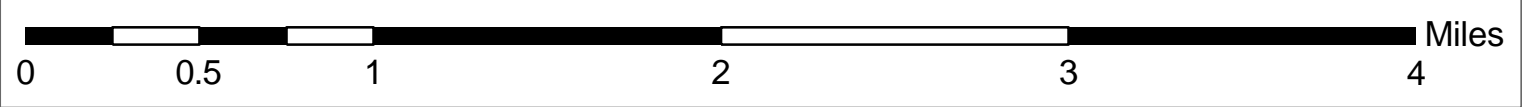
**Rank**

 High Priority

 Moderate Priority

 Lower Priority

Figure 5-2





# Isanti Master Plan - AES Subwatersheds and Flows

Figure 5-3

## Study Area



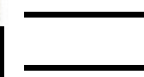
Planning Boundary



City of Isanti

1/m

Subwatersheds



Flow Direction



Major Flows



Applied Ecologica

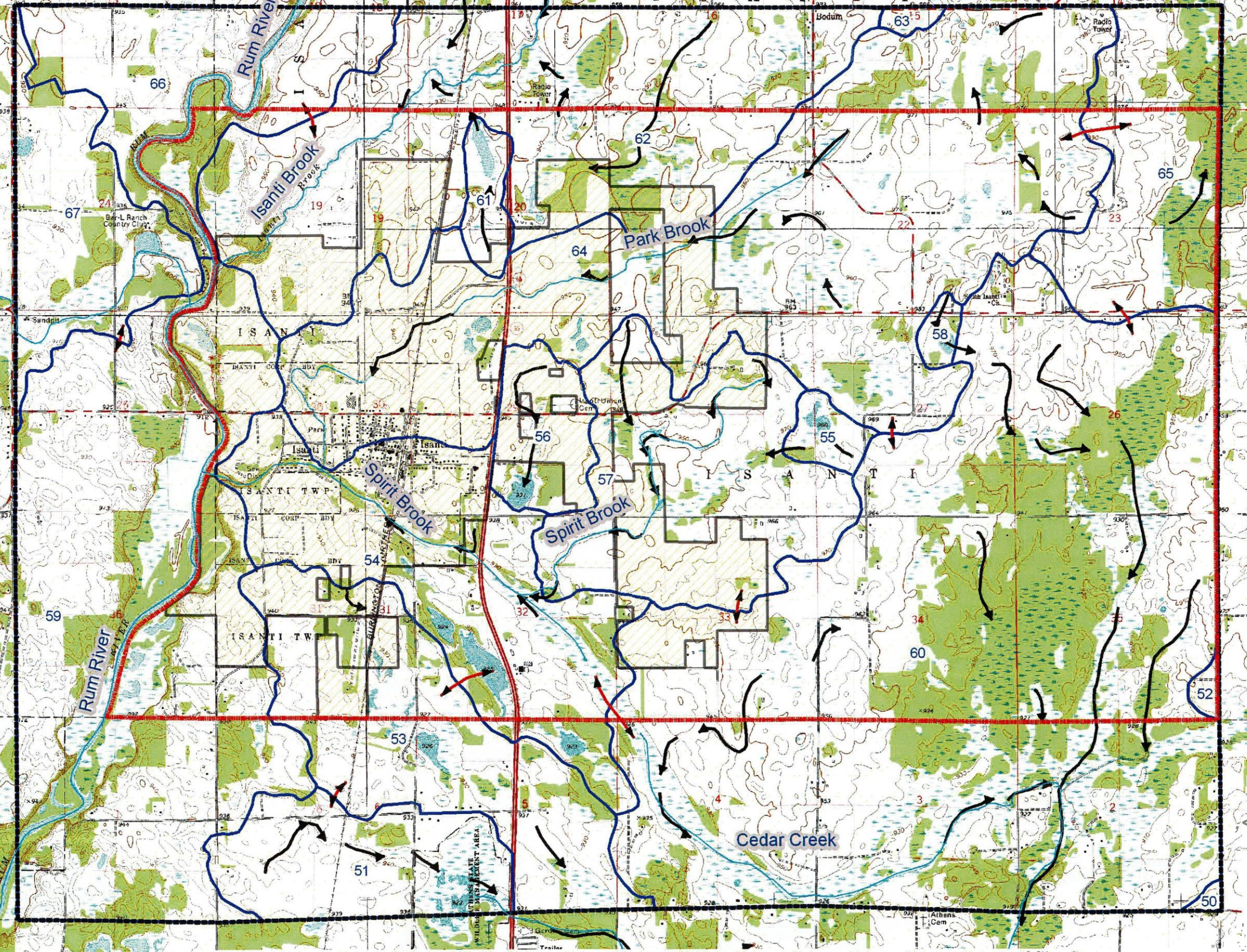


Figure S\_1i,



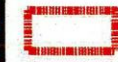
# Isanti Master Plan - Runoff Potential

Figure 5-4

## Study Area



Planning Boundary



City of Isanti



Flow Direction



Major Flows



Subwatersheds



## Estimated Runoff Potential



Low



Moderate



High



Very High

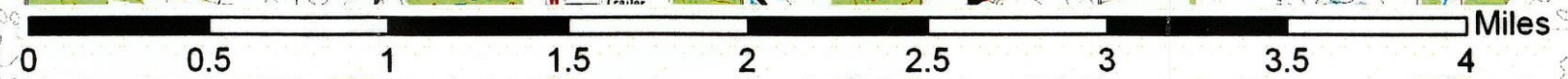
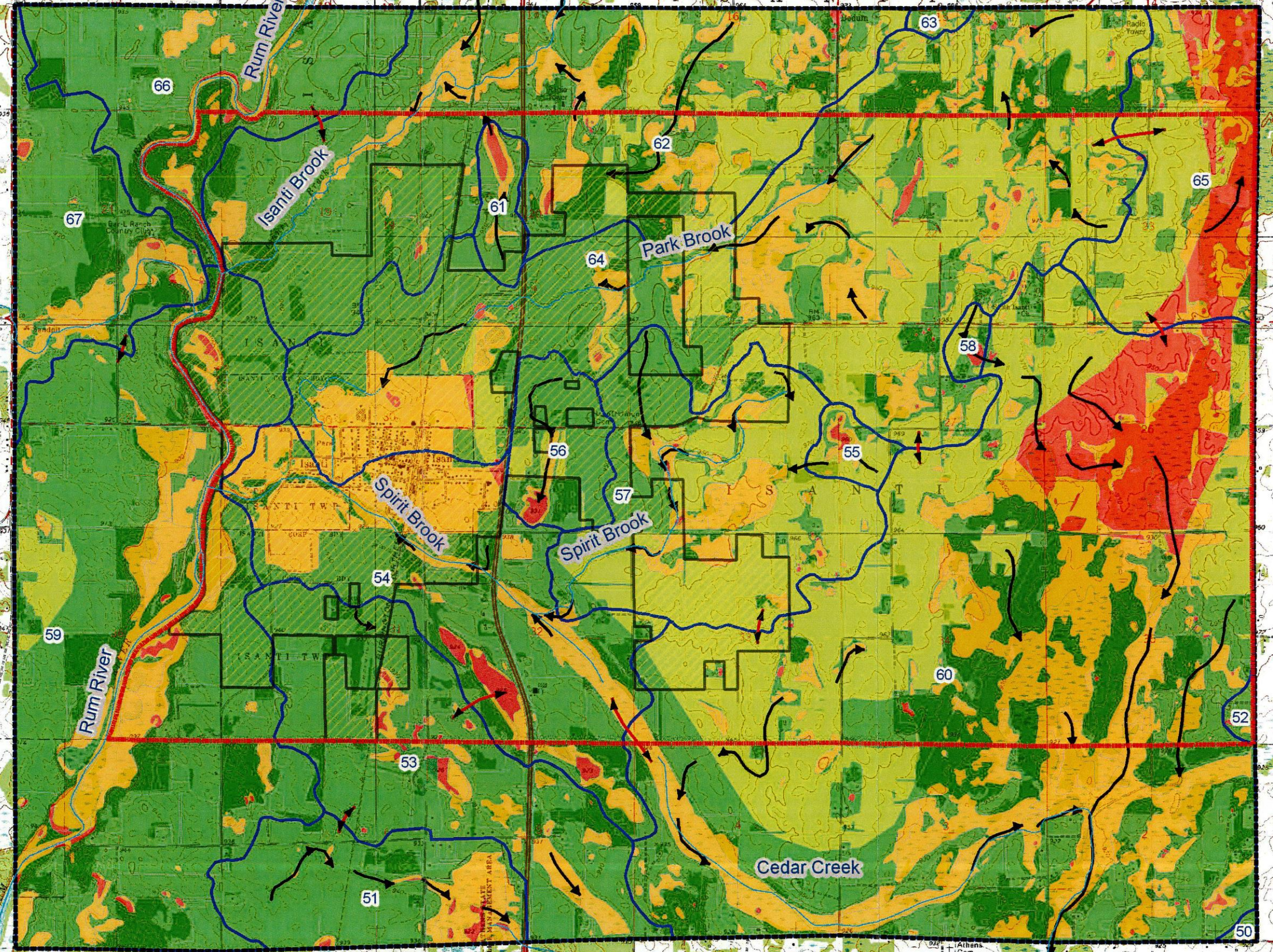


Figure 5-4C



# Isanti Master Plan - Ownership

Figure 5-5

**Study Area**

Planning Boundary

City of Isanti

**Existing Public Parks and Rec Land**

City of Isanti • Active

City of Isanti • Passive

Other

**Existing Public Interest Land**

City of Isanti

Sanbrook Golf Course

Land with Legal Public Interest or Access

Rum River Wild and Scenic Area

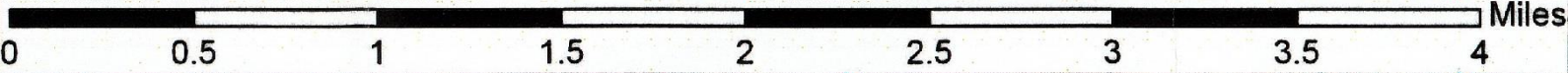
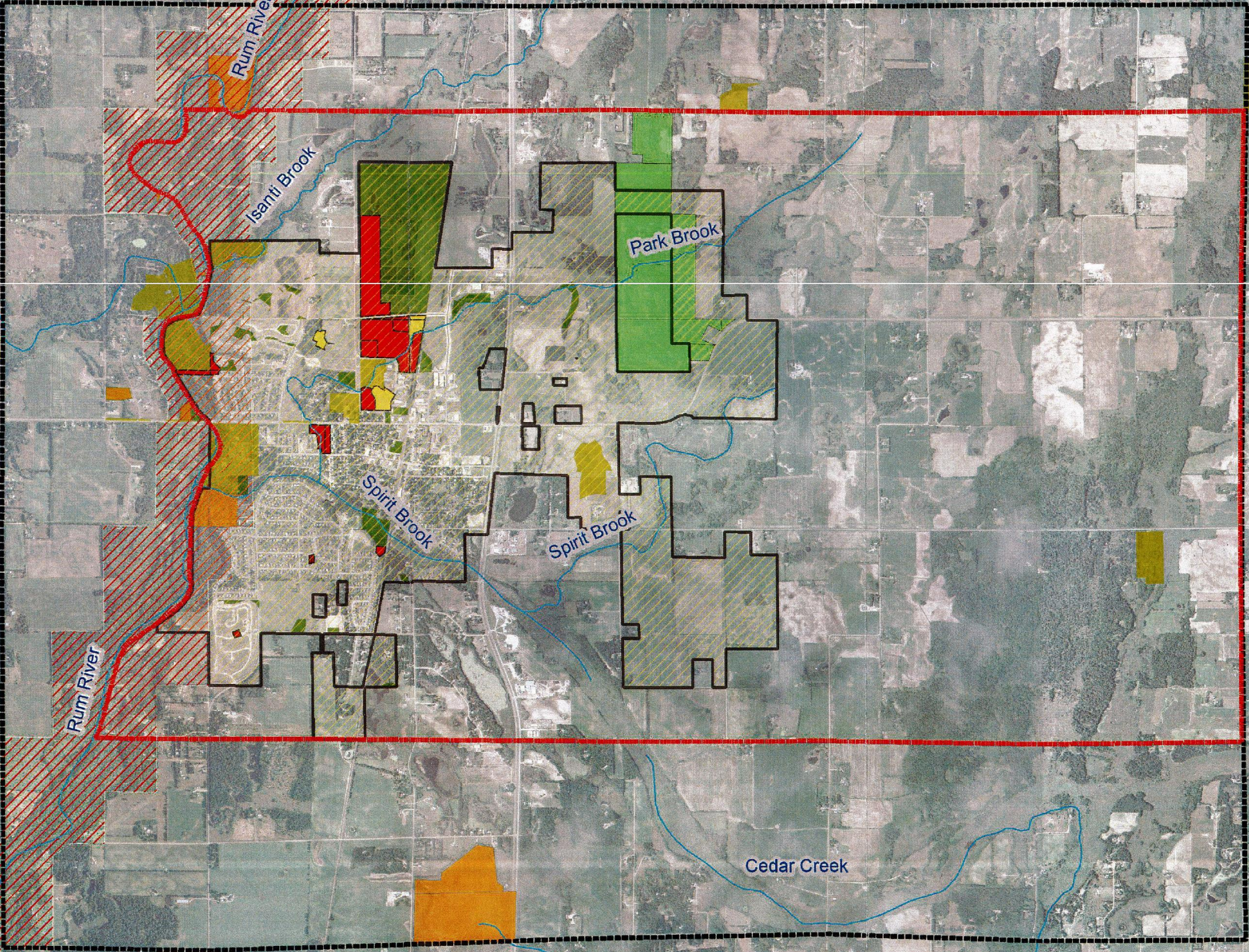


