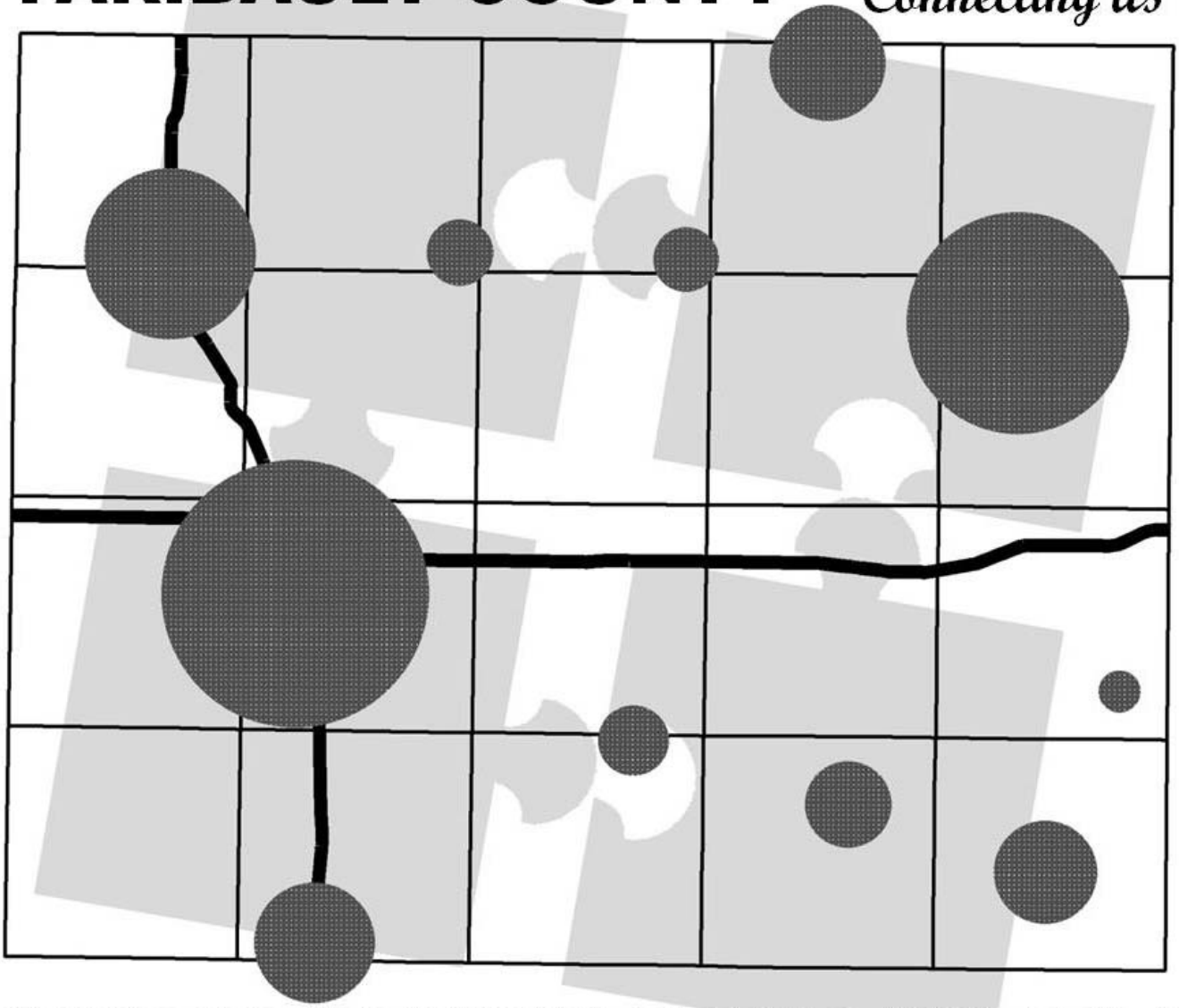
FARIBAULT COUNTY

"Connecting us all together."



COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

2015 - 2035

Faribault County Comprehensive Plan
2015
Adoption Date: _____

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Comprehensive Plan" means the policies, statements, goals, and interrelated plans for private and public land and water use, transportation, and community facilities including recommendations for plan execution, documented in texts, ordinances and maps which constitute the guide for the future development of the county or any portion of the county.

This current edition of the Faribault County Comprehensive Plan is in reality an update of the 1967 Plan. However visually, the current edition and the 1967 edition couldn't look more different. The narrative for the earlier Plan was drafted on typewriter and included paper maps that were large, and only a limited number of bound documents were distributed by the County to the public. This 2015 Plan was drafted, reviewed and finalized on computer and the entire document, including extremely detailed maps, is accessible to anyone anywhere in the world who has access to the internet, through Faribault County websites.

The purpose of each plan is very much the same; that being to describe and analyze the important elements of the county in current terms, to determine the issues surrounding each element, and to set goals and strategies for these elements that will help local policy makers as they guide the public through current issues into the foreseeable future.

1.1 SECTIONS OF THIS PLAN

- Profile of Faribault County and Communities
- History of the County
- Demographics of the County
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Public Recreational Opportunities
- Environmental Concerns
- Critical Facilities and Essential Services
- Transportation
- Land Use
- Appendixes

Within each section of the plan there is a brief introduction and purpose, followed by a snapshot of that sections strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats that was created during an extensive series of public input sessions. Detailed descriptions of current conditions, some sections contain data in the form of maps* and charts. While each section stands alone, together they help to support a public vision for the future of Faribault County.

*Within each section of the plan, there are Figures and Maps. The maps contained within the document do not contain the legend, and have cropped. However, in the Appendix of this plan, there are colored 11x17 maps of each. Please refer to the maps in the Appendix A for more detailed information.

1.2 THE PROCESS

Putting together a comprehensive plan is about managing a process in which data and input is gathered and analyzed, goals and strategies are crafted and adjusted, and then everything is compiled into a document that is both informative and useful to local practitioners, policy makers and members of the general public. In the case of the Faribault County Comprehensive Plan, the process began well before the entire data gathering when the County Board of Commissioners decided that the time had come to update the original 1967 document.

1.2.1 WHY PLAN?

For every county, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is a precursor for the county's Zoning Ordinance. The current Zoning Ordinance for Faribault County was, for the most part, developed just after the 1967 Plan was adopted. There have been required updates and additions to many sections of the Ordinance. Most of which were dictated by Minnesota Statute Chapter 394. With a solid connection between the Plan and the Ordinance, the Planning and Zoning Department was given the task of providing direction to the consultant, Region Nine Development Commission. Region Nine was then charged with managing both the planning process and assisting the county with the creation of the final plan document. The County Planning and Zoning and Soil and Water Conservation District office provided all of the maps required for the planning process and the final document. In addition to all of the detailed population, housing and economic data that was gathered in order to describe the county in these terms, the consultant also gathered outside data and county staff provided additional data that went into describing land use, infrastructure and conservation/recreation/open space.

1.2.2 PUBLIC INPUT

Beyond the data, the political/directional element of the new comprehensive plan was created through the public input process. This process was driven and supported by various county departments with additional input provided by guests who attended the public input sessions. This list included, but was not limited to business owners, homeowners, renters, local government staff, and elected officials. A total of 6 sessions were held between April and October 2013, and over 80 individuals provided input.

These sessions targeted key stakeholders and members of the general public, and a great effort was made to hold the sessions in different locations and times around the county in order to reach the widest variety of participants. The primary tool used at these sessions was a Strengths / Weaknesses / Opportunities / Threats (SWOT) analysis of existing conditions followed by development of goals and strategies that addressed the findings.

1.2.3 FINAL STEPS

Finally, a concerted effort was made to take the vision that was created through the public process, and transform goals and strategies into a workable set of implementation standards. Those implementation standards are what provided the basis for guiding county staff and officials as they move forward towards updating the county Zoning Ordinance.

1.2.4 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Throughout the planning process, a Planning Advisory Committee was utilized as a board for local input and review of drafts. The committee met various times over the two year planning process to add input and assist with direction. Once a final draft was assembled, the Faribault County Planning Commission recommended approval to the Faribault County Board of Commissioners.

1.3 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

As with any planning effort, there was a reason this plan was completed. In the case of Faribault County, the existing plan, as well as the Zoning Ordinance were outdated, making updating of this plan a necessity for the county. Additionally, as with any Comprehensive Plan, it provides an opportunity to look ahead into the future and somewhat predict how the county should or could react to a variety of issues, through an implementation planning process. In order to achieve this, within each section, you will find Future Considerations, Goals, and Objectives. These considerations include goals and actions that were identified throughout the planning process as needing to be addressed in the future. Some of these will occur within various departments on a day to day basis, such as seek funding, pursue new projects, and lobbying our legislature. Other actions will be special tasks that require extra time and funds in order to be accomplished, such as upgrading roads and bridges, updating the Zoning Ordinances, new service agreements, upgrades to existing facilities, etc.

The Future Considerations, Goals, and Objectives listed are not a complete list of needed actions, however, they were the issues collected through the public process. The complete charts from the SWOT process can be found in Appendix B.

1.4 UPDATE PROCESS

As with any planning document, much of the information included in this update will stay consistent. However, there will be sections of the plan that will need to be updated and amended more often than others. At a minimum, every five years the Faribault County Planning Commission will review the Plan and make recommendations to the Faribault County Board of Commissioners for any necessary updates.

1.5 COMMUNITIES OF FARIBAULT COUNTY

The current Faribault County Comprehensive Plan is about ALL of Faribault County, including and planning for the eleven urbanized areas, as well as the agricultural production areas. It truly was a Comprehensive Plan for the entire County. The majority of the people who live in Faribault County live and work within one of the communities. The communities support the agricultural producers and rural landowners as they are an imperative part to any planning effort set forth by the county. So for the update of the plan, it was decided that the counties and communities must continue to work together.

Appendix C of this plan contains more detailed information for each of the 11 communities within Faribault County.

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2. COUNTY PROFILE

As Faribault County embarked on a revision of the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Advisory Committee felt it imperative to look at the county as a whole. The plan was designed to include not only the rural sectors of the entire county but each of the eleven communities within the county as well. Much of the history of the county took place in the communities; therefore a plan without them would not be completely comprehensive.

A County Profile is an important first step in understanding the topics that impact an area, and this section of the Faribault County Comprehensive Plan will provide a snapshot of the county and the individual communities. More detailed information on each community can be found in Appendix C under the appropriate communities addendum.

2.1 COUNTY OVERVIEW

2.1.1 LOCATION

Faribault County is located in South Central Minnesota approximately 120 miles southwest of the Minneapolis and St. Paul metropolitan area. Faribault County is bordered to the north by Blue Earth County and Waseca County, to the west by Martin County, to the east by Freeborn County, and to the south by Iowa. The land area of the County is approximately 722 square miles or roughly 460,000 acres.

Within the county there are 11 communities and 20 townships. Table 2-1 lists the communities and townships in Faribault County. The City of Blue Earth and the City of Wells house the two major school districts serving the majority of the county. These two communities have become hubs for the county and also have the two largest populations. The City of Winnebago and the City of Minnesota Lake follow in population counts; with the majority of remaining communities being similar in population size.

Table 2-1: Communities and Townships (2)

Communities (11)	Townships (20)	
City of Blue Earth	Barber Township	Kiester Township
City of Bricelyn	Blue Earth City Township	Lura Township
City of Delavan	Brush Creek Township	Minnesota Lake Township
City of Easton	Clark Township	Pilot Grove Township
City of Elmore	Delavan Township	Prescott Township
City of Frost	Dunbar Township	Rome Township
City of Kiester	Elmore Township	Seely Township
City of Minnesota Lake	Emerald Township	Verona Township
City of Walters	Foster Township	Walnut Lake Township
City of Wells	Jo Daviess Township	Winnebago City Township
City of Winnebago		

Figure 2-1: Cities and Townships Map (6)

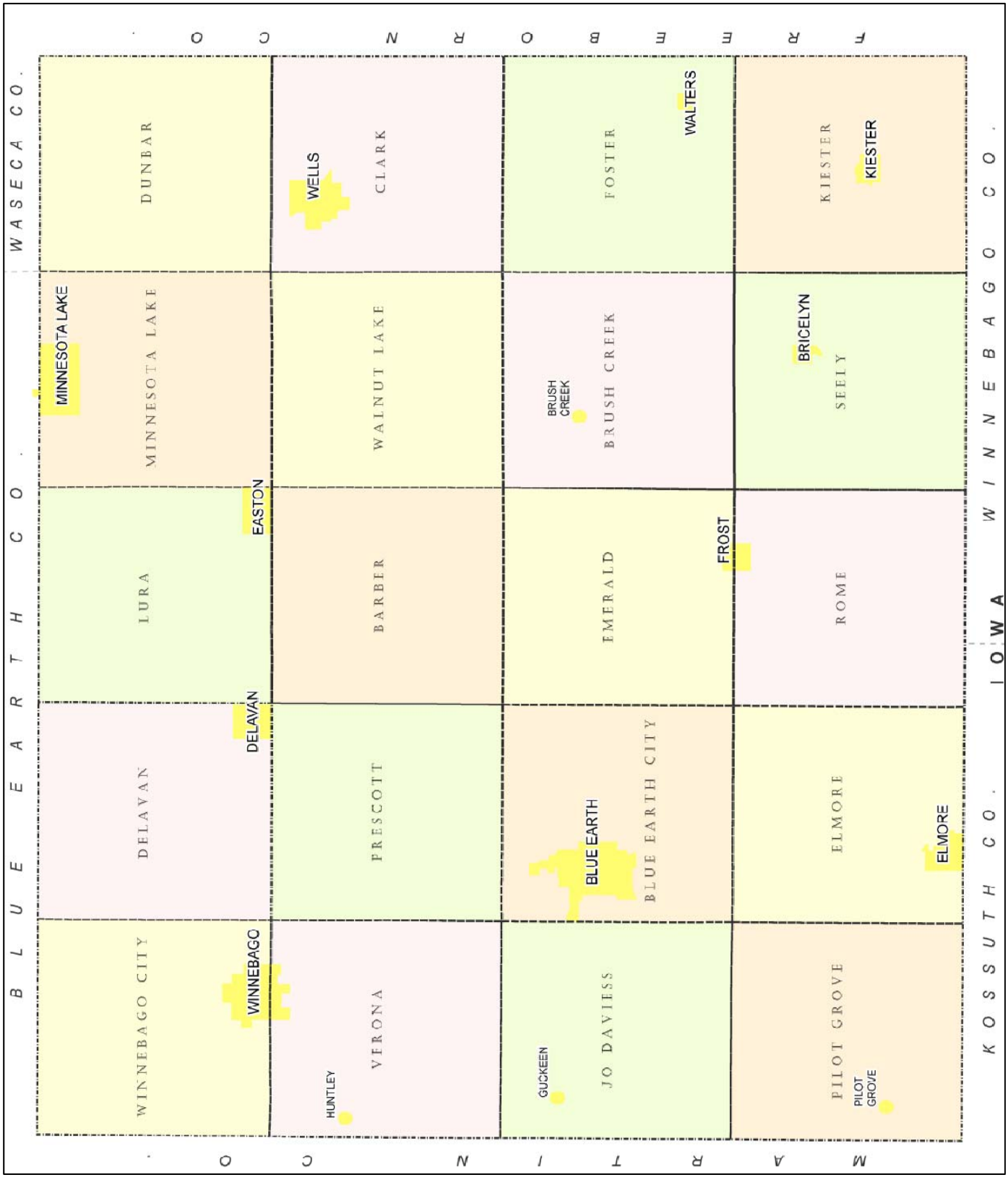
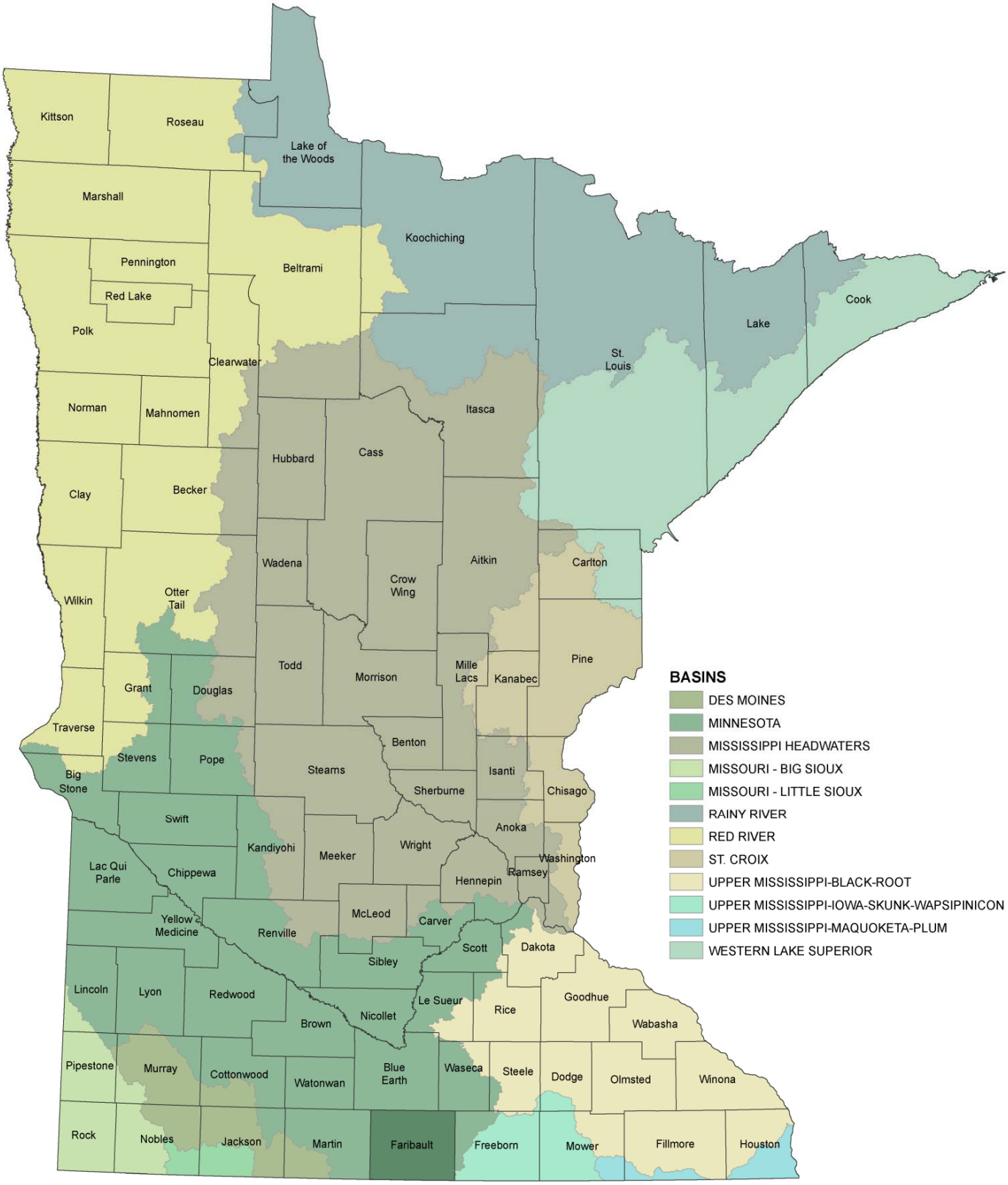


Figure 2-2: Faribault County Minnesota with MN Major Watershed Map



2.1.2 TOPOGRAPHY

The highest point in Faribault County can be found in Section 3 of Kiester Township, with a height of 1,432 feet above sea level. The hill, or terminal moraine, was formed at the edge of the Wisconsin glacier. Faribault County has a topographical difference of approximately 400 feet from its highest point in Kiester Township to its lowest points in the river valleys along the Blue Earth and Maple Rivers.

