

# Grand Rapids Comprehensive Plan

Arrowhead Regional  
Development Commission



October 2003



**CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**OCTOBER 2003**

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# C **OMMUNITY VISION**

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A community vision is an expression of possibility, an ideal future state that the community hopes to attain. It sets the stage for what is desired in the broadest sense, where the community wants to go as a whole. It serves as a foundation for underlying goals, objectives, strategies, and policies that can direct future action and help bring that vision to fruition. The vision statement presented below describes where community members would like Grand Rapids to be in key quality of life areas 10, 20, or 30 years into the future:

*“Grand Rapids is a unique blend of small town hospitality and character with big city conveniences. Grand Rapids offers its residents an excellent quality of life with outstanding educational opportunities, excellent medical care, exceptional cultural and recreational amenities, and an unequaled sense of community spirit. Grand Rapids provides families safe, friendly, affordable, and inclusive neighborhoods that reflect the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside. Grand Rapids is Minnesota’s gateway to Northwoods tourism and its hub for forest products.”*

# C OMMUNITY VALUES

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Community values are the fundamental principles and beliefs that guide a community-driven process. They are the enduring beliefs about what is right, good and desirable and provide the foundation for making Grand Rapids a positive place to live. They constitute the community's assumptions about the ends worth striving for and the appropriate means to be employed to reach those ends.

## **Small Town Feeling:**

The notion of 'small town feeling' means living in a friendly vital neighborhood where people know and care about each other, have a strong sense of community, a sense of investment in the neighborhood and the city, and convenient access to shops, businesses, and the rest of the City. It is imperative that the small town feeling is nurtured and further developed even as the community continues to grow and change.

## **Cultural and Recreational Opportunities:**

We value the availability and quality of cultural and recreational opportunities as an important element of how we define our community – in terms of our quality of life and in terms of Grand Rapids as a regional center.

## **Progressive yet Responsible:**

We are innovative and forward thinking while at the same time accountable to our community. This core value needs to be expressed in many ways, including growth and development, the provision of services, and responsiveness to community wishes.

## **Safety – Neighborhoods and Streets:**

Safety is a priority for us, especially on our neighborhoods and on our streets. This means that our children have safe environments in which to grow and our residents can cross the streets and drive in safe, regulated traffic environments.

## **Natural Environment.**

Our natural environment is a defining characteristic of our community. We value our natural features and want our resources to be properly maintained and expanded.

## **Education – Value and Promote Education for All Ages:**

We value equal access to quality educational opportunities for citizens of all ages.

## **Economic Opportunities.**

A strong diversified economy with opportunities for local businesses and meaningful jobs is a prerequisite to the full realization of all other values. We value a healthy, growing economy.

# G UIDING PRINCIPLES

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Guiding principles reflect the expressed needs and desires of the people of the community and were used as a framework to guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, they can be carried beyond the plan to provide guidance to decision-makers.

- ◆ Growth is targeted to serve community values and enhance the quality of life
- ◆ Change is harmonized to preserve the community's character and environment
- ◆ Promote economic vitality to provide jobs, services, revenues, and opportunities
- ◆ Grand Rapids is a healthy family community with strong neighborhoods
- ◆ Grand Rapids is the commercial and service center for the surrounding region
- ◆ Community participation is a permanent part of growth and development
- ◆ The Comprehensive Plan is followed, updated every three years, and progress is reported to the public

# I NTRODUCTION

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This Comprehensive Plan is the policy guide Grand Rapids will use to set forth its future land use and development activities. Planning is an ongoing attempt to guide future development or redevelopment, in order to solve and avoid problems, meet future needs, and create new opportunities to enhance community life, the region's economy, and its environmental quality. The Comprehensive Plan is a dynamic document that represents an ongoing opportunity for community members and the City to discuss issues of concern and to reassess the direction the community wishes to pursue.

The comprehensive plan is intended to guide local government policy and zoning decisions and provide guidance to citizens, developers, and anyone concerned with the development of the community. It also communicates the direction the City is heading. Furthermore, it is an initial step in helping the City to qualify for federal or state grants to address issues identified within it.

The plan elements that comprise the Comprehensive Plan each consist of a brief introduction and a set of goals that reflect the outcomes the City hopes to achieve. A set of objectives, intermediate steps undertaken to achieve the goals, are included for each goal. Finally, implementation strategies are identified for each objective. The one exception to this format is the implementation element, which provides a brief overview of implementation tools available to the City, a recommended plan update protocol, and an implementation matrix that identifies both a timeframe and responsible stakeholder for the implementation of each actionable item contained in the plan.

Background studies for each Plan element can be found in Appendix A. These background studies provide an inventory of existing conditions, statistical analysis, and a discussion of issues and problems. The background studies, along with the community vision, community values, and guiding principles, which can be found at the beginning of this Plan, provided Steering Committee members and members of each focus group with the necessary information to make informed decisions concerning future land use and development. The 2003 Community Survey is presented in Appendix B. Appendix B provides a copy of the survey instrument and the survey results, both quantitative and qualitative. The first set of community meetings resulted in a report to the Steering Committee that included the issues that need to be addressed during the planning process as well as the vision and values that were expressed by the meeting participants'. A copy of that report can be found in Appendix C. Those interested in the background materials that support the plan elements and the survey and community meeting results that informed their development should acquire the appendices from the City of Grand Rapids.



## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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Community facilities and services is a collective term used to describe a variety of essential activities that sustain and enhance the quality of life for residents within a community. Community facilities and services include such things as drinking water, solid and sanitary waste disposal, right-of-way and park maintenance, education, emergency services, power, and health care. The provision of utility services, public safety programs, and facilities for public health and education are all issues that increasingly challenge local governments. Planning is essential to ensure that the provision of these services and facilities meet the future needs of the City of Grand Rapids. Community facilities and services require significant expenditures of public funds and have a tremendous impact on the quality of life of residents.

The provision of adequate community facilities and services is fundamental to the health and well being of a community. It can also have a significant impact on economic development because many families, businesses, and industrial companies look at the availability of community facilities as an important factor in deciding where to locate. Not only are such issues as access to safe drinking water and access to quality health care key elements in the quality of life in a community, they are also vital to the long-term viability of a community.

The community facilities and services planning consisted of developing a background report and two focus group meetings. The background report presents historical information and data *and* community input obtained during the community meetings and community survey. The focus group was composed of representatives from the Public Works Department, the Public Utilities Commission, Independent School District (ISD) 318, Parks and Recreation, the Police Department, and the high school student body.

The scope of the first focus group meeting was to review and enhance a preliminary inventory of community facilities. Focus group members developed goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps for recommendation to the City Council during the second focus group meeting. The Community Facilities and Services Background Report represents a comprehensive inventory of facilities and services within Grand Rapids and can be found in Appendix A.

Six issue areas emerged from the facilities and services planning process and are reflected in the goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps. These issue areas include the following:

- ◆ Efficiency and fiscal responsibility
- ◆ Quality of life
- ◆ Minimizing impacts to the environment
- ◆ Long term sustainability
- ◆ Public health and safety
- ◆ The strong facilities and services role in supporting economic development

## Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

Overall goal for Community Facilities and Services:

**Ensure the most efficient use of public assets to create and maintain the City's physical and service infrastructure**

*Objective 1: Develop and maintain operating policies that will ensure financial sustainability for all City operations.*

**Strategy 1:** Develop a decision-making and policy framework for public expenditures that reflects a business plan format in order to protect the public interest through fiscally responsible practices.

Action Steps:

1. Identify central elements of a business plan approach to public expenditures that promotes fiscal responsibility.
2. Identify specific tools that can be used to evaluate and encourage fiscal responsibility including fiscal impact analysis, cost-revenue analysis, impact on fees, and capital budgeting analysis.
3. Once central elements and tools have been identified, complete a draft business plan that places responsibility and accountability on department heads for efficient budget expenditures, all under the guidance of the City Council.
4. Implement a business plan approach to public expenditures.

### Health & Human Services:

**Goal 1: Provide access to quality health care services and facilities to promote the survival and growth of Grand Rapids**

*Objective 1: Continue to develop Grand Rapids as a regional medical center by expanding medical facilities by adding advanced services and technology.*

**Strategy 1:** Expand the level and scope of specialty health care within Grand Rapids concurrent to the demand/need for additional services.

**Strategy 2:** Explore new and advanced technologies for medical care facilities in Grand Rapids.

## **Parks & Recreation:**

**Goal 1: Provide and facilitate affordable recreational opportunities for all demographics to support physical and social needs within Grand Rapids.**

*Objective 1: Maintain collaborative efforts with existing community programs to provide recreation services.*

Action Step:

1. Conduct regularly scheduled meetings with recreation leaders to discuss facility needs and determine who is in charge of specific programs.

*Objective 2: Evaluate and determine the need for parks in newly annexed areas of Grand Rapids and develop strategies for connectivity with existing park facilities.*

Action Step:

1. Hold neighborhood meetings in newly annexed areas to identify recreation needs and potential funding sources

*Objective 3: Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity within neighborhoods.*

**Strategy 1:** As community roads are developed and improved, if it is an identified bicycle and pedestrian corridor, design sidewalks/trails with a grass boulevard and planted trees to separate from roadways.

*Objective 4: Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to and between local destinations*

Action Step:

1. Construct a pedestrian/bicycle path on the Pokegama Avenue Bridge.

## **Utilities:**

**Goal 1: Meet the basic needs of Grand Rapids' Citizens with cost effective and quality services.**

*Objective 1: Provide efficient, adequate, and safe drinking water, wastewater, and energy systems that meet the long-term needs of the community.*

**Strategy 1:** Operate and maintain drinking water infrastructure and facilities in an efficient and economical manner.

Action Steps:

1. Adopt and implement recommendations of “The Comprehensive Water Study.”
2. Regularly review and update, if necessary, “The Comprehensive Water Study.”

Strategy 2: Operate and maintain wastewater collection and treatment facilities in an efficient and economical manner, allowing compliance to all regulatory standards.

Action Step:

1. Meet State and Federal effluent discharge standards.

Strategy 3: Operate and maintain an energy system in Grand Rapids that is affordable, reliable, efficient, and respectful of established environmental standards.

Action Step:

1. Remain aware of the district heating study as development proposals are brought forward.

**Goal 2: Facilitate healthy growth and prepare for long-term development within the City of Grand Rapids**

*Objective 1: Be aware of future generations when policies are set that will impact the environment and natural resources.*

Strategy 1: Design facilities and infrastructure to minimize conflict with the natural environment and natural resources.

Action Steps:

1. Identify potential environmental and natural resource conflicts concerning new or upgrades to existing facilities before design phase.
2. Seek to minimize potential conflicts during design phase.

*Objective 2: Ensure adequate service capacity to support growth by meeting future business and residential demand without degrading or diminishing service to existing users.*

Strategy 1: Provide the community with adequate wastewater treatment capacity utilizing technology enhancements.

Action Steps:

1. Maintain awareness of new wastewater treatment technology.
2. Examine the feasibility of incorporating promising new technology into the City's wastewater treatment facility.

*Objective 3: Be proactive in economic development and community planning while participating in cooperative efforts with other governments and community organizations.*

*Objective 4: Initiate policies, programs, and infrastructure changes that will improve public safety.*

Strategy 1: Establish criteria and adopt and maintain an Infrastructure plan as a part of the City Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Action Steps:

1. Develop criteria for the development of an infrastructure plan.
2. Develop infrastructure plan.
3. Adopt and maintain the infrastructure plan as a part of the City CIP.
4. Regularly review and update infrastructure plan.

Strategy 2: When practical and available, new electrical systems should be developed and constructed underground.

Action Steps:

1. Determine practicality of place planned electrical infrastructure underground.
2. When practicality is determined, place planned electrical infrastructure underground.

*Objective 5: Ensure the availability of proven telecommunications technology and infrastructure to enhance and maintain business competitiveness and residential quality of life.*

Strategy 1: Expand the availability of broadband technologies within the City of Grand Rapids.

Action Steps:

1. The City should take into account proven technology when reviewing, renewing, or assigning franchises.
2. The City should consider both the current and future competitiveness of technology when reviewing, renewing, or assigning franchises.

Strategy 2: Encourage partnerships among appropriate parties that provide the most effective, lowest cost communication services.

Action Step:

1. Provide a forum for communication services stakeholders to encourage the development of partnerships.

*Objective 6: Promote open and ongoing dialogue with Grand Rapids community.*

Strategy 1: Develop a process of ongoing communication with the public.

Action Steps:

1. Identify appropriate mechanism for ongoing dialogue with the public.
2. Develop an outreach/education strategy to promote better understanding of improvement projects and their relationship to quality of life and the greater good of the community.

Strategy 2: Provide an ongoing staff support system to enhance quality of service.

Action Step:

1. Provide customer service training to staff that interact with the public.

### **Emergency Services:**

**Goal 1: Ensure the safety and security of the Grand Rapids community.**

*Objective 1: Provide increased police patrol visibility in residential areas and newly annexed areas of Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Maintain staffing of patrol officers at an adequate level.

Action Steps:

1. Establish criteria for determining what constitutes an adequate level of staffing.

Strategy 2: Ensure public safety through adequate traffic enforcement.

Action Steps:

1. Establish criteria for determining what constitutes an adequate level of traffic enforcement.

*Objective 2: Ensure adequate fire service and response times.*

Strategy 1: Maintain adequate fire equipment and facilities.

Action Steps:

1. Establish methodology for determining adequate fire equipment and facilities needs.
2. Once methodology is established, conduct periodic needs analyses of fire equipment and facilities needs based upon that methodology.

*Objective 3: Promote inter-agency cooperation (mutual-aid) and efforts in providing services to Grand Rapids and the surrounding communities.*

## **Education:**

**Goal 1: Seek to maintain high level of educational excellence and a positive learning environment for all citizens of Grand Rapids, young or old**

*Objective 1: Develop strategies that support/assist the school district.*

Strategy 1: Ensure the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure.

Action Steps:

1. Develop an understanding of current and future school district infrastructure needs.
2. Establish common goals for facility development and maintenance.
3. Provide safe walking routes to and from school through the provision of appropriate sidewalk infrastructure (see transportation goal 1) and strategically placed stoplights, crosswalks, signage, and crossing guards.

Strategy 2: Establish working relationships between City staff and school district staff.

Action Steps:

1. Provide regular forums for City and school district staff interaction.
2. Involve school district staff in planning efforts that will likely impact the school district.

*Objective 2: Invest in early childhood development.*

Strategy 1: Support and promote activities to further early childhood education.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a council or forum for early childhood educators and caregivers and charge the group with researching model city sponsored programs for early childhood education undertaken by other cities.
2. Identify the best model program(s) and determine their feasibility for implementation by the City of Grand Rapids.
3. Implement best feasible program.

*Objective 3: Focus on improving and increasing continuing education opportunities for adults.*

Strategy 1: Determine the needs of continuing education in the community and identify any actions/activities the City could undertake to improve the quality of and opportunities for continuing education.

Action Steps:

1. Meet with continuing education providers to understand ways the city might be able to play a positive role.

*Objective 4: Support and promote extracurricular activities within Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Proactively address the need for extracurricular activities within Grand Rapids.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a youth advisory committee to keep current with the desires and needs of the City's school age community members regarding extracurricular activities.
2. Hold periodic stakeholder meetings to identify desired extracurricular activities and infrastructure that the school district cannot provide.



# T RANSPORTATION

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Planning for the movement of people and goods is an integral part of the comprehensive planning process. The community's future development, economic growth, environment, and quality of life will be influenced to a large degree by the local and regional transportation system. The City of Grand Rapids has recognized the importance of addressing long-range transportation planning issues by including a transportation component within the comprehensive plan.

Meeting the transportation needs of residents, visitors, and businesses calls for progressive solutions. It consists not only of an integrated system of roadways, but also addresses alternative modes of transportation including bicycles, sidewalks and transit. The Transportation Element provides a policy and program framework for these solutions. The Element recognizes that future growth in transportation cannot be met by the automobile alone. Particularly, the City of Grand Rapids should strive to become a "walkable city".