Figure 5-6A



# Isanti Master Plan - Conservation Plan

**Study Area**  


**Planning Boundary**  


**Parcels**  


**Existing Parks**

 Active

 Passive

**Existing Public Interest Land**

 Existing Public Interest Land

 Rum River Wild and Scenic Area

**Future Proposed Park**



**Conservation Strategies**

 Future Public Land/Open Space

 Stormwater Management

 Land Subdivision Ordinance

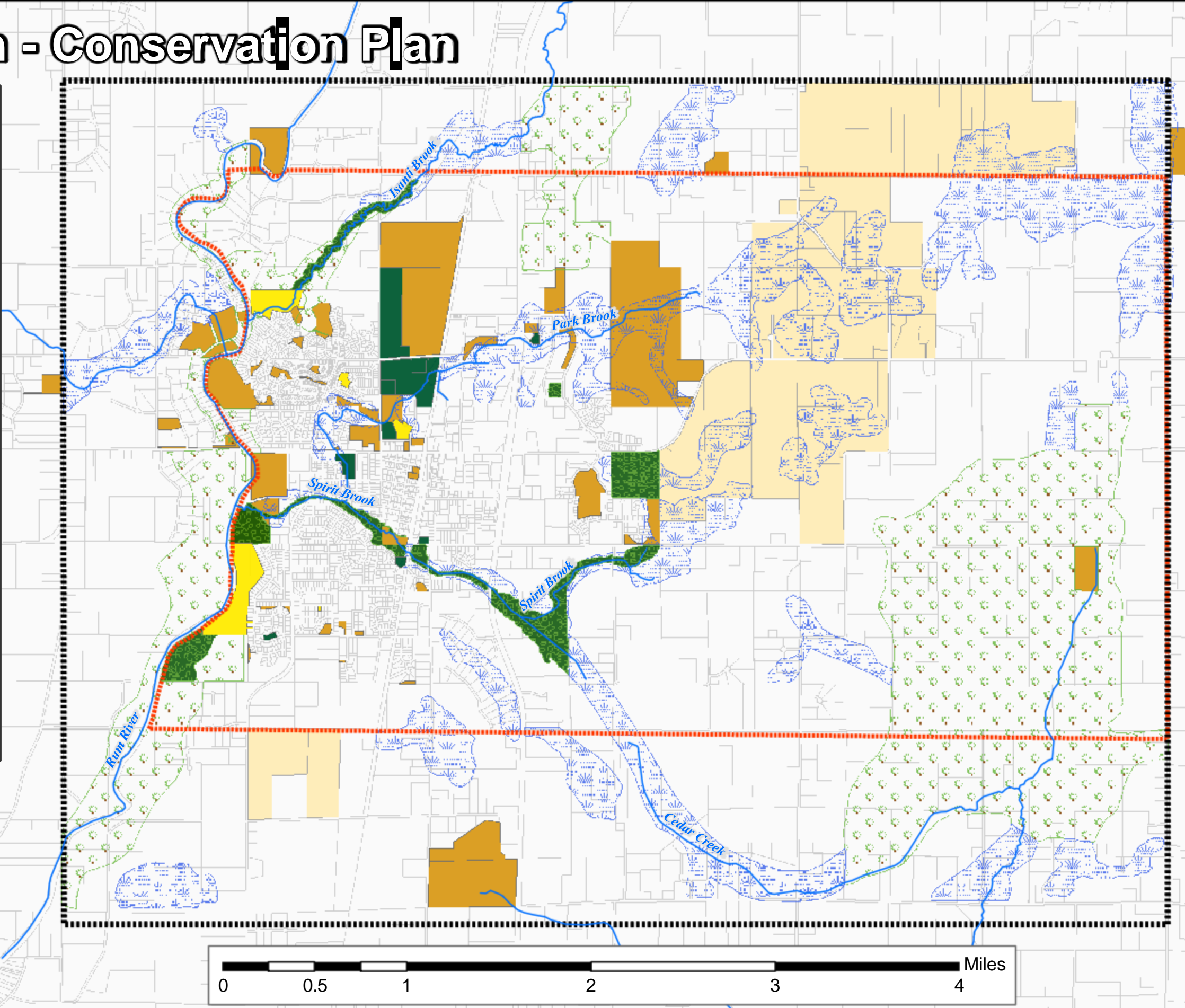
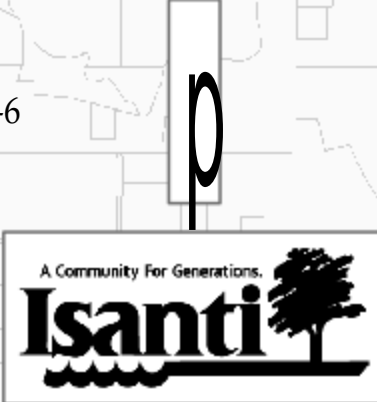


Figure 5-6



## Chapter 6: Parks, Trails and Open Space

### Introduction:

Historically the City has been proactive in the development of parks and trails. Due to continuing growth there are increasing demands for parks, trails and public access to natural areas. The City is not only committed to the preservation, conservation and enhancement of those natural areas and wetlands located in and around the community, but to the creation of a trail system to assist with park and recreation facility access. The City has moved forward to develop parks as opportunities to own land for both neighborhood and community parks, to preserve natural features, and give the community access to native natural areas and new amenities. The City is continuing a commitment to the existing and future residents of the community to provide the opportunity for all generations to enjoy and appreciate the natural environment found within the City of Isanti.

As referenced in Chapter 5, Natural Resources, there is great value in both preserving and gaining access to an interconnected system of parks and natural areas. This interconnected system would not only be utilized for recreational purposes but would also provide for a pedestrian transportation system to and from other areas within the community. Encouraging the use of such a network would help to increase the activity level of residents and promote a healthy lifestyle.



The Parks, Trails and Open Space chapter provides an inventory of existing parks and recreational facilities. In addition, the Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan assists the community in establishment of goals and aspirations for future trail connections and parks throughout the community.



### Existing Conditions:

The City of Isanti has developed both active and passive parks. The areas chosen for active parkland were primarily due to their accessibility to residents in existing neighborhoods and location of parklands with natural amenities. The active recreation facilities have been provided with a variety of playground equipment and recreational opportunities. The parks operate at the neighborhood, city and regional levels. Table 6.1 provides an inventory of all parks in the community and describes the type of park, the facilities and amenities provided, and the size of the park.

**Table 6.1 - City of Isanti – Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities**

| <u>Name</u>                    | <u>Type</u>                | <u>Major Activity</u>                                                                                                                | <u>Acres</u>  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Academy Park                   | Neighborhood               | Tennis court, Playground, Open Space, Soccer Field                                                                                   | 1.56          |
| Bike/Walk Trail                | Regional                   | Bike/walk/hike trail                                                                                                                 | 1.15 miles    |
| Bluebird Park                  | Regional                   | Isanti Indoor Arena (BMX), Baseball Field (Redbirds), Soccer, Trails, Skate Park, Dog Park, Pleasure Rink, Open Space and Playground | 65            |
| Eagle Park                     | Neighborhood               | Open Space, Passive                                                                                                                  | 0.46          |
| Fir Lane Property              | Neighborhood (undeveloped) | Undetermined                                                                                                                         | 0.60          |
| Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park | Neighborhood               | Open Space, Picnic Shelter, Playground                                                                                               | 0.67          |
| Legacy Park                    | Community                  | Walking/hiking trails                                                                                                                | 20.67         |
| Mattson Park                   | Community                  | Basketball Court, Benches, Horseshoes, Open Space, Picnic Facilities, Playground, Tennis Court, Sidewalks                            | 6.76          |
| River Bluff Preserve           | Community                  | Walking/hiking trails, Fishing Access, Community Garden, Open Space                                                                  | 46.67         |
| Riverside Park                 | Neighborhood               | Trails, Playground, Open Space                                                                                                       | 31.18         |
| Rum River Meadows Park         | Neighborhood               | Playground, Volley court, Open Space                                                                                                 | 1.33          |
| Unity Park                     | Community                  | Open Space, Picnic Facilities, Softball Field                                                                                        | 9.8           |
| VFW Park                       | Neighborhood               | Playground, Open Space                                                                                                               | 1.28          |
| Whisper Ridge Park             | Neighborhood               | Tennis Court, Basketball Court, Open Space                                                                                           | 6.58          |
|                                |                            | <b>TOTAL ACRES</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>193.71</b> |

Source: City of Isanti, **2019**



Additional park and recreational facilities not listed in the table above but are significant amenities to the City include:, David C Johnson Indoor Civic Arena-a hockey arena, Isanti Firefighters Association Rodeo Grounds and Martin's Landing-a MN DNR area. While some of these may not be City owned these facilities provide important access for recreation and sports to the community.



Each type of park is designed to serve specific purposes. Community parks and neighborhood parks are similar in that they serve the immediate area and just beyond, by providing open space, activities and trails. These parks are dispersed throughout the City to serve the variety of residential areas. Regional parks are larger and usually accommodate uses such as full-size playfields, open spaces and more amenities. These parks are designed to serve a wider population beyond the immediate neighborhood and the City limits.

#### Park Dedication:

The City has continued use of the park dedication process as a part of the city's development in an effort to set aside land for future parks and open spaces throughout the city. Trails have also been developed in conjunction with new subdivisions. The City will utilize land or fees for new or improved park development. The City Park, Recreation and Culture Board, and Planning Commission will ensure that land acquired through the dedication process (or funds acquired) completes and contributes to the overall system.

#### Analysis:

The City of Isanti is focused on the preservation and enhancement of open spaces and significant natural areas as a way to promote a desirable place for people to live, work, and play. The Natural Resource Chapter provides the foundation for the development of the integrated Parks, Open Space, Natural Areas and Trails Plan represented in Figure 6.2. The City acknowledges that encouraging healthy lifestyle activities will require an integrated and well-planned trails and recreational system. The City has prepared and continues to provide Parks/Trails maps for residents.

The Parks, Open Space, Natural Areas and Trails plan, Figure 6.2, defines the existing trail system and identifies future linkages. A key component of the plan is pedestrian 'loops', which have been created to encourage walking and biking throughout the community for recreation and transportation purposes as well as offers residents the opportunity to enjoy the exceptional natural resources found in the community.

The City has a significant percentage of land dedicated to active park space, which includes neighborhood, community, and regional parks. As the city continues to grow, it will constantly need to re-evaluate the park system to ensure that dedicated parkland is provided within future neighborhoods, which are accessible to all residents. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Board have a comprehensive Parks, Trails and Open Space plan to guide these efforts. In conjunction with active park space, the City is looking to create a natural areas corridor. The natural areas corridor will be integrated into the existing and proposed trail system. The corridor will provide the City with the opportunity to work with adjacent jurisdictions, including the townships, the school district, and the County to create a more expansive and integrated trail system. Cross-jurisdictional planning will open even more opportunities for residents to experience all of the natural areas found throughout the region.

### Open House – Parks:

On January 21, 2020, the City of Isanti held an Open House on the draft 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update. Feedback on park plans and objectives are as follows:

- Continue to integrate neighborhood parks in residential developments. Focus on community seasonal activities/events, larger facilities and active park amenities in community parks.
- Look at the potential for an Amphitheater, Lighting for community/seasonal events and a ballfield in Bluebird Park.
- Consider the potential for cross country ski trails in Legacy and River Bluff Preserve Parks.
- Look into the possibility of a bridge and trail to connect River Bluff Park to Martin's landing. Look into the potential for expanding trails north along the Rum River. This would be part of the "Grand Rounds" trail/park connection concept.
- Further consider connection of Whisper Ridge Park to the Downtown Area, via 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SW.

### Goals/Strategies:

The following support the goals and strategies defined in Chapter One and specifically address the issues as they relate to the park and trail system in the City of Isanti.