The defining characteristics of the topography in Faribault County are due to the glacial activity that occurred over the land centuries ago. The area is referred to as "tilled plains" within the prairie pothole region and is a direct result of melting glaciers.

2.1.3 SURFACE WATER, LAKES, RIVERS AND STREAM, PUBLIC DRAINAGE AND WATERSHEDS

Nearly 700 miles of open water flow through Faribault County's borders. Of this approximately 460 miles are natural flowing rivers and streams. The rivers and lakes in Faribault County support fish and other wildlife including ducks and geese and a variety of mammals and prairie birds. These waterways provide a variety of recreational opportunities for area residents. Farming is the primary industry in the county, therefore impacting the landscape and infrastructure; agricultural drainage has greatly influenced the waterways of Faribault County.

Lakes

In 2013, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources listed all or part of 9 lakes within Faribault County: Bass Lake, Guckeen Lake, Hart Lake, Lura Lake, Minnesota Lake, Rice Lake (Delavan Township), Rice Lake (Foster Township), South Walnut Lake, and Walnut Lake (see Table 2-2). Collectively, these lakes make up a surface area of nearly 5,000 acres.

Table 2-2: Lakes (7)

Lake Name	MN DNR Lake #	Surface Area
Bass Lake	0022-74	196 acres
Guckeen Lake	0022-88	28 acres
Hart Lake	0022-76	Not Available
Lura Lake	0007-79	110 acres (Faribault County)
Minnesota Lake	0022-33	1,915 acres
Rice Lake – Delavan Twp.	0022-75	1,216 acres
Rice Lake – Foster Twp.	0022-07	268 acres
South Walnut Lake	0022-22	392 acres
North Walnut Lake	0022-23	827 acres

Rivers and Streams

Faribault County is situated within two major watersheds; the Blue Earth River Watershed, to the south and Le Sueur River Watershed to the north. The Blue Earth River and LeSueur Rivers are both tributaries of the Minnesota River. Table 2-3 lists the rivers and streams that are located in the county as parts of these two major watersheds. (7)

Table 2-3: Rivers (7)

River	Section	From Twp	Range	Section	To Twp	Range	Shoreland Classification
Blue Earth River	32	101	27	3	104	28	Agricultural
W. Fk. Blue Earth River	35	101	28	8	101	27	Tributary
Coon Creek	33	102	27	29	102	27	Tributary
South Creek	30	103	28	23	103	28	Tributary
Center Creek	19	103	28	10	103	28	Tributary
Elm Creek	6	103	28	4	103	28	Agricultural
Rice Creek (RC)	2	103	27	4	104	27	Tributary
Unnamed to RC	21 (Rice Lake)	104	27	22	104	27	Tributary
Maple River (MR)	36	104	24	3	104	26	Agricultural
Unnamed to MR	6	103	24	36	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to MR	20	104	24	22	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to Unnamed	15	104	24	13	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to MR	16	104	25	12	104	26	Agricultural
Unnamed to MR	33	104	25	13	104	26	Tributary
N. Br. E. Fork. Blue Earth River (NBEFBER)	24	102	24	8	102	27	Tributary
S. Br. E. Fork. Blue Earth River	2	101	25	26	102	25	Tributary
Unnamed to NBEFBER	26	102	24	22	102	24	Tributary
Foster Creek (FC)	25	103	24	33	103	24	Tributary
Unnamed to FC	12	102	24	33	103	24	Tributary
Unnamed to South Walnut Lake	35 (Walnut Lake)	103 23	25	2 (S Walnut Lake)	102	25	Tributary
Unnamed to EFBER	33	102	24	25	102	25	Tributary
Brush Creek	33	101	24	18	101	24	Tributary
Big Cobb River	24	104	24	3	104	24	Agricultural
Cobb Creek	12	104	24	11	104	24	Tributary

Public Drainage

It is understandable, that with over 80 percent of the land in Faribault County being utilized to grow crops, that there is a need for agricultural drainage. Agricultural drainage is defined as "the removal of excess water from fields through the use of ditches and subsurface pipe" (often called "drainage tile"). Typically, drainage ditches were developed first, then subsurface drainage pipes were installed to take water from poorly drained soils and convey it to the ditches or nearby streams. Drainage tile was typically installed a few feet below the surface and can be made of concrete, clay, or now, more commonly, plastic. Conservation drainage, a more recently developed term, is when the use drainage practices

are designed and installed to drain the land in a manner that minimized negative environmental impacts. (7) Faribault County utilizes 114 drainage systems, consisting of 725 miles of subsurface tile and 245 miles of open ditches to convey both agricultural and urban runoff. Increasing amounts of private subsurface tile are being added to these drainage systems making it critical that local collaborative efforts provide information about the infrastructural capacity of these systems and how their outlets affect water quality.

Watersheds

A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that drains off of it goes into the same place—a river, stream or lake. The smallest watersheds are the drainage areas for small streams and lakes. Think about your local creek or river. Where does it start? What type of landscape does it flow through? Where does it end up? All of the area covered is a watershed. Each small watershed is part of the more extensive watershed for a larger stream or lake in the vicinity. These larger watersheds are, in turn, part of even larger drainage networks, and so on. The largest-scale watershed is called a basin. Minnesota has ten basins, some of which include portions of neighboring states or Canada.

The largest watersheds within a basin are called major watersheds. These are the drainage networks of the basin's largest rivers or lakes. There are 81 major watersheds in Minnesota. For each of these, MPCA works with other state agencies and local partners to identify water restoration and protection needs throughout the watershed and to determine how best to address them. Learn about MPCA's major watershed approach to water quality restoration and protection.

Minnesota River Watershed

The Minnesota River Watershed is made up of 12 major watersheds, including the Blue Earth River and Le Sueur River Watersheds that drain into the Mississippi River at Fort Snelling. The Minnesota River Basin is also part of the larger Mississippi River Basin which drains 40 percent of the continental United States. (7)

Blue Earth River Watershed

The Blue Earth River begins in northern Iowa and meets with the West Branch Blue Earth River in Faribault County in southern Minnesota. From there, it flows 108 miles northwardly in a winding course through eastern Faribault County into Blue Earth County, past the cities of Blue Earth, Winnebago, and Vernon Center to Mankato, where it enters the Minnesota River. Altogether, the watershed includes parts of eight counties in southern Minnesota—primarily Martin and Faribault—and four in northern Iowa. There are 21 cities in the watershed, of which Mankato and Fairmont are the largest.

The Blue Earth River major watershed area is about 1,550 square miles or 992,034 acres. The Blue Earth River, along with the city and county, were named for former deposits of bluish-green clay, no longer visible, along the banks of the river. The combination erodible soils and higher flows has led to greater levels of erosion and a dramatic increase in sediment levels in the river system since European settlement in the late 1800s. Sediment makes the water cloudy and disrupts aquatic life such as fish.

By volume, the Blue Earth is the Minnesota River's largest tributary, accounting for 46% of the Minnesota's flow at the rivers' confluence. (8)

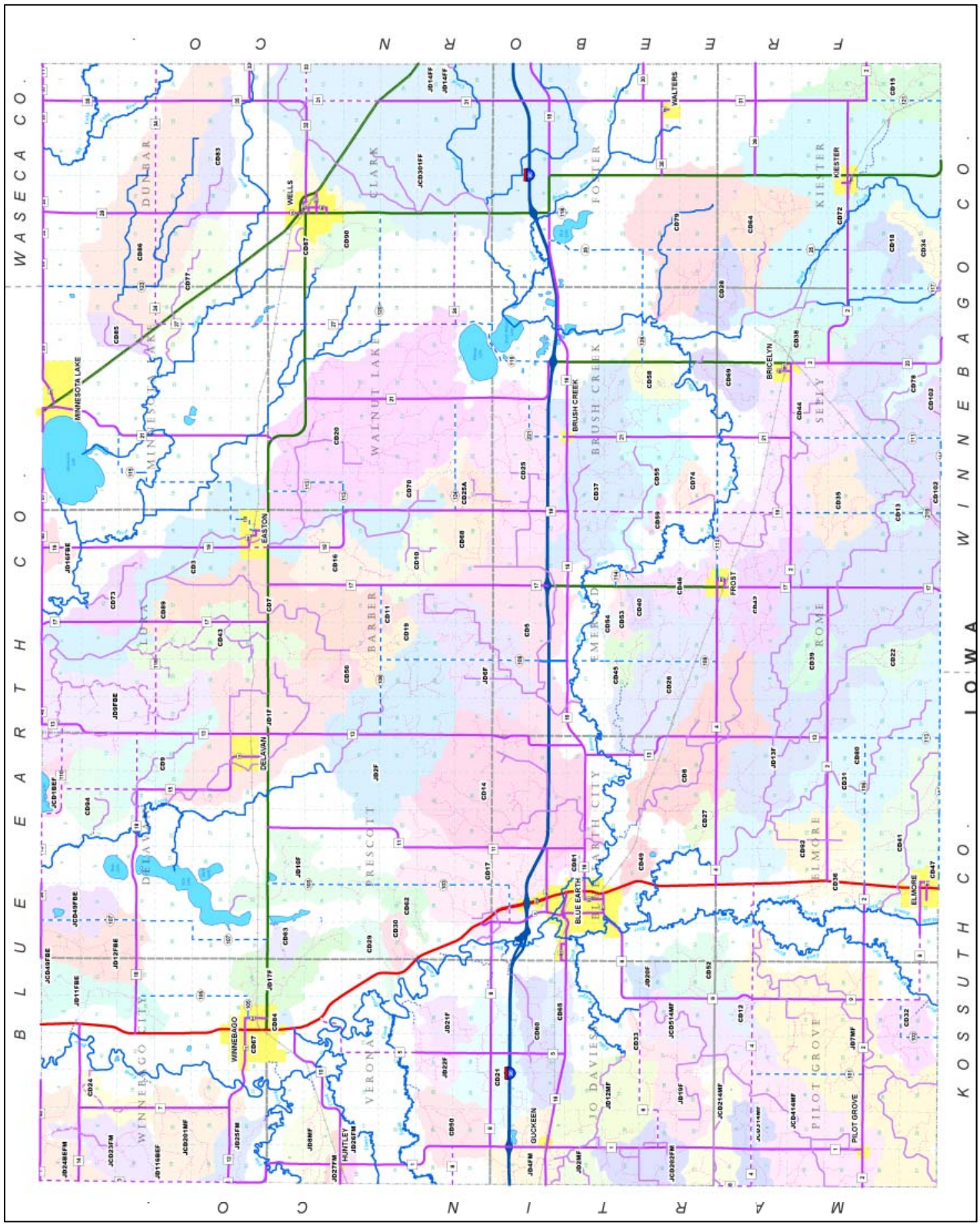
Within Faribault County, the Blue Earth River begins five miles north of the City of Elmore continuing through Faribault County in a winding course into Blue Earth County.

Le Sueur River Watershed

Located in south central Minnesota, the Le Sueur River flows 111 miles through a gently rolling landscape, most of it farmland, until it cuts down through high bluffs to the Blue Earth River. The Le Sueur, which is named for a French explorer, starts in Freeborn County, flowing north and west through parts of Waseca and Blue Earth counties. It passes through the city of St. Clair, which is near the regional hub of Mankato. Tributaries from Steele and Faribault Counties also flow into the Le Sueur. A total of 711,838 acres drain to the Le Sueur, and an extensive ditch and tile system facilitates movement of water throughout the watershed. Several streams (a total of 1,201 miles) flow to the Le Sueur, with its major tributaries being the Cobb and Maple rivers. When combined with the Blue Earth and Minnesota Rivers, it is part of the Mississippi River Watershed. (8)

Within Faribault County, the Le Sueur River is a tributary of the Blue Earth River, draining an area of 1,089 square miles. It is the largest tributary of the Blue Earth River, draining 31% of the watershed.. (7)

Figure 2-3 Public Drainage Systems Map



2.1.4 VEGETATION

Prior to settlement in the 1850-60s, Faribault County's primary vegetation consisted of prairie grasses, shrubs, wild flowers and patches of woodland located mainly along the shores of rivers, lakes, and streams. This is in accordance with the MN Department of Natural Resources natural heritage data. During the 1900's, the majority of farmsteads were surrounded by woodland areas as well. In the 1960's, many of these still remained and are evident in aerial photos. However, today the number of remaining native groves has decreased considerably. In their place, current farmsteads have planted row windbreaks strategically planted windbreaks to cut down northerly winter winds. The history of the native prairies is evident in the high fertility of soils, which made the area prime for crop production. Once settlers began tilling land for agriculture, the days of the native prairie grass and other native plant varieties were numbered in this part of the country.

Today, as you travel the countryside you find it is remarkably different than the pre-settlement landscape (see Figure 2-3 for current vegetation cover of the county). Only tiny patches of native prairies remain and minimal areas of native woodlands can be found along the river valleys. What little native perennial vegetation remains today exists in the form of buffers, park space, and conservation practices.

Faribault County is located in the heart of the Corn Belt region of the Upper Midwest and is one of the most productive counties in the nation. The Corn Belt shown in Figure 2-4 is generally characterized as relatively level land with deep, fertile soils high in organic matter. Since the 1850s, corn has been the predominant crop, replacing native tall grasses, which created the fertile soils. By 1950, 99% of the corn in the region was hybrids used to feed livestock, especially hogs and poultry. As of 2008, the top four corn-producing states were Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska and Minnesota, together accounting for more than half of the corn grown in the US. In recent decades, the number of soybean acres planted per year has been on the rise compared to decades prior to 1950. The Corn Belt is an intensively agricultural region, supporting lifestyles based on ownership of family farms, with supporting small towns and powerful farm organizations. The current landscape of Faribault County is a true representation of Midwest farmland (A vegetative Cover map and a map of the Corn Belt can be found in Appendix A).

2.1.5 GEOLOGY

Faribault County is located within the Prairie Pothole Region. The Prairie Pothole Region is an area of the northern Great Plains that contains thousands of shallow wetlands known as potholes. These potholes were created as the result of the glacial activity which ended approximately 10,000 years ago. During the Wisconsin glaciations period melting ice sheets left behind depressions that formed uneven deposits and created unique rolling hills. These potholes fill with water in the spring and after heavy rains, creating seasonal wetlands. More than half of the potholes have been drained and converted to agriculture. In some areas more than 90% of the potholes have been lost.

Due to the uniqueness of the pothole and their importance to wildlife, in 1991 the Wetland Conservation Act was enacted. The purpose of this legislation was to achieve no net loss in the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's wetlands; increase the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's wetlands by restoring or enhancing diminished or drained wetlands; avoid direct or indirect impacts from activities that destroy or diminish the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of wetlands; and replace wetland values where avoidance of activity is not feasible and prudent. More detailed information on wetlands can be found in Chapter 8: Environmental Concerns.

2.1.6 SOILS

Glacial deposits of silt and clay sediments, loamy tills, and mineral outwash soils provide a basis for all soils in Faribault County. A pre-settlement landscape of rolling hills, rivers, lakes, and wetlands provided an environment filled with prairie grasses and riverine woodlands which left behind rich organic topsoil excellent for agriculture. Under the layers of glacial deposits, are several layers of limestone and sandstone. Depending on where you are in the county soil type may be quite diverse, ranging from highly productive soils to smaller deposits of mineral soils and aggregates. (7)

The soils in Faribault County are very deep and dark colored. Slopes are generally gently sloping but range from nearly level to very steep. The soils formed in silty and clayey glacial lacustrine sediments, loamy glacial till. and loamy and sandy glacial outwash. The native vegetation consists of tall and medium prairie grasses. Some wooded areas are along streams and lakes. Faribault County had a soil survey completed in 1994.

2.1.7 CLIMATE

To say that Minnesota has extreme weather is an understatement. In the earlier years of settlement, storms were a very serious matter. Heavy winds and tornados made 'cyclone' cellars a must. There was a time when it was not uncommon to find ropes connecting rural out-buildings; these ropes were utilized in the winter to help people find their way from one building to another. Minnesota's extreme weather of dramatic droughts, dust storms, heat waves, early freezes and tornados kept settlers on their toes. Today, Faribault County still experiences these same extreme weather conditions; however, meteorological advances in predicting weather keep residents informed. According to Mark Seeley, State Climatologist for Minnesota, as a whole Minnesota has seen significant changes in recent climate trends that include; warmer winters, higher overnight temperatures, greater frequency of tropical-like atmospheric water vapor and amplified thunderstorms. Faribault County is no exception to these weather trends.

Faribault County has a continental climate characterized by extreme seasonal variations in temperature and precipitation patterns. From 1921 to 1950, Faribault County had an annual average of 27.55 inches of precipitation. By 2010, Faribault County's annual average precipitation was 35.72 inches per year. Not only is Faribault County experiencing more precipitation, it is coming at different times of the year. Historically, slightly more than 2/3 of the annual precipitation fell during the spring and summer; averaging about 22 inches of rainfall between April and September. Currently, the highest concentrations of

precipitation are being experienced in the fall, during harvest season. Traditionally, the least amount of precipitation falls in the winter, averaging 32 inches of snow per year. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) updated their Plant Hardiness Zone Map and for the first time sections of Faribault County are now Zone 5a. A plant hardiness zone is a geographically defined area in which a specific category of plant life is capable of growing, as defined by climate conditions, including its ability to withstand the minimal temperatures of the zone. For example, plants in Zone 5a can withstand temperatures as low as -20˚ F and Zone 4b can withstand temperatures as low as -25˚F. This classification change demonstrates the change in climate for the region.

2.2 COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

There are 11 incorporated communities in Faribault County. Figure 2-2 is a map showing where Faribault County is located within Minnesota, and Figure 2-1 is a map showing where each community is located within the county.

MN Statutes 394 provides the basis for the county to develop a Comprehensive Plan, MN Statutes 462 provides this same opportunity for communities. These planning activities are meant for guiding the future development and improvement of the municipality and may prepare, adopt and amend a comprehensive municipal plan and implement such plan by ordinance and other official actions in accordance with the provisions of sections 462.351 to 462.364.