This element is designed to address all modes comprehensively. Although it is intended to guide decisions over the life of this plan, Grand Rapids should make long-term plans and lay the groundwork for the distant future, even 50 years out. The City should develop transportation systems that serve local and regional travel and make investments in infrastructure that will lead to a truly integrated system.

Transportation is a key concern of residents and employers in Grand Rapids. People want to travel where they want to, when they want to. As the City grows in population and in size meeting all those needs becomes a challenge.

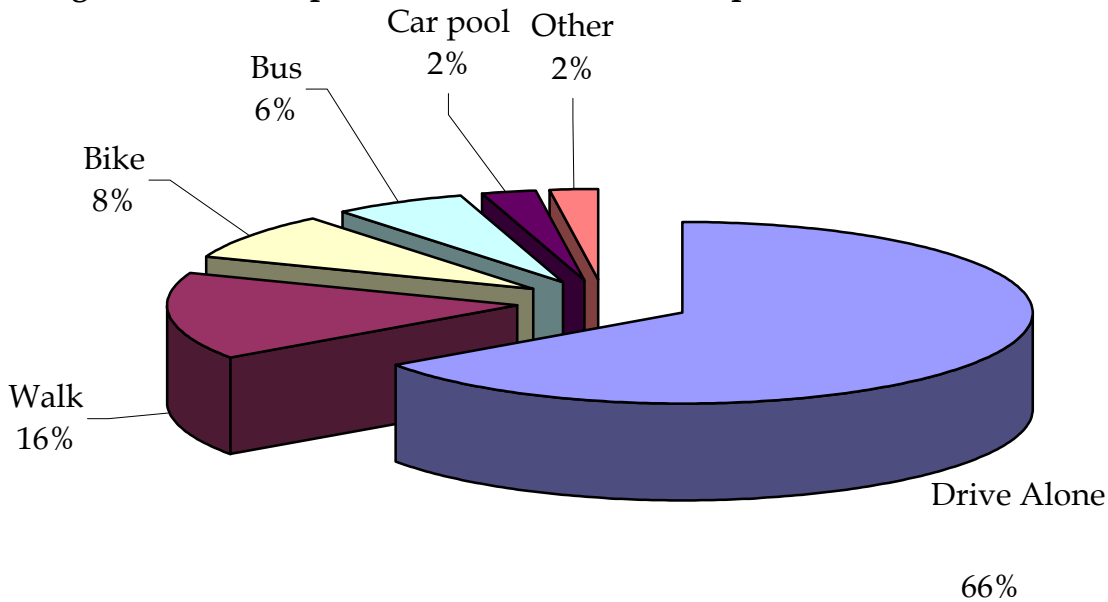
Barriers to improving Grand Rapids transportation system include:

1. In many areas, the car is the only option for getting around the city.
2. Land use planning and transportation planning are not always well coordinated.
3. Improving the transportation system is expensive and financial sources are limited.

Some portions of the city developed with a grid pattern. This type of compact design encourages walking to school, work, and shopping centers. This has been followed by a more typical suburban design car dependent development. Shopping and employment is becoming isolated from residential areas.

This causes more vehicle trips, higher fuel consumption, and more congestion on the roadways. These trends are likely to continue.

**Figure 1: How People Get to Work in Grand Rapids**



Source: Grand Rapids Comprehensive Plan Community Survey, 2003.

The transportation goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps reveal a vision for the City's future transportation system that provides residents with a range of transportation choices. While it is not expected that vehicle usage will decrease, it is important that efforts are made to ensure mobility across all modes. All modes should ensure safe and convenient access for residents, visitors, and employers.

Integrating land use decisions and multi-modal transportation planning can reverse current development trends. The goal is to consider where to build, what to build, and the kind of transportation choices to be made. The desired outcomes are less traffic, a more livable community, and more modal choices to move about the community. Increasing the efficiency of the system will increase capacity while minimizing the costs of system expansion.

A transportation background report that includes a review of previous planning, a discussion of all modes, and detailed recommendations for improvement of those modes can be found in Appendix A.

## Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

The overall transportation goal of the Grand Rapids Comprehensive Plan to improve the walkability of the City through the following mechanisms:

- ◆ Promoting pedestrian activity as a viable alternative to automobile use;
- ◆ Enhancing the pedestrian environment and increasing opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation to help improve the health of the citizens of Grand Rapids; and
- ◆ Developing concepts and standards that enhance livability, economic opportunity, safety, and quality of life.

**Goal: 1: Maintain a safe and efficient city wide transportation system that meets the local and regional access needs of Grand Rapids citizens, industries, and visitors**

Action Steps:

1. Implement the recommendations over which the City has control made in past transportation planning efforts. Such efforts have resulted in the 2001 "Grand Rapids Area Transportation Plan Update," the 2003 "Trunk Highway 169 South Access Management Plan," and the "Airport Plan."

**Goal: 2: Strive to become a "Walkable City"**

*Objective 1: Construct and maintain facilities, services, and programs that encourage walking.*

**Strategy 1:** Create a network of sidewalks and trails that serves the entire community and provides for safe pedestrian access to all potential destinations in town including schools, downtown, Itasca Community College, community facilities, major shopping areas, and residential areas.

Action Steps:

1. Require the inclusion of sidewalks in all new development unless it is demonstrated that they are not needed because the subject development is zoned rural in nature and sidewalks are not practical, or an adequate alternative pedestrian circulation system is provided. In both cases require a variance from the sidewalk requirement.
2. Include bicycle lanes and sidewalks or off-road non-motorized trails when new roads are planned and in all reconstruction plans for city streets.

3. Connect sidewalks that are isolated from the rest of the walkway system.
4. Continue to pursue funding for a streetscape project along TH 2 downtown to create a more pedestrian-friendly area.
5. Continue to monitor traffic and pedestrian patterns to determine needs.
6. Sidewalk should be placed near property lines with space for a boulevard where grass and trees planted in regular intervals can be planted.

Strategy 2: Maintenance.

Action Steps:

1. Provide regular maintenance including sweeping and safety assessments of existing sidewalks, trails, and bicycle lanes.
2. Provide all walkways with surfaces free of obstructions and maintain all bike-walkways free of trash, gravel, snow, and other hazards.

*Objective 2: Educate the general public on the importance of the sidewalk and bikeway system and its safe use.*

Strategy 1: Create a long-term education program to change the travel habits of residents, visitors and workers by informing them about transportation alternatives, incentives and impacts.

Action Steps:

1. Incorporate citizen involvement in the process of planning and repairing sidewalk facilities.
2. Work with the Chamber to develop a pedestrian map/safety information pamphlet.

**Goal 3: Provide a safe, convenient, efficient, continuous, and aesthetically pleasing transportation environment that is conducive to both recreational bicycling and using the bicycle for a commuting purpose**

*Objective 1: Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and between local destinations, including public facilities, schools, parks, open space, employment districts, and shopping centers.*

Strategy 1: Bicycle facilities should be planned as part of the infrastructure, as are highways and utilities.

Action Steps:

1. Extend the separated trail system into new neighborhoods as the city grows. Connections should be made to schools, parks, and other activity areas.
2. New construction should focus on linking existing trails to form a continuous network. While trail systems are usually implemented one section at a time, long-range planning should be emphasized so continuous corridors are eventually created.

*Objective 2: Educate cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists about safety concerns related to the use of bicycles, and encourage wide use of bike-walkways. Promote bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation.*

Strategy 1: Develop educational materials for the motorized and non-motorized public.

Action Steps:

1. Establish and post rules for safe trail use.
2. Provide information so people are more aware of the trails and bicyclists.
3. Publish a trail guide and coordinate trail activities.

*Objective 3: Maintain and provide regular safety assessments of existing trails and bike routes.*

Strategy 1: Develop, periodically update, and implement a bicycle facilities improvement program.

Action Steps:

1. Incorporate citizen involvement in the process of planning and repairing bicycle facilities.
2. Design, layout, and construct trails in a manner that will minimize long-term maintenance.

**Goal 4: Work with Arrowhead transit to continue to maintain, and enhance the Transit system**

*Objective 1: Work to expand and improve service in response to community growth, and to enhance transit accessibility and convenience.*

Strategy 1: Coordinate land use decisions with existing transportation services.

Action Steps:

1. Support development that is transit friendly for the aging and the disabled.

**Goal 5: Provide an aviation facility to meet the needs of passengers, the City, commercial airlines, and general aviation in a safe and efficient manner**

*Objective 1: Guide future airport development so that it will satisfy aviation demand.*

Strategy 1: Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and citizens.

Action Steps:

1. Enforce airport safety zone restrictions through the zoning ordinance to prevent hazards or obstructions to planned air space and citizens.

*Objective 2: Support airport economic development activities.*

Strategy 1: Promote use of the airport.

Action Steps:

1. Enhance the airport's revenue stream by promoting hangar rentals, the flight instruction school, aircraft and fuel sales, aircraft maintenance, and general marketing.
2. Encourage public use of the airport terminal for meetings, informational gatherings, and special events.
3. Encourage airport attractions to increase tourism in Grand Rapids and enable the town to be a frequent stop for small plane travel.
4. Rework the signage leading to the airport to eliminate motorist confusion.

Strategy 2: Airport development should be consistent and coordinated with the commercial/ economic development occurring around the airport.

Strategy 3: Support the following airport expansion plans.

Action Steps:

1. Reduce the land use area restricted by the crosswinds runway by shifting the western end of the runway eastward to the point it intersects with the main runway.

2. Extend runway 16/34 1,410 feet to the south and the opposite (north) threshold would be relocated 65 feet to the south, resulting in 7100 feet of runway available for takeoff. The extended runway should be designated for C-II aircraft with a maximum weight less than 60,000 pounds on dual gear.
3. Extend parallel taxiway A. With the expansion of runway 16/34 the parallel taxiway A would need to be extended the full length of the runway.
4. Install an Instrument Landing System (ILS) for approach to Runway 16.

**Goal 6: Maintain the function of the street system for current users, emergency response efforts and for use by future generations**

*Objective 1: Create and retain streets that promote a mix of uses such as car travel, transit, and bicycling.*

Strategy 1: Include pedestrian and bicycle provisions in all roadway projects.

Action Steps:

1. The City shall use street resurfacing projects as an opportunity to install or enhance sidewalks, bicycle lanes, raised medians, and painted crosswalks, where feasible. If the project is not under City jurisdiction, the City shall recommend that the State or the County make such enhancements.
2. Use traffic calming, where appropriate, to promote transportation choice, to reduce the negative impacts of car travel, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.
3. Increase street tree plantings and landscaping in medians and along arterials to calm traffic, soften the effects of arterial streets, and where appropriate, provide separation between pedestrians and other modes of transportation.

*Objective 2: Promote land use policies that limit access as necessary to maintain safe and efficient operation of the existing road system.*

Strategy 1: Limit access to all arterial routes.

Action Steps:

1. Implement access management standards to better manage the number of driveways, their location, and spacing; street intersections and connections; medians and median openings; marginal access roads; traffic signal location and timing; turn lanes and acceleration/ deceleration lanes; and, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
2. Implement the TH 169 South Access Management Plan.

*Objective 3: The street layout of new developments shall be coordinated with the streets and parking of surrounding areas.*

Strategy 1: Serve residential neighborhoods with collector roads, and commercial areas with collector and arterial roads into which local roads connect, in order to retain the local nature of neighborhood roads.

Action Steps:

1. All new development shall be reviewed for appropriate opportunities to connect to local roads and collectors in adjacent developments.
2. Develop grid systems at commercially zoned arterial intersections, where feasible, in order to support increased traffic.
3. Should the City allow private street development, the owner or developer of all new developments located within Grand Rapids will conform to city street standards for private road development.
4. Provide street lighting along all new or improved collector and arterial roads, and along local roads where requested by petition.
5. Require the construction of dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs to be extended to the farthest property line to ensure planned extensions.
6. Identify the impact on dead-end streets on the flow of traffic within and between neighborhoods. Determine feasible and appropriate courses of action, such as right-of-way or easement acquisition, and other means to remedy dead-end streets.
7. All streets in Grand Rapids will be constructed to urban street standards unless zoned rural residential.
8. When the need arises the City should project possible future street routes and connections.

*Objective 4: Protect previous investments and ensure efficient use of the road system by giving high priority to operational maintenance, safety improvements, and capacity improvements that are cost-effective projects (such as signalization upgrades, adding turn lanes, and signage) and increased level of service.*

Strategy 1: Maintain the public road system in a cost-effective manner to extend the roadway surface life, minimize traffic congestion, and allow for the safety of the public in all seasons and weather conditions.



Action Steps:

1. Implement recommendations made in the 2002 Grand Rapids Area Transportation Plan Update that have not been completed.
2. Resurface streets within two years of major utility work if frequent or extensive patching reduces rideability to a level below other City streets.
3. On an annual or bi-annual basis, have a transportation committee evaluate the Transportation element to identify necessary adjustments and periodically consider and implement plan amendments.
4. Continue to maintain existing streets based on the pavement software management program currently used by the Engineering department.

**Goal 7: Promote safe and efficient rail service to Grand Rapids**

*Objective 1: The City shall support preservation and use of the existing railroad system and encourage improvements that could benefit potential industrial development.*

Strategy 1: Protect the railroad corridor for the safe transportation of people and goods.

Action Steps:

1. Review the land use plan, zoning and subdivision standards along the existing rail corridor to ensure appropriate land uses and site design to avoid encroachment and noise issues.
2. Minimize at-grade crossings of the track for new projects.
3. Coordinate with the railroad companies to provide appropriate signage, traffic controls and public education to minimize train-crossing accidents in the community.
4. Close the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE crossing and redesign the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE crossing, along with installing gates and lights.
5. Close the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW railroad crossing, improve the intersection at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW and TH 2 by adding an extra long turn lane eastbound and a center left turn lane westbound.
6. Develop a long-range railroad crossing master plan.

# E

## CONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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The purpose of the economic development element is to describe the current state of the economy, identify assets and barriers for economic development, and discuss areas that provide opportunities for economic development. It functions as a blueprint for achieving community objectives by translating the Grand Rapids' broader vision and goals into economic initiatives consistent with its position in the regional context. Furthermore, it provides greater visibility to Grand Rapids' economic development strategy by providing a specific place to discuss the community's economic need in relationship with strategies for meeting that need. Finally, it allows for the assembly of economic data (see Appendix A), along with an identified vision, and goals, objectives, and strategies, and places economic development within the context of the City's other goals and policies.

Grand Rapids, with a 2000 population of 7,764 (2000 US Census), functions as a regional center providing employment opportunities, retail and service options, government services, health and professional services, and cultural amenities for some 30,000 year-round residents of the region. In addition, the city functions as a service area for significant numbers of seasonal visitors to the region. The City of Grand Rapids supplies, maintains, and regulates much of the infrastructure necessary to accommodate this regional function, and its policies and actions help influence the direction of economic development within the larger region. Recognizing the important function the City plays in the regional context, it seeks to better understand its role in regional economic development and develop policies and strategies that are commensurate to that role. To this end, the Jobs 2020 private sector initiative, facilitated by the Itasca Development Corporation (IDC), is considered a point of departure for the discussion of the Grand Rapids economy; Jobs 2020 will result in a regional strategy in which Grand Rapids will have a significant role to play.

The cultivation of the economic development process was entrusted to a subset of the Comprehensive Plan Steering and Technical Advisory committees, the economic development focus group. The Steering Committee members of the focus group include two at large community representatives, a representative of economic development, a representative of manufacturing, and a representative of the retail/service industry. The Technical Advisory Committee members of the focus group include a representative of the South Central Intergovernmental Planning Board, a representative of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, a representative of the Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority (EDA), and a representative of the Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission.

The economic development process consisted of a textual overview of the Grand Rapids economy, a series of three focus group meetings, a presentation to the Steering Committee, which afterwards recommended it to the City Council for adoption, and review by the EDA for comment.

The overview of the Grand Rapids economy was provided to focus group members prior to the first focus group meeting and underwent several iterations with guidance from the focus group. The final iteration of the economic overview can be found in appendix A.