- Use the Comprehensive Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan prepared by the Park, Recreation and Culture Board and this Chapter as a guide when determining the location of future parkland and open space as required by the Park Dedication Ordinance.
- Create an incentive-based program to encourage developers and landowners to complete the network of trails and open space. Look at investments by the City to complete trail segments and connections.
- Provide passive parkland and open space areas to enhance the quality of life in existing and future neighborhoods.
- Plan green spaces accordingly so they may become a part of a larger multi-purpose greenway system in accordance with Chapter Five, Natural Areas.

## Chapter 7: Land Use and Growth

### Introduction:

The land use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is often seen as the “heart of the Comprehensive Plan”, as it guides development of the Official Zoning Map and City through placement of land uses by use type and density. It also guides future land use, which in turn becomes reality through development of residential, commercial and industrial areas. Therefore, in order for the City of Isanti to have guided deliberate development with proper placement of transportation and utility systems, evaluation and planning for land use is necessary for the future community.

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan studied existing and proposed land uses in the future land areas of the City. This update will focus on land use within the planning area boundary as defined by the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. This planning boundary is defined as land south of 301<sup>st</sup> Avenue, west to the Rum River, south to the Athens Township line and east to Durant Street. It should be noted that land uses in the City do extend beyond planning boundaries, as development in the City already extends south into Athens Township.

### Land Use Inventory:

The land use inventory and Existing Land Use Map (See Figure 7-1, attached at the end of this Chapter) have been updated to reflect current development patterns. The acreages are reflected in the figure below. The development has followed existing planning and zoning requirements, which were based on the 2007 comprehensive plan. Areas that were annexed in that time period have been assigned a zoning classification based on their land use. Most of those properties are residential in nature and have been reclassified from rural residential to low density residential.

### Intrinsic Suitability:

The existing land use plan is based on evaluation of proposed land uses and the “intrinsic suitability” of the land use in light of the natural systems and existing land use in the planning area boundary. Areas that have been developed for agricultural, rural residential, recreational, or rural commercial have already been altered. These areas have been evaluated for suitable future land use and densities. These systems and recommendations have been discussed in Chapter 5 and are included in the Future Land Use Plan.

Table 7-1

Existing Land Use - 2019

City of Isanti Planning Area

| <b>Land Use Category</b>   | <b><u>Gross Acres</u></b> | <b><u>Percent</u></b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Agriculture                | 4,642.45                  | 49.64%                |
| Rural Residential          | 1,077.74                  | 11.52%                |
| Low Density Residential    | 641.82                    | 6.86%                 |
| Medium Density Residential | 160.70                    | 1.72%                 |
| High Density Residential   | 36.63                     | 0.39%                 |
| CBD                        | 4.26                      | 0.05%                 |
| General Commercial         | 120.15                    | 1.28%                 |
| Industrial                 | 289.92                    | 3.10%                 |
| Public/Semi Public         | 216.03                    | 2.31%                 |
| Golf Course                | 235.90                    | 2.52%                 |
| Open Space                 | 1,444.19                  | 15.44%                |
| Park                       | 168.78                    | 1.81%                 |
| Vacant                     | 313.85                    | 3.36%                 |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>9,352.42</b>           | <b>100%</b>           |

*Source: City of Isanti*

Land Use Designations:

The following designations are used to define land use in the city and land within the planning area boundaries:

**Agricultural** – Current agricultural use encompasses 4,642.45 acres, which is 49.54 percent of the total land use in the planning area boundary. This is the largest land use type and signifies all agricultural land uses, of which the majority are in crop production.

**Rural Residential** – Rural residential use typically identifies single-family homes on large lots. The properties range in size from 1 to 10 acres. The use is typically residential, but some properties have an ancillary home occupation or business use.

**Low Density Residential** – The areas on the updated Existing Land Use Map (Figure X) that identify low density residential signify the next tier of single-family residential uses on lots of 8,500 to 15,000 square feet. This use of developed land is the next highest at 641.82 acres. This land use also signifies single family residential uses on larger lots that have been brought in to the city corporate limits.



**Medium Density Residential** – medium density residential includes single-family homes on traditional “grid” blocks to attached dwellings, such as twin homes or townhomes.

**High Density Residential** – This designation includes areas for multifamily residential structures that range from designated townhouse developments to large multi-unit buildings. Such uses are typically located along major traffic corridors.

**Central Business District** – This area is defined as the traditional downtown commercial district in the city. This area, developed next to the rail corridor, has historic commercial structures and service commercial uses.

**Commercial** – This commercial designation has the largest amount of acreage and broadly defines general commercial uses, which range from mini malls to free standing commercial buildings with a variety of commercial uses. The area is adjacent to the Highway 65 and major transportation corridors in the city. A significant amount of vacant commercial land is available and adjacent to Highway 65 Corridor.

**Industrial** – The City has a large area that has access to the Highway 65 corridor that is used for light industrial uses. The industrial park and land guided for industrial development are 289.92 acres of the total land use area. The area contains both “shovel ready lots” for expansion, as well as large acreages that could be utilized for industrial development.

**Golf Course** – Sandbrook Golf Course is now closed.

**Public/Semi-Public** – This designation includes both lands and community facilities that are owned or operate by the governmental organizations.

**Park/Open Space** – Parks and open spaces are an extremely valuable part of the existing land use in the City. In recent years, the City has added two larger parks, Legacy Park and River Bluff Preserve, as well as land for small neighborhood parks. Currently the City has 168.78 acres in this designation.

#### Existing Growth Patterns:

Overall, the City has continued growth trends since completion of the 2007 comprehensive plan. Although residential development came to a virtual standstill during the great recession; post-recession Isanti has enjoyed substantial residential, commercial and industrial development. The reason that drove earlier growth is still the same today. Homeowners are seeking value in purchase of a new home in Isanti. Residential development within the past 5 years has basically been infill on platted lots and planned areas that were in place prior to the recession. The inventory of open lots has virtually been exhausted. Future growth will come from new subdivisions. This update is timely from the perspective of rechecking past assumptions and updating land use directives, as new land is considered for subdivision and development.



Growth is also predicated on placement of infrastructure. Investments previously made by the City in main line extensions to the east side of Highway 65, and in water and wastewater treatment facilities have allowed the City to achieve the growth that it enjoys today. Capacity remains for additional residential growth to the east, with some potential infill to the south and northwest. While plant and system capacity may be sufficient for residential growth within the time period of this update; planned facility and system updates will be necessary to both meet environmental and licensing requirements, as well as provide capacity for the growing city.

#### Future Land Use and Growth:

The future land use plan (Figure 7-2, attached at the end of this Chapter) is developed from three source documents: existing land use, natural areas and growth areas maps. The land use plan reflects the direction and goals of the City as to future development. It guides citizens and developers with respect to residential, commercial and industrial development. The plan uses land use designations that are common between this and past comprehensive plans. The plan forms the basis for zoning and the implementation of land use and zoning as properties become part of the City. As discussed in the prior comprehensive plan the land use plan does the following: “1) It reflects existing development and generalized land use patterns; 2) It addresses the need to plan for orderly expansion of urban development into areas that are most efficiently served by public infrastructure and utilities; and 3) The plan recognizes and places emphasis on the natural environment.”

#### Basic Planning Provisions:

As recognized and discussed in the past comprehensive plan, implementation of the land use plan is based on the following principles:

- Zone existing and new property in accordance with this plan.
- Ensure that major and collector streets have access to existing and new development in the City and growth areas.
- Guide development to areas that have accessibility to utilities in a phased manner.
- Prepare and plan for orderly expansion beyond the current City boundary into the growth area.
- Connect existing and new residential neighborhoods, parks, and community facilities with pedestrian access and trail systems.
- Work cooperatively with surrounding townships and the county in planning for trails, road and street networks, and other cross jurisdictional systems.
- Create a capital improvements plan to prepare for the development of additional facilities to provide utility capacity and infrastructure to newly developing areas.

## Physical Character of the City:

Listed below are the basic four elements that define the physical character of the City. These were taken from the existing plan and amended for this comprehensive plan update.

### 1. City Development Pattern and Neighborhood Form:

- Continue redevelopment of the downtown and promote connections to adjacent commercial development. Encourage mixed use development in the district.
- Consider more compact development densities as appropriate in new and redeveloped residential areas to spread infrastructure costs.
- New residential areas and neighborhoods should be developed in harmony with natural areas and systems.
- Encourage green residential development and retain connections with natural systems.
- Guide development and density to provide economical extension of city utilities.
- As appropriate, integrate lower density multi-family, small lot single-family, and life cycle housing in residential developments.
- Develop high density multi-family housing along major or collector road systems in conjunction with commercial development.

### 2. Transportation Facilities:

- Develop sidewalk and trail systems to connect newly developed residential areas to existing systems for access to commercial, community facility, parks and regional systems.
- Connect street and pedestrian systems between new residential developments
- Implement a transportation plan that includes signal and road capacity upgrades as the City develops.

### 3. Open Space/Community Facilities:

- Strategically locate city and neighborhood parks and open space
- Ensure connection of natural areas and wildlife corridors.
- Connect all jurisdictional community facilities by sidewalks and trails
- Continue to implement street, sidewalk and trail maintenance plans and upgrades as required.

### 4. Commercial Areas:

- Work to implement transportation systems and access to land in the Highway 65 commercial district to encourage development.
- As needed, create neighborhood commercial areas to serve residential neighborhoods.

- Encourage mixed use and redevelopment in an expanded Downtown District.
- In the downtown district, encourage architectural styles and building construction that honor the history and place that is historic downtown Isanti.

#### Future Land Use Designations:

It is the intent that these future land use designations will guide the use of the land in their respective locations, as well as any policies regarding their future development, zoning or subdivision. These policies will provide the legal basis for development of the land as per this comprehensive plan.

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan identified 14 land use categories for the Future Land Use Plan. These categories will be continued in this comprehensive plan update. An abbreviated description, as well as any additional considerations or discussion is provided as follows.

**Agriculture** – These are existing active agricultural lands and facilities that will likely remain in production beyond the timeframe of this comprehensive plan update. It should be noted that through the county land use plan and regulations, rural residential development will likely continue as some landowners maximize the development potential of their property. The City should work with county and township zoning authorities on joint planning efforts to review and comment on proposed rural residential development.

**Rural Residential** – The rural residential designation identifies large lot subdivisions or existing residential development in the planning area that are outside of city boundaries. The developments are 1 acre or larger properties. Provision for utility service, especially sanitary sewer service should be planned for. In the event that there are multiple properties in a rural subdivision, joint on-site collection and treatment systems should be considered as an interim step until the City system is extended to their area. Clustering of housing should also be encouraged to preserve open space and natural areas.

**Low Density Residential** – This category identifies both existing and potential future low-density residential development within the timeframe of this comprehensive plan update. Low density single family residential land use will take up the majority of new land acreage added to the City. Housing density in this classification is 0-3 units per acre. This is in conformance with the 2007 comprehensive plan and a density of 3 units per acre would allow reasonable retention of natural systems as land is developed for this purpose. Allowances for greater density by planned unit developments should be considered to maximize the amount of land that could be left in natural state. This is also beneficial when the need for storm water retention or flood plain systems (along existing creeks/waterways) is required.

**Medium Density Residential** – Medium family residential remains defined as areas in the City that could accommodate residential units in the densities of 4-8 units per acre, not to exceed 10 units per acre. Structures in this classification consist of twin homes and duplexes, detached and attached townhomes. This classification provides life cycle housing opportunities

in the City, with such housing seen as both first time buyer and empty nest / senior housing options. This use also has potential for planned unit development, with clustering of housing units to preserve natural areas and systems. Placement of this land use should be in conjunction with both transportation and utility systems that have capacity to handle this use. Those factors should be considered in any review of proposed development plan.

**High Density Residential** – Traditionally, this classification was used to define multifamily units with densities of 10-12 units per acre or more. Current zoning has maximum densities at 12 units per acre. Development of these facilities is preferred closer to retail commercial and commercial/service areas. High density residential also needs adequate transportation corridors and utilities. The siting of increased density housing provides a clientele and synergy for development of retail and service commercial. This use contributes to life cycle housing for both young residents who cannot afford a home or empty nesters / seniors who desire to rent versus owning housing. Creativity in design and possibly a mixed-use development can be used to produce housing with site amenities that benefit those living there and the greater community. The planned unit development process is a way to encourage design creativity with these developments.

**General Commercial** – General commercial uses include auto oriented retail commercial and service commercial uses. That includes developments and businesses such as big box retail, food and grocery stores, strip malls, specialty retail, and fuel/convenience stores. Much of this land use is guided next to the Highway 65 corridor and on Heritage Boulevard (near the intersection of both roadways). Predominately oriented for automobile accessibility, the developments and buildings are of such scale and magnitude that design is very important. The east side of Highway 65 has had infrastructure investments made that need to be utilized to maximize commercial development in that area.