As the county embarked on the process of updating the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, participation by the communities was essential. This planning effort allowed for city and county professionals, elected officials, and residents to develop strong working relations. Most importantly, the process encouraged discussion on issues such as: minimizing unnecessary duplication, increasing efforts to enhance and maintain workforce, providing for additional businesses, housing, recreational activities, and the potential for future grant opportunities. Appendix B contains an overview of the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats, or the SWOT analysis, that was created during extensive public input sessions. The SWOT analysis provided the framework for the updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Because of the involvement and participation of city professionals, officials, and residents, each section of this plan includes community information. Understanding that communities may have additional information that they feel is important to have available within this document, we have included an addendum for each community. Appendix C includes the “City Addendums”. These addendums, are meant to be specific to each community and are potentially the basis to developing a more detailed framework, or municipal plan, for future programs, projects, and decision making at the community level. Like the Comprehensive Plan, it will need to be adopted and updated as necessary by the city(s).

2.2.1 CITY OF BLUE EARTH

General Overview

Blue Earth is the county seat and strategically located at the intersections of Interstate 90 and Highway 169 in south-central Minnesota. The city is located 125 miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport; 90 miles from Rochester; 220 miles from Des Moines, Iowa; 130 miles from Sioux Falls, SD; and 40 miles from Interstate 35 at Albert Lea. Interstate 90 runs past the northern edge of the city, and was the meeting place for the completion of the east and west Interstate construction teams in 1978. This meeting place was memorialized by the placement of a "Golden Spike" which symbolized this memorial event.

Population (2013)	3,265
Population Forecast (2018)	3,282
Households (2013)	1,449
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	1,601
Education (Completed High School)	87.58%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	11.65%
Median Household Income (2010)	$36,276

Historical Overview

The City of Blue Earth was first established in 1858 and later incorporated in 1872 as the county seat for Faribault County. The City of Blue Earth gets its name from the Blue Earth River which surrounds the town. The river was given the Dakota name "Mahka-to: meaning blue earth for the blue-black clay once found in the river banks. The City of Blue Earth is the county seat and home to the Jolly Green Giant. The Jolly Green Giant statue attracts over 10,000 visitors annually. (4) (5)

2.2.2 CITY OF BRICELYN

General Overview

Bricelyn is located at the intersection of Minnesota State Highway 253 and 50th Street, just a few miles south of Interstate 90 and a few miles north of the Iowa border. There are also two major rail lines that run through the city.

Population (2013)	355
Population Forecast (2018)	357
Households (2013)	167
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	184
Education (Completed High School)	91.86%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	14.34%
Median Household Income (2010)	$39,249

Historical Overview

The City of Bricelyn is located in Seely Townhsip, sections 10 and 15. Bricelyn was named after John Brice, who owned and platted the city.

Bricelyn was incorporated on July 15, 1903 and was seperated from the townhip on March 30, 1912. The city was served by rail and has a station and a post office that opened in 1899. (4) (5)

2.2.3 CITY OF DELAVAN

General Overview

The City of Delavan is located at the intersection of Minnesota State Highway 109 and County Highway 13 between the communities of Winnebago and Easton.

Population (2013)	174
Population Forecast (2018)	175
Households (2013)	77
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	98
Education (Completed High School)	92.37%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	19.08%
Median Household Income (2010)	$47,499

Historical Overview

Delavan was first settled in May 1856 and was first named Gutherie in honor of Sterrit Gutherie, one of its pioneer settlers. On May 1, 1872, the name was changed to Delavan to coincide with the name of a railroad village that had been platted on October 11, 1870. The Village of Delavan was a growing, thriving community for more than seven years before it was incorporated on February 7, 1877. On May 9, 1917 it was separated from the township. Delavan grew as a railroad town, and was originally platted by Harvey Whitcomb Holley and Oren Delavan Brown who surveyed "Delavan Station" in Section 36 of Guthrie (Delavan) Township. Today, the railroad still plays an important role in the commerce of this community. In 2011 Watonwan Farm Service built a grain distribution center that involved a circular rail line for easier loading of rail cars. (4) (5)

2.2.4 CITY OF EASTON

General Overview

As you approach the City of Easton from either Hwy 109 or County Road 19, you will see a horizon dominated by a towering church steeple, groups of massive grain elevators, and Ag-chemical storage facilities. Surrounded by acres of some of the richest farmland in Southern Minneosta, Easton is a good place for rural families and Ag-related businesses to grow and flurish.

Population (2013)	193
Population Forecast (2018)	195
Households (2013)	83
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	117
Education (Completed High School)	94.37%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	26.06%
Median Household Income (2010)	$53,499

Historical Overview

The site for the City of Easton was decided in the early 1870s when Colonel Thompson of the neighboring City of Wells undertook the building of the Southern Minnesota Railroad from the Mississippi River west to the City of Winnebago.

The early history of Easton really begins with the settlement of Wesner's Grove in Barber Township. After the railroad was complete, several families from Illinois heard about the rich soil along the railroad and bought farmsteads near present day Easton. The City of Easton was incorporated on March 9, 1874 and by 1890 the population of Easton was 318 people. (4) (5)

2.2.5 CITY OF ELMORE

General Overview

The City of Elmore is located on US Highway 169 near the Minnesota/Iowa border. Elmore is most known as the hometown of former US Vice President and Democratic presidental candidate Walter Mondale who lived in Elmore from 1937 to 1947 and graduated from Elmore High School in 1946.

Population (2013)	646
Population Forecast (2018)	650
Households (2013)	267
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	335
Education (Completed High School)	92.93%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	16.10%
Median Household Income (2010)	$32,030

Historical Overview

The City of Elmore was originally named Dobson, but in 1863 the name was changed to Elmore in honor of Judge A.E. Elmore, a prominent local community leader.

The city was known as a railroad town and trains that came from Minneapolis or St. Paul or Omaha Nebraska often turned around there using the "roundhouse" that switched trains back to their place of origin. Elmore was incorporated into the county in November 27, 1891. (4) (5)

2.2.6 CITY OF FROST

General Overview

Frost is located off Minnesota State Highway 254 about 5 miles south of Interstate 90 and 5 miles north of the Iowa border. Frost undoubtedly owes its existance to the Iowa, Minnesota and Northwestern Railroad.

Population (2013)	193
Population Forecast (2018)	194
Households (2013)	85
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	102
Education (Completed High School)	88.81%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	11.89%
Median Household Income (2010)	$50,499

Historical Overview

The land for the new town was purchased by the Iowa and Minnesota Townsite Company from Ole Halverson and Eric Amundson, both of whom homesteaded property in the area in the early 1870's . The town was named after architect Charels S. Frost.

The town was platted and last sold September 28, 1899 and was offically incorporatied December 11, 1903. The new town attracted business at once. Frost had one of the first radios, if not the first, in Faribault County. In 1931, Frost was known as the sugar beet capital of the world, each year a huge stock pile of of beets justifyed the reputation. Today, zero sugar beets are grown in Faribault County. (4) (5)

2.2.7 CITY OF KIESTER

General Overview

Kiester is located at the intersection of Minnesota State Highway 22 and 35th St. It is about 2 miles north of the Iowa border and 8 miles south of Interstate 90.

Population (2013)	487
Population Forecast (2018)	490
Households (2013)	229
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	252
Education (Completed High School)	91.27%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	14.08%
Median Household Income (2010)	$39,285

Historical Overview

The City of Kiester began as a railroad town and was first incorperated on November 19, 1900. (4) (5) The city was named after county historian Jacob Kiester.

2.2.8 CITY OF MINNESOTA LAKE

General Overview

Minnesota Lake is not only located in Faribault County but a small portion is also located in Blue Earth County. The town was first named Marples in 1858 in honor of Charles Marples, an early settler of the town. The name was changed to Minnesota Lake on February 23, 1866. The town was laid out in October, 1866 on the east bank of the lake from which it derives its name.

Population (2013)	669
Population Forecast (2018)	672
Households (2013)	296
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	397
Education (Completed High School)	90.43%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	14.26%
Median Household Income (2010)	$45,277

Historical Overview

By 1900, the town had grown to a population of around 700 and has remained fairly constant in population since then. In 2009, the community celebrated its 143rd year, and looks forward to developing in the years to come.

The City of Minnesota Lake began as a railroad town and was first incorporated on February 14, 1876. The town of Minnesota Lake is located on the shores of old glacial Lake Minnesota and is surrounded by some of the richest farmland in the world. Glacial Lake Minnesota was formed over 10,000 years ago as glacial ice was melting. Once covering part of five counties and over one-half million acres in size, all that remains today is the 1,800 acres of Minnesota Lake, which is in the north central corner of Faribault County. (4) (5)

2.2.9 CITY OF WALTERS

General Overview

Walters is located off 85th St. just over a mile east of Minnesota State Highway 22 and just a few miles south of Interstate 90.

Population (2013)	71
Population Forecast (2018)	71
Households (2013)	29
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	36
Education (Completed High School)	89.58%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	16.67%
Median Household Income (2010)	$51,249

Historical Overview

Walters, located in Foster Township, section 26, was built on land owned by Thomas H. Brown, who filed a plat on August 15, 1900, and was incorporated as a village on August 18, 1903.

The first business was a general store; the post office began in 1901. The name was chosen by officials of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railway. (4) (5)

2.2.10 CITY OF WELLS

General Overview
Wells is located at the intersection of Minnesota State Highways 22 and 109. The center of town is 6 miles north of Interstate 90.

Population (2013)	2,280
Population Forecast (2018)	2,293
Households (2013)	990
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	1,175
Education (Completed High School)	83.26%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	13.08%
Median Household Income (2010)	$42,580

Historical Overview
Wells had its start as the first railroad town in the county. Its founder, Clark W. Thompson, had made his fortune in California before moving to Minnesota in the 1850's.

He was later appointed the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northwest by Abraham Lincoln. He is credited with establishing the first mill, a creamery, a cheese factory, a barrel factory, and a vinegar factory in Wells. He also personally financed a railroad running from La Crosse, Wisconsin to Wells, which later reached Mankato. These factories remained in Wells until 1887 when they were relocated to Austin, Minnesota.

The city was named after his wife, Rebecca Wells. Wells was incorporated on March 6, 1871 and was the first city to become incorporated in Faribault County. (4) (5)

2.2.11 CITY OF WINNEBAGO

General Overview

Winnebago is home to a thriving down town, a great school and several parks including a swimming pool. It has everything a family needs including a school, grocery store, medical clinic and dentist. It is located approximately 35 miles south of Mankato on US Highway 169. The community's nick name is "the Small Town with a Big Heart."

Population (2013)	1,399
Population Forecast (2018)	1,406
Households (2013)	607
Labor Force (2012 Q2)	748
Education (Completed High School)	88.07%
Education (Bachelor's Degree or Higher)	9.89%
Median Household Income (2010)	$39,582

Historical Overview

Winnebago had its beginning as a railroad town in 1856. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the city served as a hub for mail moving westward. The city hosted Parker College, which averaged an enrollment of 100 students until 1924.

In 1925, the Fairmont Canning Company opened a cannery for sweet peas and corn in the city, ushering in a new era for the city as a hub for agricultural manufacturing.

Winnebago was incorporated on March 8, 1873. (4) (5)

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3. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Not only are the soils of Faribault County rich but so is its history. Faribault County would not be what it is today without those that founded and developed our townships and communities. Understanding how we got to where we are today gives us a better understanding of why we have what we have and where we should go in the future.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Historic and Cultural Facilities section of this plan is intended to identify and describe those historical landmarks that are important parts of the county's history and identity. This section will provide a brief overview of the county's 160 years of history from the time of the first settlers in 1855 until present day. As settlers left their mark on the land, they created Cultural Facilities that will be identified and described in Section 3.3. Today the task of our residents is to preserve our history.

3.2 HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Much of the information found in this section was obtained from the book *Faribault County 1855-1976: A Panorama* by Tom Bartholomew and Gerald Leland and *The History of Faribault County, Minnesota From its First Settlement to the Close of the Year,* first published by J.A. Kiester in 1879.

On February 20, 1855, the legislature passed an act establishing certain counties and defining their boundaries; Faribault County was one of the counties established that day. Holding true to traditions, the county was named in honor of John Baptiste Faribault. Faribault, a Canadian Native with French decent, first travelled to present day Faribault County on an exploring and hunting expedition. At the time of his death in 1860 he was the oldest white resident in Minnesota. It is appropriate to note that the City of Faribault in Rice County is named after John's eldest son, Alexander.

3.2.1 PRE-SETTLEMENT HISTORY

The first people to settle in what is present day Faribault County were Native Americans – descendants of those who walked across the Bering Strait about 10,000 years ago and migrated across the North and South American continents. These first settlers were known as the Paleo Native Americans or Big Game Native Americans. They were hunter-gatherers following big game such as the wooly mammoth and giant bison. They were later followed by the Woodland Native Americans and the Mississippian Native Americans who settled in the area between 1000 B.C. to 1700 B.C. and 1000 A.D. to 1700 A.D. respectively. The Mississippian Native Americans were subsistence farmers, relying on a diet of beans, corn, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco. Numerous archeological sites have been discovered across the county and identified as belonging to the Mississippian and Woodland Native Americans.

Beginning around the 18th century, there were two tribes living in the area in and around Faribault County. The Sioux and Winnebago tribes were unrelated, but spoke similar languages. They continued to live along the Blue Earth River until the Federal Government relocated them after the Sioux Uprising of 1862. The Winnebago, who were more peaceful

toward the settlers, were relocated to the City of Winnebago, MN, various areas in Nebraska and the Wisconsin Dells area, while the Sioux were relocated to South Dakota.

3.2.2 EARLY HISTORY

Faribault County officially became incorporated on February 20, 1855. One of the first inhabitants, Jean Baptiste Faribault, used his expertise as a fur trader to maintain good relations with the Native American tribes in the area. He helped finance the War of 1812 and was highly regarded for his assistance with numerous treaty negotiations between the Federal Government and the Sioux and Winnebago Native Americans.

Moses Sailor was the first permanent settler to arrive in Faribault County only a few months after its establishment (1). Sailor was born in Ohio in 1808 and later moved to Indiana. After the death of his wife in 1854, Sailor decided to leave Indiana, which had become too civilized for his pioneering spirit. In April 1855 Sailor, James Little and John Love set out on foot for the Minnesota Territory from Bradford, Iowa. Approximately eight days later they reached the east branch of the Blue Earth River. They were delighted with the county. Making the first wagon tracks in the county, Sailor staked his claim south of current day Blue Earth, on May 25, 1855. Being spring and planting season, Sailor set to breaking ground and planting five acres of corn and potatoes. Sailor's 18 x 24 foot cabin served as a home for his family, a hotel for newcomers and a social gathering place. Sailor remained on the land that he first claimed until his death in 1896.

Faribault County had approximately 2,500 settlers by the time of the Sioux Uprising in 1862. Following the uprising, none of which actually occurred in Faribault County, only about 100 settlers remained. In September 1862, Fort Rusk was established in Winnebago to protect the stage coach lines. Meanwhile in Blue Earth, men began to convert the old Metropolitan Hotel into a fort.

3.2.3 INCORPORATION OF TOWNSHIPS

When it came to the layout of Faribault County, not much was needed in terms of imagination; the square shape of the county lead to a squared layout for townships. In 1858, Andrew Dunn, James S. Latimer, and R. P. Jenness, all from the Winnebago area, acted as a three-person commission to authorize the First Legislature of the State of Minnesota to name the townships within that county. When it came to naming the townships, no grand plan was utilized; a few of the 20 townships were named after the first settlers, some by characteristics and others on the strength of misinformation. Some were named after natural topographic features, and a few others were named after noted residents. Table 3-1 lists the townships of Faribault County, who they were named after, the year in which they were first settled, and their population, if any, as recorded by the 1860 census. Figure 2-1 is a map of Faribault County Townships. (1) (2).

Table 3-1: Townships - Year Settled and 1860 Population

Township	Named After	Year Settled	1860 Population
Barber	Chauncey Barber	*	*
Blue Earth City	Blue Earth River	1855	317
Brush Creek	Brush Creek River	1856	31
Clark	Clark W. Thompson	1862	*
Delavan	Oren Delavan Brown	*	*
Dunbar	William F. Dunbar	1856	*
Elmore	Andrew E. Elmore	1856	95
Emerald	Emerald Isle	*	*
Foster	Dr. Reuben R. Foster	1858	*
Jo Daviess	Jo Daviess	*	*
Kiester	J. A. Kiester	1857	*
Lura	Lura Lake	*	20
Minnesota Lake	Minnesota Lake	*	34
Pilot Grove	Pilot Grove	*	27
Prescott	Mr. Prescott	1855	14
Rome	Rome, NY	*	*
Seely	Philander C. Seely	1857	17
Verona	Steele County Resident	1855	268
Walnut Lake	Walnut Lake	1856	46
Winnebago City	Winnebago Tribe	1855	286

*Not available.

Barber Township was named in honor of Chauncey Barber, who actually lived in Minnesota Lake. Andrew Wesner and John Bocher were the first to settle the area, and it became known as Wesner's Grove. Located at the fork of the stage coach trail that ran from Albert Lea northwesterly to Winnebago and south to Blue Earth, the area became an important stage stop. A store, post office, Catholic Church, parsonage, cemetery, hotel and a number of homes were established in the area. When the railroad was constructed three miles north, Easton was established and Wesner's Grove all but disappeared. Today St. Mary's (Our Lady of Mt. Carmel) Cemetery remains as a landmark.

Blue Earth City Township took its name from the river whose east and west branches join within the City of Blue Earth. This township had a head start over the others, as it contained the first settler, Moses Sailor and later became the county seat. The 1860 census showed 317 residents living in the township which grew to 1,686 by 1880.

Brush Creek Township was named after the small stream that flows through the township and empties into the East Branch of the Blue Earth River. The first permanent resident of the township was James Prior. Milton Morey had a thriving saw mill and store on the banks of Walnut Lake. In 1869, Charles Fletcher built a grist mill (corn mill) powered by the river in Section 33. Between 1860 and 1880 the population grew from 31 to 525.

Clark Township originally Cobb Township, named after the Cobb River that was thought to run through the township. In 1869, the name was changed to Thompson, although this name was also overturned due to over use of the name. Finally in 1870, the commissioners

decided upon Clark, in honor of Clark W. Thompson. Thompson was the original proprietor of the Village of Wells and the largest landowner in the county. Thompson was also one of the state's most influential citizens. Alfred Holland was the first settler in 1862; while Augustus Powers was the first permanent settler and staked his claim in the winter of 1862.

Delavan Township was originally named Guthrie in honor of Sterrit Guthrie, an early settler. However, the Village of Delavan was already established and the name was changed to Delavan in 1872. The village and township were both named for Oren Delavan Brown, a proprietor and railroad employee in the Village of Delavan. The township is unique in the fact that the three main lakes in the county were within this township at the time of settlement and still remain today; Bass Lake, Rice Lake (then Maple Lake) and Lura Lake.