The first of the three focus group meetings consisted of presentations by three economic development professionals affiliated with the University of Minnesota Extension Service and a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis facilitated by University of Minnesota Extension Service staff. The panel of presenters included Liz Templin, a Regional University of Minnesota Extension Service Educator, who shared a brief overview of community-based economic development strategies based on national research; Dr. Tom Stinson, an Extension Specialist, Associate Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics, and Minnesota State Economist since 1987, who gave an overview of the state and national economies and provided insight about the Grand Rapids economy in relation to them; and Lee Munich, a Senior Fellow at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and director of the Institute's State and Local Policy Program, who presented the results of the Northeast Minnesota Industry Cluster Study. The second and third meetings consisted of the identification of land for potential industrial expansion and the development of objectives, strategies, and action steps associated with the six goals identified during the SWOT analysis.

The community residents, business people, and economic development professionals who participated in the economic development focus group meetings fashioned the goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps that follow. In doing so, they drew upon their own experience, community input through community meetings and the community survey, direct input from their planning constituents, and information contained in the economic overview. The intention of the economic overview was not to lead focus group members toward a preconceived set of goals and objectives. Rather, it was to inform them about the local economy and about previous efforts that sought to understand or guide it.

Six discernable themes can be teased from the economic development planning process that are reflected to some extent in the goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps. These themes include the following:

- ◆ The notion that job growth comes primarily from the growth and expansion of existing area businesses rather than from newly located businesses

- ◆ That the development and nurturing of industry clusters are important sources of jobs and prosperity
- ◆ That quality of life is important to economic health
- ◆ That the expansion and promotion of affordable housing is an important element retaining and attracting younger workers and families
- ◆ That planned development can promote economic development when properly implemented
- ◆ That Grand Rapids is an important part of a larger region

The notion that job growth comes primarily from the growth and expansion of existing business rather than from newly located business is an accepted proposition in current economic development thinking. This notion was the subject of discussion during the economic development focus group meetings and is clearly reflected in goal number one, 'retain and enhance existing businesses', and its associated objectives, strategies, and action steps. Further, there was little interest among focus group members concerning the pursuit of business attraction, except as it relates to the enhancement of industry clusters, which arguably falls within the purview of support and enhancement of local businesses.

The development and nurturing of industry clusters was seen as a fundamental economic development pursuit, given the three major clusters associated with the Grand Rapids region. Industry clusters were the topic of the presentation given by Lee Munich during the first economic development meeting. It was the subject of the Northeast Minnesota Industry Cluster Study reviewed during the previous work section of the economic overview and an important aspect of the approach. Synergy was discussed in reference to the academic papers also reviewed during the previous work section. Finally, the importance of industry clusters to the Grand Rapids economy is reflected in Goal 2, "Use the City's available resources to strengthen economic clusters" and its associated objectives, strategies and action steps.

Although the idea that 'quality of life' is important to economic health is not explicitly discussed in the economic overview, it was a topic of discussion during focus group meetings. The notion of quality of life is associated with good schools, cultural and recreational amenities, the beauty of the natural environment, and affordable housing, among others. The concern for quality of life as it influences economic development is expressed in the objectives, strategies, and action steps associated with goal three, 'development of the riverfront', goal four, 're-development of a viable downtown', and goal five, 'provide affordable housing opportunities', albeit not explicitly so.

The expansion and promotion of affordable housing as an important element in retaining and attracting younger workers and families was explicitly discussed during

focus group meetings. The discussions concerned the aging population of Grand Rapids as was identified in the economic overview and the implications that aging population has for both the long-term viability of the community and the availability of a large enough pool of workers to meet the needs of local employers into the future. Goal five, 'provide affordable housing opportunities', and its associated objectives, strategies, and action steps directly addresses this concern.

An implicit theme that ran throughout the economic development planning process is that planned development can promote economic development when properly implemented. Just because the economic development element is an important part of the comprehensive planning process it is not necessarily ipso facto evident that planned development will promote economic development. However, there was consensus among focus group members that good planning coupled with earnest implementation efforts can indeed do so. The objectives, strategies, and actions steps associated with goal number six, 'maintain the Comprehensive Plan as the guide for achieving planned growth and development', reflect this view. They seek action on previous planning efforts that are yet to be implemented, went well beyond the immediate process in their scope, require regular updates to the economic development element, and request regular implementation updates from the City.

Finally, the economic development element recognizes the important function the City of Grand Rapids plays within the larger region. Much of the information and analysis contained in the economic overview is regional in scope. The previous work reviewed as part of the overview all had the Grand Rapids region as its focus, the demographic and economic data reported both local and regional data, and the economic base analysis was conducted with data at the county level. Throughout the economic development process, focus group members remained cognizant of Grand Rapids' function as a central place within the context of the larger region. Thus, this regional function was a theme throughout the economic development planning process and is clearly reflected in the objectives, strategies, and action steps associated with several of the larger economic development goals.

The following goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps do reflect the personalities and interests of focus group members to some extent. However, the group did earnestly consider the welfare of the community and the greater good from the viewpoint of economic development.

## Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

### **Goal 1: Retain and enhance existing businesses**

*Objective 1: Seek to understand and address the needs of existing businesses.*

Strategy 1: Conduct an ongoing Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program.

#### Action Steps:

1. Collaborate with “Grow Itasca” through the Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority (EDA) and receive periodic updates.
2. Maintain a positive and responsive working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, IDC and Jobs 2020, Business Roundtable, and similar organizations.

*Objective 2: Make business feel welcome.*

Strategy 1: Collaborate with other development organizations.

#### Action Steps:

1. Promote close cooperation between the City and the various economic development organizations and promote the definition of the roles of those organizations to reduce duplication of efforts.
2. Develop methodology of measuring the feeling of “welcomeness” among local businesses through a collaborative effort between the EDA and IDC and Jobs 2020.
3. Improve communications between government and the business community by hosting/providing an annual “public/private summit” to enhance communication.

Strategy 2: Buy local whenever feasible.

#### Action Steps:

1. Review purchasing practices among local businesses and government.
2. Promote/support consumer promotion/education program.

*Objective 3: Seek to improve customer service throughout the City.*

Strategy 1: Proactively set example of improved customer service for local business.

#### Action Steps:

1. Conduct a customer service training program for City staff and offer such training to other local public and private entities.

*Objective 4: Support growth of existing businesses.*

Strategy 1: Maintain a proactive Economic Development Authority (EDA).

Action Steps:

1. Maintain knowledge of new State and Federal policies/development tools and take advantage of them as appropriate to leverage local economic development.
2. Explore public/private/non-profit partnership opportunities.
3. Appoint and train experienced EDA members

*Objective 5: Maintain and support a healthy infrastructure.*

Strategy 1: Maintain up-to-date capital improvement plan (CIP)

Action Steps:

1. Fund implementation/construction of CIP priorities while remaining fiscally responsible.

Strategy 2: Enhance working relationship between City, Public Utility Commission (PUC), and other public entities.

Strategy 3: Support the presence of high-speed/high-volume broadband to businesses in City at competitive rates.

**Goal 2: Use the City's available resources to strengthen economic clusters**

*Objective 1: Improve individual factors that influence each cluster.*

Strategy 1: Assess the forest products industry and make specific improvements to the business climate.

Action Steps:

1. Review Governor's Task Force Report and implement items under local control.
2. Use Chambers Forestry Affairs Committee, Blandin Foundation, IDC and JOBS 2020, and others as appropriate to augment rapport with additional items under local control.

Strategy 2: Assess tourism industry in Itasca County.

Action Steps:

1. Working from University of Minnesota Extension Office report on tourism, invite IDC and Jobs 2020 Tourism Task Force to complete SWOT analysis of Itasca County tourism industry.
2. Support the establishment of an identity/brand for Itasca County tourism.

Strategy 3: Assess medical services industry in Itasca County.

Action Steps:

1. Meet with medical service providers, IDC and Jobs 2020, Itasca Community, and other stakeholders to assess what the City can do to assist in the development of the medical service industry.

*Objective 2: Identify and leverage synergies among clusters.*

Strategy 1: Identify common assets – forests, roads, lakes and rivers, cultural assets, U of M North Central Research and Outreach Center, Forest History Center, among others.

Action Steps:

1. Identify a natural owner of this project.
2. Charge this "natural owner" with completing this assignment in 3 months.

Strategy 2: Plan actions that promote uses of common assets for the benefit of multiple clusters.

*Objective 3: Promote specific opportunities of Itasca County forestry/tourism synergy.*

Strategy 1: Build awareness of forestry and tourism synergy within Itasca County

Action Steps:

1. Convene IDC and JOBS 2020 forum in 2004 to build awareness of forestry/tourism synergy.
2. Develop marketing plan in collaboration with existing organizations and governmental units.
3. Implement the marketing plan.



Strategy 2: Build awareness outside of Itasca County.

Action Steps:

1. Develop and implement an external marketing plan.
2. Pool resources within the County for implementation.

**Goal 3: Development of the Riverfront**

*Objective 1: Agree on a land use plan for various sections and shorelines of the river.*

Strategy 1: Build consensus for development of river segments.

Action Steps:

1. *Review and update, if necessary, "Riverfront Development Task Force Report."*
2. *Formalize the acceptance of the plan. (Incorporate into land use section of this Comprehensive Plan).*

*Objective 2: Implement the plan.*

Strategy 1: Identify and assign responsibility for developing each segment of the river.

Action Steps:

1. Review role of the Riverfront Development Task Force.
2. Assign responsibility for implementing those parts of the plan that are outside the scope of the Task Force, or are not being advanced.

Strategy 2: Clarify City of Grand Rapids' responsibility for plan implementation and monitoring.

Action Steps:

1. Identify natural owner for implementation and monitoring.
2. Provide quarterly updates from the "natural owners" to the City Council.

**Goal 4: Develop and Enhance the City's Business/Industrial Districts**

*Objective 1: Re-develop a viable Downtown*

Strategy 1: Create a vision for Downtown (Timeline - 1 year Total)

Action Steps:

1. Reconvene Downtown Business Council.
2. Evaluate what is successful and not successful now in Grand Rapids, and why.
3. Identify comparable cities with “successful” downtowns to benchmark.
4. Visit these sites.
5. Agree on types of businesses that will thrive in downtown Grand Rapids.
6. Convene appropriate stakeholders to review benchmark data and create the written vision document.
7. Obtain needed public and private approvals.

Strategy 2: Implement and promote a common theme that supports the vision.

Action Steps:

1. Review and develop and implement design standards for the CDB (see Grand Rapids Downtown Redevelopment Design Standards, Blocks 18-21).

Strategy 3: Provide necessary infrastructure.

Action Steps:

1. Identify needed infrastructure for orderly development of the downtown vision. (Covered in detail under Goal 6: Planned Growth and Development – Speed up trains through town, Broad band, District heating, water pressure, overpass/bypass, etc.)

Strategy 4: Develop funding sources for implementation.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a public/private investment fund.
2. Encourage downtown development that fits the plan and discourage development that falls outside the plan.
3. Pursue Small Cities Development Program funding through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the rehabilitation of downtown commercial properties.

Strategy 5: Work with existing businesses to improve and maintain office/storefronts.

Action Steps:

1. Continue Storefront Renovation Loan Program.
2. Enforce present ordinances to improve storefronts.
3. Adopt ordinances to ensure maintenance of properties.

*Objective 2: Enhance the East and West TH2, TH169 Business District*

Strategy 1: Encourage Use of the City Storefront Renovation Loan Program

Action Steps:

1. Direct mail information on Program to commercial properties

Strategy 2: Support the implementation of TH2 objectives in the 2002 Grand Rapids Area Transportation Plan Update

Action Steps:

1. Promote the development of a new access to 3<sup>rd</sup> St. N. industrial area
2. Promote the development of a pedestrian friendly streetscape along TH2
3. Promote the consolidation and improvement of railroad crossings to allow for increased train speeds through the City.

Strategy 3: Prepare for District Heating Asset

Action Steps:

1. Be prepared to work with developers where district heating may be used if district heating becomes a possibility.

*Objective 3: Create new industrial business opportunities through industrial park development in the Airport South and Blandin West JOBZ areas.*

Strategy 1: Prepare a development plan

Action steps:

1. Assess land acquisition costs
2. Develop a plan for relocation of existing occupants of the area.
3. Request a Feasibility Report from the City Engineer to assess the costs for infrastructure extensions.
4. Study options for platting or re-platting of JOBZ area property.
5. Compile list of available funding sources for land and infrastructure expenses.

Strategy 2: Implement Development Plan

Action steps:

1. Negotiate and acquire property.
2. Contract for the development of a new industrial subdivision and coordinate with the Planning Commission and City Council in its review and approval.
3. Initiate the rezoning of property from Agricultural to Industrial.
4. Contract for the design and construction of infrastructure.
5. Work with IDC in development and implementation of a marketing plan for attracting business relocation to the JOBZ area.

*Objective 4: Encourage the expansion of industries in the City's existing industrial parks into undeveloped lands included within the Industrial Parks JOBZ area.*

Strategy 1: Initiate discussion with existing industries

Action Steps:

1. Explain the benefits of the JOBZ program
2. Discuss current land prices
3. Address concerns

**Goal 5: Provide affordable housing opportunities**

*Objective 1: Increase knowledge of housing issues in our community.*

Strategy 1: Identify stakeholders in the housing field.

Action steps:

1. Survey the realtors in the City and determine the largest demand for housing that they are not able to meet.
2. Monitor possible future building sites, i.e.: Old Middle School, and Old Hospital sites.
3. Refer to the 2003 Housing Study for housing demand.
4. Work with the private sector in developing housing.

Strategy 2: Obtain periodic reports and updates from the City's HRA.

Strategy 3: Obtain periodic reports and ongoing dialogue on current housing trends and issues from advisory groups such as the Itasca Housing Coalition.

Action steps:

1. Focus on housing issues in the City of Grand Rapids through dialogue and trends.
2. Develop projects and implement, as needed.

Strategy 4: Identify and develop strategic relationships with private and public housing development groups.

**Objective 2: Support the improvement of existing housing conditions.**

Strategy 1: Work creatively and collaboratively with partners in housing to structure financial options for affordable housing.

Action steps:

1. Work with entities such as GMHR, MN Housing Partnerships, lending institutions, and bond consultants.
2. Consider the use of TIF for the development of affordable housing projects.
3. Structure an RFP to private sector developers.

Strategy 2: Identify action steps and role definition of the City Council and HRA.

Strategy 3: Support housing development and redevelopment strategies.

Action Steps:

1. Pursue Small Cities Development Program funding through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for rehabilitation of owner- and renter-occupied housing.
2. Work with Kootasca in housing rehabilitation.

Strategy 4: Proactively identify and support areas for development of future housing.

Action steps:

1. Develop a database of vacant property for sale.
2. Encourage the development of housing by the private sector.

Strategy 5: Consider development of an equity type proposal (land trust) to insure continued affordable housing.

Action steps:

1. Explore the potential for this strategy with organizations such as GMHF.
2. Meet with other communities that have implemented this type of strategy.

Strategy 6: Build relationships with major area employers to promote public/private partnerships in the development of affordable housing.

**Goal 6: Maintain the Comprehensive Plan as the guide for achieving planned growth and development**

*Objective 1: Update comprehensive plan regularly.*

**Action Steps:**

1. Convene special session of City Council and appropriate City boards and commissions to annually review plan and compliance.
2. Include plan progress updates in the Mayor's "State of the City" reports.

*Objective 2: Hire expertise to develop zoning master plan and philosophy.*

*Objective 3: Establish City/Private partnerships to accomplish development.*

**Strategy 1:** Use this comprehensive plan to acquire the human and financial resources needed for future projects.

**Action Steps:**

1. Submit proposals to Blandin Foundation and other funding sources to fund elements of the plan's implementation.
2. Assign EDA the responsibility of measuring the annual progress toward implementing the plan's economic development element.

**Strategy 2:** Partner with IDC and JOBS 2020 to optimize resources and align actions on a regional basis.

# L AND USE

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Grand Rapids currently encompasses approximately 5,186 acres of area and is bisected by the Mississippi River, which provides the community with both economic and recreational opportunities. The river, along with the City's lakes and parks, and its proximity to other significant economic and recreational opportunities, make Grand Rapids a desirable place to live and operate a business. The excellent quality of life provided by the natural environment of Grand Rapids is impacted by the relative quality of services and jobs available to the City's residents. Educational, recreational, medical, public, and commercial services, along with industrial and other job producing activities, all have land use needs with associated impacts to the natural environment, public health and safety, and the overall quality of life. In order to help ensure that the various land use needs of the Grand Rapids community are met in a way that satisfies as best it can all of the community's stakeholders through support of the larger community vision, land use planning must be an ongoing process and a priority for City decision-makers.