Existing and future residential development on the peripheral areas of this district will assist in gaining commercial development. Since the last comprehensive plan, there has been additional development of a medical clinic, senior care facility and physical therapy facility in the district. Additional uses of this nature may be added as the areas develop.

**Central Business District** – This category represents both the historic downtown areas and adjacent areas that include a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses. The City has recognized the housing and industrial areas and their interrelationship through implementation of zoning sub districts. The industrial area is part of historic Isanti and was sited along the BNSF railroad to utilize that transportation corridor. As discussed earlier, commercial uses have spread east from the historic downtown, along and between Heritage Boulevard and Main Street. This essentially creates a larger commercial corridor in the area from both a land use and economic basis.

**Neighborhood Commercial** – This designation anticipates a growing city that will need small scale commercial districts to serve residential areas that develop outside of the central part of the City. One example of such a commercial node is convenience station / mall located on the northeast corner of Whiskey Road NW and Heritage Boulevard intersection. Uses include

fuel/convenience stores, small groceries, restaurants and specialty retail. The design and scale of size of the buildings are typically single level to match development in the area. Areas for this designation will be primarily located in the eastern residential development areas of the City, relating to future road systems.

**Mixed Use** – Mixed use classification in its essence is a combination of both business and residential uses. Commercial uses could be free-standing, but most often include upper story residential units. New housing units can range from small one level residential, to townhouses and apartments. Density for housing can range from 10 units per acre and above. Often these are planned developments with unique architectural and design features. Site design typically incorporates both pedestrian and vehicular transportation systems and on-site amenities to create a niche neighborhood. Because of their density and need for commercial access, these areas are often located next to major transportation corridors. Currently there is not a zoning classification for this use.

**Recreational Commercial**- This district represents commercial uses that are based on recreation facilities and services. This includes uses such as hotel/water parks, athletic clubs, fitness gyms, restaurants /recreation facilities, private arenas and golf courses. Natural features should be included in any outdoor recreational facility.

**Industrial** – The City has worked to develop industrial areas for light industrial uses that include: fabrication and machining, manufacturing, automotive, warehousing and related industrial uses. Office and some ancillary commercial use is also integrated with industrial uses. Sites have been prepared for industrial development and expansion areas are designated on the plan. The City has an area designated for a potential rail industrial park. This project is of regional significance and efforts to develop it should be further explored.

**Parks and Open Space** – These are land areas that contain both existing and potential park areas. These include both local, county and state facilities. They contain both active and passive recreational uses. Passive uses often include natural areas and systems, both to retain and possibly enhance them.

New residential areas should also include neighborhood parks. Larger city parks should be sited depending on area recreational needs and plans. The City has and should continue to work with recreational groups and educational facilities on recreational facilities and sites, and should continue to explore opportunities and acquisition of natural areas to enhance systems and wildlife corridors.

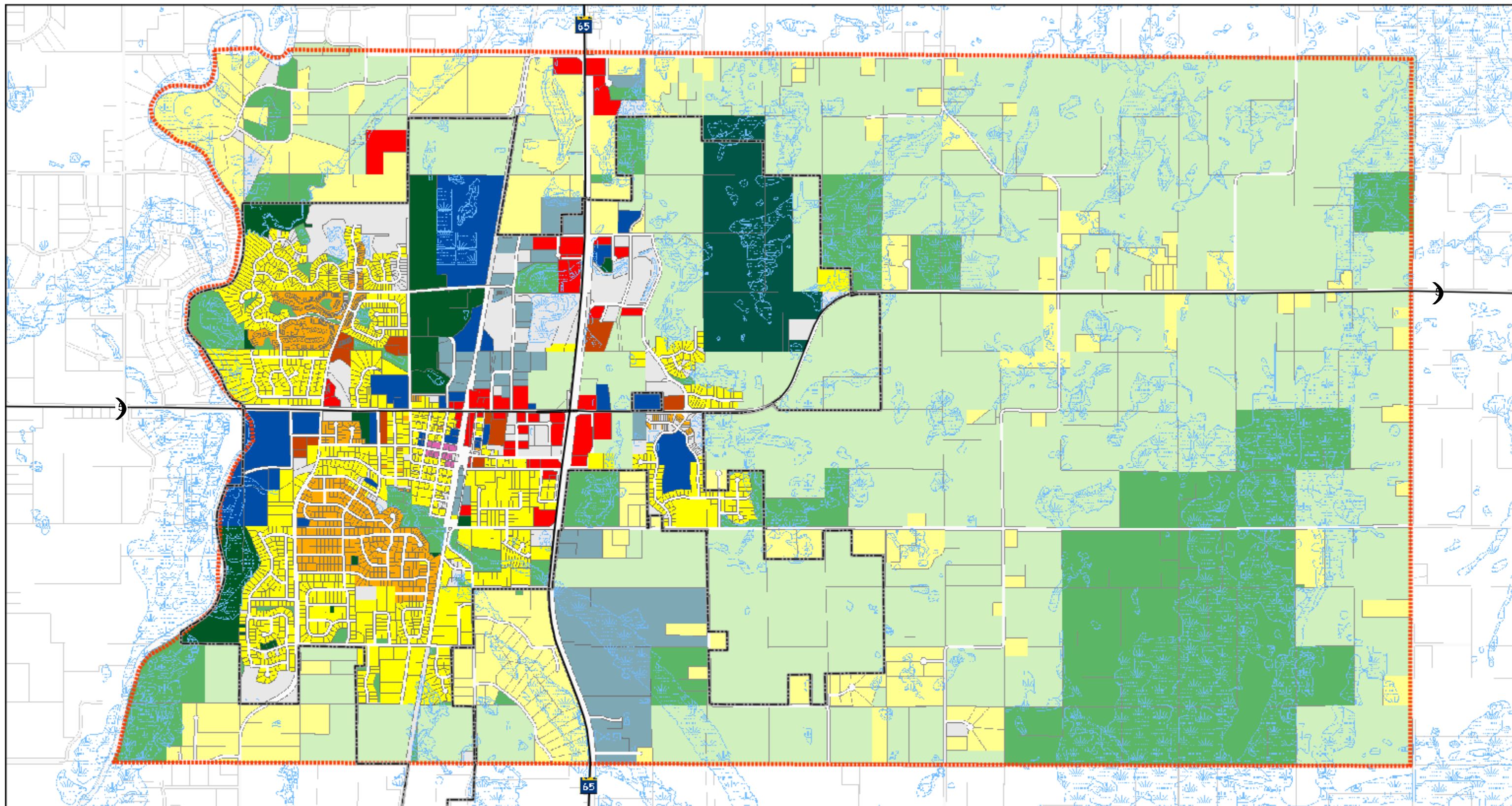
**Public/Semi Public** – This category identifies areas that include public and semi-public buildings and facilities. This includes: city buildings, public and private schools, utility buildings and facilities, other governmental buildings or sites. This use also includes: hospitals, cemeteries, and religious institutions.

The 2008 plan included possible locations for a future high school. These locations are continued on the proposed land use map. The relevance of this planning should be reviewed with the school district.

Land Use and Growth Goals/Strategies:

The following goals and strategies support land use and growth, and are in addition to the ones listed in Chapter 1 of this comprehensive plan update.

- Consider goals listed in Basic Planning Provisions in reviewing development and redevelopment projects.
- Look for mixed use opportunities for land adjacent to major general commercial corridors and expanded central business district that could include high density multi-family residential.



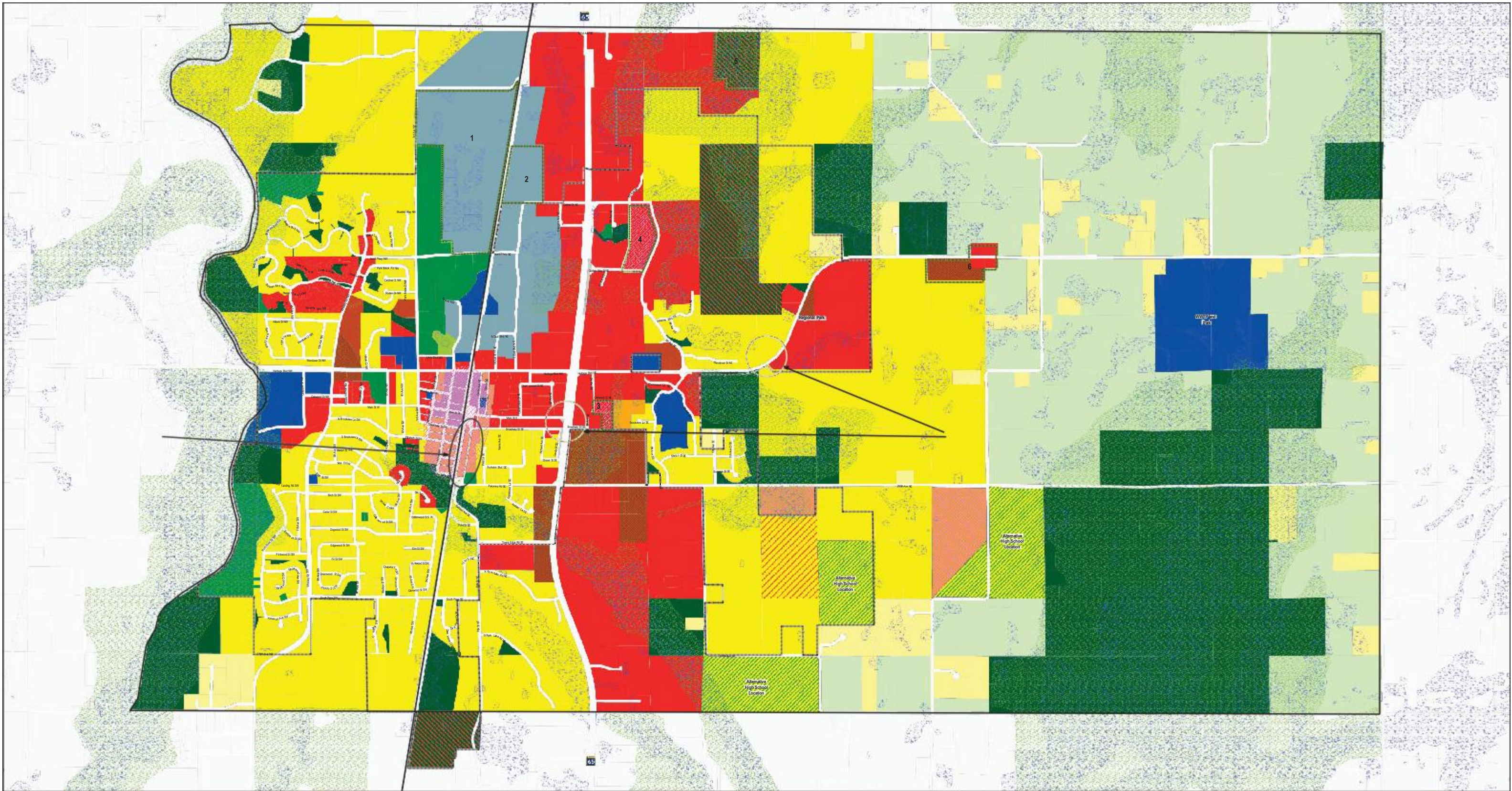
**Existing Land Use**  
City of Isanti  
Figure 7-1

Community Development Department  
Updated: 3/11/2020

1:25,500

|  |                         |  |                            |  |                    |  |             |
|--|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------|--|-------------|
|  | Planning Boundary       |  | Medium Density Residential |  | Industrial         |  | Open Space  |
|  | City of Isanti          |  | High Density Residential   |  | Public/Semi-Public |  | Agriculture |
|  | Rural Residential       |  | CBD Business               |  | Golf Course        |  | Vacant      |
|  | Low Density Residential |  | General Commercial         |  | Park               |  | NWI Wetland |







## Chapter 8: Transportation

### Introduction:

As recognized in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, adequate transportation systems in the City are critical to the vitality and growth of the City. Isanti has two major road corridors that go through it, US Highway 65, which bisects the City with a north/south four lane corridor that provides access to the metropolitan area, and County Highway 5 / Heritage Boulevard, which provides an east/west connection through Isanti County. Isanti County Highway 5, through connecting inter-county roads, has access to US Interstate 35 to the east and US Highway 169 to the west. How City and County arterial road systems interrelate to the major roads will promote or hinder commercial, industrial and residential development and growth. Listed below are key transportation goals that are incorporated into this update.

### Transportation Goals and Strategies:

- Provide a safe, efficient and adequate transportation system that services and balances both access and mobility needs.
- Create and provide excellent north-south and east-west connections and movements throughout Isanti.
- Maintain a transportation system that is coordinated and cost effective.
- Coordinate transportation with land use planning and environmental protection.
- Establish a strong multi-modal transportation plan to meet the community's current and future needs.