Dunbar Township was initially called Douglas in honor of Stephan A. Douglas, one of the most active and noted statesmen of the period. Upon notice of another township in the state having the same name it was changed to Dunbar in 1859 after state auditor William F. Dunbar. The families of Lucerne C. Taylor and son A.L. Taylor were the first permanent settlers. A.L. claimed 800 acres of land in 1856 and quickly broke ground on 160 acres to produce corn. In 1870 the township had a population of 203 and in ten years grew to 368.

Elmore Township was named by resident William S. Drake in honor of his business partner Andrew E. Elmore; a prominent citizen of the State of Wisconsin. Even with a grasshopper infestation in 1873-1874 and continued hard time in 1875-1876 the township grew from 95 inhabitants in 1860 to 442 in 1880.

Emerald Township received its name from the Emerald Isle, under the impression that most of the settlers were Irishmen. Ironically, the township was often called Norway because of the large amount of Norwegian inhabitants. There were also a solid number of German descendants, particularly on the northern border. The greater portion of Lake Ozahtonka, once the largest lake in the county, was located near the northern boundary of the township. Lake Ozahtonka does not remain today, row crops are grown where the lake once was. The Village of Dell was the hub of the township for many years prior to the railroad and settlement of the Village of Frost. Dell had a schoolhouse, post office, blacksmith shop, several dwellings and a general store. Today the church, parsonage and cemetery still remain in operation and are a landmark of the original Village of Dell. In remembrance of the Norwegian decadence, Dell Church still holds one of the state's largest Lutefisk Feeds the second Sunday in February.

Foster Township was named in honor of Dr. Reuben R. Foster, the first resident physician of the county but never a resident of Foster Township. In 1858, Foster moved to Blue Earth to practice medicine. Along the north end of Rice Lake a post office, store, hotel, blacksmith shop, school and several dwellings served as the hub for the township. The most prominent early resident was C.S. Dunbar who came to Foster Township in 1861, was engaged in farming and served as a state representative during the Centennial session of 1876.

Jo Daviess Township was originally called Johnson in honor of James and Alexander Johnson, two of the earliest settlers in the county. The name changed to Jo Daviess at the suggestion of James L. McCrery, who was the first settler of the township. Jo Daviess was a soldier, lawyer and speaker who was a Kentucky hero. The John A. Dean nursery farm was started here in 1865 and grew to be a large and prosperous business. The Great Grasshopper Plague of 1873-1877 hit the township hard, along with others, in 1874. Farmers got less than their seed back from wheat, corn and oats. The average yield per acre of corn that year was less than six bushels.

Kiester Township was named after J.A. Kiester, Faribault County's first historian. However, Kiester was never a resident of Kiester Township. Arriving in Blue Earth in 1857, Kiester served at various times as county surveyor, register of deeds, state representative, judge for probate, and state senator. The highest point in the county is located in Section 3 of Kiester Township. The first census of the township was conducted in 1870 and listed 61 residents. The township grew at a much slower rate than others in the county because of its lack of timber, elevated terrain, and land was owned by investors. In ten years the township only grew by 69 people.

Lura Township was incorrectly named. Early commissioners didn't have very accurate maps and were under the impression that Lura Lake was in Lura Township; in fact the lake is located in Delavan Township. The population of the township was just 20 in 1860 and grew at a rapid pace to 628 by 1880. Part of the population boom was due to the establishment of the Village of Easton in 1873 by Jason C. Easton and Conrad Ruf. Easton. Jason was a prominent financer of his day, said to be the most extensive banker and land owner in the state.

Minnesota Lake Township was originally named Marples in honor of Charles Marples, an early settler, but a name change was approved in 1866. The township, now named after the lake located in the township. Due to the topography of the lake, it was dry for a number of years at the turn of the century and to this day, still dries up from time to time. At the turn of the century there were years when the lake was actually farmed. When the lake is full today, it is the largest body of water in the county. The Village of Minnesota Lake was settled on the south side of the lake. A large amount of timber was located around the lake and along the banks of the Maple River. In 1860 the firm of John Harrison & Co., reported the manufacturing of over 100,000 feet of hardwood lumber. The township enjoyed a good early growth; from 34 persons in 1860 to784 in 1880.

Pilot Grove Township was named for a grove of native timber along the northern boundary. In the early days the grove was a landmark that immigrants could see from miles away. The grove stood on the shores of Pilot Grove Lake, which is currently a restored Waterfowl Production Area. A small village sprung up in the southwest part of the township. A post office, store and lumber yard were once in operation. A few homes are all that remain today. Due to the Great Grasshopper Plague of 1873-1877 there was almost a complete loss of all crops on the west side of the county, forcing farmers to leave their lands and find employment elsewhere. In 1860 the township had a population of 27. By 1880 the population had recovered and grown to a population of 234.

Prescott Township was named in honor of Mr. Prescott who resided in the township at the time but who left soon after. Little is known about him, other than that he was a carpenter nicknamed "Old Honesty." Benjamin Gray was actually the first settler of the township in the fall of 1855. While others had staked claims, they were not settled. One of the outstanding early residents was farmer Frank W. Temple who served many years on the county board of commissioners. According to an early Lake Ozatonka historian; it was largely thought that Temple's sensible management of the county was responsible for the construction of the county courthouse. In 1860, only 14 residents were in the township and by 1880 that figure had grown dramatically to 603.

Rome Township was first called Campbell in honor of James Campbell, who was one of the earlier settlers in Elmore Township but never lived in Rome Township. The name was changed to Grant in honor of Ulysses S. Grant, but because the name quickly became over used it was once again changed. In 1868, the present name of Rome was established, after the City of Rome in New York State. Fred Everton, the second settler to the township proposed the name. It was uninhabited in 1860 and by 1880 it had 504 residents.

Seeley Township was named after Philander C. Seeley, one of the earliest settlers of the township in 1857. Seeley was elected Sheriff in 1861, receiving every vote cast in the county. After serving only one year, he returned to farming. The township had a hotel, blacksmith shop, school, store and three post offices. The population of 17 in 1860 grew to 441 in 1880.

Verona Township was named in the most unusual manner. A.B. Cornell of Owatonna and Henry Stoddard, near Winnebago, planned a mail route between their residences. Cornell got the route established and gave the name of Verona to this end of the route. Thus the special commission accepted the name in 1856. Stoddard was the first settler of the township, staking his claim in Section 11 on June 4, 1855. This was the first tract of land "proved up" in the county. The land was located a short distance south of the City of Winnebago. The area in which Stoddard lived was variously known as Verona or Dewy, but in reality there was never a plat laid out until the establishment of the City of Winnebago whose southern boundary reaches into Verona Township. Verona was among the first townships to be settled and for many years was the third in population and wealth. This provided them with a political influence and allowed the population to grow from 268 in 1860 to 562 in twenty years by 1880.

Walnut Lake Township acquired its name from the lake on its southern border. The lake was a favorite summer resort in the early days, just as it had been prior to white settlement. It had been a favorite summer spot for Native Americans, especially the Winnebago Tribe whose teepees were often seen on the banks. Daniel James Ackerman took the first claim in this township on the northeast side of the lake in 1856. The Village of Marengo was once planned here but never developed. A village called Walnut Lake sprang up on the northwest side of the lake and flourished with hotels, a post office, a school, several stores, a blacksmith shop and several dwellings. The only remnant of this village today is a small cemetery not far from the village site. The population of this township was too small to be included in the 1860 census on its own but grew to 487 by 1880.

Winnebago Township was named after the village which had taken its name from the Winnebago Native Americans who were neighbors to the northeast in Blue Earth County. The Winnebago Native Americans camped and extensively hunted lands in Faribault County. Austin R. Nichols and Henry Roberts were the first settlers of the township. They took claims a few days after Moses Sailor staked land in Blue Earth Township. The population grew rapidly; from 286 in 1860 to 1,426 in twenty years.

3.2.4 INCORPORATION OF COMMUNITIES

On February 23, 1856, the Territorial Legislature of Minnesota passed a bill authorizing the establishment of the county seat by popular vote and the creation of the first county commission, which would be appointed by the governor until such time that a commission could be properly elected. The commission for Faribault County consisted of James B. Wakefield as Chair, Henry T. Stoddard, and Moses Sailor. The first Commissioner of Deeds was Samuel V. Hibler and the first sheriff was Henry P. Constans. The Justices of the Peace were George B. Kingsley and Newel Dewey. Table 3-2 lists the communities in Faribault County in order by the dates of incorporation (3).

Table 3-2: Communities - by Date of Incorporation

City	Date of Incorporation
Blue Earth	February 1, 1872
Bricelyn	July 15, 1903
Delavan	February 7, 1877
Easton	March 9, 1874
Elmore	November 27, 1891
Frost	December 11, 1903
Kiester	November 19, 1900
Minnesota Lake	February 14, 1876
Walters	August 18, 1903
Wells	March 6, 1871
Winnebago	March 8, 1873

City of Blue Earth: Simply due to its appointment as county seat, Blue Earth grew quickly. In 1865, a 27 plot cemetery was started and titled Riverside Cemetery, which is still active today. The most unique marker at the cemetery, a miniature stone replica of a log cabin, marks the grave of Moses Sailor. Public ownership of utilities began before 1890 when citizens contributed to the establishment of a central well for water services. Three wells, a filtering system and two storage tanks supplied the community. 19 miles of water mains, 148 fire hydrants and nearly 1500 water services were established. In 1892, O. J. Clark began providing energy to a limited number of people for a limited number of hours per day. The residents purchased Clark's operation and to this day, Blue Earth Light and Water still serves the community. A fire department was established in 1876, a police department in 1899 and a public warning system in 1893.

City of Bricelyn: The location of Bricelyn was determined by the Iowa and Minnesota Townsite Company. Land was purchased, plotted and sold starting on September 27, 1899; settlement started immediately. The new town was originally set to be named Brice in honor of W.E. Brice, president of the Iowa, Minnesota and Northwestern Railroad.

However, there was fear that Brice would easily be confused with Bruce, Minnesota, an already established town. Under the misconception that Mrs. Brice's name was Evelyn, 'lyn' was added to the name, creating Bricelyn. Rich crop lands surrounded the town and two railroads ran through the town; for a while creating a South Bricelyn. Due to its geographic location, when the railroads lost business, the City of Bricelyn saw a quick decline in population.

City of Delavan: Railroad promoter Owen Delavan Brown sought out section 36 of Delavan Township, thus creating the City of Delavan. The village, the fifth in the county, was platted October 11, 1870. Although the first train ran through the town on December 19, 1870, a depot was not built until spring of 1871. Multiple businesses soon began operating in Delavan. The town was incorporated in 1877 and continued to progress meeting the needs of the agriculture dominated community. As with other railroad towns, the economic shift caused businesses to close and the population to decline. Today, Delavan is one of the only towns remaining that has a large railroad presence. In 2012, Watonwan Farm Services expanded their operations to include a large rail loop and grain distribution facility.

City of Easton: Easton is located between Delavan and Wells along the Southern Minnesota rail line. Having heard of the rich lands, Conrad Ruff came from Illinois in 1868 and purchased land. Ruff and Carl Rath each donated 10 acres for the establishment of Lura Station, later named Easton; after Jason C. Easton. The town site was surveyed and staked out in 1873 and was incorporated on March 9, 1874. Easton saw its peak population of 411 in 1960.

City of Elmore: In 1879 the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroads was progressing southward from Lake Crystal into Iowa. In 1880, a railway station was built 80 rods (roughly 1,320 feet) north of the state line and named Elmore after the township. Before the village was platted, several settlers had located in the township. Among these was James Dobson, who came to the area in 1856 and for whom the township was named. In 1858, a log schoolhouse was built about four miles northwest of what is now Elmore, known as Dobson School. The schoolhouse was the center of considerable activity, serving not only as a school, but a town hall and church as well. The Dobson Cemetery (Elmore Section 17) located near the school site is of historical interest today because of the informational monument inscriptions. The new village grew rapidly and it wasn't long before several residents had built homes and businesses. By 1900, Elmore had boarding houses, eating establishments, hardware and general merchandise stores, farm implements, blacksmith shops, granaries and elevators, a harness shop, a jewelry store, a drug store, a bank, a millinery shop, a barbershop, a creamery, a roller flour mill, meat markets and a feed and hay business. Post World War I, motorized transportation had begun and the beginnings of State Highway 169 had begun. Eventually train service ceased completely and in 1976 rails were removed, leaving the town without any railroad shipping facilities.

City of Frost: Frost was the last town to be incorporated in Faribault County on December 11, 1903. Undoubtedly, the town exists because of the Iowa, Minnesota and Northwestern railroad. The land for the new town was purchased by the Iowa Minnesota Townsite Company from Ole Halverson and Eric Amundson, both of whom homesteaded property in the area in the early 1870's. The town was named after Charles S. Frost, an architect and

member of the firm of Frost and Granger, which designed depots along the railroad. The vast majority of early settlers in the area were from Norway, where the land is mountainous and farming difficult. Settlers were pleased with the endless prairie that made for easy farming. Frost had one of the first radios (if not the first) in the county. Joe Maland was very interested in the new invention and persuaded a few men to buy one together. It was a great success and many people came to listen. When a speaker was added, not only could groups of townspeople listen but on special occasions a fee was charged for visitors to see and hear the new invention. In 1931, Frost was known as the sugar beet capital of the world, each year a huge beet stock pile justified the reputation.

City of Kiester: Kiester was another one of the new towns developed along the Iowa, Minnesota and Northwestern railroad in 1899. On July 16, 1899, 75 acres of land were purchased from Conrad Whipplinger by the Iowa Minnesota Townsite Company in Section 21 of Kiester Township for a new village. The town was named after the township and a plat for the village was filed on September 26, 1899. By 1900, a general store, a bank, a hardware store, an implement firm, a dray line, a newspaper, two blacksmith shops, a livestock dealer, a lumberyard, a doctor, a jewelry store, a creamery and a post office were all operating in the new village. By 1910, the new street lights illuminated the cement sidewalks that had been laid the entire length of Main Street. The railroad that had brought progress to town also took it away when passenger service was discontinued in 1950. The depot was closed in 1959 and later dismantled in 1965. The "Kiester Hills" were well known for their deposits of gravel. With a local supply of gravel it was possible for streets and roads to be graveled at a time when dirt roads were the norm. Graveling days were held, farmers and townspeople worked together to improve the roads in and around Kiester, making good roads one of the distinctive features of the village.

City of Walters: Walters was the only new railroad town founded in Faribault County when the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern (later the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific) was built from Germania (now Lakota), Iowa to Albert Lea, Minnesota. Thomas H. Brown owned the land and on August 15, 1900 filed a plat for the village. The first place of business in Walters was the general store, where supplies could be purchased. By the end of 1900, the village also had a bank, restaurant, lumberyard, elevator, saloon and a combined livery and feed barn. Walters was the only village that didn't have rapid growth and today still remains the smallest incorporated city in Faribault County.

City of Wells: G.J. Adams is given credit for being the first to locate in the present day City of Wells, arriving in 1869 and camping on the prairie. He later built his home in what was later platted as Block II. Wells owes it permanent existence to Clark W. Thompson. In 1861, Thompson was appointed by President Lincoln as the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Northeast. In 1865, Thompson resigned from the position to take charge of construction on the Southern Minnesota Railroad. The City of Wells received its name from Thompson's wife, Rebecca Wells-Thompson who was instrumental in settling the area surrounding Wells, owning 9,000 acres (some records say 11,000), he broke up the land into 40 acre square plots, built brick homes on them, stocked them with animals and rented them out. Thompson built the first mill, the first creamery, a cheese factory, a barrel factory and a vinegar factory. He gave the town its first park site and ground for a school.

However, his greatest contribution to the people of Wells and Faribault County was the railroad built from LaCrosse, Wisconsin for which he paid the entire expense. This act made Wells the first railroad town in the county. At the peak of rail transportation, Wells saw six passenger trains and three freight trains per day. Wells soon became the grain market of the county. The village was the first in the county to be incorporated on March 6, 1871. The first doctor came to town in 1868, the first cement sidewalk was laid in 1898. In 1921, when citizen became worried about getting stuck on Main Street, a graveling project began followed by a paving project in 1922.

City of Winnebago: In September of 1856 four young men from St. Paul were moved by the spirit of the times and purchased a team of horses, a few supplies, and set out for southern Minnesota to establish a town. After finding out that they were too late to make the first settlement on Lake Albert Lea, they set out for the Blue Earth River. They found a spot for a 12 x 14 foot cabin that served as the first house and store for the village that would be named Winnebago. The next building established was a hotel, which served as a fort during the Native American excitement, known as Fort Rusk. In the spring of 1857, a steam sawmill was constructed utilizing twenty yoke of oxen. This mill was the first in the county and gave the town its real beginning. The United States Land Office was located in Winnebago, making it a destination place for new settlers. New businesses sprang up and old ones prospered. The one thing that Winnebago was missing was a rail line, and in 1871 it came. The Southern Minnesota Railroad, funded by Clark W. Thompson made Winnebago the grain shipping center for the county. Four stage lines soon fanned out in all directions from town, opening Winnebago, a once American born dominated village, to immigrants. Hotels had a thriving business between the stage coach lines and the ten passenger trains that came through the area per day. In 1879 the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad came through Winnebago, making it a hub to head in any direction one could desire. Parker College was established to bring trained teachers and their families to the area. In 1895, the first two town cars arrived, a pair of Packards owned by G. Eygabroad and J. Wheeler. This was the beginning of the end for horses and carriages. Prior to the automobile, almost every home had a barn to house the animals. The animals served as transportation and were often raced. These thoroughbreds served as a status symbol. The first horse that Ringling Brothers Circus acquired came from Winnebago. As with all the other communities in the county Winnebago fell victim to changing of the times and the population boom ceased and populations gradually declined.

3.2.5 1855 TO 1900'S

In January of 1856, a plan was hatched by a few men sitting around a fire to set out into the wilderness and find a suitable place for a town site to settle down in as permanent citizens. That is exactly what James B. Wakefield, Henry, P. Constans, Spier Spencer and Samuel V. Hibler did. On February 16, 1856 they came upon the Blue Earth River and Sailor's cabin. The following morning they staked out the town of Blue Earth. With 15 votes, the Village of Blue Earth was voted the county seat, even though it didn't exist yet. Four pioneers began at once to construct a 16 x 22 foot, one story log cabin with one window. This dwelling became the headquarters for the county, and served as such for some time. With a weekly mail route from Mankato established, settlers and provisions started to pour into the area.

The first manufacturing done in the county was a brick factory run by Captain J. B. Gillit. A newspaper was established and published its first issue in April 1861. In a matter of two or three years the city possessed all the essentials for becoming a progressive community, except one thing, a railroad. It wasn't until October of 1879 that the first train would run through the Village of Blue Earth.

In 1890, the County Commissioners decided to build a new courthouse, in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, this would cement Blue Earth as the county seat once and for all. Through a competitive bidding process, an architect by the name of C.A. Dunham of Burlington, Iowa and a contractor, S.J. Hoban from St. Paul, were chosen to build the courthouse.