The purpose of the land use element is to delineate desired land use outcomes. It will serve as a guide for City decision-makers as they review development proposals and make decisions concerning the public facilities, housing, commercial and industrial development, and recreational infrastructure. This document lays the foundation for zoning and subdivision regulations that put the goals and objectives of the land use section into action. The land use element will begin with a discussion of desired future land use and will conclude with land use goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps. A detailed discussion of background material can be found in Appendix A.

## FUTURE LAND USE

The land use element of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to promote the expressed vision and values of the Grand Rapids community through the establishment of goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps. Specific land use recommendations establish the basis for the development of those goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps and justify the delineation of recommended zoning as identified on the future land use map.

The future land use plan map is intended to be rather specific in nature and is intended to function as the basis for a revised zoning map that will include four new zoning districts. Although the majority of land use recommendations identified below are intended for the areas of Grand Rapids Township that are to be annexed into the City, there are several specific recommendations for land use within the current boundaries of the City. Future land use recommendations are identified in the categories described below and are reflected on the future land use map as specific uses.

## **Agriculture**

This category includes agricultural and farmland areas. There are currently no agricultural operations within either the annexation areas or the current city boundaries. It is recommended that the Agricultural district (AG) be stricken from the zoning ordinance.

## **Airport**

The Airport District is designated is a highly specialized use area, because of the unique character of this area and its role in the local economy. It is recommended that no changes to the current permitted, conditional, and restricted uses, development regulations, and geography of the Airport District be made. However, it is recommended that improved communication and cooperation be fostered between business groups and the Airport Commission regarding development in and around the airport.

## **Conservancy/Open Space**

This category is intended to preserve and protect open space including lakes, streams, wetlands, marshes, woodlands, and similar areas of natural, aesthetic, and scenic value it is recommended that no changes to the current permitted, conditional, and restricted uses and development regulations are made to the Conservancy District (CD). It is recommended that the residentially zoned area located on the on the west side of TH 169 South between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets Southwest be rezoned to CD and that the City purchase the associated properties as they are placed on the market for sale. It is also recommended that appropriate areas located in the annexation areas be rezoned to CD.

## **Commercial**

The commercial category includes areas where the principal use of land is associated with wholesale, retail, or service business activity. The majority of commercial uses in Grand Rapids can be placed in one of the three commercial categories: convenience goods and services, general commercial goods and services, or highway commercial goods and services. One other commercial use category requiring attention in the annexation areas is recreational commercial.

### ***Convenience Goods and Services:***

Convenience goods and services include groceries, sandwiches, salads, pizza, ice cream, newspapers, everyday household items, prescription and over-the-counter drugs, beauty salons, and similar uses; video rentals, laundry and dry cleaning, and branch banking. The distinguishing feature of these uses is that their primary market is nearby residents and employees, as opposed to the larger community. Current City zoning districts within this category include the L-B district and the SL-B district. It is recommended that a convenience node be located at the intersection of Golf Course Road and Isleview Road to serve employees of the future Grand Itasca Hospital and current and future residents of the immediate area.



An issue that arose among Steering Committee members during the visioning session involved this category of commercial use. The concern was that Grand Rapids' neighborhoods are losing their sense of place because increased traffic levels have reduced their walkability and that in the majority of cases a trip to the store for convenience goods and services necessitate a car ride. As a result, there are fewer people outside in the neighborhoods while there are more people driving outside of the neighborhoods. Steering Committee members saw this as unwelcome erosion of their sense of place. They were interested in creating walkable neighborhoods with convenience destinations located within them.

It is recommended that convenience nodes be established to offer convenience goods and services primarily to benefit nearby residents. They should be placed where they can easily be accessed by the neighborhoods they serve and should be accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists as well as to drivers. These should be appropriately located and properly buffered and should be of a scale that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods. Finally, it is recommended that a network of sidewalk infrastructure be developed to increase safety and walkability within existing and future neighborhoods.

***General Commercial Goods and Services:***

General commercial goods and services include department stores, furniture stores, appliance stores, commercial printing companies, central banks, wholesale supply companies, and other similar uses. The distinguishing feature of these uses is that their market area is the community as a whole, rather than nearby neighborhoods.

Downtown Grand Rapids, the City's central business district, can be considered a general commercial goods and services center. However, the downtown has suffered from neglect and abandonment over the years, which is evident in vacant storefronts and rundown buildings. It is recommended that a revitalization effort be undertaken to improve the look and viability of the downtown area. Such an effort should be spearheaded by a group charged with the task and should include the formal adoption of design standards, the provision of necessary infrastructure, and the development of funding sources.

***Highway Commercial Goods and Services:***

Highway commercial goods and services include automobile dealers, big box retailers, fast food restaurants, hotels and motels. These typically are located along highway corridors to accommodate the large amount of traffic generated by these uses. The commercial area along Highway 169 South is the most significant example of this type of commercial use in Grand Rapids. Specific problems associated with highway commercial areas in Grand Rapids include the large number access points along these commercial corridors and the proximity of conflicting uses on the west side of TH 169 South between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets Southwest.

It is recommended that any further development and redevelopment along TH 169 South commercial corridor take place in accordance with the *Trunk Highway 169 South Access Management Plan*. It is recommended that other areas of highway commercial development and redevelopment take place in a way that is consistent with the accepted principles of access management.

***Recreational Commercial Uses:***

Recreational commercial uses include shooting ranges, ATV parks, game farms, golf courses, and other commercially viable recreational activities. It is recommended that a new Recreational Commercial zoning district be established and that the golf course and the area on County Road 256 to the west of the residential development off of TH 38 and to the east of the farmstead at the western terminus of CR 256 be rezoned to it. In order to accommodate recreational commercial uses, the creation of a recreational commercial zoning district is recommended as follows

◆ ***RC Recreational Commercial***

The purpose of the recreational commercial district is to reserve specific areas for recreational use, whether privately owned or publicly owned, and commercial in nature.

**Industry**

Industrial uses such as manufacturing, assembling, research and development provide tax revenues and jobs for residents of Grand Rapids and the surrounding area. It is recommended that industrially zoned land be expanded in a planned manner that minimizes impacts upon public infrastructure and the number of potential land use conflicts. To this end, industrial uses should be located along major highway corridors, in industrial or business parks, and adjacent to existing industrial areas. Wherever possible, these uses should be located away from residential uses. When potential conflicts between land uses do occur, appropriate buffering and landscaping should be provided to minimize their impacts. Specific areas for industrial expansion include the area located to the west of the current UPM/Blandin plant, the area north of the current City boundary located between the TH 38 (Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway) corridor and the bike trail corridor, and the area directly adjacent to the southwestern quadrant of the airport south of Southeast 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Medical**

Medical uses represent a major source of jobs for residents of Grand Rapids and the surrounding area. It is recommended that medical uses, including medical and dental clinics, be grouped in areas of similar use. In particular, it is recommended that medical uses be located adjacent to the new Grand Itasca Hospital campus. This provides ease of use by residents and transitional land uses. It is also recommended that congregate housing be deconstructed into constituent uses and that nursing homes be a permitted use in the medical district.

## Mixed Use

A mixture of uses such as office, retail, residential, and public uses characterize mixed-use. Mixed-use development can provide an opportunity for the development of traditional neighborhood feel in which the attributes of traditional neighborhood development can dominate. These attributes include a limited size to encourage pedestrian activity, an interconnected street pattern with sidewalks and smaller blocks to provide multiple routes, a mix of residential and commercial uses, and a formal square in the neighborhood center.

It is recommended that new, planned mixed-use developments, in which the attributes of traditional neighborhood development dominate, be encouraged through the creation of a new mixed-use zoning district. Such new neighborhoods should be designed in a manner that avoids urban sprawl. Specific locations for future mixed-use development include the location of the current Itasca Medical Center and the area to the south and west of the future Grand Itasca Medical Center. In order to accommodate and guide mixed-use development as described here, the creation of a mixed-use zoning district is recommended as follows:

### ◆ *M-U Mixed-Use District:*

A mixed-use district should encourage the location of a balanced and harmonious mixture of commercial, public, and private uses, and encourage an efficient use of land in the form of diverse and interesting neighborhoods. A mixed-use development should be designed to incorporate a variety of uses into an integrated plan compatible with the surrounding land uses. The mixed-use district should be predominantly residential with neighborhood-serving retail shops, small-scale office uses, restaurants, and a public square or green space.

Standards for mixed-use developments should be developed to ensure that they are not developed in a laissez faire fashion, but rather result in a conceptually planned neighborhood. Proposals for a mixed-use development should come from a single developer or a consortium of developers in a joint venture and should include an integrated conceptual plan for the entire area in question with internal architectural compatibility. Permitted uses should include utility services and municipal facilities, all other uses being conditional uses. Appropriate conditional uses include professional, business, and general offices, residential units in the form of townhomes, condominiums, or second story above-business apartments, eating and drinking establishments, retail and service establishments (except convenience stores with gas), theaters, and indoor recreation and family amusement establishments. All businesses, services, or processing should be conducted within an enclosed building except outdoor dining areas and temporary events. Finally, the development should maintain pedestrian scale to buildings when appropriate, maintain pedestrian linkages using walkways and plazas, create public places as destinations along pedestrian linkages,

and carefully place signs, sign supports, and sign structures to integrate with the scale, color and detail of the building design while complying with the sign provisions of the zoning ordinance.

### **Public/Quasi-Public**

The public/quasi public category includes such uses as essential public facilities that provide governmental, educational, recreational, cultural, and healthcare services to the entire community. Public/quasi public uses can be described as being of two types based upon the scale of their service areas: those designed to serve the community as a whole, such as City Hall or the Grand Rapids Area Library, and those designed to serve neighborhoods, such as neighborhood community centers or neighborhood churches.

It is recommended that community-wide public and quasi-public uses be accessible to the community through the major street system. They should be located within convenient driving range of the expected users, preferably in the central area of the City. They should have adequate off-street parking designed in a manner that is suitable to the areas in which they are located.

Neighborhood public and quasi-public uses should be central to the neighborhood they serve and be available to them for use. The development of neighborhood level public and quasi-public uses should be encouraged because they can help foster a feeling of neighborhood cohesiveness and a sense of place.

### **Residential**

The residential category includes areas where the principal use of land is associated with low-, medium-, and high-density residential uses and. It is recommended that the use category 'congregate housing' be deconstructed into its constituent uses and that boarding houses be permitted in the medium-density residential districts. It is recommended that new and existing residential development should be served by the City's sewer system whenever possible. New development should be planned to include neighborhood parks and green space and links with the city's existing parks and recreational facilities. Cul-de-sacs are to be avoided. Instead, emphasis should be placed upon multiple connections through and between neighborhoods and subdivisions. In order to address residential use in the annexation areas, the creation of two new residential districts are recommended as follow:

#### **◆ *R-G Residential Growth District:***

This district would represent areas within the City's jurisdiction where new residential growth is encouraged to locate. It should include land adjacent to areas of newer residential development and areas that can take advantage of the present or future extension of City services. It should incorporate the same land uses of the R-1 and SR-1 districts. It should be designed primarily for residential use with the minimum lot size of 8,400 square feet with City sewer and 32,673 square feet (¾

acre) without City sewer. It should incorporate all other standards, requirements, and regulations of the R-1 district. New and existing properties having sanitary waste facilities and which are located within the City's jurisdiction and are located a public sanitary sewer within some reasonable number of feet should be required to connect directly to the public sewer within a specified timeframe.

◆ ***R-R Rural Residential District:***

This district would represent areas in the annexation areas that are rural in character and unlikely to have access to City services in the foreseeable future, but nevertheless are appropriate for residential development. This should be a one-family residence district that allows for all R-1 and SR-1 uses, with additional uses that are consistent with rural living. It should have minimum lot sizes of no less than 32,673 square feet or  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre that are have direct access to a public roadway. Roadways in within it should be rural in nature and not require curb and gutter as is required in more urban residential districts.

**Other**

There are other land use concerns that do not fit within a discrete land use category yet rise to the level of community significance. For these, a set of principles is recommended that provide guidance to the community and its decision-makers when such issues arise.

***Community Landmarks and Historic Preservation***

Community landmarks are sites, buildings, structures, or natural features that have visual, historic, or cultural significance, and are important to community identity, as well as to that of the various neighborhoods in which they are located. An example of such a landmark is the old Central School building. It is recommended that such landmarks should be preserved, unless it is clearly in the public interest to do otherwise.

Community landmarks should be well maintained and care should be taken to protect their integrity. It is recommended that should the uses for which landmarks were designed be discontinued or become obsolete, the City or owner should seek appropriate new uses for them that help to preserve them and protect their integrity. A protocol should be developed for evaluating and approving changes to community landmarks.