### Transportation Elements:

Transportation elements are placed in categories, each of which is an important part of the transportation system. These categories are expanded on as follows.

### Roadway Jurisdiction

Transportation right-of-ways and their roadways, non-motorized and pedestrian facilities have different governing jurisdictions, ranging from the State Department of Transportation, Isanti County, Townships and the City. The City has both a municipal road system and a municipal state aid road system. With state aid system routes, the City receives both money for improvement and on-going maintenance. As the City's

population increases, the City will be able to designate more road miles to the state aid system. Figure 8-1 shows the State Aid Routes and Jurisdiction of County and State road systems at the time of this update.

### Roadway Classification

Roadways are classified based on access, capacity and function. Local road classifications range from a Major Arterial (US Highway 65) to minor collector roads (South Passage SE). The higher the classification, the greater the vehicle capacity of the road. Access points are more limited and road speeds are higher. Classifications can change over time due to increased usage of the roads, changes in road design and access. MSA routes in the City are primarily minor collector routes. At this time the following local roads are classified as follows:

| <u>Road</u>                 | <u>Classification</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • US Highway 65             | Major Arterial        |
| • Heritage Boulevard/CSAH 5 | Major Collector       |
| • CSAH 23/Whiskey Road SW   | Minor Collector       |
| • CSAH 55                   | Minor Collector       |

### Local MSA Routes

- South Passage SE/SW
- 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW
- Railroad Avenue SE
- Palomino Road SE (Railroad Avenue SE to US Highway 65)
- Towns Edge Rd SE (Railroad Avenue SE to US Highway 65)
- S. Brookview Lane SW (CSAH 23 to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW)
- Fifth Avenue SW (S. Brookview Lane SW to N. Brookview Lane SW)
- N. Brookview Lane SW (5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW/NW (N. Brookview Lane SW to Heritage Boulevard NW)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW (N. Brookview Lane SW to Main Street W)
- Main Street W/E (4<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW to US Highway 65)
- Credit Union Drive NE (Main Street E to Heritage Boulevard NE)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NW (Heritage Boulevard NE to Isanti Parkway NW)
- Isanti Parkway NE (3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NW to East Dual Boulevard NE)
- East Dual Boulevard
- Cajima Street NE (East Dual Boulevard to US Highway 65)

## Local Road Systems

Beyond the original townsite plan, with its surveyed grid iron blocks with street and alley systems, development of streets has taken place as part of the planning and subdivision process, with many of the roads part of developer installed public improvements in a specific subdivision. The City has worked diligently to maintain all local roads in its jurisdiction, including drainage and hard surfacing to improve existing neighborhoods as needed. The City implemented a long-range plan to address current and future improvements and maintenance. The City will need to monitor legislative changes that may either enhance or limit the ability of the City to finance these programs.

## Road Use and Access

The City, in conjunction with Isanti County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation, periodically monitors vehicle traffic usage of collector, arterial and local streets. This is reflected in the mapping of Average Daily Trips (ADTs). This is reflected in Figure 8-2, Current Traffic Volumes. This data is collected over time and is used in planning improvements in road systems. As an example, certain traffic thresholds may cause implementation of traffic signals or re-configuration of traffic lanes to flow more volume in a specific right of way. Access to those roads also becomes part of the equation, as more access points on a specific road may lower speeds and the ability of the roadway to carry increasing traffic loads. With both collector and arterial road systems, direct access from an adjacent property is discouraged or limited, with local roads taking on the function of gathering destination specific traffic and bringing that traffic to specific intersections, some of which may be signalized. This concept works in residential and commercial areas as well. Often frontage or backage roads are constructed in general commercial areas to serve this purpose. Roadway design for both current and future traffic use, is important as transportation systems evolve over time. As a matter of policy for future road systems, the City may want to consider development of a Roadway Design and Access Policy.

## Functional Transportation Plan:

The City has developed a long-range functional transportation plan for vehicular traffic that has been reviewed as a part of this comprehensive plan update. This is reflected in Figure 8-3 Multi-Modal & Transportation Corridor Enhancements (placed at end of this Chapter). These improvements include roadways and collectors that may be developed beyond the scope of this planning effort (post 2030). The Plan incorporates the following elements:

- Realignment of CR 45 - straightening of segments to create a smoother corridor. North-south route between 277<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and CSAH 5 – this corridor would extend north to an east-west route and ultimately connect with the extension of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

- E Dual Boulevard Extension – this corridor would connect to the railroad crossing at 299<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- East-west connection between north-south corridor, east of golf course and extending to CR 45.
- East-west connection between CR 23 and Polk Street.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE & Wendover NE Extensions – East Commercial corridor connection.
- West Frontage Road Improvements – From Heritage Boulevard north to Golden Way and Enterprise Avenue NE.
- Intersection Improvements at: Heritage Boulevard NE and East Dual Boulevard NE, Cajima Street NE and US Highway 65, Eighth Avenue NE and Heritage Boulevard NE, and Palomino Rd SE and US Highway 65

#### Multi Modal Transportation Systems:

##### Local Sidewalk and Trail Systems

The Parks, Open Space, Trails and Natural Areas Plan contains the location of existing trails and sidewalks in the City. The City has had sidewalks and trail extensions installed as commercial and residential development occurred in the City. The City has also had some sidewalk systems installed as MSA, local and neighborhood roads have been reconstructed. Typically, sidewalks in the City are on the north and west sides of roadways. As we move to the future, the City should have sidewalk or trail systems installed along all MSA, current and future roads that will be classified as minor collectors. In cases where sufficient right of way does not exist for a separated trail, shoulder trails, possibly separated by curbing or part of a “complete street” concept could be implemented. Access improvements across major roadways should also be considered in the future.

The major goal is to have a contiguous system of sidewalks and trails that connect commercial and residential areas, educational facilities and parks/natural areas. Off road trails could be used to connect natural areas (river, brooks, wetland/woods) and passive parks. In some cases, these will be unpaved trails with seasonal access and use.

##### Regional Trail Systems

Connections should also be made and enhanced to County, regional and state trail systems. This includes future extension of the Cambridge Isanti Bike/Walk Trail north to Braham. The City also has access to the state Sunrise Trail in the City of North Branch, using CSAH 5. This access needs some improvements that hopefully will be made in the future. An alternate trailway along CSAH 9 could also provide access to the Sunrise Trail. The County has completed a future trail plan with connections in and through Isanti. It is recommended that the City coordinate its trail efforts with the County and surrounding communities.

### Highway 65 Crossing

State Highway 65 bisects the City, creating limited crossing opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists. A signalized controlled access is available at the Heritage Avenue intersection. That was constructed to provide a safe route across this roadway. Additionally, bicycle access improvements across the Cajima Street intersection with Highway 65 are incorporated in a current intersection improvement project. In the past the City had pursued a separated walkway over the highway near the Main Street access, but funding constraints and cost of construction for connecting trails on the east side of the highway ended consideration of that project. It is not anticipated that a separated crossing is in the timeframe of this comprehensive plan update. However, it should be noted that the need for such a crossing will increase with future residential development on the east side of the City.

### Other Multi-Modal Systems

The City has a local bus company, Heartland Express, that provides destination specific bus transportation for local residents. At the writing of this update, metro bus transportation is provided up to the City of Blaine, with a park and ride location. At this time, there is not a designation public park and ride lot in Isanti for those desiring to share rides to metro destinations. It has been discussed that such a lot could be developed in downtown Isanti. Placement of such a lot could coincide with future planning for a commuter rail stop in the City. Planning for the commuter rail in the timeframe of this comprehensive plan update has the rail stop in the City of Cambridge.

### Cross Jurisdictional Transportation Planning:

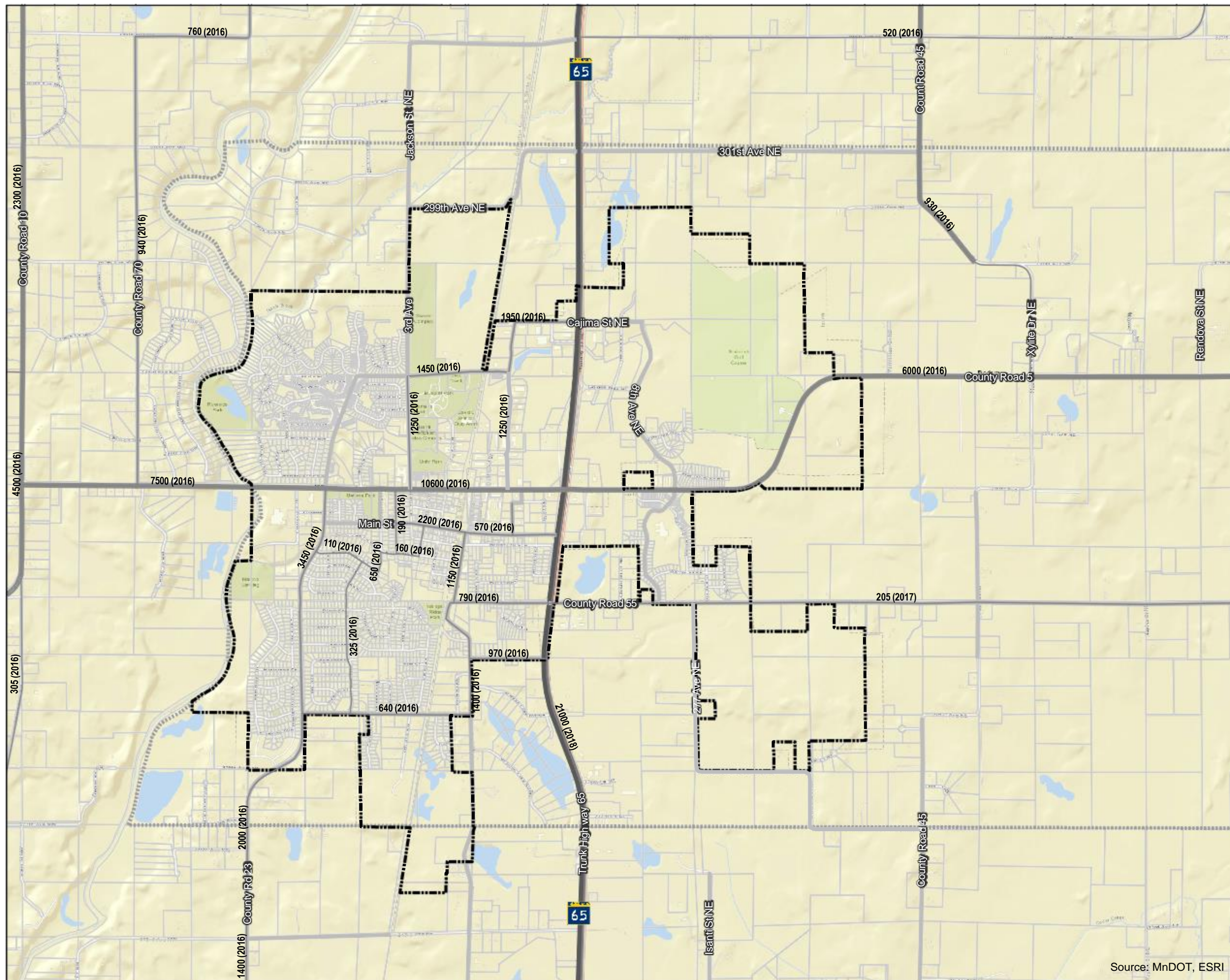
The 2008 City Comprehensive Plan took into account transportation plans prepared by the Isanti County Highway Department, as well as consultation with MnDOT. The City was actively involved in County planning efforts, as well as other multi-modal planning transportation efforts. It is recommended that those collaborative efforts be continued. It is recommended that the City consider membership in the Highway 65 Corridor Coalition. This group advocates for highway improvements from Anoka to Kanabec County.