3.2.6 1900'S TO 1940'S

In 1926, the Blue Earth Canning Company began operations as a vegetable canning company. By 1950, the company had been renamed Green Giant and adopted the Jolly Green Giant as its symbol. In 1977, the City of Blue Earth took an idea from Paul Hedberg, owner of KBEW radio station at the time, to construct a 55 foot fiberglass green giant to commemorate the linking of the east and west of Interstate 90. The statue was erected on July 6, 1979 and attracts over 10,000 visitors annually. Today, the statue is mounted on a pedestal and has steps allowing visitors to take a photo directly under the Jolly Green Giant.

In 1906, the first county ditch was completed, signaling the rise of agriculture as the dominant industry in the county. By 1920, a network of drainage ditches stretched across the county. As more ditches were laid, more lakes and wetlands were drained to create new land for farming. By the late 1920s, there were thousands of farms in the county. The cost of farm land continued to skyrocket due to speculation on Wall Street. However, in 1929 when the stock market crashed, land prices and crop prices plummeted, sending hundreds of farms into foreclosure, falling back into the hands of creditors. Even as the nation recovered from the Great Depression, the number of farms continued to decrease while the average size of farms increased. Between 1939 and 1969, the number of farms in the county decreased from 2,525 to 1,546, while the average acreage increased from 177.1 to 284.7.

3.2.7 POST WWII TO 1990'S

By the 1950s, a well-developed network of state trunk highways, county roads, and township roads had been developed and paved, enabling easy access by car to almost any point in the county. Community populations boomed during this time, with many communities being self-sustaining at this time. As time went on, populations declined and businesses decreased.

The City of Blue Earth and Faribault County were forever changed in the 1970s as Interstate 90 was laid down east to west across the county. This event prompted the widening of other routes, such as U.S. Highway 169, bringing in large volumes of traffic from other areas of the country for the first time.

Faribault County was deeply affected by the Midwest Farm Crisis of the 1980s. Why did the crisis happen? In the early 1970s, lowered trade barriers coupled with record Soviet purchases of American grain resulted in a sharp increase in agricultural exports. Farm incomes and commodity prices soared. The removal of restrictions on Federal Land Bank lending, coupled with increased lending by other entities for farmland purchases in the 1970s, led to increased land values. Conveniently low interest rates persuaded many farmers, and would be farmers, to go deeply into debt on the assumption that commodity prices and land values would continue to rise. The agricultural boom didn't last long. By the early 1980s, tight money and high interest rates had burst agriculture's speculative bubble. Farmland value dropped by nearly 60% between 1981 and 1985. Many farms found it impossible to retire their debts as fast as their asset values declined. Record harvest led to overproduction which in turn resulted in a surplus of farm commodities. In addition, President Jimmy Carter enforced a grain embargo on the Soviet Union, crippling a crucial overseas market. American agricultural exports, declined more than 20% between 1981 and 1983, while real commodity prices plummeted 21% during the same time period. The Crisis hit mid-level farmers the hardest, the majority of Faribault County farmers fell into this category, therefore they were deeply affected. The stock market crash in the Fall of 1987 led many to question the stability of the economy.

3.2.8 1990'S TO PRESENT DAY

The unstable economy of the 1980s transitioned into a recession in 1991, and finally began its slow recovery in 1992. As a result, the federal deficit had drastically increased, the stock market recovered, financial industries were plagued with problems, while computers, aerospace and export industries thrived during the recovery.

Farming operations were never the same after the 1980s. While farming, as with any industry, has seen numerous changes in recent years. No longer are horses pulling a plow, but Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are steering tractors. Chemical companies have thrived with the integration of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides into day to day farming operations. The majority of the land in Faribault County is dominated by row crops of corn and soybeans, minimal acres are used for canning, forage and organic crops. As technology advances, the size of farming equipment increases. This decreases time in the field, increases productivity and poses challenges on roads. Today the term "modern agriculture" is used and depicts farmer's commitment to innovation, stewardship and meeting global food challenges all at once.

The Housing Market Crash of 2007 was the worst housing crash in US history. The crash was the root cause of the financial crisis during the same time period. This nearly caused the US to experience another depression similar to the Great Depression. The housing market across the county, Faribault County and Southern Minnesota were no exception, experienced modest but steady growth from 1995 to 1999. Within the stock market crash of 2000, there was a shift in dollars going away from the stock market and into the housing market. Housing prices were high, interest rates were low (some with 0% down), and the combination spelled disaster. The housing market peaked in 2006. The trouble started when some of the types of subprime loans started to go into default. Credit markets froze in the summer of 2007, things began to deteriorate rapidly. Subprime credit stopped

completely and interest rates for credit for other types of borrowing, including corporate loans and consumer loans, rose dramatically. Even though the financial crisis was resolved by 2009, the housing market to decline. Unemployment rose to over 10% nationally and the housing market crash created the worst recession since the early 1980s. Today, Faribault County has benefitted from the housing crash and offers opportunities for first time home buyers.

3.3 HISTORICAL FACILITIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS

This portion of the chapter will identify the existing sites, structures, and events of historical and cultural significance within the county and what efforts are currently being undertaken to preserve the heritage of those sites and events.

3.3.1 EXISTING FACILITIES

Faribault County has a number of sites and structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In order to be added to the list, a site or structure must generally be more than 50 years old, be in more or less the same condition as it was in the past, and have a significant connection to important historical events in the area. Sites and structures on the National Register are generally eligible for various tax credits and state and federal grants. Table 3-3 is a listing of all the sites and structures within Faribault County that are on the National Register of Historic Places (4).

Table 3-3: National Historic Register Properties (4)

Name of Resource	Location	Address
Bullis, Adams H., House	Delavan	Address Restricted
Center Creek Archeological District	Winnebago	Address Restricted
Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Depot and Lunchroom	Wells	89-100 1st St., NW
Church of the Good Shepherd--Episcopal	Blue Earth	Moore and 8th St.
District No. 40 School (Little Pink Schoolhouse)	Wells	MN 109
Dunn, Andrew C., House	Winnebago	133 S. Main St.
Faribault County Courthouse	Blue Earth	415 N. Main
First National Bank	Winnebago	Main St. and Cleveland
Kremer, Peter, House	Minnesota Lake	Main and 4th St.
Leland, Muret N., House	Wells	410 2nd Ave., SW
Memorial Library	Blue Earth	Sixth St. and Ramsey St.
Wakefield, James B., House	Blue Earth	405 E. 6th St.
Walters Jail	Walters	3rd and Main St.

Adam H. Bullis House

The Adam H. Bullis House is located in a wooded grove in rural Delavan Township. Bullis moved to the area in 1869 and to the 800-acre Delavan Township farm site in 1875. Bullis is credited with introducing the first Hereford and shorthorn cattle to the region and was recognized as an authority on scientific cattle breeding. Bullis was born in New York State in 1832 and moved to Minnesota in 1854 where he served two terms in the State Legislature for Rice County. Upon moving to Faribault County, Bullis served three terms as a county commissioner and was president of the Winnebago Agricultural Society. The Bullis House was built from bricks made locally in the Bullis brickyard. The house

incorporates features of the Italianate style and the cubed shape, low pitched roof, double brackets and keystone arched windows make this house stand out even today. The Bullis house stands as a reminder of the commitment made to farming in Faribault County and reflects the transition made in the county between the 1870's and the 1880's that converted the small pioneer farm into a farming enterprise reliant on sophisticated agricultural methods.

Center Creek Archeological District

Center Creek archaeological Districts, an 800 acre site south of Winnebago contains remnants of the Mississippi Native American Culture. The site was explored by archaeologists from the University of Minnesota, members of the Minnesota Historical Society, and local amateur archaeologists and contains artifacts from the Mississippian culture - an agricultural tribe that flourished in the area from 1000A.D. to 1700 A. D. The site was pushed to register in order to protect and preserve it from the threat of a new road being proposed to run through the site in 1975. This site is not open to the public.

Wells Train Depot

The railroad that first came to Wells in 1870 was the Southern Minnesota Railway, through the efforts of Clark W. Thompson. This was later taken over by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railway, more commonly known as the Milwaukee Road. The current depot building was built in 1903 by the Milwaukee Road, the first brick structure after two wooden depots, one of which burned in a fire.

This building, with its unique witch hat roof, served the community as both freight and passenger depot for many years. Passenger service ended about 1960, but the building was in use as a railroad office right up until 2005, when the current rail line owners ICE/DME intended to demolish it. The Wells Historical Society bought the building for a dollar, and helped the railroad find other property along the track to build a depot more suited their needs. They needed a large equipment garage (not possible at the traditional depot) and a small office space. Since then, the Canadian Pacific Railway took over, and they are currently located about a block from the original depot, on the other side of the tracks, on 2nd Ave NW and 3rd St. NW.

Church of the Good Shepherd

The Good Shepherd Episcopal Church was built in 1872 at the intersection of Moore and 8th St. in Blue Earth. Under the direction of Bishop Henry Whipple, the church remained unaltered since its construction. It contains Swiss-made stained glass windows and original pews of wood peg construction.

District No. 40 School (Little Pink Schoolhouse)

Located half-way between the communities of Wells and Easton, stands the Little Pink Schoolhouse. The schoolhouse was built in 1896 and served students in School District #40 until 1952. The schoolhouse utilized a one room and one teacher system to educate children in kindergarten through eighth grade. The Pink Schoolhouse has become notable because of its color. The original color of the school was red but when it came time to repaint, a mixture of buttermilk and ochre was used. During the process of mixing, the

ochre was tipped over and spilled on the ground changing the intensity of the color. The new combination created the pink hue that became the trademark of the old District 40 schoolhouse. For several years in the 1950's, the schoolhouse was painted white but residents were not happy with the change and it was repainted back to its 'original' pink. In 1952, District #40 consolidated with the Wells Public School System and the schoolhouse was closed. In 1953, the Pink Schoolhouse was sold to Walnut Lake Township to be used as their town hall. Today, it is used for monthly meetings and annual township meetings for residents.

Andrew C Dunn House

Andrew Clarkson Dunn was born in New York City in 1834 and moved to Minnesota in 1854. In 1856, Dunn and four others from St. Paul moved to Winnebago and platted out the city in 1857. The Dunn house was built in 1902, near the end of Dunn's life. The house is located on a large wooded lot at the corner of SW 2nd St. at Main St. in Winnebago. The 2 ½ story building of irregular plan has a gable roofline and displays elements of the Queen Ann and Classical styles. Decorative elements of the wrap-around porch include classic Corinthian columns, swag and bows, and spindle work portieres. The house also includes a Palladian window in the principle gable and an eyebrow window in the east dormer.

Faribault County Courthouse

The Faribault County Courthouse in Blue Earth was completed in December of 1892 at a cost of $70,000. Over the years, the location of the county seat had been contested by other communities in the area. However, in 1890, the County Commissioners advertised for bids to build a new courthouse that settled the location of the county seat. C.A. Dunham was the architect for the courthouse and S.J. Hoban won the bid to become the contractor. Built in the Richardsonian style, it incorporates stone from Kasota, Minnesota and granite pillars.

In 1925, bids were let to update the heating system in the courthouse. There were multiple offices and rooms that had fireplaces, explained by the multiple chimneys on the roof. One of the original fireplaces remains today, in the Treasurer's office. In 1930 the County Commissioners contracted to repoint and reset the stone and shingles on the tower. Old mortar on the stone foundation of the courthouse was also replaced at this time. In 1987, the quarry tile floor on the main level of the courthouse was torn up and re-laid. In 2002, the platform that was added to the front step of the courthouse during the 1960s was removed and the steps were rebuilt closer in style to the original steps.

First National Bank

The First National Bank building is located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Cleveland in the heart of the Winnebago business district. The bank was founded in 1870 as the Winnebago City Bank by Jason C. Easton and J.A. Armstrong. In 1900, the bank became First National Bank. Continued growth made it necessary to construct a larger bank and in 1913, Minneapolis architect Franklin Ellerbe was commissioned to draw up plans. The Classic Revival style building was constructed in 1916 & 1917 on the same site of the first bank building. The recessed main entry includes a flat portico supported by scrolled brackets flanked by two columns. Two minor alterations have been made to the bank; a drive through window teller to the west and the incorporation of a former security

company building to the south side of the structure. The bank was remodeled in 1977-78 with great care taken to preserve the exterior of the building.

Peter Kremer House

The Kremer House was built in Minnesota Lake in 1902 by Peter and Millie Kremer. The house is a red brick, Queen Anne style mansion. It is noted for it's ornate oak woodwork, parquet flooring, etched hinges, double doors and a decorative fireplace. The decorative and curved glass windows, impressive foyer and staircase, and overall excellence of construction make the Kremer House an architectural treasure for this small Faribault County community. After the Kremer's death it was sold to the Farmers National Bank in 1959. The house was then divided into apartments and occupied by a number of families until the oil crunch of the mid 1970's. When it became too expensive to heat, it sat empty for several years. The Kremer House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in May of 1980. The bank then decided to donate the house to the City of Minnesota Lake for use as a Library and Museum in December of 1984. Two stories of the house are used for the museum where displays are changed throughout the year. The museum is also home to family files that are available to area residents of the Minnesota Lake area interested in genealogy.

Muret N. Leland House

The Muret N. Leland House was built in 1883. It exhibits all the characteristics of Queen Ann style architecture. This home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and is featured in the book "Minnesota Treasures" by Dennis Gardner and Richard Moe. The home is currently privately-owned and not open to the public.

Walters Jail

The Walters Jail was constructed in 1906 on the corner of Third and Main St for the newly formed railroad town. The cell for the jail was shipped by rail from Michigan. The jail occasionally provided lodging for railroad workers since the town had no hotel.

3.3.2 EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

Within Faribault County, there are numerous organizations dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of the county. These include historical societies, libraries, and museums. Table 3-4 lists the organizations within Faribault County that are engaged in historic preservation activities.

Table 3-4: Historic Preservation Organizations (4)

Organization	Address	City	Phone
Faribault County Historical Society	405 E. Sixth St.	Blue Earth	(507) 526-5421
Bricelyn Area Historical Society	309 N. Main St.	Bricelyn	(507) 653-4644
Elmore Area Historical Society	108 South Henry St.	Elmore	(507) 943-3855
Kiester Area Historical Society	PO Box 222	Kiester	(507) 338-0079
Minnesota Lake Area Historical Society	PO Box 225	Minnesota Lake	(507) 462-3420
Wells Historical Society	PO Box 43	Wells	(507) 553-6303
Winnebago Area Museum	18 First St. NE	Winnebago	(507) 893-4660

3.3.3 LOCAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Saving the Wells Railroad Depot. In February 2004, the IC&E Railroad contacted the Wells City Development Director with their intent to demolish the 1903 Depot and put up a metal building that would better suit their needs. Many citizens in the community took action to re-establish the Wells Historical Society and save the historic train depot. Once the historical society purchased the depot for one dollar from IC&E Railroad, the restoration efforts started in full force. While many treasures, such as the original freight scale, ticket window and wood floors were found inside, they also found a leaking roof, crumbling chimneys and pigeons. Restoration of the depot started at the top with a new roof and replacement of the original redwood gutters and reconstruction of the original chimneys. Multiple grants and local funds were utilized to complete the restoration of the train depot. On August 20, 2010, an official ribbon cutting kicked off the beginning of the Wells Depot Museum, which showcases the history of the Wells area.

The Bricelyn Area Historical Society (BAHS) was formed for the purpose of collecting, preserving and recoding the history of the Bricelyn area. Their present focus is the preservation of the First Baptist Church of Bricelyn. The building is over 100 years old and is the second oldest church in Faribault County. At the present time the BAHS has over 200 Charter Members and are continually looking for more.
Elmore, Kiester, Minnesota Lake and Winnebago also have active Area Historical Societies.

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4. DEMOGRAPHICS and POPULATION TRENDS

The study of populations and where people live is a critical component of any planning effort. In order to successfully plan for the future needs of the county, we must know some things about the people who live here. How many are there? Is the population increasing or decreasing? What are their ages and genders? Where are they currently living? Where will they live in the future? Will the current school system be adequate for future generations? These are just some of the questions that should be considered when planning for the future needs of the county.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Demography is the study of the characteristics of human populations such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, and migration patterns. In order to effectively plan for the future, it is important to understand the demographic makeup of the county's population. The purpose of this section of the plan is to provide an overview of the county's past, current, and projected future demographics that will give the county's decision-makers the information they need to make informed decisions about development, such as when and where it may be appropriate to build new schools or senior centers.

4.2 GENERAL POPULATION TRENDS

Faribault County is one of the nine counties to the south and west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area that is considered south central Minnesota.

Because these nine counties share many of the same characteristics, it is useful to group demographic data for each and then make comparisons. Much of the population and housing data in this section is presented in this format. This nine county area is comprised of a single major regional center (Mankato/North Mankato) in Blue Earth/Nicollet County, several smaller regional communities such as Le Sueur, Waseca, New Ulm, Fairmont and Blue Earth, and then a large number of small to very-small rural communities. The balance of the population lives in the rural townships.

When total population by county, by decade is presented together, the first thing that most people notice is that the combined total of all of the nine counties does not increase in a steady, upward trend, but goes up in the 1970's, then down between the 1980 and 1990 census, and then continues upward again through the 2010 census period. This varying trend line is not uncommon for mainly rural areas of the State of Minnesota.

The second most obvious basic population statistic from this data set is that Faribault County has by far the greatest population loss (-30.36%) of all nine counties, between 1970 and 2010. This figure keeps re-appearing in variations of this data throughout this section of the Comprehensive Plan. Watonwan County had the second greatest decrease of population during this time period (-15.69%), and the average change for all nine counties was an increase of 6.06%. Clearly this represents an area of concern for county officials, the general population, and other stakeholders.

In addition, and partly as a consequence of this trend, Faribault County went from having the fourth lowest total population of the nine counties (1970 and 1980), to the third lowest (1990 and 2000), to the second lowest total population in 2010 (1) (2)

4.2.1 A CHANGING POPULATION

Population loss for Faribault County is taking place in the communities and in the rural townships. Between 1980 and 2010, Faribault County communities experienced a total population decrease of 16.89%, while the townships lost over 40% during this same period (1) (2). While it is not as readily apparent in the communities, especially Blue Earth, Winnebago and Wells, one only has to visit with local farm families who can point out areas where several former farm families used to live, to see how the population of rural areas has decreased.