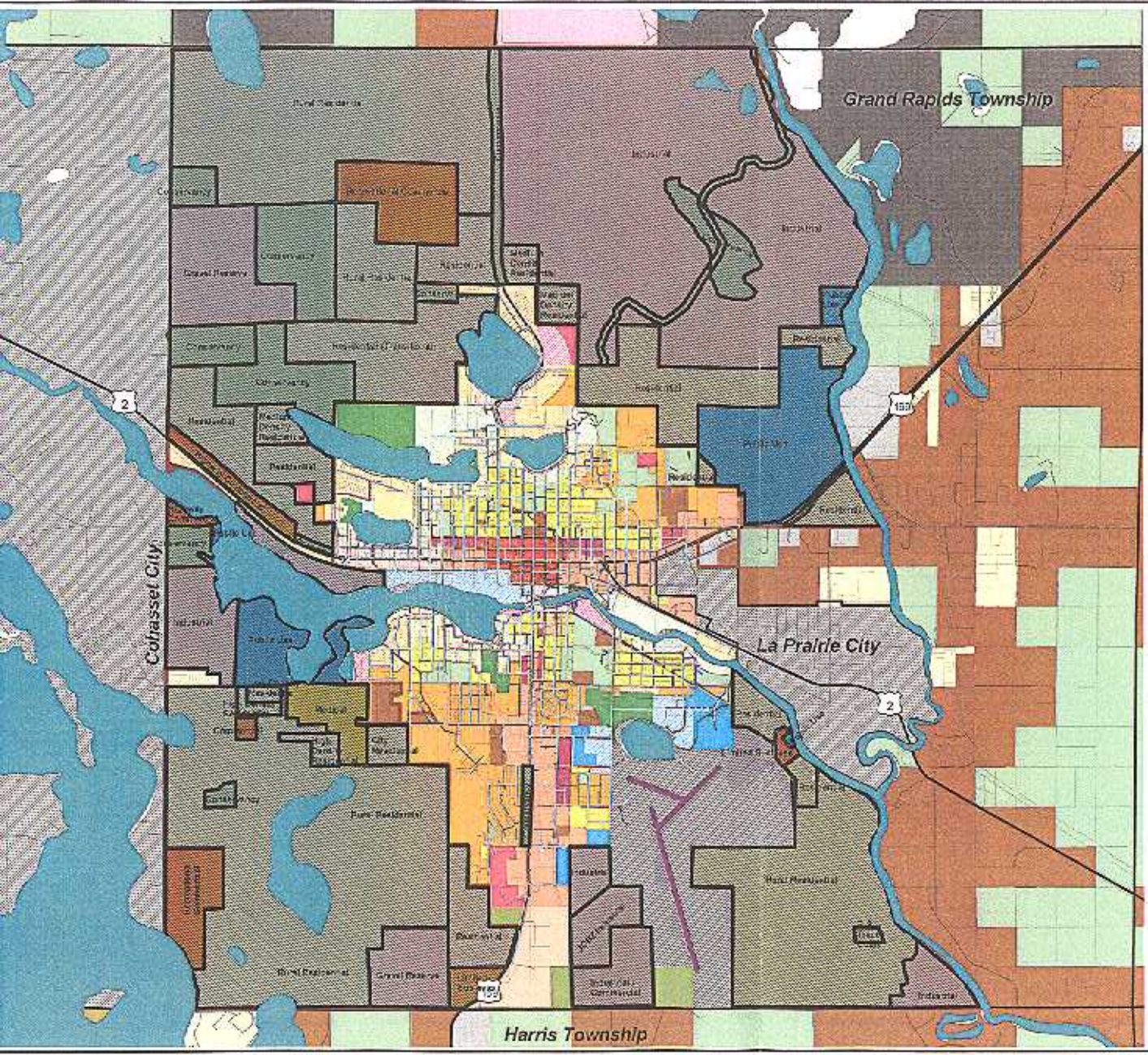


# Grand Rapids Area Zoning / Future Land Use



## Map Features

- Future Land Use**
  - Commercial
  - Community
  - Industrial
  - Medium Density Residential
  - Office
  - Public Use
  - Residential
- City Zoning Districts**
  - AG-1 (Agriculture)
  - AG-2 (Agriculture)
  - AG-3 (Agriculture)
  - AG-4 (Agriculture)
  - AG-5 (Agriculture)
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  - AG-100 (Agriculture)
- County Zoning Districts**
  - County Office
  - County Commercial
  - County Industrial
  - County Residential
  - County Public Use
  - County Agriculture
  - County Forestland
  - County Wetlands
  - County Open Space
  - County Recreation
  - County Cultural
  - County Historic
  - County Environmental
  - County Energy
  - County Transportation
  - County Utilities
  - County Manufacturing
  - County Distribution
  - County Research
  - County Development
  - County Innovation
  - County Technology
  - County Creative
  - County Professional
  - County Business
  - County Services
  - County Health
  - County Education
  - County Government
  - County Non-Profit
  - County Community
  - County Cultural
  - County Historic
  - County Environmental
  - County Energy
  - County Transportation
  - County Utilities
  - County Manufacturing
  - County Distribution
  - County Research
  - County Development
  - County Innovation
  - County Technology
  - County Creative
  - County Professional
  - County Business
  - County Services
  - County Health
  - County Education
  - County Government
  - County Non-Profit
  - County Community
- County Zoning Districts (continued)**
  - County Office
  - County Commercial
  - County Industrial
  - County Residential
  - County Public Use
  - County Agriculture
  - County Forestland
  - County Wetlands
  - County Open Space
  - County Recreation
  - County Cultural
  - County Historic
  - County Environmental
  - County Energy
  - County Transportation
  - County Utilities
  - County Manufacturing
  - County Distribution
  - County Research
  - County Development
  - County Innovation
  - County Technology
  - County Creative
  - County Professional
  - County Business
  - County Services
  - County Health
  - County Education
  - County Government
  - County Non-Profit
  - County Community
- Other Features**
  - Water
  - Water Line
  - Sanitary Sewer Line
  - Gas
  - Highway
  - Railroad





## Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

**Goal 1: Provide a sound basis for orderly development by establishing proper relationships among agricultural, commercial, industrial, residential, and other land uses**

*Objective 1: Ensure that development is orderly and avoids the close proximity of conflicting uses.*

Strategy 1: Promote the highest and best use of land with special attention to use options in transition areas.

### Action Steps:

1. When determining the highest and best use, consider the site characteristics, market realities, and local development pattern when determining what use would develop the highest value.
2. Ensure that new development is sensitive to and compatible with existing land uses.
3. Require developers to mitigate nuisances associated new development that conflicts with adjacent uses. Mitigation can include physical barriers, such as vegetative berms, hedges or other landscape cover, and walls or fences aesthetically designed for screening and noise reduction purposes.
4. Develop a set of criteria to determine the circumstances in which it would be appropriate for residential property owners to mitigate nuisances associated with conflicting uses in transitional areas and amend the zoning ordinance to allow for it.

*Objective 2: Ensure that opportunities for convenient and concentrated commercial development are provided to support both the local and regional market.*

Strategy 1: Provide opportunities for neighborhood commercial nodes that are compatible with residential property.

### Action Steps:

1. Rezone appropriate areas to accommodate the development of convenience goods and services commercial nodes to serve individual neighborhoods.

Strategy 2: Redevelop a viable downtown (see Economic Development Goal 4).

Strategy 3: Encourage/promote expansion of commercial opportunities in existing commercial corridors or nodes where infrastructure can support growth and where another use is not deemed more desirable by the City.

Action Steps:

1. Ensure that (re)development of commercial property located in commercial corridors takes place in accordance with the principles of access management.

Strategy 4: Allow commercial uses that are recreational in nature, whether privately owned or publicly owned.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a recreational commercial district that would allow for permitted and conditional uses such as shooting ranges, ATV parks, game farms, golf courses, and other commercially viable recreational activities.
2. Rezone the area on County Road 256 (Peterson Road) to the west of residential the residential development off of TH 38 and to the east of the farmstead at the western terminus of CR 256(Peterson Road) to recreational commercial.
3. Rezone the golf course area to recreational commercial.

*Objective 3: Provide sufficient opportunities for industrial development sites within Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Protect existing industrial development from encroachment by incompatible development.

Action Steps:

1. Where appropriate, (re)zone land adjacent to new industrial development as industrial to serve as an industrial expansion area.
2. Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to industrial areas.

Strategy 2: Rezone appropriate areas as industrial.

Action Steps:

1. Rezone the area located to the west of the current UPM/Blandin plant to industrial.
2. Rezone the area north of the current City boundary located between the TH 38 (Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway) corridor and the bike trail corridor to industrial.
3. Rezone the area directly adjacent to the southwestern quadrant of the airport south of Southeast 17<sup>th</sup> Street to industrial.



Strategy 3: Promote the retention and expansion of existing, and the attraction of new, industrial development opportunities in suitable locations, including areas in and around the airport.

Action Steps:

1. Actively participate in the regional JOBZ process.
2. Foster communication and cooperation between business groups, the Airport Commission, and Itasca County regarding development in and around the airport.

Strategy 4: Mitigate negative impacts to residential areas that are located near industrial uses.

Action Step:

1. Establish and enforce buffering requirements between industrial uses and nearby residential areas.

*Objective 4: Protect and enhance the affordability, livability, and viability, of Grand Rapids' residential neighborhoods.*

Strategy 1: Protect existing residential areas from encroachment by incompatible development.

Action Steps:

1. Buffer residential areas from impacts associated with incompatible uses.
2. Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to residential areas.
3. Establish a philosophy or strategy for buffering.

Strategy 2: Promote inclusive and economically integrated neighborhoods that allow a diverse mix of residents and housing types.

Action Steps:

1. Seek to provide a range of housing options throughout Grand Rapids.
2. Allow all congregate uses in medium density residential districts and distinguish nursing homes as a unique use.

Strategy 3: Promote the development and retention of traditional neighborhoods in and adjacent to the urbanized area of Grand Rapids.

Action Steps:

1. Establish design standards that preserve the aesthetic character and function of established neighborhoods.
2. Connect neighborhoods with greenbelts, arterial sidewalks, bicycle paths/routes, commercial nodes, and public facilities.
3. Provide neighborhood amenities throughout the community in an equitable manner.

Strategy 4: Promote neighborhood identity, pride, and sense of place.

Action Steps:

1. Establish formalized neighborhood planning groups to advocate for neighborhood specific issues.
2. Rezone appropriate areas to accommodate the development of convenience goods and services commercial nodes to serve individual neighborhoods.
3. Maintain public space amenities in neighborhoods that have them and establish them in neighborhoods that do not.

Strategy 5: Allow uses and activities appropriate to the character of the residential district.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a transitional residential zoning district for transitions from urban to rural residential areas.
2. Establish a rural residential zoning district that allows for uses appropriate a rural residential lifestyle. Review all appropriate City ordinances and regulations while creating a rural residential district to ensure that the interests of rural resident in pursuing a rural lifestyle are protected while at the same time protecting the interests of the City.

*Objective 5: Encourage new, planned mixed-use developments, in which the attributes of traditional neighborhood development dominate.*

Strategy 1: Provide opportunities for mixed-use development in Grand Rapids.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a mixed-use zoning district that allows a mixture of office, retail, residential, and public uses.

2. Establish development standards for mixed-use districts that include an interconnected street pattern with sidewalks, smaller blocks, and a formal square in the neighborhood center.
3. Identify areas that are appropriate for the establishment of a mixed-use district.
4. Once identified, rezone appropriate areas to mixed-use.
5. Encourage developers to engage in mixed-use development in the designated mixed-use districts.

*Objective 6: Support the development and expansion of medical uses in Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Group medical uses, including medical and dental clinics, in areas of similar use.

Action Steps:

1. Expand the medical district associated with the future Grand Itasca Hospital campus to include the area across Golf Course Road to accommodate future medical related development.
2. Allow nursing homes in the medical district.
3. Rezone the area where the County nursing home is located to medical.

*Objective 7: Balance open space and environmental preservation with the Grand Rapids' development needs.*

Strategy 1: Protect and preserve existing open space and encourage the expansion of urban and rural green spaces in suitable locations to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors.

Action Steps:

1. Provide open space that is easily accessible to residents at the neighborhood level.
2. Rezone the residentially zoned area located on the on the west side of TH 169 South between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets Southwest to Conservancy District (CD).
3. Consider the potential impacts of development upon open space when hearing rezoning requests.
4. Establish a Green Space Master Plan in order to preserve, expand, and coordinate green space and to protect the broader public interest.

Strategy 2: Protect and preserve existing trees and encourage the planting of additional trees in suitable locations to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors.

Action Steps:

1. Review the City's tree preservation policy for efficacy.
2. Establish a Silviculture Master Plan.

Strategy 3: Protect, preserve, and enhance the quality of Grand Rapids lakes and lakeshores

Action Step:

1. Establish a Lake Preservation and Development Policy that seeks to protect, preserve, and enhance the quality of lakes and lakeshores.

*Objective 8: Provide sufficient opportunities for public use activities within Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Mitigate potential conflicts between activities associated with public use districts and adjacent uses.

Action Steps:

1. Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to public use districts that are appropriate to the activities within them.

Strategy 2: Rezone appropriate areas as Public Use.

Action Steps:

1. Rezone the area associated with the University of Minnesota North Central Research and Outreach Center to public use.
2. Rezone the area south of County State Aid Highway 63, northeast of Potlatch property to public use.
3. Rezone the area south of the Mississippi River extending from the peninsula directly north of the future Grand Itasca hospital site westward to include the Forrest History Center property.

Strategy 3: Protect the current and future viability of the Itasca County Fairgrounds.

Action Steps:

1. Review and, if appropriate, implement the recommendations made in the "Northeastern Grand Rapids Area Strategic Plan: Cooperative Planning Study, Itasca County Fairgrounds."

**Goal 2: Provide physical accessibility throughout Grand Rapids.**

*Objective 1: Encourage and facilitate accessibility by walking and cycling as well as by motorized vehicles.*

Strategy 1: Encourage the development of pathways that link the community together in a cohesive manner.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a network of arterial sidewalks in the urbanized area of Grand Rapids that connect neighborhoods to work, school, shopping, and recreation.
2. Develop a network of connected bicycle paths/routes throughout the urban and rural areas of Grand Rapids that connect to work, school, shopping, and recreation.

*Objective 2: Encourage the provision of access to residents and visitors with disabilities.*

Strategy 1: Enforce accessibility rules that serve people with disabilities.

Action Steps:

1. Enforce the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Minnesota State Building Code regarding development and redevelopment.
2. Strictly enforce rights-of-way laws regarding access to public streets and sidewalks, including crosswalks, curb ramps, street furnishings, parking, and other components of public rights-of-way.

### **Goal 3: Preserve community landmarks**

*Objective 1: Promote the preservation of those sites, buildings, structures, objects and natural resources that are associated with the historical and cultural development of Grand Rapids.*

Strategy 1: Develop a community landmark preservation plan.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a community landmark preservation commission or other group.
2. Establish criteria and methodology to determine what constitutes a community landmark.
3. Once criteria and methodology have been established, inventory buildings, structures, objects, and natural resources that meet those criteria.
4. Develop a framework for seeking to preserve those identified community landmarks.
5. Create and Implement Plan

**Goal 4: Protect the Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway Corridor**

*Objective 1: Protect the Visual Integrity of the Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway.*

Strategy 1: Maintain appropriate buffering on both sides of byway.

Action Steps:

1. Rezone the byway corridor to Conservancy District.
2. Protect existing trees adjacent to byway and (re)plant trees as needed.

Strategy 2: Ensure that signage along the Grand Rapids portion of the byway remains consistent with the remainder of the byway.

Action Step:

1. Adopt and enforce a Minnesota Trunk Highway 38 (Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway) Sign Ordinance that is identical to that established by Itasca County.

**Goal 5: Ensure that riverfront development meets the needs of current and future Grand Rapids Residents**

Action Step:

1. Review and, if appropriate, implement the recommendations made in the "The Riverfront Framework Plan."

# **I**MPLEMENTATION

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The implementation element provides a general overview of the opportunities for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and recommendations for updating it. Plan implementation is firmly tied to the ability of the City to promote the plan over the long term. Key partners in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan include the decision-makers, staff, and residents of Grand Rapids. The City Council, Planning Commission, and City staff will study and understand the plan and serve as its implementers. The support of City residents and business owners is essential to the successful implementation of the plan.

## **IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

Implementation tools are clear and specific mechanisms that the City can use to guide its future development. Furthermore, they represent a means to realize the vision for Grand Rapids that was established by the community as part of this planning process. Because of this, it is critical that the tools the City uses to influence development are either instituted or revised in a way that is consistent with this plan and its spirit. The following implementation tools can be fashioned in ways that reflect the community values identified in this plan and thereby help accomplish objectives, further goals, and promote the larger community vision.

### **Official Controls**

Official controls are tools that the City uses to regulate land use and establish standards for development. Official controls include the zoning and subdivision regulations that the City uses to establish standards for development and regulate land use. The City's land use ordinance utilizes zoning districts as its principal tool to implement the City's land use policies. The land use ordinance consists of two essential elements, the ordinance text and the official zoning map. The ordinance text sets forth the specific guidelines for the development of land within Grand Rapids and the official map delineates zoning district boundaries. The City will review its land use ordinance and zoning map and compare them with the adopted goals and strategies included in this plan in order to identify and reconcile areas of discrepancy.

The subdivision ordinance regulates the subdivision of parcels and coordinates private investment with public infrastructure. Subdivision regulations ensure that appropriate physical development and the provision of adequate public infrastructure are available to areas of growth. The subdivision ordinance ensures that the costs of public improvements associated with new development are assessed to the developer and new residents rather than to the established community.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Intergovernmental cooperation is an arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. Intergovernmental cooperation can be as simple as communicating and sharing information, or it can be as involved as entering into formal intergovernmental or joint powers agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue. It can even involve the consolidation services, jurisdictions, or the transference of territory.

The pursuit of appropriate intergovernmental cooperation will help the City build and sustain relationships with other units of government in order to encourage planned growth and development, promote economic vitality, enhance the quality of life for its residents, and promote its interests.

## **Additional Studies and Planning Activity**

This Comprehensive Plan provides a broad guide and vision for future development in Grand Rapids. However, it is important to recognize that some issues may require additional studies or planning efforts before specific courses of action can be recommended. For example, the ability to address housing needs within Grand Rapids may require that a comprehensive analysis be made. Information collected during the course of such studies will be used in amending the Comprehensive Plan in order to address any pressing needs.

## **Capital Improvement Programs**

Capital improvements are publicly owned physical improvements to the City's infrastructure. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) establishes schedules and priorities for capital improvements and usually identifies projects five years out. Projects typically included in a CIP are of three types, (i) the reconstruction, major maintenance, or upgrading of existing facilities; (ii) new projects in developed areas where the need or demand already exists; and (iii) the expansion of projects in partially developed or developing areas where demand is anticipated as a result of, or in preparation for, future growth. The City of Grand Rapids will develop a CIP framework that identifies, estimates the costs of, and prioritizes needed public improvements over a given period. Recognizing that the City's financial resources are limited, a CIP framework integrated into the decision-making process will allow it to provide the most critical of public improvements while staying within budgetary constraints.