**Figure 8-2**  
**CITY OF ISANTI**  
**EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES**

ISANTI COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
FEBRUARY 2020

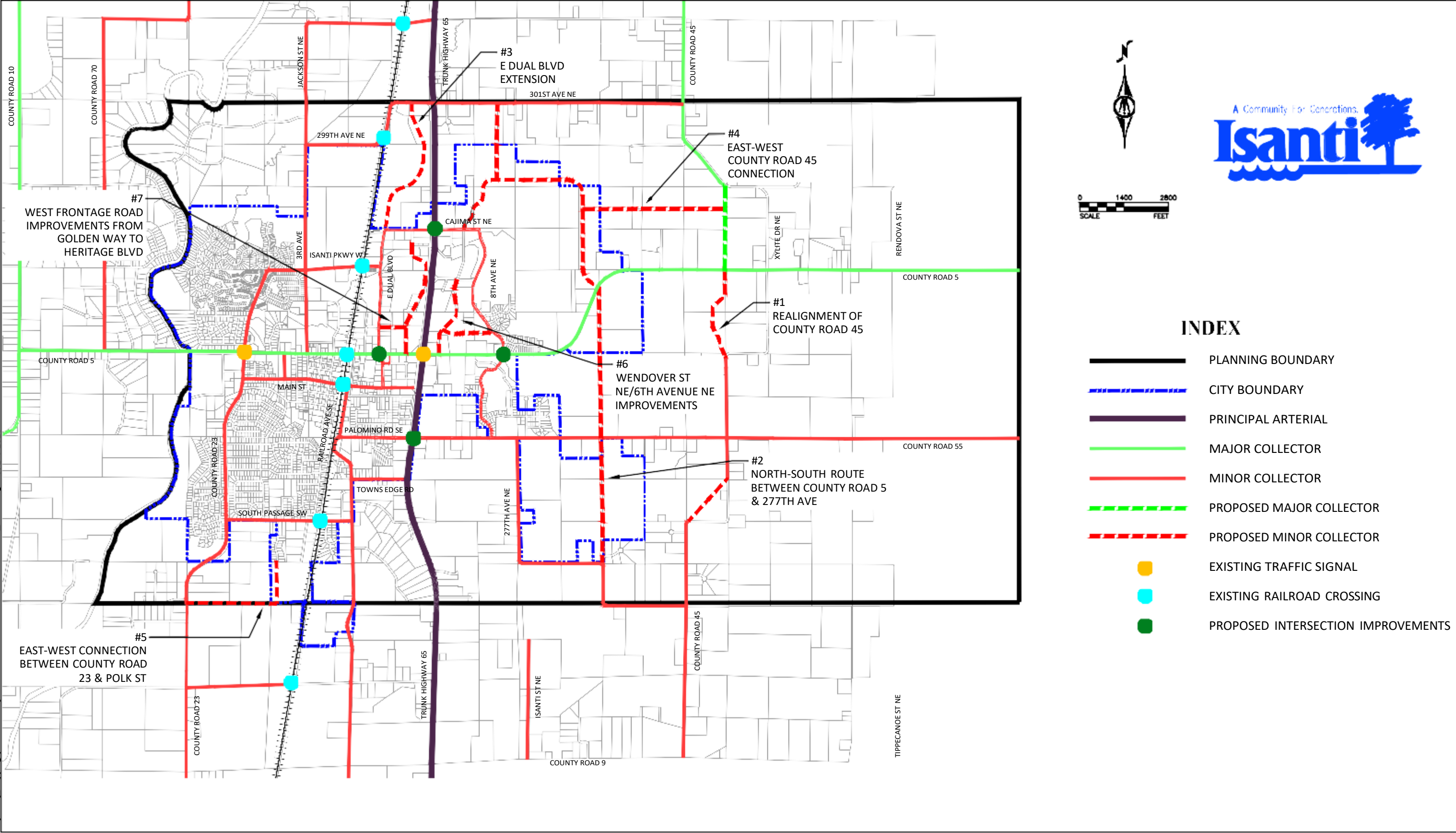
- Planning Boundary
- Corporate Boundary
- Official AADT
- Trunk Highway
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

Prepared By:  
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Questions regarding this map should be directed to the  
Community Development Director at 763-444-5512.

Source: MnDOT, ESRI







# **2020 COMPREHENSIVE SANITARY SEWER PLAN UPDATE**

## **CITY OF ISANTI, MINNESOTA**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose for this report is to update the City's 2007 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan based on current population and land use projections. The 2007 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan included a plan for meeting the City's infrastructure needs based on development projected within the City's Future Municipal Services Boundary as depicted in the attached figure.

City staff has identified development which has occurred since the 2007 study and has provided projections for development which is likely to occur in the Future Municipal Services Boundary. This report evaluates the impact of the recent and projected development on the proposed sanitary sewer infrastructure implementation.

The intent of this update is to complete the following:

- Identify improvements completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan,
- Identify new improvements that were not included in the previous plan, and
- Estimate project costs associated with the identified improvements.

### **B. SUMMARY OF INFRASTRUCTURE REVISIONS FROM THE 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Section III of the 2007 report describes the existing trunk infrastructure that was in place at that time, and the identified deficiencies. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and have the following updates:

#### **III. Existing Sanitary Sewer System**

##### **A. Gravity Collection System**

- No clay pipes remain in the system that are used as carrier pipes.
  - The last vitrified clay sanitary sewer pipe was lined in 2011.
- The sanitary sewer crossing the BNSF railroad at Broadway has been replaced with a larger pipe.

##### **B. Lift Stations and Force Main**

- The Main Lift Station was replaced in 2016 with 40 HP pumps and a 1,000 gpm pump capacity at 84' of head.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (Unity) Lift Station was replaced in 2014 with 5 HP pumps and a 300 gpm pump capacity at 35' of head.
- A new lift station was added in 2014 at the public works facility to service the public works site and the Isanti Indoor Arena. This lift station has two 5 HP pumps with a 125 gpm pump capacity at 49' of head.

## C. Treatment and Disposal

- The average monthly influent flow recorded over the past year is approximately 345,000 gpd.
- At current pumping rates, the City is at about 67% of its average wet weather monthly flow capacity.
- Isanti is currently averaging approximately 70 gallons per person per day. This is below the industry standard assumption of 100 gppd.

Section VI of the 2007 report describes the recommendations for trunk infrastructure improvements. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and evaluated the system to meet future needs and have the following updates:

## VI. Recommendations for Sanitary Sewer System

### A. Gravity Pipe and Appurtenances

#### 1. Upgrades to Existing System

- 3 locations were identified in 2007 as being in need of upgrades as development continues. One has been completed, and the other two are development dependant.
  1. The existing 8” main crossing BNSF railroad at Broadway Ave should be upgraded to 12”. **(COMPLETE)**
  2. The existing 18” main from CSAH 23 to the Main Lift Station along Spirit Brook should be upgraded to 24” as the City of Isanti continues to develop west of TH 65. This main receives wastewater flow from the majority of land in the City of Isanti on the west side of TH 65. It will eventually also receive wastewater flow from the 100 acre area south of CR 55 and east of TH 65. The main has adequate capacity to handle an additional 380 acres of development in its service area. **(Not Complete)**
  3. The existing 12” main on CSAH 23 from North Brookview to Birch Street SW should be upgraded to 18” as the City of Isanti develops to the southwest. The existing main has capacity to handle an additional 190 acres of development in its service area. This main flows into the main identified above. **(Not Complete)**
- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan also identified the need to extend sanitary sewer into two regions of the City that do not currently have gravity sanitary sewer service:
  1. An 8” sanitary sewer main could be constructed along Heritage Boulevard between the Elementary School and Hillock Court.
  2. An 8” sanitary sewer main could be constructed in Tyler Street to provide service to these residents. This would connect to the sanitary sewer main in Deerhaven Drive.

An updated Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Map showing the location of the remaining trunk priority projects is included in the appendix.

## **B. Lift Stations and Force Main**

- The Main Lift Station was replaced in 2016 with 40 HP pumps and a 1,000 gpm pump capacity at 84' of head.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (Unity) Lift Station was replaced in 2014 with 5 HP pumps and a 300 gpm pump capacity at 35' of head.
- A new lift station was added in 2014 at the public works facility to service the public works site and the Isanti Indoor Arena. This lift station has two 5 HP pumps with a 125 gpm pump capacity at 49' of head.
- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan identified the need to extend sanitary sewer into two regions of the City that would require additional lift stations:
  1. A lift station would be needed to provide service to the residents on Pond Street and Towns Edge Road. This lift station could also provide service to new development in this region. The forcemain would run along Railroad Avenue to the gravity main at Palomino Road.
  2. A lift station would be needed to provide service to the residents on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of South Passage. This lift station could also provide service to new development to the south. The forcemain would run up 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the gravity main in South Passage.

An updated Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Map showing the location of the priority projects is included in the appendix.

## **C. Treatment and Disposal**

### **Wastewater Treatment Facility**

- At current pumping rates, the City is at about 67% of its average wet weather monthly flow capacity. Once the City reaches 85% of its flow capacity it will be required to establish a plan for future treatment. It takes approximately 5-6 years to complete the process from initial plan to a new online WWTF.
- The further in advance that this planning is completed the more funding cycle opportunities will be available to apply for funding.
- Using 100 gppd for future flows, the existing WWTF has a population capacity of approximately 8,000-9,000 excluding any future commercial or industrial businesses that may come to the City.
- Given the current ranges in population projections discussed in other sections, the City is expected to reach the capacity limit in 10-15 years. Should the concept Railroad Industrial Park develop, this timeline would be greatly accelerated.
- It is anticipated that once the City reaches the currently permitted maximum capacity of 0.657 MGD the MPCA will update effluent requirements to be more restrictive to the point where a mechanical plant will be the most cost-effective solution to meet these requirements.

### **Clarifier Rehabilitation**

- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan has the existing clarifier scheduled for rehabilitation in 2025. This follows the 2007 Comp Plan recommendation as well.

### **E. Summary of Sanitary Sewer System Improvements**

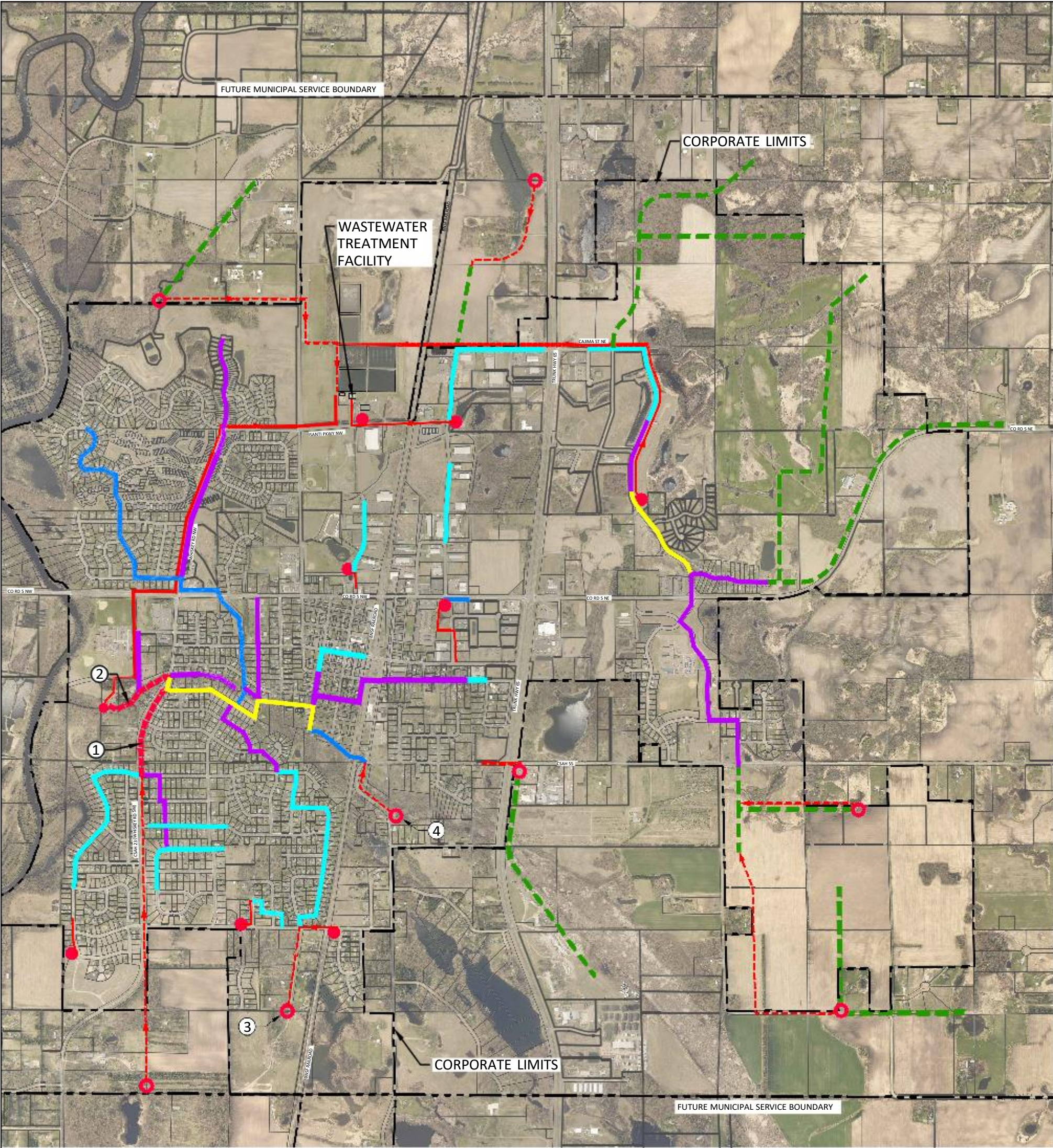
- The existing system is currently functioning well for the City. There is minimal I&I, and all clay pipes have either been replaced or lined.
- Two lift station have been replaced and one new lift station added since 2007.
- It is estimated that in the next 10-15 years the City will be required to upgrade to a full mechanical wastewater treatment facility. The initial planning stages will need to begin 5-6 years in advance of this. The further in advance that this planning is completed the more funding cycle opportunities will be available to apply for funding.