Table 4-1: Distribution of Population between Communities and Townships

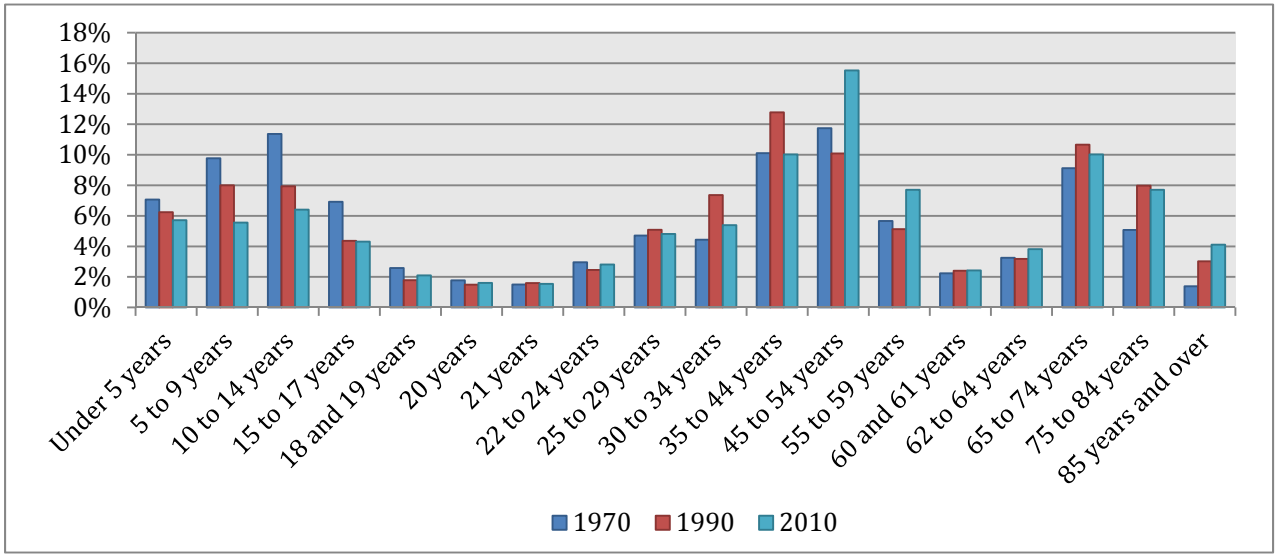
Year	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change*
Communities*	12,030	10,993	10,713	9,998	-16.89%
Townships	7,684	5,944	5,468	4,555	-40.72%
Total	19,714	16,937	16,181	14,553	-26.18%

*Data not available for 1980 for the City of Bricelyn.

4.2.2 AGING POPULATION AND AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO

Much can be learned about an area by studying the ages of it citizens. In spite of the overall population decrease, the percentage of older Faribault County citizens is increasing. In the past 40 years, the younger generation in the county experienced a negative change within the total population. The middle group of ages (21 to 44) had stabilization within the population. And the oldest age group (ages 45 to 85+) has all positive percentages (1) (2) (3). Faribault County is not alone in this trend, due to the "baby boomer" era the nation is experiencing an aging population.

Figure 4-1: Percent of Population by Age Cohort - 1970 to 2010



The term "Age Dependency Ratio" describes the ratio between the percentage of the population within the labor force (from age15 to 64) to that percentage of the population outside of the labor force (populations below age 15 and above age 64). A ratio of 1.0 (100%) or below is favorable, meaning that the existing labor force can support those not within the labor force (children and the aged), while a ratio of greater than 1 is typically not desirable. For instance, a ratio of 1.1 or (110%) implies that each member of the labor force supports themselves and an extra person not within the labor force population (non-labor force age group). Tracking Faribault County's age dependency for 1970, 1990 and 2010 helps provide a good picture of the implication of the County's aging population.

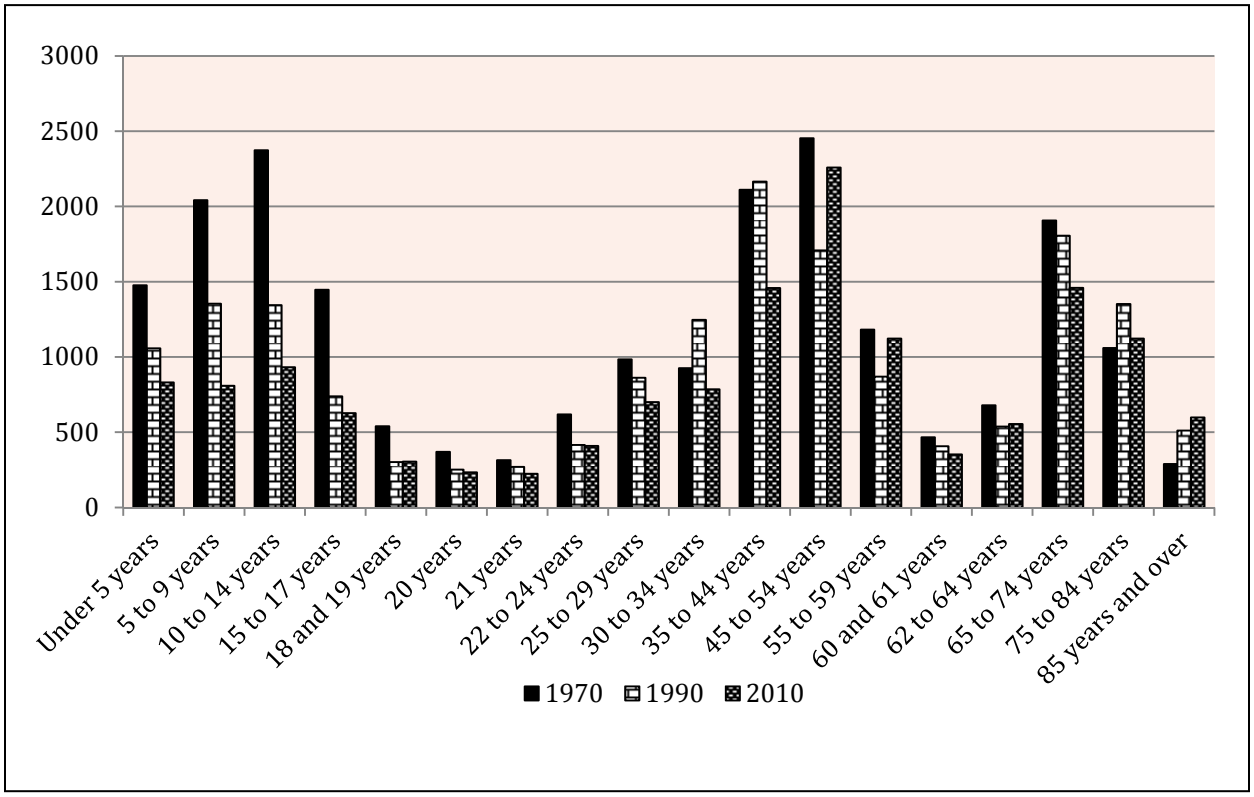
Table 4-2: Age Dependency Ratio

Projected Year	Dependent Population	Independent Population	Dependency Ratio
1970	9,148	12,090	76%
1990	7,424	9,874	75%
2010	5,751	9,031	64%

Directing attention to Table 4-2 and Figure 4-2, the total proportion of children (persons below age 15) and the elderly (above 64 years), which makes up the non-labor force age population, constituted 43% of the 1970 population of Faribault County. This increased to 44% in 1990 and later decreased to 40% in 2010. The proportion of children decreased by an average of 5% while that of the aged population increased by 7% through this period. An increasing labor force population from 1970 to 2010 therefore guarantees a favorable age dependency ratio for Faribault County.

Table 4-2 and Figure 4-2 help to capture the trend of age dependency ratios for the County from 1970 to 2010. The age dependency ratios for Faribault County have decreased from 76% in 1970 to 64% in 2010. Yes, the typical labor force population has decreased by 3,059 (25%) from 1970 to 2010, but this has not affected the County's dependency because the population outside the typical labor force age group has also significantly decreased, 3,397 (37%). It is worthy to note that such a decrease in the non-labor force age group category is mostly accounted for by the decrease in the child population than that of the aged population. It therefore suffices to say that, all other things being equal, pending future increases in the aged population due to the aging of the "baby boomers", Faribault County has a very favorable age dependency ratio.

Figure 4-2: Population by Age Cohort - 1970 to 2010



4.2.3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

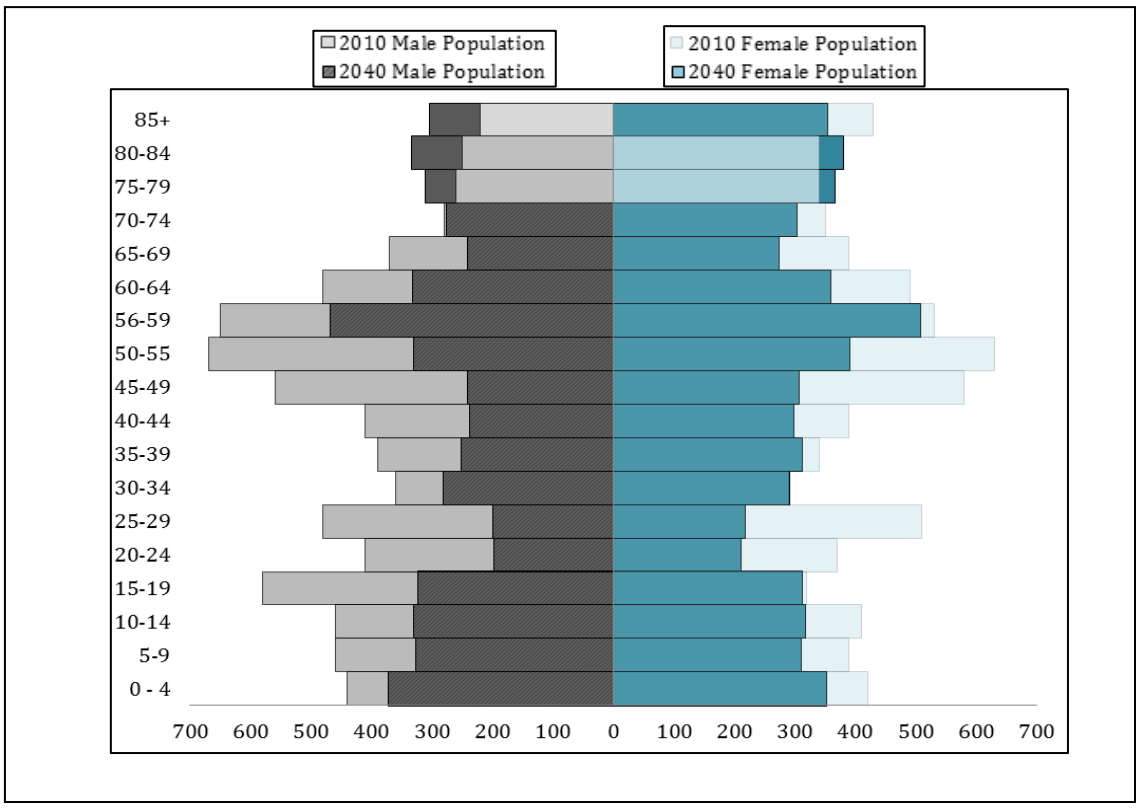
This simple table shows the projected number of people, by sex from 2015 through 2040. (4)

Table 4-3: Population Projections - 2015 to 2040

Projected Year	Males	Females	Total
2015	6,968	7,032	14,000
2020	6,666	6,793	13,459
2025	6,337	6,562	12,899
2030	5,996	6,331	12,327
2035	5,666	6,099	11,765
2040	5,364	5,869	11,233
Change	-1,604	-1,163	-2,767
Percent	-23.0%	-16.5%	-19.8%

Figure 4-3. Population Pyramids are a useful way to show differences in age and sex in a given geographic area over time. The two graphics below represent the present (2010) and a projection by the State Demographic Center for 2040, for Faribault County (4). In the 2010 graph, you will notice that for women, there is only one cohort (for the age 30-34 cohort) that contains less than 300 persons, but for men, there are four, representing ages 70-85+. This shows that the population of women is distributed more evenly by age and that women are living longer than men.

Figure 4-3: Population Pyramids for 2010 and 2040 Population



The greater distinction comes from comparing the 2010 and the 2040 graphics. The most obvious difference is that the 2040 overall population is much smaller than in 2010, and the second is that the age categories are more uniform for both sexes. And finally, there is a reduction in the number of residents between the ages of 20 and 30 by the year 2040.

4.2.4 MEDIAN AGE

Another indication of the aging and declining population is the drastic increase in the median age between 1980 and 2010. Table 4-4 shows while the median age in some communities increased by only a few years, the majority of communities saw increases of around 10 years or more (1) (2). Frost topped the list with an increase in median age of 16.4 years. Minnesota Lake followed closely with an increase of 13.2 years, bringing the median age in the city to 53.1 – the highest of any community in the county. Elmore was the only community to buck the upward trend, with a decline of -0.3 years. Whereas in 1980, only two communities had a median age over 40, by 2010 only one community had a median age under 40. With further population decline expected, especially in the younger age brackets, this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Table 4-4: Median Age of Residents in Communities - 1980 to 2010

City	1980	2000	2010	Change
Blue Earth	36.7	44	46.4	9.7
Bricelyn	37.8	45.5	47.9	10.1
Delavan	43.2	46.8	53.1	9.9
Easton	33.3	41.8	44.9	11.6
Elmore	38.9	41.5	38.6	-0.3
Frost	31.4	37.5	47.8	16.4
Kiester	42.3	45.9	47.8	5.5
Minnesota Lake	27.9	39.5	41.1	13.2
Walters	37.5	36	43.8	6.3
Wells	36.3	42.9	45.3	9
Winnebago	37.9	44.1	42.3	4.4

4.2.5 POPULATION OF TOWNSHIPS

In many ways, changes in population for Faribault County townships mirror changes to the communities. Without exception, every township experienced a decline in population between 1970 and 2010, and the scope of those changes was significant. No township lost less than 27% population in that time frame, twelve out of twenty lost greater than 50%, and six out of twenty lost greater than 70% (1) (2). Average population decline for all the townships was 63%, compared to a 17% decline for all communities. In 1970, 16 of the 20 townships had a population greater than 400 and two had a population of over 1,000, whereas by 2010, not one township had a population greater than 400. This would indicate that although some people have moved from the townships into the communities, most have left the county entirely. This trend of declining township populations is not unique to Faribault County. It is happening across the country and internationally in most rural areas (5).

Table 4-5: Population of Townships - 1970 to 2010

Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change
Barber	513	431	321	278	248	-51.66%
Blue Earth City	605	522	476	454	387	-36.03%
Brush Creek	375	297	239	241	225	-40.00%
Clark	644	510	459	459	254	-60.56%
Delavan	585	339	248	275	228	-61.03%
Dunbar	493	422	370	312	283	-42.60%
Elmore	1,281	311	229	203	181	-85.87%
Emerald	438	330	258	228	222	-49.32%
Foster	603	373	314	314	239	-60.36%
Jo Daviess	435	370	310	281	245	-43.68%
Kiester	1,167	349	317	320	260	-77.72%
Lura	718	302	243	217	163	-77.30%
Minnesota Lake	1,089	322	263	237	190	-82.55%
Pilot Grove	359	246	187	182	156	-56.55%
Prescott	369	308	245	222	163	-55.83%
Rome	545	284	208	172	143	-73.76%
Seely	847	297	247	210	193	-77.21%
Verona	500	476	483	391	364	-27.20%

Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change
Walnut Lake	431	362	291	251	214	-50.35%
Winnebago City	352	346	236	221	201	-42.90%
Total	12,349	7,197	5,944	5,468	4,559	-63.08%

4.2.6 POPULATION OF COMMUNITIES

Of the eleven communities in Faribault County, three have populations greater than 1,400 people, and eight have fewer than half that number (1) (2). The combined population of the three largest (Blue Earth, Wells, and Winnebago) makes up 71% of the total population of communities. Walters is the smallest with a population of 73 in 2010 and also had the greatest change in population (-38.14%) between 1980 and 2010. Like the townships, every single city within the county without exception has lost population in the past 40 years.

Table 4-6: Population of Communities - 1970 to 2010

City	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change*
Blue Earth	3,965	4,132	3,745	3,621	3,353	-18.85%
Bricelyn**	N/A	N/A	426	379	365	-14.32%
Delavan	N/A	262	245	223	179	-31.68%
Easton	N/A	283	229	214	199	-29.68%
Elmore	N/A	882	709	735	663	-24.83%
Frost	N/A	293	236	251	198	-32.42%
Kiester	N/A	670	606	540	501	-25.22%
Minnesota Lake	N/A	744	681	681	687	-7.66%
Walters	N/A	118	86	88	73	-38.14%
Wells	2,791	2,777	2,465	2,494	2,343	-15.63%
Winnebago	N/A	1,869	1,565	1,487	1,437	-23.11%
Total	6,756	12,030	10,993	10,713	9,998	-16.89%

*Percent change from 1980 to 2010. 1970 data not available for most communities.
**Data not available for 1970 or 1980 for Bricelyn, MN.

4.2.7 POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Between 1970 and 2010, not only did the number of households decrease by just under 2%, so did the average household size (from 2.85 persons to 2.01 persons) (1) (2). This can be partially attributed to a declining birth rate: a phenomenon, which is occurring in almost every developed country in the world (6).

Table 4-7: Population in Households - 1970 to 2010

	Communities					
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change
Population in households	20,632	19,369	16,586	15,731	14,217	-31.09%
Households	7,232	7,950	7,416	7,247	7,090	-1.96%
Persons per household	2.85	2.44	2.24	2.17	2.01	-29.71%

4.2.8 COUNTY MIGRATION

The United States has always been an extremely mobile society, and the residents of Faribault County are no exception. Migration data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006-2010 American Community Survey indicate that between 2006 and 2010, 1,683 of

Faribault County's residents moved to or from the county (7). Table 4-8 presents the number of people who migrated in or out of the county during this time period.

Table 4-8: Migration Flow, 2006 to 2010

Inbound	Number	Outbound	Number
Different State	222	Different State	441
Different County in Minnesota	431	Different County in Minnesota	577
Different Country	12		

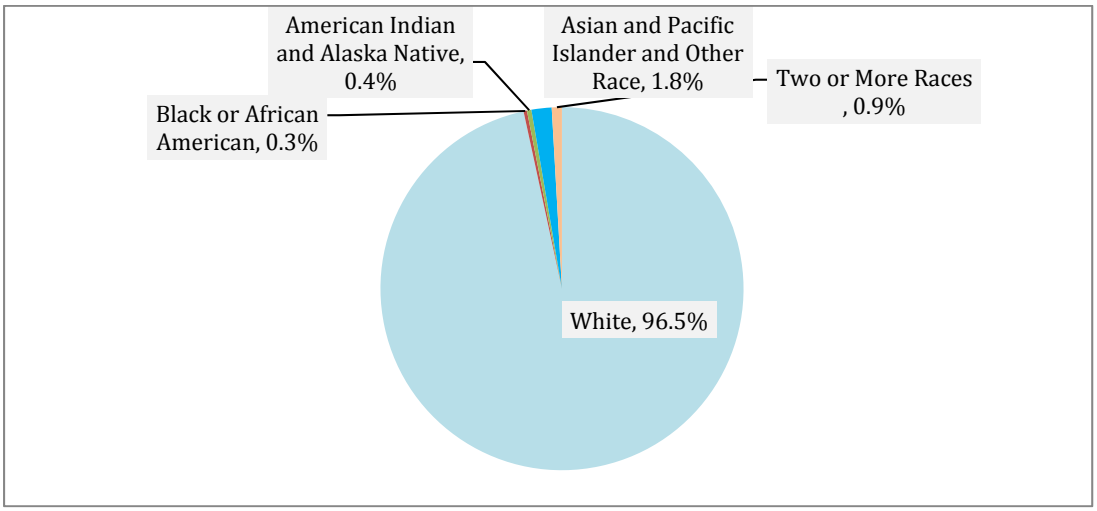
4.2.9 MINORITY POPULATION TRENDS

Faribault County is one of the least diverse counties in the state. This is evidenced by the fact that 96% of the population is White while only 4% belong to a minority group. Although the percent change in the minority population appears to be increasing exponentially, the actual population increase is marginal at best (1) (2).