## **Other strategies**

Unforeseen circumstances may arise that require the City's attention but for which the Comprehensive Plan provides no direction. When confronted with a particular issue or request, the City Council may employ such strategies as policy directives or statements of position that allow for satisfactory resolution. When such strategies have been employed by the City, and are determined to have future value, they may be included as part of the Comprehensive Plan during the next scheduled Plan review and update.

## **PLAN UPDATE PROTOCOLS**

The Comprehensive Plan touches on a broad list of topics intended to direct future growth and development in Grand Rapids. These topics include land use, transportation, community facilities and services, and economic development. For each topic area, the Comprehensive Plan presents goals that reflect the desired conditions to be achieved in the future. Each goal includes a set of objectives that represent intermediate goals, which together help bring the larger goal to fruition. Implementation strategies are identified for each objective and, where appropriate, action steps have been identified as part of those strategies. The goals can be characterized as policy statements describing long-term outcomes. The strategies are more concrete and action-oriented. While the goals provide long-range vision and are less likely to change over time, the strategies and associated action steps may change over time as needs change and new opportunities arise.

The City Council, City Boards and Commissions, and City staff should familiarize themselves with the Plan and should follow its guidance in making decisions. New members of the City Council and City Boards and Commissions, and new department heads should be given copies of the Plan as part of their orientation process. The Plan should be cited or referenced in support of land use decisions made by City officials and staff. The Plan is intended to be the foundation upon which subsequent land use decisions and regulation rest.

## **Plan Review and Updating**

Recognizing the dynamic nature of society, the City should periodically review the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that it appropriately reflects the current conditions and views that exist within the Community and update it as appropriate. The City should adopt a public review process with a schedule and protocol for reviewing and updating the plan. The review should assess the successes and challenges of implementing the plan, consider any new developments that may impact the City, and address any significant changes in public opinion. This plan review process might include the following procedures:

- ◆ Beginning upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, conduct an annual training session concerning the content and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for the City Council, Planning Commission, and critical staff of City departments.
- ◆ An annual strategic planning session to identify available resources and opportunities to carry out strategies as identified in the plan, as well to identify new initiatives that work towards achieving the plan's goals.
- ◆ An annual progress report on plan implementation presented to the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission by department heads.
- ◆ An annual meeting of an official committee composed of community members and members of the original planning group who were active, regular participants of the original process to assess plan progress and ensure accountability.
- ◆ An update of the Plan every three years.
- ◆ A periodic review of background information.
- ◆ Periodic, but regular survey of the Grand Rapids Community. The survey results can be thought of as a temporal snapshot of Community attitudes. Residents' attitudes concerning important issues are likely to change over time. A regular update of the survey can act as a 'reality check' by helping to ensure that decision-makers and staff are aware of current views.

### **IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

The Comprehensive Plan provides desired outcomes in the form of goals that reflect the Grand Rapids community vision. The objectives and strategies in the Plan are intended to provide direction towards these outcomes. The Plan review process will provide a forum to discuss priorities and propose amendments to the Plan as needed. It is recognized that resources are limited and that not every proposed study or policy can be immediately implemented. This section provides an implementation matrix that lists all of the goals, objectives, strategies, and action steps included in this Plan. Each actionable item has a suggested timeline for implementation and is identified as an ongoing, short-term (0-5 years), mid-term (6-10) or a long-term (11 years and beyond) need. Some strategies are recommended to be started short term, however they may represent an ongoing effort that goes beyond the five-year horizon. In addition, the implementation Matrix identifies those responsible for implementation of the actionable items. This provides a tool for project prioritization and review of Plan progress. Furthermore, it allows for accountability should implementation experience significant delays.

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - OVERALL GOAL: ENSURE THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF PUBLIC ASSETS TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN THE CITY'S PHYSICAL AND SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>TIME FRAME<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Develop and maintain operating policies that will ensure financial sustainability for all City operations.	Develop a decision-making and policy framework for public expenditures that reflects a business plan format in order to protect the public interest through fiscally responsible practices.	Identify central elements of a business plan approach to public expenditures that promotes fiscal responsibility.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Identify specific tools that can be used to evaluate and encourage fiscal responsibility including fiscal impact analysis, cost-revenue analysis, impact on fees, and capital budgeting analysis.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Once central elements and tools have been identified, complete a draft business plan that places responsibility and accountability on department heads for efficient budget expenditures, all under the guidance of the City Council.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Implement a business plan approach to public expenditures	Short-Term	GR City Council

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES GOAL 1: PROVIDE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO PROMOTE THE SURVIVAL AND GROWTH OF GRAND RAPIDS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Continue to develop Grand Rapids as a regional medical center by expanding medical facilities by adding advanced services and technology.	Expand the level and scope of specialty health care within Grand Rapids concurrent to the demand/need for additional services.		Ongoing	GrandItasca Hospital and other area service providers
	Explore new and advanced technologies for medical care facilities in Grand Rapids		Ongoing	GrandItasca Hospital and other area service providers

<sup>1</sup> Time frames are tentative and subject to change.

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION GOAL 1: PROVIDE AND FACILITATE AFFORDABLE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL DEMOGRAPHICS TO SUPPORT PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS WITHIN GRAND RAPIDS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Maintain corroborative efforts with existing community programs to provide recreation services.		Conduct biennial meetings with recreation leaders to discuss facility needs and determine who is in charge of specific programs.	Short-Term	GR Parks and Recreation Board
Evaluate and determine the need for parks in newly annexed areas of Grand Rapids and develop strategies for connectivity with existing park facilities.		Hold neighborhood meetings in newly annexed areas to identify recreation needs and potential funding sources	Short-Term	GR Parks and Recreation Board
Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity within neighborhoods.	As community roads are developed and improved, if it is an identified bicycle and pedestrian corridor, design sidewalks/trails with a grass boulevard and planted trees to separate from roadways.		Short-Term	GR Engineering and Parks and Recreation Department
Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to and between local destinations		Construct a pedestrian/ bicycle path on the Pokegama Avenue Bridge.	Mid-range	GR Engineering, Parks and Recreation Department, and Mn/DOT

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - UTILITIES GOAL 1: MEET THE BASIC NEEDS OF GRAND RAPIDS CITIZENS WITH COST EFFECTIVE AND QUALITY SERVICES</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provide efficient, adequate, and safe drinking water, wastewater, and energy systems that meet the long-term needs of the community.	Operate and maintain drinking water infrastructure and facilities in an efficient and economical manner.	Adopt and implement recommendations of "The Comprehensive Water Study."  Regularly review and update, if necessary, "The Comprehensive Water Study."	Short-Term  Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission  GR Public Utilities Commission
	Operate and maintain wastewater collection and treatment facilities in an efficient and economical manner, allowing compliance to all regulatory standards.	Meet State and Federal effluent discharge standards.	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission
	Operate and maintain an energy system in Grand Rapids that is affordable, reliable, efficient, and respectful of established environmental standards.	Remain aware of the district heating study as development proposals are brought forward.	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - UTILITIES GOAL 2: FACILITATE HEALTHY GROWTH AND PREPARE FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Be aware of future generations when policies are set that will impact the environment and natural resources.	Design facilities and infrastructure to minimize conflict with the natural environment and natural resources.	Identify potential environmental and natural resource conflicts concerning new or upgrades to existing facilities prior to design phase.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission, Public Works, and Engineering
		Seek to minimize potential conflicts during design phase.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission, Public Works, and Engineering
Ensure adequate service capacity to support growth by meeting future business and residential demand without degrading or diminishing service to existing users.	Provide the community with adequate wastewater treatment capacity utilizing technology enhancements.	Maintain awareness of new wastewater treatment technology.	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission
		Examine the feasibility of incorporating promising new technology into the City's wastewater treatment facility	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission
Be proactive in economic development & community planning while participating in cooperative efforts with other governments & community organizations.			Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission, Public Works, and Engineering

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - UTILITIES GOAL 2: FACILITATE HEALTHY GROWTH AND PREPARE FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (CONTINUED)				
Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Initiate policies, programs, and infrastructure changes that will improve public safety.	Establish criteria and adopt and maintain an Infrastructure plan as a part of the City Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).	Develop criteria for the development of an infrastructure plan.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission
		Develop infrastructure plan.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission
		Adopt and maintain the infrastructure plan as a part of the City CIP.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission
		Regularly review and update infrastructure plan.	Short-Term	GR Public Utilities Commission
	When practical and available, new electrical systems should be developed and constructed underground.	Determine practicality of place planned electrical infrastructure underground.	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission
		When practicality is determined, place planned electrical infrastructure underground.	Ongoing	GR Public Utilities Commission
Ensure the availability of proven telecommunications technology and infrastructure to enhance and maintain business competitiveness and residential quality of life.	Expand the availability of broadband technologies within the City of Grand Rapids.	The City should take into account proven technology when reviewing, renewing, or assigning franchises.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		The City should consider both the current and future competitiveness of technology when reviewing, renewing, or assigning franchises.	Short-Term	GR City Council
	Encourage partnerships among appropriate parties that provide the most effective, lowest cost communication services.	Provide a forum for communication services stakeholders to encourage the development of partnerships.	Short-Term	GR City Council

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - UTILITIES GOAL 2: FACILITATE HEALTHY GROWTH AND PREPARE FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Promote open and ongoing dialogue with Grand Rapids community	Develop a process of ongoing communication with the public.	Identify appropriate mechanism for ongoing dialogue with the public.	Short-Term	GR PUC, Public Works, & Engineering
		Develop an outreach/education strategy to promote better understanding of improvement projects and their relationship to quality of life and the greater good of the community.	Short-Term	GR PUC, Public Works, & Engineering
	Provide an ongoing staff support system to enhance quality of service.	Provide customer service training to staff that interact with the public.	Short-Term	GR City Council

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES SERVICES - EMERGENCY SERVICES GOAL 1: ENSURE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY.</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provide increased police patrol visibility in residential areas and newly annexed areas of Grand Rapids.	Maintain staffing of patrol officers at an adequate level.	Establish criteria for determining what constitutes an adequate level of staffing.	Short Term	Grand Rapids Police Department and City Council
	Ensure public safety through adequate traffic enforcement	Establish criteria for determining what constitutes an adequate level of traffic enforcement.	Ongoing	Grand Rapids Police Department and City Council
Ensure adequate fire service and response times.	Maintain adequate fire equipment and facilities.	Establish methodology for determining adequate fire equipment and facilities needs.  Once methodology is established, conduct periodic needs analyses of fire equipment and facilities needs based upon that methodology.	Short Term	Grand Rapids Fire Department and City Council



Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES SERVICES - EMERGENCY SERVICES GOAL 1: ENSURE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY.**

Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Promote inter-agency cooperation (mutual-aid) and efforts in providing services to Grand Rapids and the surrounding communities			Mid Range	Grand Rapids Police Department, Fire Department, Ambulance, and City Council

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES SERVICES - EDUCATION GOAL 1: SEEK TO MAINTAIN HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL CITIZENS OF GRAND RAPIDS, YOUNG OR OLD**

Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Develop strategies that support/assist the school district.	Ensure the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure.	Develop an understanding of current and future school district infrastructure needs.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		Establish common goals for facility development and maintenance.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		Provide safe walking routes to and from school through the provision of appropriate sidewalk infrastructure (see transportation goal 1) and strategically placed stoplights, crosswalks, signage, and crossing guards.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
	Establish working relationships between City staff and school district	Provide regular forums for City and school district staff interaction.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Involve school district staff in planning efforts that will likely impact the school district.	Short-Term	GR City Council
Invest in early childhood development.	Support and promote activities to further early childhood education.	Develop a council or forum for early childhood educators and caregivers and charge the group with researching model city sponsored programs for early childhood education undertaken by other cities.	Short Term	GR City Council
		Identify the best model program(s) and determine their feasibility for implementation by the City of Grand Rapids. Implement best feasible program.	Short-Term	Council or forum established above GR City Council

Community Facilities and Services Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES SERVICES - EDUCATION GOAL 1: SEEK TO MAINTAIN HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL CITIZENS OF GRAND RAPIDS, YOUNG OR OLD (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Focus on improving and increasing continuing education opportunities for adults.	Determine the needs of continuing education in the community and identify any actions/activities the City could undertake to improve the quality of and opportunities for continuing education.	Meet with continuing education providers to understand ways the city might be able to play a positive role.	Short-Term	GR City Council
Support and promote extracurricular activities within Grand Rapids.	Proactively address the need for extracurricular activities within Grand Rapids.	Establish a youth advisory committee to keep current with the desires and needs of the City's school age community members regarding extracurricular activities.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Hold periodic stakeholder meetings to identify desired extracurricular activities and infrastructure that the school district cannot provide.	Short-Term	GR City Council

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL 1: MAINTAIN A SAFE AND EFFICIENT CITY WIDE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ACCESS NEEDS OF GRAND RAPIDS CITIZENS, INDUSTRIES, AND VISITORS**

Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
		Implement the recommendations over which the City has control made in past transportation planning efforts. Such efforts have resulted in the 2001 "Grand Rapids Area Transportation Plan Update," the 2003 "Trunk Highway 169 South Access Management Plan," and the "Airport Plan"	As recommended in each past plan	As recommended in each past plan

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL 2: STRIVE TO BECOME A "WALKABLE CITY"**

Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Construct and maintain facilities, services, and programs that encourage walking.	Create a network of sidewalks and trails that serve the entire community and provides for safe pedestrian access to all potential destinations in town including schools, downtown, Itasca Community College, community facilities, major shopping areas, and residential areas.	Require the inclusion of sidewalks in all new development unless it is demonstrated that they are not needed because the subject development is zoned rural in nature and sidewalks are not practical, or an adequate alternative pedestrian circulation system is provided. In both cases a variance from the sidewalk requirement is require.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Engineering, Planning Commission, and City Council
		Include bicycle lanes and sidewalks or off-road non-motorized trails when new roads are planned and in all reconstruction plans for city streets.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., and Engineering
		Connect sidewalks that are isolated from the rest of the walkway system.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., and Engineering
		Continue to pursue funding for a streetscape project along TH 2 downtown to create a more pedestrian-friendly area.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev.,
		Continue to monitor traffic and pedestrian patterns to determine needs.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev., and Engineering
		Sidewalk should be placed near property lines with space for a boulevard where grass and trees planted in regular intervals can be planted.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., and Engineering, Planning Com. & City Council
	Maintenance	Provide regular maintenance including sweeping and safety assessments of existing sidewalks, trails, and bicycle lanes.	Ongoing	GR Public Works
		Provide all walkways with surfaces free of obstructions and maintain all bike-walkways free of trash, gravel, snow, and other hazards.	Ongoing	GR Public Works

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 2: STRIVE TO BECOME A “WALKABLE CITY” (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Educate the general public on the importance of the sidewalk and bikeway system and its safe use.	Create a long-term education program to change the travel habits of residents, visitors and workers by informing them about transportation alternatives, incentives and impacts.	Incorporate citizen involvement in the process of planning and repairing sidewalk facilities.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Engineering & Public Works
		Work with the Chamber to develop a pedestrian map/safety information pamphlet.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com, Dev.