Table 9 below shows the updated priority project list and estimated project costs in 2020 dollars.

**Table 9 – Sanitary Sewer System Improvement Projects Inside the Municipal Services Boundary**

| <b>Sewer Main Projects</b>                                       | <b>Trigger</b>                                                                                | <b>Estimated Cost</b> | <b>Planning Horizon</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Upgrade from CSAH 23 to the Main Lift Station along Spirit Brook | Development of 380 additional acres in area generally west of TH 65                           | \$350,000             | 10+ Years               |
| Upgrade on CSAH 23 from North Brookview to Birch Street SW       | Development of 190 additional acres in area generally west of TH 65 and south of Spirit Brook | \$450,000             | 10+ Years               |
| Heritage Boulevard Sanitary Sewer Main                           | When service to residents in this area is needed.                                             | \$126,000             | 2023                    |
| Tyler Street Sanitary Sewer Main                                 | Tyler Street residents were annexed into the City in 2019.                                    | \$275,000             | 2027                    |
| <b>Lift Station Projects</b>                                     |                                                                                               |                       |                         |
| Upgrade 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave LS – Add Pump                        | When average monthly LS flows exceed 250,000 gpd                                              | \$25,000              | 10+ Years               |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Lift Station/Forcemain                    | 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue residents were annexed into the City in 2019.                          | \$435,000             | 2028                    |
| Towns Edge Road Lift Station/Forcemain                           | When service to Pond Street and Towns Edge Road is needed.                                    | \$650,000             | 10+ Years               |
| <b>Wastewater Treatment</b>                                      |                                                                                               |                       |                         |
| Clarifier Rehabilitation                                         | Age, Condition, or 70% of permitted mass loading                                              | \$615,000             | 2025                    |
| Mechanical Wastewater Treatment Facility                         | When average wet weather flow exceeds 0.657 MGD                                               | \$14,000,000          | 10+ Years               |

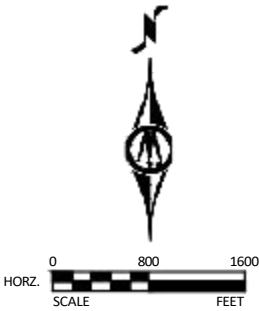
















CITY OF ISANTI  
COMPREHENSIVE  
SANITARY SEWER MAP

PRIORITY PROJECTS

1. EXISTING 12" MAIN TO BE UPGRADED TO 18" AS CITY DEVELOPS TO SOUTHWEST.
2. EXISTING 18" MAIN TO BE UPGRADED TO 24" AS CAPACITY IS REACHED WHEN CITY DEVELOPS TO THE SOUTHEAST.
3. CONSTRUCT LIFT STATION & FORCEMAIN ON 4TH AVENUE SOUTH OF SOUTH PASSAGE TO SERVE THE RECENTLY ANNEXED PARCELS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO THE SOUTH.
4. CONSTRUCT A REGIONAL LIFT STATION & FORCEMAIN ON RAILROAD AVENUE AT POND STREET TO PROVIDE SERVICE TO EXISTING RESIDENTS ON POND STREET AND TOWNS EDGE ROAD FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THIS REGION.



LEGEND

- |                             |                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EXISTING 10" SANITARY SEWER |  |
| EXISTING 12" SANITARY SEWER |  |
| EXISTING 15" SANITARY SEWER |  |
| EXISTING 16" SANITARY SEWER |  |
| EXISTING 18" SANITARY SEWER |  |
| EXISTING FORCEMAIN          |  |
| FUTURE TRUNK SANITARY SEWER |  |
| FUTURE TRUNK UPGRADE        |  |
| FUTURE FORCEMAIN            |  |
| EXISTING LIFT STATION       |  |
| FUTURE LIFT STATION         |  |
| CORPORATE LIMITS LINE       |  |



# **2020 COMPREHENSIVE STORM SEWER SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE**

## **CITY OF ISANTI, MINNESOTA**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose for this report is to update the City's 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer System Plan based on recent improvements and current population projections.

This report evaluates the impact of the recent and projected development on the proposed storm sewer system infrastructure and incorporates the studies, permits, and procedures that have been adopted since the 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer System Plan:

- In 2011, the Anoka Conservation District created a report titled City of Isanti Stormwater Retrofit Assessment evaluating water quality in the City of Isanti what improvements could be made to the system. This report has been used to obtain Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) grant money.
- In 2013, in order to comply with all of the above referenced new ordinances, procedures, and inspections the City adopted a Storm Water Utility Fee to distribute the costs of maintaining the City storm water management system proportionately across all property owners independent of tax status.
- On September 20, 2016 the City of Isanti became a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community and began the implementation process to comply with the MS4 General Stormwater Permit. The City has since updated City Ordinances, established Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control Practices, Began Construction Enforcement, adopted Enforcement Response Procedures, and Illicit Discharge Procedures.
- In 2016, the City also completed a Storm Sewer Apron and Pond Inventory Report where it identified maintenance needs throughout the storm sewer system.
- In 2016, A rain garden incentive program has also been adopted by the City.
- In 2018, a 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan was adopted that identified proposed improvement projects scheduled through 2028.

All of these procedures and ordinances shall be incorporated into the City of Isanti 2020 Comprehensive Plan and supersede the findings of the 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer System Plan.

The intent of this update is to complete the following:

- Identify improvements completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan,
- Identify new improvements that were not included in the previous plan, and
- Estimate project costs associated with the identified improvements.

### **B. SUMMARY OF INFRASTRUCTURE REVISIONS FROM THE 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Section IV of the 2007 report describes the existing infrastructure that was in place at that time, and the identified deficiencies. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and have the following updates:

## **IV. Existing Storm Sewer System**

### **A. Collection System**

Improvements that have been completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan include:

- An annual storm system maintenance program was put into place in 2016. 3 of 5 years have been completed, restoring storm aprons, brushing out and dredging ponds to restore the system to the original designed function.
- Weekly inspections are performed by the City on all construction sites through out the City to verify storm water runoff is meeting NPDES requirements.

### **B. Detention, Treatment and Disposal**

Improvements that have been completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan include:

- New construction is required to design infiltration basins that reduce or maintain the site runoff from the predevelopment condition.
- A storm water pond was constructed at the intersection of Palomino Road and Railroad Avenue.
  1. This pond was constructed to improve water quality to the Rum River.

Section VII of the 2007 report describes the recommendations for infrastructure improvements. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and evaluated the system to meet future needs and have the following updates:

## **VII. Recommendations for Storm Sewer System**

### **A. Collection System**

The 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer System Plan identified two proposed projects:

1. Drainage issues on Elizabeth Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. – **(COMPLETED in 2008)**
2. As construction projects are completed in areas for which storm sewer is inadequate, upgrades to the existing storm sewer should be completed. These will be identified on a case-by-case basis, primarily in areas that are not currently served by storm sewer. – **(Not Complete)**

The City has identified another drainage issue in the ditch on the east side of Whiskey Road from Oakwood Street to Nina Street. This may require re grading the ditch bottom along Whiskey Road and replacing some section of the existing storm sewer system.

### **B. Treatment and Disposal**

The 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer Priority Areas map identifies areas of the City with inadequate storm water treatment or fully land locked basins. As future construction projects occur in these areas, infiltration basins, rain gardens, and storm pipe network improvements will be evaluated.

The 2011 Storm Water Retrofit Assessment identified 8 recommended improvements in different catchment areas.

- The primary recommendation is to add rain gardens in the existing fully developed areas that have inadequate storm water treatment. These rain gardens will be evaluated with

each future reconstruction project that may occur. The City rain garden incentive program is also supporting the addition of these rain gardens.

- The Storm Water Retrofit Assessment also identifies locations for ponding or filtration modifications.
  1. Federated Co-Op Basin – Add a vertical riser to outlet and double basin area.
  2. VFW – Construct a rain garden with a sand filter.
- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan includes a 5-year pond maintenance program that is designed to restore the existing ponds and storm aprons to their designed function.

An updated Comprehensive Storm Sewer Priority Area Map showing the location of the priority projects is included in the appendix.

### C. Summary of Storm Sewer System Improvements

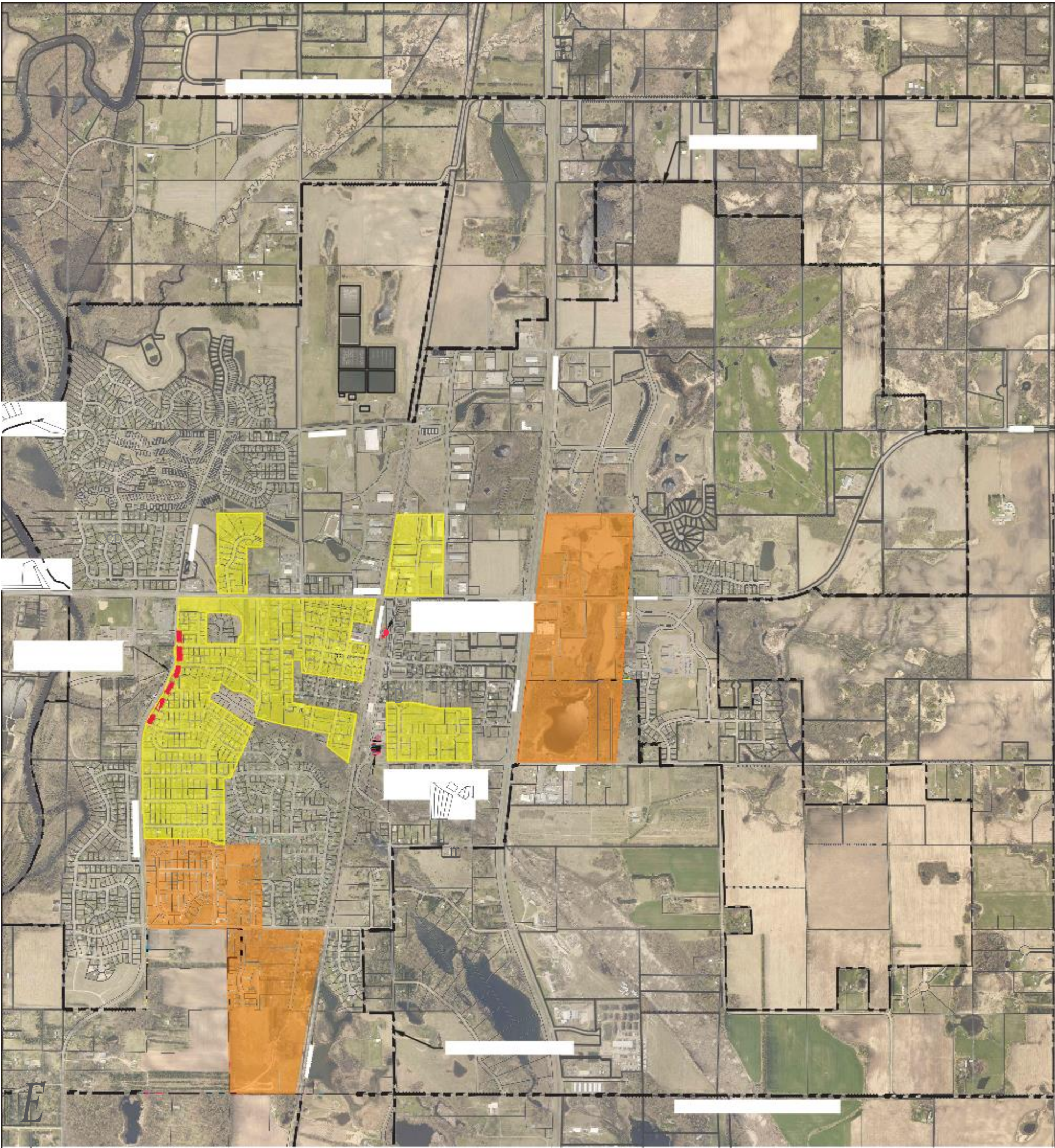
- Many studies, report, assessments, procedures, and permit requirements have been adopted since the 2007 Comprehensive Storm Sewer System Plan.
- The City has many requirements to meet now that it is an MS4 community.

Table 10 below shows the updated priority project list and estimated project costs in 2020 dollars.