Table 4-9: People by Race 1970 to 2010

Race	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change (1970-2010)
White	20,854	19,435	16,670	15,714	14,042	-6,812
Black or African American	1	7	10	39	47	46
American Indian and Alaska Native	12	8	23	31	62	50
Asian and Pacific Islander and Other Race	29	234	234	285	268	239
Two or More Races (Data not collected before 2000)				112	134	22

Figure 4-4: Current Population by Race -2010



4.3 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

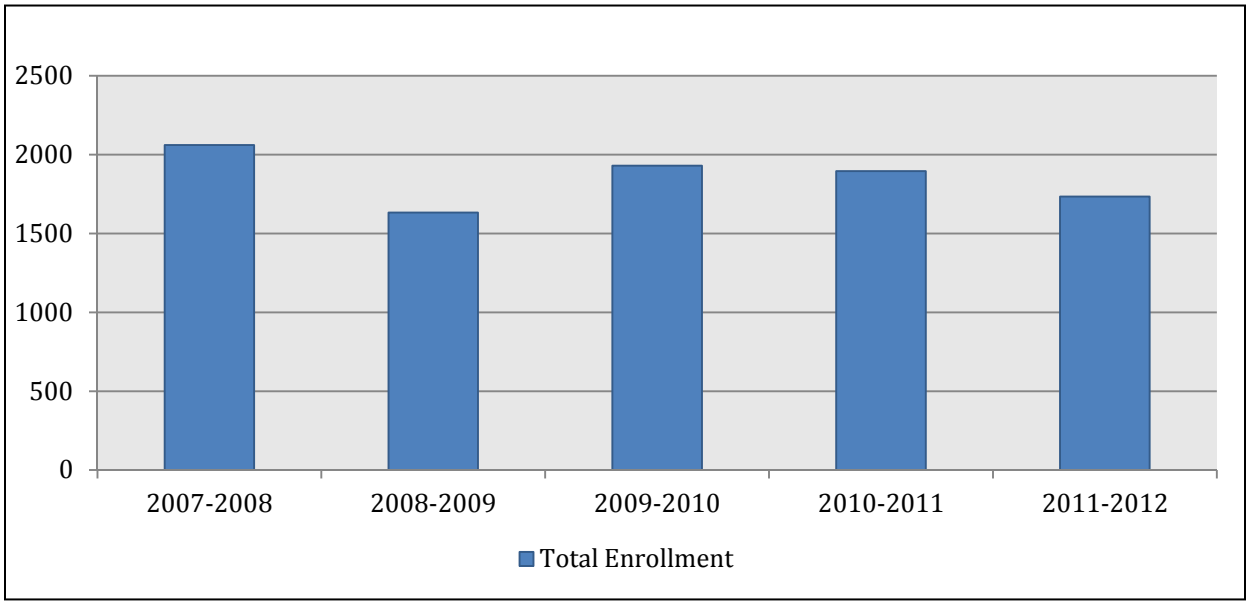
As of the 2013-14 school year, there are six school districts whose territory overlaps with Faribault County. Information for these districts can be found below (8).

Table 4-10: School Districts, 2013 to 2014

School District Number	Name
2860	Blue Earth Area Schools
2134	United South Central
2536	Granada-Huntley-East Chain
242	Alden-Conger
2135	Maple River

Although enrollment data from the Minnesota Department of Education was not available for years prior to 2007, it is likely that school enrollment figures will experience a decline mirroring that of the younger age cohorts. It is also likely that the enrollment will become more diverse, based off trends of increasing racial diversity within the county. These trends are both likely to put pressure on the education system. Decreased enrollment will mean reduced funding from the state, while an increase in minority enrollment, specifically that of immigrant students, will mean an increased demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) resources. Figure 4-5 shows school enrollments for all schools within Faribault County from 2007 to 2012 (9).

Figure 4-5: Total PK-12 Enrollment, 2007 to 2012



4.3.1 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RACE

If past trends are any indication of the future, the diversity of students enrolled is likely to increase in future years following projected increases in the diversity of the overall population of the county. Table 4-11 shows the number of minority students enrolled in

Faribault County schools between 2007 and 2012. Although the numbers vary from year to year, there is a clear upward trend between 2007 and 2012 (9).

Table 4-11: Public School Enrollment by Race (2007 to 2012)

School Year	American Indian	Asian Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black	White	Total Minority	Total Students
2007-2008	9	20	175	16	1,841	220	2,061
2008-2009	7	14	155	21	1,436	197	1,633
2009-2010	5	15	228	16	1,666	264	1,930
2010-2011	8	13	212	18	1,645	251	1,896
2011-2012	8	9	200	15	1,502	232	1,734
Percent Change	-11.11%	-55.00%	14.29%	-6.25%	-18.41%	5.45%	-15.87%

4.4 SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS OF COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC AND POPULATION

Having an understanding of Faribault County's demographic and population trends aids County officials to determine the needed socio-economic interventions needed to sustain the growth and development of the County. A key finding from the analysis thus far shows declines in current and projected County population. Again, the almost insignificant growth in the youthful population against an increasing aged population in the County requires policy measures which will target projected needs of these population groups.

4.5 BIBLOGRAPHY

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5. HOUSING

Understanding the current and projected demographics of a county (see section 4) is vital to understanding where the current and future population will reside. What is the current condition of the housing stock? What types of units are currently available? What types of units will be in demand in the future? How might the county work with others in the housing industry to meet the needs of a changing population? These are all questions that are vitally important to the future strength of Faribault County.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Housing is a fundamental component of quality of life. Without appropriate shelter, people cannot meet their basic needs or adequately participate in society. Housing issues can have a direct effect on the health, education and wellbeing of the community. Everyone should have access to good-quality housing and a pleasant home environment that makes them feel safe.

Providing safe and affordable housing for all members of society has long been a dominant public policy concern. The purpose of this Housing Section of the Faribault County Comprehensive Plan is to identify local housing issues that are a priority for current and future residents and elected officials, and to offer suggestions for officials as they address these issues and move forward into the future.

5.2 HOUSING SNAPSHOT

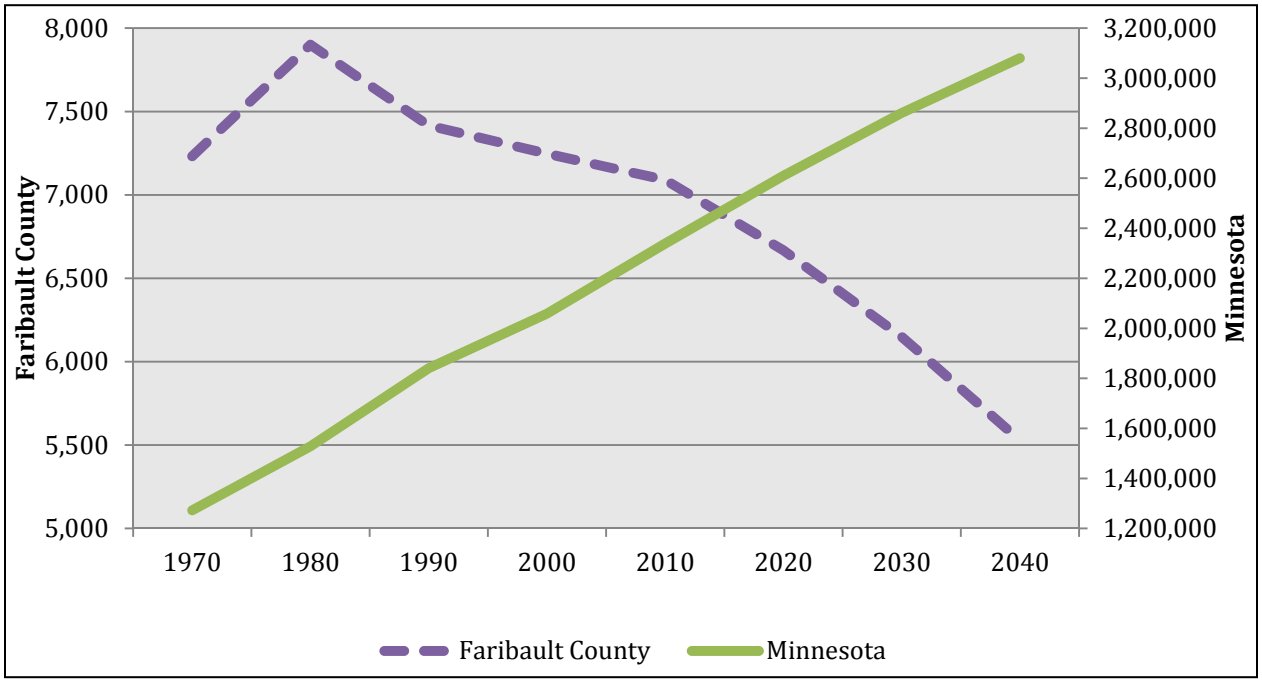
- Availability of affordable housing stock;
- Limited transitional housing stock and developable lots;
- Encouraging housing rehabilitation;
- Availability of land for new housing developments;
- Various financing programs to promote home ownership.

5.3 HOUSING TRENDS

5.3.1 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

Figure 5-1. When compared with the growth of the state of Minnesota, Faribault County has incurred a gradual decrease since 1970. By the year 2040 that number is projected to decrease by 23.5% to a total of only 5,529 households (1)

Figure 5-1: Projected Number of Households - 1970 – 2040



On the State level, Figure 5-2, household projections suggest that in the future a smaller number of householders will be asked to support a greater number of retired older residents. Faribault County has a very large Baby Boomer population and is in the same boat as the rest of the state. In the not so distant future, fewer residents will be expected to support the ever growing elderly population in the county. Faribault County is experiencing an aging community that with the assistance of modern medicine is not only living longer; they are living longer within their homes before transitioning into a care facility.

Figure 5-2: Projected Number of Households by Family Type - 2005 to 2035

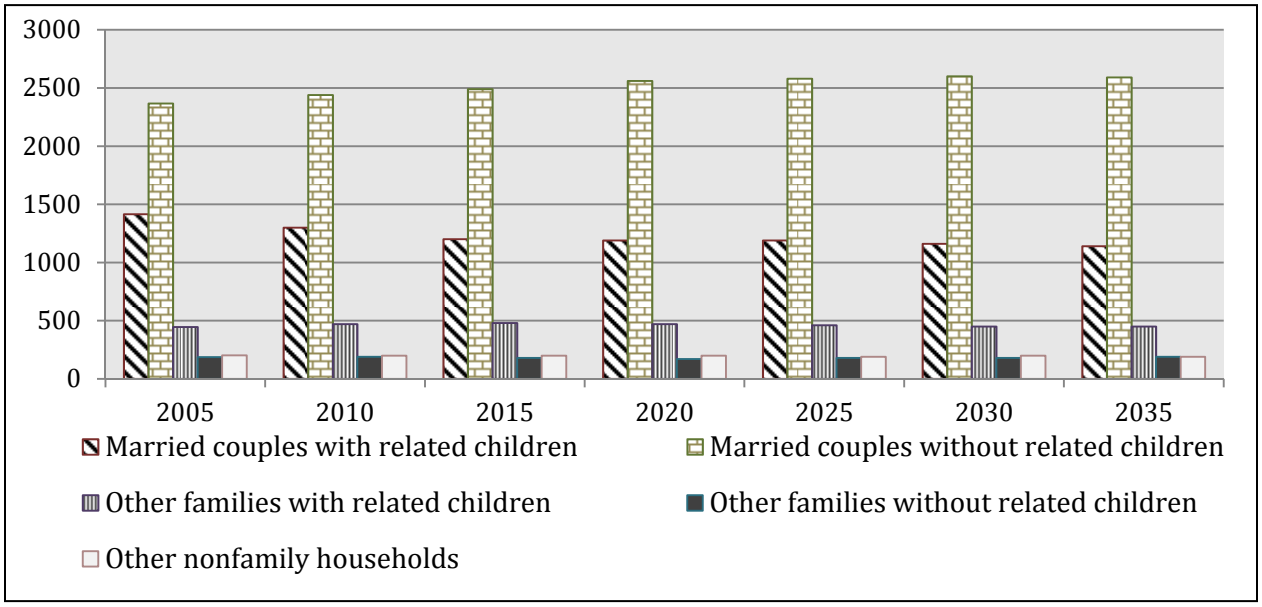


Figure 5-3: Projected Number of Householders Living Alone - 2005 to 2035

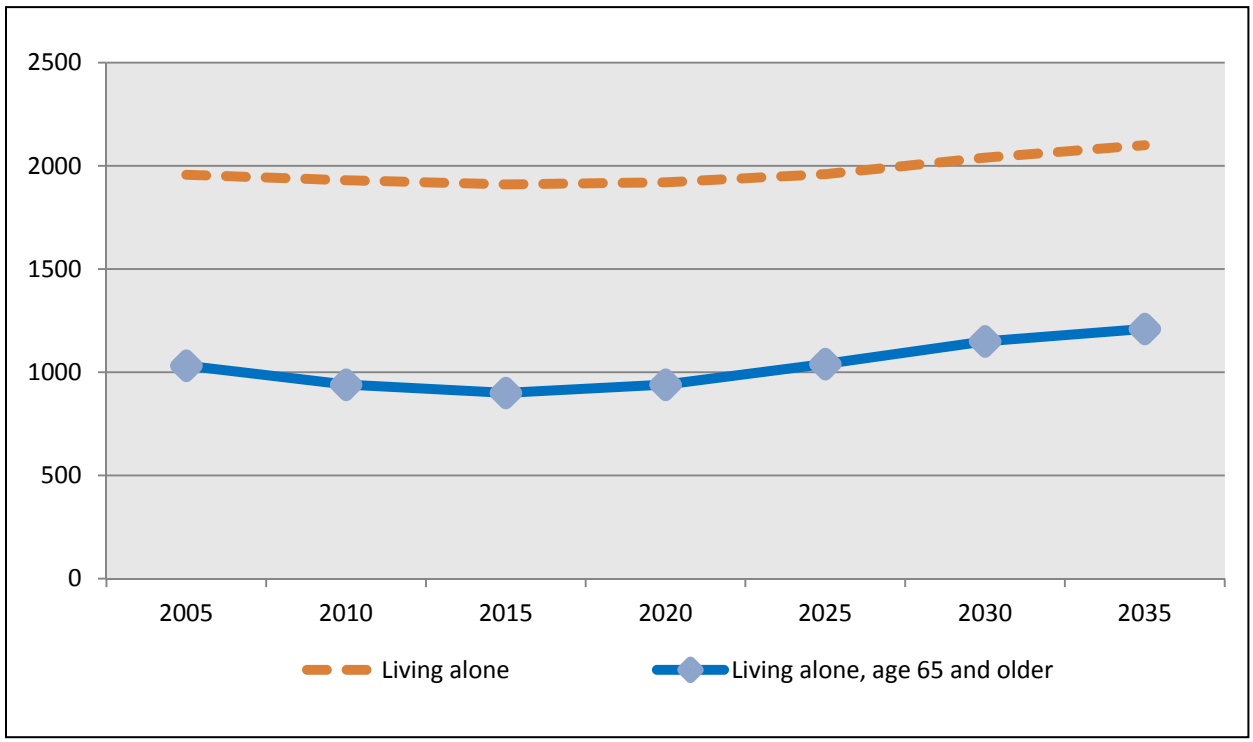
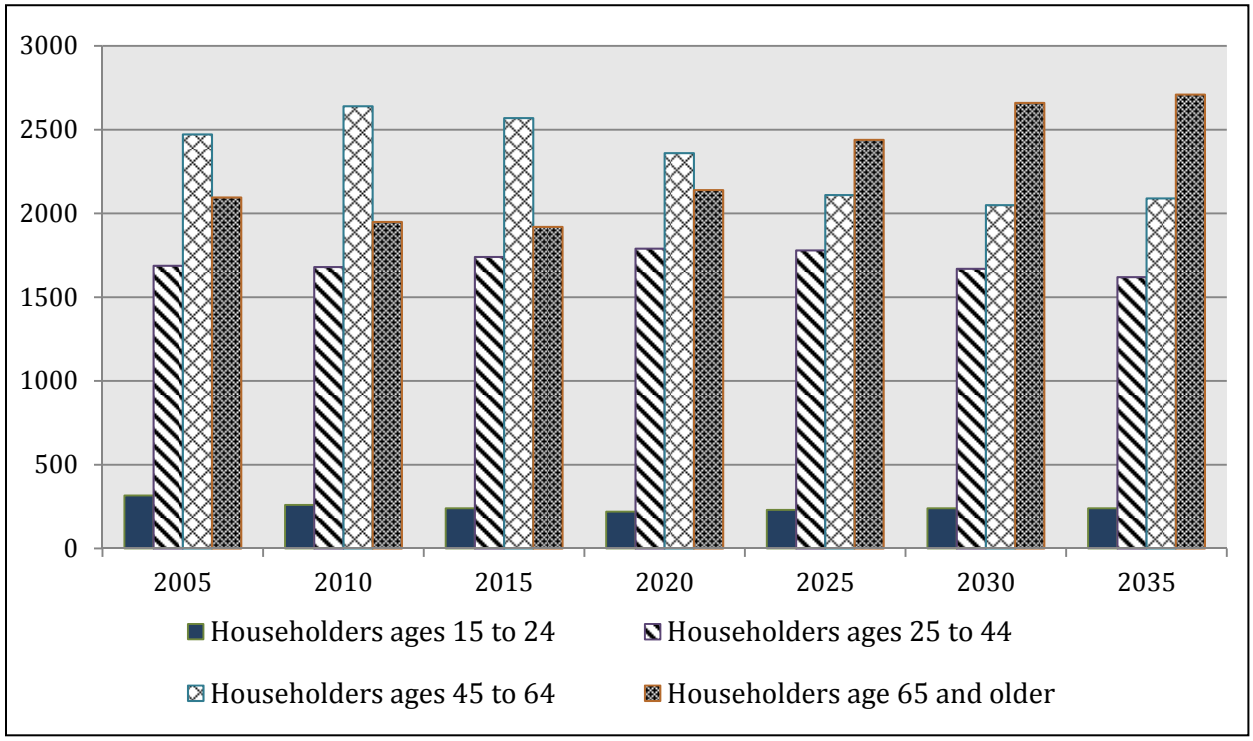