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 3: PROVIDE A SAFE, CONVENIENT, EFFICIENT, CONTINUOUS, AND AESTHETICALLY PLEASING TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO BOTH RECREATIONAL BICYCLING AND USING THE BICYCLE FOR A COMMUTING PURPOSE</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and between local destinations, including public facilities, schools, parks, open space, employment districts, and shopping centers.	Bicycle facilities should be planned as part of the infrastructure, as are highways and utilities.	Extend the separated trail system into new neighborhoods as the city grows. Connections should be made to schools, parks, and other activity areas.	Mid-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev and Engineering
		New construction should focus on linking existing trails to form a continuous network. While trail systems are usually implemented one section at a time, long-range planning should be emphasized so continuous corridors are eventually created.	Long-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev and Engineering

**Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps**

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 3: PROVIDE A SAFE, CONVENIENT, EFFICIENT, CONTINUOUS, AND AESTHETICALLY PLEASING TRANSPORTATION ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO BOTH RECREATIONAL BICYCLING AND USING THE BICYCLE FOR A COMMUTING PURPOSE</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Educate cyclists, pedestrians & motorists about safety concerns related to the use of bicycles, and encourage wide use of bike/walkways. Promote bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation.	Develop educational materials for the motorized and non-motorized public.	Establish and post rules for safe trail use.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev. and Engineering
		Provide information so people are more aware of the trails and bicyclists.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev. and Engineering
		Publish a trail guide and coordinate trail activities.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
Maintain and provide regular safety assessments of existing trails and bike routes.	Develop, periodically update, and implement a bicycle facilities improvement program.	Incorporate citizen involvement in the process of planning and repairing bicycle facilities.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Engineering & Public Works
		Design, layout, and construct trails in a manner that will minimize long-term maintenance.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com, Dev. and Engineering

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 4: WORK WITH ARROWHEAD TRANSIT TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN, AND ENHANCE THE TRANSIT SYSTEM</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Work to expand and improve service in response to community growth, and to enhance transit accessibility and convenience.	Coordinate land use decisions with existing transportation services.	Support development that is transit friendly for the aging and the disabled.	Ongoing	GR City Council

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 5: PROVIDE AN AVIATION FACILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PASSENGERS, THE CITY, COMMERCIAL AIRLINES, AND GENERAL AVIATION IN A SAFE AND EFFICIENT MANNER</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Guide future airport development so that it will satisfy aviation demand.	Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and citizens.	Enforce airport safety zone restrictions through the zoning ordinance to prevent hazards or obstructions to planned air space and citizens.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Community Development
Support airport economic development activities.	Promote use of the airport.	Enhance the airport’s revenue stream by promoting hangar rentals, the flight instruction school, aircraft and fuel sales, aircraft maintenance, and general marketing.	Short-Term	Airport Commission and HRA
		Encourage public use of the airport terminal for meetings, informational gatherings, and special events.	Short-Term	Airport Commission and HRA & GR Com. Dev.
		Encourage airport attractions to increase tourism in Grand Rapids and enable the town to be a frequent stop for small plane travel.	Short-Term	HRA
		Rework the signage leading to the airport to eliminate motorist confusion.	Short-Term	GR Public Works
	Airport development should be consistent and coordinated with the commercial/ economic development occurring around the airport.		Short-Term	HRA and Airport Commission
Support the following airport expansion plans.		Reduce the land use area restricted by the crosswinds runway by shifting the western end of the runway eastward to the point it intersects with the main runway.	See Airport Plan	See Airport Plan
		Extend runway 16/34 1,410 feet to the south and the opposite (north) threshold would be relocated 65 feet to the south, resulting in 7100 feet of runway available for takeoff. The extended runway should be designated for C-II aircraft with a maximum weight less than 60,000 pounds on dual gear.	See Airport Plan	See Airport Plan
		Extend parallel taxiway A. With the expansion of runway 16/34 the parallel taxiway A would need to be extended the full length of the runway.	See Airport Plan	See Airport Plan
		Install an Instrument Landing System for approach to Runway 16.	See Airport Plan	See Airport Plan

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 6: MAINTAIN THE FUNCTION OF THE STREET SYSTEM FOR CURRENT USERS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS AND FOR USE BY FUTURE GENERATIONS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Create and retain streets that promote a mix of uses such as car travel, transit, and bicycling.	Include pedestrian and bicycle provisions in all roadway projects.	The City shall use street resurfacing projects as an opportunity to install or enhance sidewalks, bicycle lanes, raised medians, and painted crosswalks, where feasible. If the project is not under City jurisdiction, the City shall recommend that the State or the County make such enhancements.	Mid-Term	Engineering
		Use traffic calming, where appropriate, to promote transportation choice, to reduce the negative impacts of car travel, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.	Short-Term	GR Engineering, HRA & Com. Development
		Increase street tree plantings and landscaping in medians and along arterials to calm traffic, soften the effects of arterial streets, and where appropriate, provide separation between pedestrians and other modes of transportation.	Short-Term	GR Engineering, HRA & Com. Development
Promote land use policies that limit access as necessary to maintain safe and efficient operation of the existing road system.	Limit access to all arterial routes.	Implement access management standards to better manage the number of driveways, their location, and spacing; street intersections and connections; medians and median openings; marginal access roads; traffic signal location and timing; turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration lanes; and, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	See Access Management Plan	See Access Management Plan
		Implement the TH 169 South Access Management Plan.	See Access Management Plan	See Access Management Plan

Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 6: MAINTAIN THE FUNCTION OF THE STREET SYSTEM FOR CURRENT USERS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS AND FOR USE BY FUTURE GENERATIONS				
Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
The street layout of new developments shall be coordinated with the streets and parking of surrounding areas.	Serve residential neighborhoods with collector roads, and commercial areas with collector and arterial roads into which local roads connect, in order to retain the local nature of neighborhood roads.	All new development shall be reviewed for appropriate opportunities to connect to local roads and collectors in adjacent developments.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		Develop grid systems at commercially zoned arterial intersections, where feasible, in order to support increased traffic.	Mid-Range	GR Engineering
		Should the City allow private street development, the owner or developer of all new developments located within Grand Rapids will conform to city street standards for private road development.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Engineering, and Planning Commission
		Provide street lighting along all new or improved collector and arterial roads, and along local roads where requested by petition.	Short-term	GR Engineering
		Require the construction of dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs to be extended to the farthest property line to ensure planned extensions.	Short-term	HRA & GR Com. Dev. and Engineering,
		Identify the impact of dead-end streets on the flow of traffic within and between neighborhoods. Determine feasible and appropriate courses of action, such as right-of-way or easement acquisition, and other means to remedy dead-end streets.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		All streets in Grand Rapids will be constructed to urban street standards unless zoned rural residential.	Short-Term	GR Engineering,
		When the need arises the City should project possible future street routes and connections.	Short-Term	GR Engineering,



Transportation Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 6: MAINTAIN THE FUNCTION OF THE STREET SYSTEM FOR CURRENT USERS, EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS AND FOR USE BY FUTURE GENERATIONS (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Protect previous investments and ensure efficient use of the road system by giving high priority to operational maintenance, safety improvements, and capacity improvements that are cost-effective projects (such as signalization upgrades, adding turn lanes, and signage) and increased level of service.	Maintain the public road system in a cost-effective manner to extend the roadway surface life, minimize traffic congestion, and allow for the safety of the public in all seasons and weather conditions.	Implement recommendations made in the 2002 Grand Rapids Area Transportation Plan Update that have not been completed.	See area transportation plan	See area transportation plan
		Resurface streets within two years of major utility work if frequent or extensive patching reduces rideability to a level below other City streets.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		On an annual or bi-annual basis, have a transportation committee evaluate the Transportation element to identify necessary adjustments and periodically consider and implement plan amendments.	Short-Term	GR Transportation Committee
		Continue to maintain existing streets based on the pavement software management program currently used by the Engineering department.	Ongoing	GR Engineering

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL 7: PROMOTE SAFE AND EFFICIENT RAIL SERVICE TO GRAND RAPIDS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
The City shall support preservation and use of the existing railroad system and encourage improvements that could benefit potential industrial development.	Protect the railroad corridor for the safe transportation of people and goods.	Review the land use plan, zoning and subdivision standards along the existing rail corridor to ensure appropriate land uses and site design to avoid encroachment and noise issues.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev. and Planning Commission
		Minimize at-grade crossings of the track for new projects.	Mid-Term	GR Engineering
		Coordinate with the railroad companies to provide appropriate signage, traffic controls and public education to minimize train-crossing accidents in the community.	Short-Term	GR Engineering, HRA & Com. Dev.
		Close the 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue NE crossing and redesign the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE crossing, along with installing gates and lights.	Mid-Term	GR Engineering
		Close the 12 <sup>th</sup> Avenue NW railroad crossing, improve the intersection at 18 <sup>th</sup> Avenue NW and TH 2 by adding an extra long turn lane eastbound and a center left turn lane westbound.	Short-Term	GR Engineering
		Develop a long-range railroad crossing master plan.	Short-Term	GR Engineering

**Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps**

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1: RETAIN AND ENHANCE EXISTING BUSINESSES</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Seek to understand and address the needs of existing businesses.	Conduct an ongoing business retention and expansion (BRE) Program	Collaborate with “Grow Itasca” through the Grand Rapids Economic Development Authority (HRA) and receive periodic updates	Short Term	HRA
		Maintain a positive and responsive working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, IDC and Jobs 2020, Business Roundtable, and similar organizations.	Short Term	HRA
Make businesses feel welcome	Collaborate with other development organizations..	Promote close cooperation between the City and the various economic development organizations and promote the definition of the roles of those organizations to reduce duplication of efforts.	Ongoing	HRA, IDC & Jobs 2020, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Council, and others.
		Develop methodology of measuring the feeling of “welcomeness” among local businesses through a collaborative effort between the EDA and IDC and Jobs 2020.	Short Term	HRA and IDC & Jobs 2020
		Improve communications between government and the business community by hosting/providing an annual “public/private summit” to enhance communication.	Ongoing	HRA
	Buy local whenever feasible.	Review purchasing practices among local businesses and government.	Ongoing	City of Grand Rapids, all departments
		Promote/support consumer promotion/education program.	Ongoing	City of Grand Rapids
Seek to improve customer service throughout the city	Proactively set example of improved customer service for local business	Conduct a customer service training program for City staff and offer such training to other local public and private entities.	Short Term	City of Grand Rapids
Support growth of existing businesses	Maintain a proactive Economic Development Authority (EDA).	Maintain knowledge of new State and Federal policies/development tools and take advantage of them as appropriate to leverage local economic development.	Ongoing	HRA
		Explore public/private/non-profit partnership opportunities.	Short-Term	HRA
		Appoint and train experienced EDA members.	Ongoing	GR City Council

**Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps**

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1: RETAIN AND ENHANCE EXISTING BUSINESSES (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Maintain and support a healthy infrastructure.	Maintain up-to-date capital improvement plan (CIP).	Fund implementation/construction of CIP priorities while remaining fiscally responsible.	Ongoing	GR City Council
	Enhance working relationship between City, Public Utility Commission (PUC), and other public entities.		Short Term	City of Grand Rapids, PUC, and Public Works.
	Support the presence of high-speed/high-volume broadband to businesses in City at competitive rates		Ongoing	GR City Council and HRA

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2: USE THE CITY'S AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC CLUSTERS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Improve individual factors that influence each cluster.	Assess the forest products industry and make specific improvements to the business climate.	Review Governor's Task Force Report and implement items under local control.	Short Term	GR City Council and HRA
		Use Chambers Forestry Affairs Committee, Blandin Foundation, IDC and JOBS 2020, and others as appropriate to augment report with additional items under local control.	Short Term	HRA
	Assess tourism industry in Itasca County.	Working from University of Minnesota Extension Office report on tourism, invite IDC and Jobs 2020 Tourism Task Force to complete SWOT analysis of Itasca County tourism industry.	Short Term	HRA
		Support the establishment of an identity/brand for Itasca County tourism.	Short Term	City Council
	Assess medical services industry in Itasca County	Meet with medical service providers, IDC and Jobs 2020, Itasca Community, and other stakeholders to asses what the City can do to assist in the development of the medical service industry.	Short-Term	HRA

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2: USE THE CITY'S AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC CLUSTERS (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Identify and leverage synergies among clusters.	Identify common assets – forests, roads, lakes and rivers, cultural assets, U of M North Central Research and Outreach Center, Forest History Center, among others.	Identify a natural owner of this project.	Short Term	GR City Council and HRA
		Charge this "natural owner" with completing this assignment in 3 months.	Short Term	GR City Council
	Map actions that promote uses of common assets for the benefit of multiple clusters.		Short Term	HRA
Promote specific opportunities of Itasca County forestry/tourism synergy.	Build awareness of forestry and tourism synergy within Itasca County	Convene IDC and JOBS 2020 forum in 2004 to build awareness of forestry/tourism synergy.	Short Term	IDC & Jobs 2020
		Develop marketing plan in collaboration with existing organizations and governmental units.	Short Term	HRA, County, IDC/Jobs 2020, others
		Implement the marketing plan.	Short Term	HRA, City Council, County, IDC/Jobs 2020, others
	Build awareness outside of Itasca County.	Develop and implement an external marketing plan.	Short Term	HRA, City Council, Itasca County, IDC/Jobs 2020, others
		Pool resources within the County for implementation.	Short Term	

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3: DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVERFRONT</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Agree on a land use plan for various sections and shorelines of the river.	Build consensus for development of river segments.	Review and update, if necessary, Riverfront Development Task Force Report.	Short Term	HRA & GR Community Development
		Formalize the acceptance of the plan. (Incorporate into land use section of this Comprehensive Plan).	Short Term	City Council

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3: DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVERFRONT (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Implement the plan.	Identify and assign responsibility for developing each segment of the river.	Review role of the Riverfront Development Task Force.	Short Term	HRA & GR Community Development
		Assign responsibility for implementing those parts of the plan that are outside the scope of the Task Force, or are not being advanced.	Short Term	City Council
	Clarify City of Grand Rapids' responsibility for plan implementation and monitoring.	Identify natural owner for implementation and monitoring.	Short Term	City Council
		Provide quarterly updates from the "natural owners" to the City Council.	Ongoing	"Natural owner" of plan implementation

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE CITY'S BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Re-develop a viable Downtown.	Create a vision for Downtown	Reconvene Downtown Business Council.	Short Term	Downtown Businesses
		Evaluate what is successful and not successful now in Grand Rapids, and why.	Short Term	HRA, Com. Dev., & Downtown Council
		Identify comparable cities with "successful" downtowns to benchmark.	Short Term	HRA, Com. Dev., & Downtown Council
		Visit these sites.		HRA, Com. Dev., & Downtown Council
		Agree on types of businesses that will thrive in downtown Grand Rapids.	Short Term	
		Convene appropriate stakeholders to review benchmark data and create the written vision document.	Short Term	HRA, Com. Dev., & Downtown Council
		Obtain needed public and private approvals	Short Term	GR City Council & Downtown Council
	Implement and promote a common theme that supports the vision.	Review and develop and implement design standards for the CDB (see <i>Grand Rapids Downtown Redevelopment Design Standards</i> , Blocks 18-21).	Short Term	GR Community Development and City Council

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE CITY'S BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	Provide necessary infrastructure.	Identify needed infrastructure for orderly development of the downtown vision. (Covered in detail under Goal 6: Planned Growth and Development - Speed up trains through town, Broad band, District heating, water pressure, overpass/bypass, etc.)	Ongoing	GR Public Works, Engineering, PUC, Mn/DOT, providers, Railroad
	Develop funding sources for implementation.	Develop a public/private investment fund.  Encourage downtown development that fits the plan and discourage development that falls outside the plan.  Pursue Small Cities Development Program funding through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the rehabilitation of downtown commercial properties.	Short Term  Ongoing  Short Term	HRA  City Engineering/ Building/Zoning Dept  HRA & GR Com. Dev.
	Work with existing businesses to improve and maintain office/storefronts.	Continue Storefront Renovation Loan Program.  Enforce present ordinances to improve storefronts.  Adopt ordinances to ensure maintenance of properties.	Ongoing  Ongoing  Short Term	HRA  HRA & Community Dev.  City Council
Enhance the East and West TH2, TH169 Business District	Encourage Use of the City Storefront Renovation Loan Program	Direct mail information on Program to commercial properties	Short-Term	HRA
	Support the implementation of TH2 objectives in the Transportation Plan	Promote the development of a new access to 3 <sup>rd</sup> St. N. industrial area  Promote the development of a pedestrian friendly streetscape along TH2  Promote the consolidation and improvement of railroad crossings to allow for increased train speeds through the City.	Short-Term  Short-Term  Mid-Term	GR Engineering  HRA , Com. Dev., & Engineering  GR Engineering
	Prepare for District Heating Asset	Be prepared to work with developers where district heating may be used if district heating becomes a possibility.	Ongoing	HRA