**Table 10 – Storm Sewer System Improvement Projects**

| Project                         | Trigger                      | Estimated Cost | Planning Horizon |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| <b>Storm Water Projects</b>     |                              |                |                  |
| Storm Pond Maintenance          | Regular Pond Maintenance     | \$220,000      | 2020-2021        |
| Whiskey Road Ditch Improvements | Flooding, Restricted Flow    | \$50,000       | Current          |
| Rain Gardens                    | Rate Control, Volume Control | Site Specific  | Current          |
| Federated Co-Op Basin           | Rate Control, Volume Control | \$30,000       | 1-5 years        |
| VFW Sand Filter                 | Rate Control, Volume Control | \$60,000       | 1-5 years        |





CITY OF ISANTI  
COMPREHENSIVE  
STORM SEWER AREAS





# 2020 COMPREHENSIVE WATER SYSTEM PLAN UPDATE

## CITY OF ISANTI, MINNESOTA

### A. PURPOSE

The purpose for this report is to update the City's 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan based on recent improvements and current population projections. The 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan included a plan for meeting the City's infrastructure needs based on development projected within the City's Future Municipal Services Boundary as depicted in the attached figure.

This report evaluates the impact of the recent and projected development on the proposed water system infrastructure implementation.

In October 2018 City Staff created a Water Supply Plan and submitted it to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to comply with Water Appropriations Permit 1976-3190 and Minnesota Statute 103G.291. Once approved by the DNR, this Water Supply Plan shall be incorporated into the City of Isanti 2020 Comprehensive Plan and supersede the findings of the 2007 Comprehensive Water Plan.

The intent of this update is to complete the following:

- Identify improvements completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan,
- Identify new improvements that were not included in the previous plan, and
- Estimate project costs associated with the identified improvements.

### B. SUMMARY OF INFRASTRUCTURE REVISIONS FROM THE 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Section II of the 2007 report describes the existing trunk infrastructure that was in place at that time, and the identified deficiencies. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and have the following updates:

#### II. Existing Water System

##### A. Water Supply

Improvements that have been completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan include:

- A new Water Treatment Facility was constructed in 2008. This significantly changed the water treatment needs of the City from the 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan.
  1. The 2018 Water Supply Plan shall replace all existing conditions noted in the 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan.
    - The 2018 Water Supply Plan document includes updated flow data, treatment and storage capacities, water source limits, and monitoring results.
- Well #3 and the well blending project was completed in 2007.
- An Emergency Response plan has been adopted since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.
- A Wellhead Protection Plan was adopted in 2014. This identified the Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA).

- A 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was adopted and since been updated into the 2020 CIP.

## **B. Distribution System**

Improvements that have been completed since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan include:

- A 10" watermain replaced the existing 6" main in Isanti Parkway from the WWTF to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue prior to 2009.
- A 10" trunk watermain loop was installed along Railroad Avenue from Palomino Road to South Passage in 2013.
- An 8" watermain loop was constructed in 2016 from the Isanti Middle School across Heritage Boulevard to Wendover Street.
- The 6" watermain in Palomino Road was replaced with a 10" watermain in 2017.
- An 8" watermain loop was constructed in 2018 from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE to Main Street E.
- An 8" watermain loop was constructed in 2018 along Richard Avenue from Main Street to Broadway Street.

Section V of the 2007 report describes the recommendations for trunk infrastructure improvements. For this report, we have reviewed the improvements made to the system since 2007 and evaluated the system to meet future needs and have the following updates:

## **V. Recommendations for Water System**

### **A. Water Supply**

The 2018 Water Supply Plan evaluated the system based on future demand projections. The Plan determined:

- The wells, storage facility and treatment plant are adequate for the population and land uses projected to at least 2028.
- Minor expansions or extensions of the municipal water distribution system may become necessary over time to serve upcoming potential development.
- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan identified the need to rehabilitate the water treatment filters over three years from 2021-2024. This is the minimum life expectancy anticipated. Normal life expectancy is 15-30 years. We will review the condition in 2020 and determine if the project schedule can be adjusted.

### **B. Water Storage**

- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan identified the need to re-coat the existing elevated storage tank in 2024. The interior and exterior coatings, as well as any other minor maintenance work required on the elevated storage tank should be reevaluated in 2020 to determine if this project schedule can be adjusted.
- The 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan identified a possible location for a 4<sup>th</sup> Well if it should need to be constructed. This is anticipated to be required once the population reaches 8,500 or additional commercial or industrial development occurs.
- The 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan identified 2 future towers:
  - 1. Water Tower #2** – There is no change to this proposed future tower or location.

- As the southwestern portion of Isanti develops, it may be desirable to add a tower in that area. This would provide storage to meet increasing fire demands and alleviate issues with pressure during peak use. The water tower should be built on the high point of elevation 950 south of Isanti Meadows east of CSAH 23. Both towers would be in the same pressure zone. The volume of the tower would be approximately 300,000 gallons depending on the ISO requirements and the extent of the development.

**2. Water Tower #3** – There is no change to this proposed future tower or location.

- As the east side of Isanti develops, a 300,000-gallon water tower should be installed on the east side. It would be in the same pressure zone as the other towers. This tower would help with fire demand as well as maintaining pressures on the east side of the City. The tower should be located at the high point with an elevation of approximately 970. As the east side of Isanti develops, there may be some areas with elevations above 965 that experience lower pressures during high use. This is unlikely to be a significant issue for many years.

An updated Comprehensive Watermain Map showing the location of the priority projects is included in the appendix.

**C. Distribution System**

- The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan identified the need to extend water service to a number of parcels that were annexed in 2019. These three separate improvements include the construction of 8” watermain in:
  1. Towns Edge Road,
  2. Tyler Street, and
  3. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of South Passage.
- The 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan identified four existing distribution improvement projects:
  1. Replace the 6” main on Palomino Road with a 10” main – **(COMPLETED IN 2017)**
  2. Replace the 6” main on Isanti Parkway west from WWTF to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue with 12” main. – **(COMPLETED prior to 2009 with a 10” watermain)**
  3. Install 10” trunk watermain along Railroad Avenue from Palomino Road to South Passage. – **(COMPLETED IN 2013)**
  4. Install 10” trunk watermain from the intersection of North Brookview Lane and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Nina Street near Nina Court. A developer has installed approximately 150 ft of watermain as part of the Brookview South 6<sup>th</sup> Addition project. – **(NOT COMPLETE)**
- The 2007 Comprehensive Water System Plan also identified 3 future development driven distribution improvement projects:
  1. Replace the existing 8” watermain along Rum River Drive with a 10” watermain from south of Flintwood Street to Birch Street.

2. Replace the existing 8" watermain along Whiskey Road with a 10" watermain from Birch Street to Heritage Boulevard.
3. Replace the existing 8" watermain along Birch Street with a 10" watermain from Rum River Drive to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

#### **D. Summary of Water System Improvements**

The 2018 Water Supply Plan evaluated the system based on future demand projections. The Plan determined:

- The wells, storage facility and treatment plant are adequate for a population up to 8,500 unless high use commercial or industrial development occurs.
- Minor expansions or extensions of the municipal water distribution system may become necessary over time to serve upcoming potential development.

The 2019-2028 Capital Improvement Plan identified water system improvement projects that are needed in the next 10 years and includes the following:

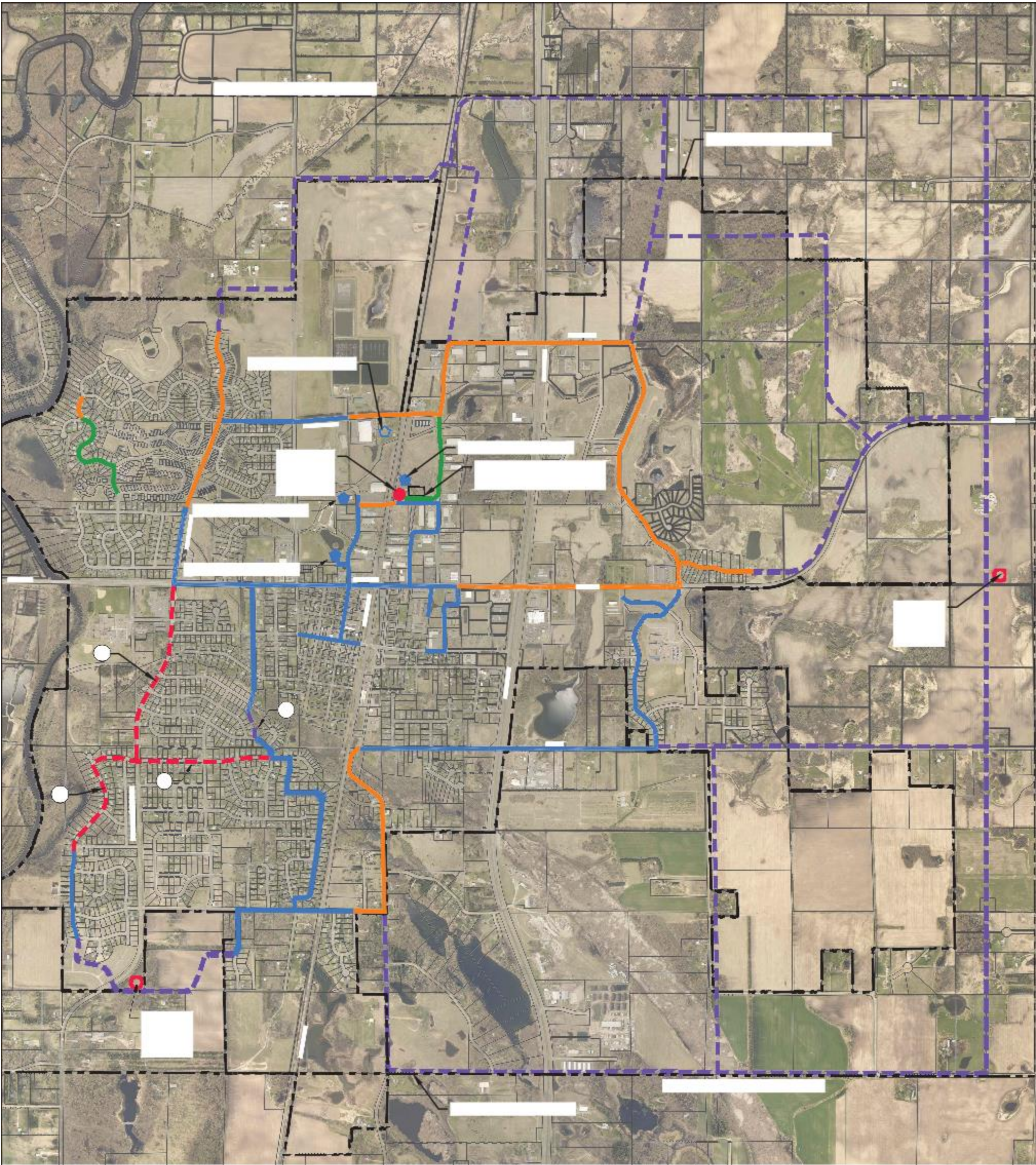
- Rehabilitate the water treatment filters over three years from 2021-2024. (Reevaluate)
- Construct 8" watermain in Tyler Street, Towns Edge Road, and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of South Passage to extend service to those parcels annexed into the City in 2019.

Table 8 below shows the updated priority project list and estimated project costs in 2020 dollars.

**Table 8 – Water System Improvement Projects**

| <b>Project</b>                           | <b>Trigger</b>                           | <b>Estimated Cost</b> | <b>Planning Horizon</b> |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Water Supply Projects</b>             |                                          |                       |                         |
| Filter Rehabilitation                    | Regular Maintenance                      | \$1,375,000           | 2021-2024 +             |
| Well #4 and Pump House                   | When Population Exceeds 8,500            | \$2,000,000           | 10 + Years              |
| <b>Water Storage Projects</b>            |                                          |                       |                         |
| Water Tower Coating Rehabilitation       | Regular Maintenance                      | \$700,000             | 2024 +                  |
| Elevated Storage in SW (300,000 gallon)  | Development in Southwest                 | \$1,700,000           | 10 + Years              |
| Elevate Storage in East (300,000 gallon) | Development in East                      | \$1,700,000           | 10 + Years              |
| <b>Water Distribution Projects</b>       |                                          |                       |                         |
| Nina Street Loop                         | Pipe Velocities, Looping                 | \$75,000              | 5-10 Years              |
| Rum River Drive – 10" Main               | Development in Southwest                 | \$175,000             | 10 + Years              |
| Whiskey Road – 10" Main                  | Development in Southwest                 | \$300,000             | 10 + Years              |
| Birch Street – 10" Main                  | Development in Southwest                 | \$300,000             | 10 + Years              |
| Towns Edge Road – 8" Main                | 2019 Annexed Parcels, Future Development | \$90,000              | 2026                    |
| Tyler Street – 8" Main                   | 2019 Annexed Parcels                     | \$89,000              | 2027                    |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue – 8" Main         | 2019 Annexed Parcels, Future Development | \$98,000              | 2028                    |





CITY OF ISANTI  
COMPREHENSIVE  
WATERMAIN MAP