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE THE CITY'S BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Create new industrial business opportunities through industrial park development in the Airport South and Blandin West JOBZ areas.	Prepare a development plan	Assess land acquisition costs	Short-Term	HRA
		Develop a plan for relocation of existing occupants of the area.	Short-Term	HRA, & GR Com. Dev.
		Request a Feasibility Report from the City Engineer to assess the costs for infrastructure extensions.	Short-Term	HRA, & GR City Council
		Study options for platting or re-platting of JOBZ area property.	Short-Term	
		Compile list of available funding sources for land and infrastructure expenses.	Short-Term	HRA, & GR Com. HRA
	Implement Development Plan	Negotiate and acquire property.	Short-Term	HRA & City Council
		Contract for the development of a new industrial subdivision and coordinate with the Planning Commission and City Council in its review and approval.	Short-Term	HRA, City Council, & Planning Commission
		Initiate the rezoning of property to Industrial.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
		Contract for the design and construction of infrastructure.	Short-Term	GR City Council & HRA
		Work with IDC in development and implementation of a marketing plan for attracting business relocation to the JOBZ area.	Short-Term	HRA
Encourage the expansion of industries in the City's existing industrial parks into undeveloped lands included within the Industrial Parks JOBZ area.	Initiate discussion with existing industries	Explain the benefits of the JOBZ program	Short-Term	HRA
		Discuss current land prices	Short-Term	HRA
		Address concerns	Short-Term	HRA

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

Economic Development GOAL 5: Provide affordable housing opportunities				
Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Increase knowledge of housing issues in our community.	Identify stakeholders in the housing field.	Survey the realtors in the City and determine the largest demand for housing that they are not able to meet.	Short Term	Grand Rapids Community Development
		Monitor possible future building sites, i.e.: Old Middle School, and Old Hospital sites.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
		Refer to the 2003 Housing Study for housing demand.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
		Work with the private sector in developing housing.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
	Obtain periodic reports and updates from the City's HRA.		Ongoing	City of Grand Rapids & HRA
	Obtain periodic reports and ongoing dialogue on current housing trends and issues from advisory groups such as the Itasca Housing Coalition.	Focus on housing issues in the City of Grand Rapids through dialogue and trends.	Ongoing	City of Grand Rapids, Itasca Housing Coalition, other housing advisory groups
		Develop projects and implement, as needed.	Ongoing	
	Identify and develop strategic relationships with private and public housing development groups.		Short Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
Support the improvement of existing housing conditions.	Work creatively and collaboratively with partners in housing to structure financial options for affordable housing.	Work with entities such as GMHR, MN Housing Partnerships, lending institutions, and bond consultants.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com. Dev. & City Council
		Consider the use of TIF for the development of affordable housing projects.	Shot-Term	HRA, Com. Dev. & City Council
		Structure an RFP to private sector developers.	Short-Term	HRA
	Identify action steps and role definition of the City Council and HRA.		Short Term	Grand Rapids City Council, HRA & GR Com. Dev.



**Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps**

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5: PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	Support housing development and redevelopment strategies.	Pursue Small Cities Development Program funding through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for rehabilitation of owner- and renter-occupied housing.  Work with Kootasca in housing rehabilitation.	Short Term  Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.  HRA & GR Com. Dev.
	Proactively identify and support areas for development of future housing.	Develop a database of vacant property for sale.  Encourage the development of housing by the private sector.	Ongoing  Ongoing	HRA  HRA & GR Com. Dev., HRA, & City Council
	Consider development of an equity type proposal (land trust) to insure continued affordable housing.	Explore the potential for this strategy with organizations such as GMHF.  Meet with other communities that have implemented this type of strategy.	Short-Term  Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev.  HRA & GR Com. Dev.
	Build relationships with major area employers to promote public/private partnerships in the development of affordable housing.		Ongoing	HRA, GR Com. Dev. & City Council

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6: MAINTAIN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS THE GUIDE FOR ACHIEVING PLANNED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Update comprehensive plan regularly.		Convene special session of City Council and appropriate City boards and commissions to annually review plan and compliance.  Include plan progress updates in the Mayor's "State of the City" reports.	Ongoing  Ongoing	GR City Council  Mayor
Continue to develop zoning master plan and philosophy.		Hire expertise as required.	Short Term	City Council

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6: PLANNED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)				
Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
Establish City/Private partnerships to accomplish development.	Use this comprehensive plan to acquire the human and financial resources needed for future projects.	Submit proposals to Blandin Foundation and other funding sources to fund elements of the plan’s implementation.	Ongoing	HRA & GR Com. Dev.
		Assign HRA the responsibility of measuring the annual progress toward implementing the plan’s economic development element.	Short Term	City Council
	Partner with IDC and JOBS 2020 to optimize resources and align actions on a regional basis.		Short-Term	HRA & City Council

**Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps**

<b>LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES.</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensure that development is orderly and avoids the close proximity of conflicting uses.	Promote the highest and best use of land with special attention to use options in transition areas.	When determining the highest and best use, consider the site characteristics, market realities, and local development pattern when determining what use would develop the highest value.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Community Development and Planning Com.
		Ensure that new development is sensitive to and compatible with existing land uses.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Community Development and Planning Com.
		Require the mitigation of nuisances associated new development that conflicts with adjacent uses. Mitigation can include physical barriers, such as vegetative berms, hedges or other landscape cover, and walls or fences aesthetically designed for screening and noise reduction purposes.	Short-Term	HRA, GR Community Development and Planning Com.
		Develop a set of criteria to determine the circumstances in which it would be appropriate for residential property owners to mitigate nuisances associated with conflicting uses in transitional areas and amend the zoning ordinance to allow for it.	Short-Term	HRA, GR Community Development and Planning Com.
Ensure that opportunities for convenient and concentrated commercial development are provided to support both the local and regional market.	Provide opportunities for neighborhood commercial nodes that are compatible with residential property.	Rezone appropriate areas to accommodate the development of convenience goods and services commercial nodes to serve individual neighborhoods.	Short Term	HRA, GR Community Development, Planning Commission, and City Council
	Redevelop a viable downtown (see Economic Development Goal 4, Objective 1).	(See Economic Development Goal 4, Objective 1).	(See Economic Development Goal 4, Objective 1).	(See Economic Development Goal 4).

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES (CONTINUED).</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	Encourage/promote expansion of commercial opportunities in existing commercial corridors or nodes where infrastructure can support growth and where another use is not deemed more desirable by the City.	Ensure that (re)development of commercial property located in commercial corridors takes place in accordance with the principles of access management.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev., Engineering, Planning Com. and City Council, & Mn/DOT
	Allow commercial uses that are recreational in nature, whether privately owned or publicly owned.	<p>Establish a recreational commercial district that would allow for permitted and conditional uses such as shooting ranges, ATV parks, game farms, golf courses, and other commercially viable recreational activities.</p> <p>Rezone the area on County Road 256 (Patterson Road) to the west of residential the residential development off of TH 38 and to the east of the farmstead at the western terminus of CR 256 (Patterson Road) to recreational commercial.</p> <p>Rezone the golf course area to recreational commercial.</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p>	<p>HRA, GR Com Development, Planning Commission, and City Council</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Development, Planning Commission, and City Council</p> <p>Same as above</p>
Provide sufficient opportunities for industrial development sites within Grand Rapids.	Protect existing industrial development from encroachment by incompatible development.	<p>Whenever feasible, (re)zone land adjacent to new industrial development as industrial to serve as an industrial expansion area.</p> <p>Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to industrial areas.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission, and City Council</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission, and City Council</p>
	Rezone appropriate areas as industrial	<p>Rezone the area located to the west of the current UPM/Blandin plant to industrial.</p> <p>Rezone the area north of the current City boundary located between the TH 38 (Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway) corridor and the bike trail corridor to industrial.</p> <p>Rezone the area directly adjacent to the southwestern quadrant of the airport south of Southeast 17<sup>th</sup> Street to industrial.</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p>	<p>HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission, and City Council</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p>

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES (CONTINUED).</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	Promote the retention and expansion of existing, and the attraction of new, industrial development opportunities in suitable locations, including areas in and around the airport.	Actively participate in the regional JOBZ process.  Foster communication and cooperation between business groups and the Airport Commission regarding development in and around the airport.	Short Term  Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev  HRA, GR Com Dev, and Airport Commission
	Mitigate negative impacts to residential areas that are located near industrial uses.	Establish and enforce buffering requirements between industrial uses and nearby residential areas.	Short-Term	HRA, GR Com Dev. Planning Commission, and City Council
Protect and enhance the affordability, livability, and viability, of Grand Rapids' residential neighborhoods.	Protect existing residential areas from encroachment by incompatible development.	Buffer residential areas from impacts associated with incompatible uses.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev., Planning Commission, and City Council
		Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to residential areas.	Short-Term	HRA, GR Com Dev., Planning Commission, and City Council
		Establish a philosophy or strategy for buffering	Short-Term	Same as above
	Promote inclusive and economically integrated neighborhoods that allow a diverse mix of residents and housing types.	Seek to provide a range of housing options throughout Grand Rapids.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev
		Allow all congregate uses in medium density residential districts and distinguish nursing homes as a unique use.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission, and City Council
	Promote the development and retention of traditional neighborhoods in and adjacent to the urbanized area of Grand Rapids.	Establish design standards that preserve the aesthetic character and function of established neighborhoods.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission, & City Council
		Connect neighborhoods with greenbelts, arterial sidewalks, bicycle paths/routes, commercial nodes, and public facilities.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev, & Planning Commission
		Provide neighborhood amenities throughout the community in an equitable manner.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev& Planning Commission

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES (CONTINUED).				
Objective	Strategy	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility
	Promote neighborhood identity, pride, and sense of place.	<p>Establish formalized neighborhood planning groups to advocate for neighborhood specific issues.</p> <p>Rezone appropriate areas to accommodate the development of convenience goods and services commercial nodes to serve individual neighborhoods.</p> <p>Maintain public space amenities in neighborhoods that have them and establish them in neighborhoods that do not.</p>		
	Allow uses and activities appropriate to the character of the residential district.	<p>Establish a transitional residential zoning district for transitions from urban to rural residential areas.</p> <p>Establish a rural residential zoning district that allows for uses appropriate a rural residential lifestyle. Review all appropriate City ordinances and regulations while creating a rural residential district to ensure that the interests of rural resident in pursuing a rural lifestyle are protected while at the same time protecting the interests of the City.</p>		
Encourage new, planned mixed-use developments, in which the attributes of traditional neighborhood development dominate.	Provide opportunities for mixed-use development in Grand Rapids.	<p>Establish a mixed-use zoning district that allows a mixture of office, retail, residential, and public uses.</p> <p>Establish development standards for mixed-use districts that include an interconnected street pattern with sidewalks, smaller blocks, and a formal square in the neighborhood center.</p> <p>Identify areas that are appropriate for the establishment of a mixed-use district.</p> <p>Once identified, rezone appropriate areas to mixed-use.</p> <p>Encourage developers to engage in mixed-use development in the designated mixed-use districts.</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission and City Council</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission and City Council</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission and City Council</p> <p>HRA, GR Com Dev and Planning Commission</p>

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES (CONTINUED).</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Support the development and expansion of medical uses in Grand Rapids.	Group medical uses, including medical and dental clinics, in areas of similar use.	Expand the medical district associated with the future Grand Itasca Hospital campus to include the area across Golf Course Road to accommodate future medical related development.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Com. & City Council
		Allow nursing homes in the medical district	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Com. & City Council
		Rezone the area where the County nursing home is located to medical.	Short-Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission and City Council
Balance open space and environmental preservation with the Grand Rapids' development needs.	Protect and preserve existing open space and encourage the expansion of urban and rural green spaces in suitable locations to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors.	Provide open space that is easily accessible to residents at the neighborhood level.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission
		Consider the potential impacts of development upon open space when hearing rezoning requests.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission and City Council
		Establish a Green Space Master Plan in order to preserve, expand, and coordinate green space and to protect the broader public interest.	Short Term	GR Community Dev, Planning Commission & City Council
	Protect and preserve existing trees and encourage the planting of additional trees in suitable locations to meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors.	Review the City's tree preservation policy for efficacy.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Planning Commission, & City Council
		Establish a Tree Preservation Ordinance in order to control, protect, and regulate the use of trees within the City to ensure that the benefits provided by trees in the community are not lost and to protect the broader public interest.	Short-Term	HRA & GR Com. Dev., Planning Commission, & City Council

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SOUND BASIS FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT BY ESTABLISHING PROPER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG AGRICULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND OTHER LAND USES (CONTINUED).</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Provide sufficient opportunities for public use activities within Grand Rapids	Mitigate potential conflicts between activities associated with public use districts and adjacent uses.	Establish appropriate transition uses adjacent to public use districts that are appropriate to the activities within them.	Ongoing	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission, and City Council
	Rezone appropriate areas as Public Use.	Rezone the area associated with the University of Minnesota North Central Research and Outreach Center to public use.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission, and City Council
		Rezone the area south of County State Aid Highway 63, northeast of Polatch property to public use.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission, and City Council
		Rezone the area south of the Mississippi River extending from the peninsula directly north of the future GrandItasca hospital site westward to include the Forrest History Center property.	Short Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Commission, and City Council
	Protect the current and future viability of the Itasca County Fairgrounds.	Review and, if appropriate, implement the recommendations made in the "Northeastern Grand Rapids Area Strategic Plan: Cooperative Planning Study, Itasca County Fairgrounds."	Mid Term	HRA, GR Com Dev Engineering, Planning Commission, Public Works and City Council

<b>LAND USE GOAL 2: PROVIDE PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT GRAND RAPIDS.</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Encourage and facilitate accessibility by walking and cycling as well as by motorized vehicles.	Encourage the development of pathways that link the community together in a cohesive manner.	Develop a network of arterial sidewalks in the urbanized area of Grand Rapids that connect neighborhoods to work, school, shopping, and recreation.	Ongoing	GR Engineering, Com. Development, Planning Commission, & City Council
		Develop a network of connected bicycle paths/routes throughout the urban and rural areas of Grand Rapids that connect to work, school, shopping, and recreation.	Ongoing	GR Engineering, HRA, GR Com Dev, Planning Commission, & City Council



Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 2: PROVIDE PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT GRAND RAPIDS (CONTINUED).</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Encourage the provision of access to residents and visitors with disabilities.	Enforce accessibility rules that serve people with disabilities.	Enforce the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Minnesota State Building Code regarding development and redevelopment.	Ongoing	GR Building Official
		Strictly enforce rights-of-way laws regarding access to public streets and sidewalks, including crosswalks, curb ramps, street furnishings, parking, and other components of public rights-of-way.	Ongoing	GR Engineering and Police Department

<b>LAND USE GOAL 3: PRESERVE COMMUNITY LANDMARKS.</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Promote the preservation of those sites, buildings, structures, objects and natural resources that are associated with the historical and cultural development of Grand Rapids.	Develop a community landmark preservation plan.	Establish a community landmark preservation commission or other group.	Short-Term	GR City Council
		Establish criteria and methodology to determine what constitutes a community landmark.	Short-Term	The established Commission
		Once criteria and methodology have been established, inventory buildings, structures, objects, and natural resources that meet those criteria.	Short-Term	The established Commission
		Develop a framework for seeking to preserve those identified community landmarks.	Short-Term	The established Commission
		Create and Implement Plan	Short-Term	The established Commission & GR City Council

Land Use Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps

<b>LAND USE GOAL 4: PROTECT THE EDGE OF THE WILDERNESS NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Protect the Visual Integrity of the Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway.	Maintain appropriate buffering on both sides of byway.	Rezone the byway corridor to Conservancy District.	Short Term	GR zoning, Planning Com. & City Council
		Protect existing trees adjacent to byway and (re)plant trees as needed.	Ongoing	Public Works
	Ensure that signage along the Grand Rapids portion of the byway remains consistent with the remainder of the byway.	Adopt and enforce a Minnesota Trunk Highway 38 (Edge of the Wilderness National Scenic Byway) Sign Ordinance that is identical to that established by Itasca County.	Short Term	GR zoning, Planning Commission and City Council

<b>LAND USE GOAL 5: ENSURE THAT RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT MEETS THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GRAND RAPIDS RESIDENTS</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
		Implement the recommendations made in the "The Riverfront Framework Plan."	Ongoing	GR Engineering, HRA, GR Com Dev Planning Com. and City Council