Figure 5-4: Projected Number of Householders by Age - 2005 to 2035

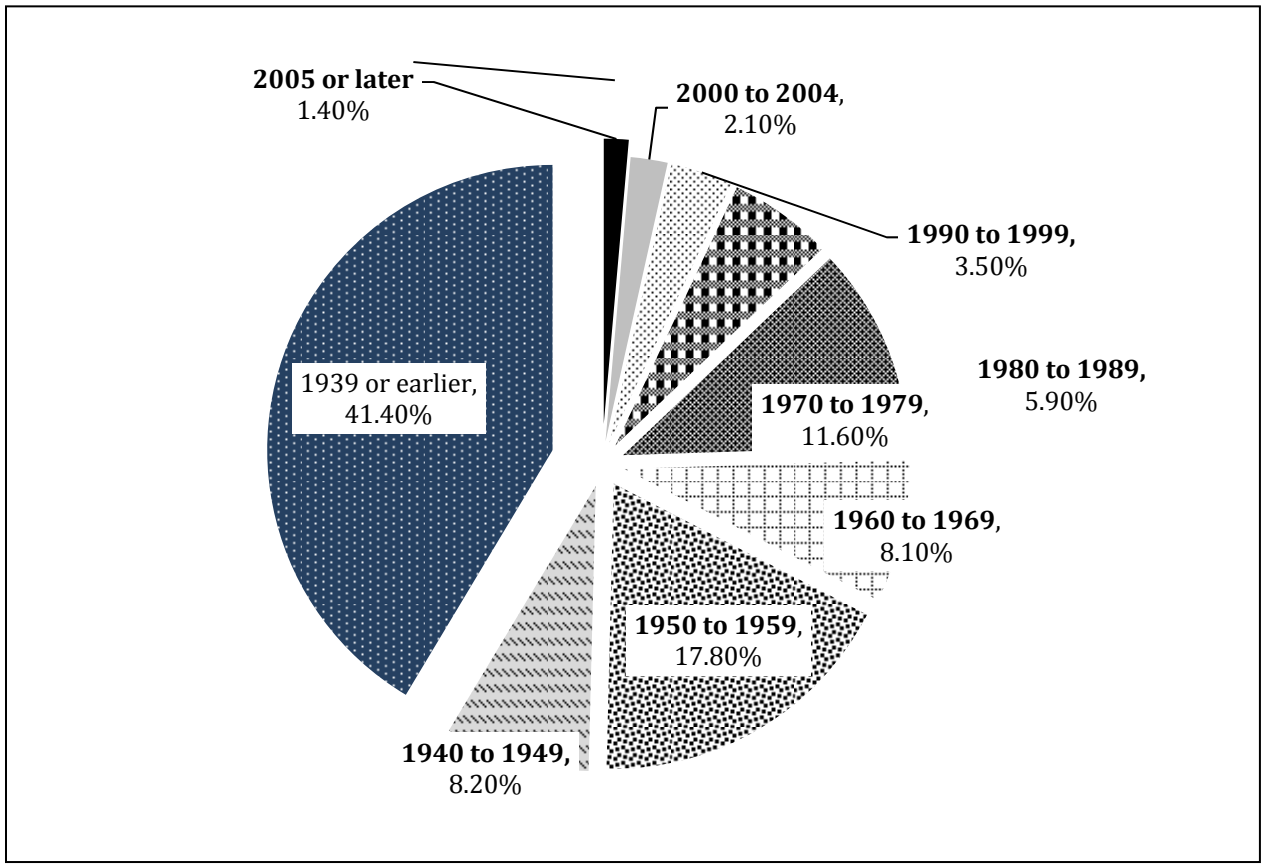


5.3.2 HOUSING STOCK AND HOUSING UNIT TRENDS

One of the most common problems shared by rural counties in the United States today is aging infrastructure. This term covers everything from roads and bridges to water and sewer systems, including the buildings that we live in. From single-family homes to multi-family apartment buildings and even assisted care facilities; housing is expensive to maintain and even more expensive to construct. The difficulty of aging housing stock is one that Faribault County officials are familiar with.

Figure 5-5 displays that in 2011, only 7% of the housing units in the county were built since 1990. As a whole, 75.5% of units were built prior to 1970; 67.4% of units were built prior to 1960, and 41.4% of units were built prior to 1940. The median age of all housing units is 63 years (2) (3).

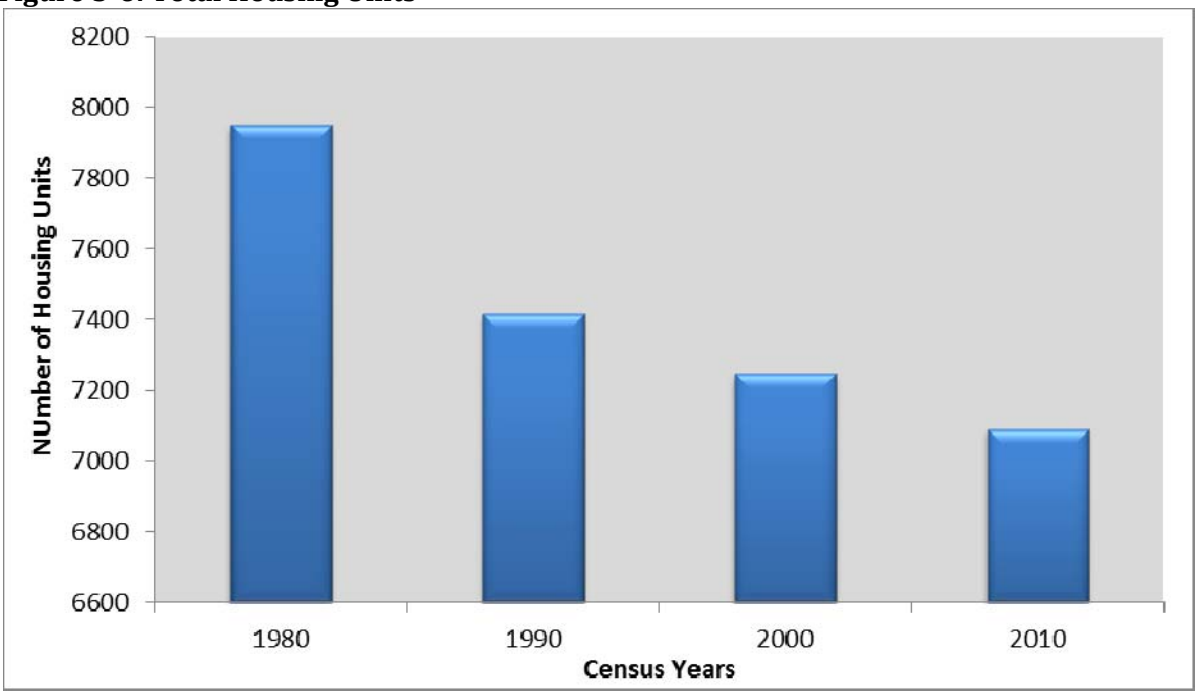
Figure 5-5: Age of Housing Stock



5.3.3 TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

Faribault County has seen a decrease in housing stock since 1980, from 7,950 to 7,090 in 2010. Perhaps this is in relation to the age of the housing stock. While the number of housing units in Faribault County has decreased that is not always considered a bad thing. Removal of deteriorating housing stock is a good thing for the region. The majority of housing stock lost or removed is generally rural homesteads. There are various factors that affect the data below that include aging communities, trusts and estates, and foreclosures.

Figure 5-6: Total Housing Units



5.3.4 OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS

Table 5-1. Faribault County has seen a loss of approximately 15% in occupied housing units. This is a direct correlation to the aging infrastructure. While there are housing units available, a large number of them do not suit current market demands. On the other hand, some of the rural properties that are remaining are no longer move-in ready and would potentially require a great deal of renovation prior to them being habitable. (4) (5).

5.3.5 VACANT HOUSING UNITS

Table 5-1. This trend can be directly related to the aging community. An increased number of residents are residing in care facilities while still owning residences. A number of residents in the county have chosen to winter in the south or in assisted living facilities and spend summer months in their homes. There are also a large number of trusts and estates that are owned by multiple family members and can legally never be sold and remain unoccupied. The largest change in vacant housing occurred between 2000 and 2010, the housing market crisis that started in 2008 caused a number of homes to go into foreclosure and others being turned back to lending agencies. (4) (5).

5.3.6 HOUSING UNIT TRENDS

Table 5-1 describes the change in the number of total, occupied and vacant housing units in Faribault County between 1980 and 2010 (4) (5).

Table 5-1: Housing Unit Trends

	Housing Units				
Faribault County	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**Change**
Total	7,950	7,416	7,247	7,090	-10.82%
Occupied	7,378	6,772	6,652	6,236	-15.48%
Vacant	572	644	595	854	-49.30%

5.3.7 HOUSING UNITS OCCUPANCY STATUS

Table 5-2. Breaking down the housing units occupancy status reveals Faribault County again among those with a reduction in the number of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Faribault County owner-occupied units decreased by 392, from 5,370 to 4,978. The number of rental units also decreased, by 24 units from 1,282 to 1,258. Similarly, Martin and Watonwan Counties also witnessed a decrease in the number of owner and renter-occupied units during this time period (4) (5).

Table 5-2: Housing Unit Occupancy Status - 2000 to 2010

	Owner Occupied			Renter Occupied		
County	2000	2010	Average Size (2010)	2000	2010	Average Size (2010)
Blue Earth	13,988	15,951	2.56	7,074	8,494	2.20
Brown	8,476	10,782	2.43	2,122	2,270	1.79
Faribault	5,370	4,978	2.34	1,282	1,258	2.03
Le Sueur	8,018	8,911	2.59	1,612	1,847	2.38
Martin	7,014	6,802	2.35	2,053	2,233	2.02
Nicollet	8,065	8,965	2.60	2,577	3,236	2.06
Sibley	4,672	4,895	2.55	1,100	1,139	2.20
Waseca	5,654	5,688	2.56	1,405	1,593	2.02
Watonwan	3,566	3,475	2.53	1,061	1,045	2.18
Total	64,823	70,447		20,286	23,115	
Average			2.50			2.10

5.3.8 VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS

Table 5-3. Between 2000 and 2010, the median dollar value of owner-occupied housing units in Faribault County went from $50,300 to $87,000 – an increase of 73%. By comparison, a standard inflation rate of 3% per year applied to that $50,300 results in a 2010 value of only $67,560 (an increase of 34%). A closer look at the data reveals that a big part of the difference might be in the sizeable increase in the number of new, higher-value homes built in the county during that decade. For instance, the number of homes valued greater than $200,000 increased from 56 to 568 during this period. And that figure includes an increase from 8 to 67 in homes valued greater than $500,000. Conversely, the number of homes valued less than $100,000 decreased from 3,720 to 2,987 in this time period, representing a drop of 20% (6) (7). According to the Census Bureau, there were

240 building permits issued for new homes in the county from 2000 to 2013. The County Recorder's Office stated that there were 5,792 property transfers between 2000 and 2010.

Table 5-3: Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Units - 2000 to 2010

Value of Unit	2000	2010	Percent Change
Less than $50,000	2,094	1,018	-51.38%
$50,000 to $99,999	1,626	1,969	21.09%
$100,000 to $149,999	340	987	190.29%
$150,000 to $199,999	97	554	471.13%
$200,000 to $299,999	42	330	685.71%
$300,000 to $499,999	6	171	2750.00%
$500,000 to $999,999	4	43	975.00%
$1,000,000 or more	4	24	500.00%
Total Units	4,213	5,096	20.96%
Median (dollars)	$50,300	$87,000	72.96%

5.3.9 GROSS RENT

Table 5-4. Not surprisingly, the median rent paid by Faribault County renters increased by 32%, (from $347 to $458) between 2000 and 2010. (6) (7). Although the total number of rental units within the county remained virtually unchanged, the number of units with gross monthly rent of less than $500 decreased from 874 in 2000 to 636 in 2010: a decrease of 27%. Meanwhile, the number of units with rent between $500 and $1,000 increased from 137 to 347: an increase of 153%. Even more surprisingly, the number of units with rent over $1,000 increased from 7 to 65: an increase of over 800%. The data suggests that much of the increase in rent is due to inflation rather than new development (8).

Table 5-4: Gross Rent - 2000 to 2010

Cost of Rent	2000	2010	Percent Change
Less than $200	140	78	-44.29%
$200 to $299	238	106	-55.46%
$300 to $499	496	452	-8.87%
$500 to $749	106	242	128.30%
$750 to $999	31	105	238.71%
$1,000 to $1,499	7	58	728.57%
$1,500 or more	0	7	700.00%
No cash rent	184	157	-14.67%
Total Units	1,202	1,205	0.25%
Median (dollars)	$347	$458	31.99%

5.3.10 MULTI-FAMILY AND GROUP HOUSING FACILITIES

Table 5-5 provides a description of subsidized housing, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities in the county (9).

Table 5-5: Multi-Family and Group Housing Facilities

Name	Location
Blue Ridge Apartments	Blue Earth
Bricelyn Apartments	Bricelyn
Bricelyn Plaza	Bricelyn
Broadway Apartments	Wells
Crescent Apartments	Blue Earth
Easttown Apartments	Wells
Friendship Court	Blue Earth
Garden Court Apartments	Winnebago
Homestead Apartments	Wells
Homestead Apartments	Winnebago
Kee Valley Apartments	Kiester
Milltown Manor Apartments	Minnesota Lake
Nicollet Place	Blue Earth
Northside Estates	Winnebago
Park Place Townhomes	Wells
Parker Oaks Communities, Inc.	Winnebago
Parkview Apartments	Elmore
Parkview Care Center	Wells
Shepherd's Inn	Wells
St. Luke's Lutheran Home	Blue Earth
Village Green Estates	Blue Earth
Wellington Estates	Wells
Woodbridge Apartments	Blue Earth

5.4 CURRENT STATUS

Faribault County saw a peak number of households in the mid 1980's and has since seen a gradual decline. Approximately 69% of the population lives within one of the eleven incorporated communities, the remaining residents reside in rural or unincorporated areas. According to 2010 census data there are 6,236 households in the county; The lower median price of housing stock has allowed for a higher than state average homeownership percentage, with 80% of the residents in Faribault County owning the home in which they reside.

5.5 FUTURE OF HOUSING

Housing will remain to be a fundamental component of quality of life in not only the county, but in our communities as well. Even with our declining population, there is a limited amount of higher income and transitional housing units available. There are also very few buildable lots within the communities.

5.6 SUMMARY

In 2014, Faribault County is not unlike many of its neighbors when it comes to housing. The County's population continues to decline and the percentage of elderly is increasing. The single-family housing stock is aging and for the past five or six years very few new homes have been built. But as the nation recovers from the current recession, there is room for optimism in Faribault County as sales of existing homes and new construction begin to increase and the values of both are on the rise. Within the next thirty years, the challenge for the county will be to provide a greater diversity of housing types at prices that are affordable to all segments of society.

5.7 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Maintain conditions of existing housing stock.

- A rehabilitation program to address the aging housing stock and infrastructure concerns
- Stable tax base
- Provide educational opportunities for local contractors
- Make legislators and local officials more aware of the issues that we are facing.
- Provide affordable and diverse housing stock to attract new and keep current residents.

Increase diversity of housing stock

- Single-family, duplex & multi-family
- Low, middle and upper price ranges

Provide additional developable lots for the construction of new, single-family homes

Promote within areas currently serviced with sewer and wastewater.

Increase availability of housing for all income levels.

- Provide more opportunities for first time home buyers, low income, elderly
- Maintain existing tax base
- Provide diversity in quality and affordability of housing stock.
- Attract a diverse population while maintaining the charm of existing neighborhoods.

Provide opportunities for contractors and developers to construct all types of new housing in a profitable manner.

- Ensure that local businesses are able to continue operating and to grow their operations.
- Ensure that developers are aware of opportunities within the county.

Promote home ownership through education and development of various housing financing programs.

- Assist communities and individuals access to grant and loan programs.
    - Housing Rehabilitation Programs
    - New Housing Development Grants
- Ensure that everyone has access to adequate housing.

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6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is the sustained, concerted action of policy makers for the county and communities that promote the standard of living and economic health of Faribault County. Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy. The scope includes the process and policies by which a community improves the economic, political and social well-being of its people. Economic development typically involves improvements in a variety of indicators such as literacy rates, life expectancy and poverty rates and does not take into account aspects such as leisure time or environmental quality.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

A well-thought out set of economic development strategies is vital to the economic prosperity of any community, but especially for more rural communities which have fewer resources than their urban counterparts with which to attract new development. The purpose of this section of the comprehensive plan is to provide policy makers in the county and local communities with a firm understanding of the current economic conditions within the area, to identify issues effecting their economic vitality and growth and to develop a set of goals and objectives for addressing the issues.

6.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOT

- County and local EDAs
- Good established network for distribution of products
- Underutilization of existing strengths, such as Interstate 90, MN Highway 169 and MN Highway 22
- Available good quality workforce

6.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

6.3.1 EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE

Employment

Following the Civil War, Minnesota became an attractive location for European settlers and Faribault County was no exception. The low cost of land and the high soil fertility presented itself for agricultural development, similar to what their homelands offered. While farming started small, the development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture sparked the expansion of agriculture into an industry. The agricultural industry and railroads go hand in hand; Minnesota and Faribault County were no exception. Railroads played an imperative role in not only the settlement of the county but its industry as well. Agricultural products needed to be transported from the farm to urbanized areas and the railroads were the answer.

The Great Depression and drought in the 1930's hit the area hard but like the rest of the nation, Faribault County and the agricultural industry recovered. Agriculture transformed from an individual occupation into a major industry following WWII. Technological development increased productivity on farms, such as automatic milk machines for dairy producers. Row crops also saw a change with the introduction of hybridization of corn,

wheat, and soybeans. Farmers were introduced to new options in fertilizers, herbicides, and mechanical equipment, such as tractors and combines, became the norm. Farming operations saw another dramatic change after the 1980s, when local family owned farms were bought out by corporate farms. Equipment continues to get larger as technology advances.

Industrial development took a little longer to take off in Faribault County in comparison to the rest of Minnesota. The implementation of the highway system and the agricultural industry greatly influenced industrial development in the county. Many of the first industries in the county could be directly related back to agriculture. That same aspect holds true today. The economic recession of 2008 to 2012 had an enormous impact on all aspects of life in the U.S. and Faribault County was no exception. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, as of the middle of May, 2013, Faribault County was only 1.8% away from full post-recession recovery.

As of 2012 (shown in Table 6-1), Faribault County's unemployment rate was 6.1, which is the lowest recorded rate within the last 5 years. Unemployment is further discussed later in this sub-section. The City of Blue Earth, which is a micro-regional center, is home to the largest number of top employers in the County.

Table 6-1: Annual Employment Trends

	Annual Average			Average Annual Unemployment Rates		
Years	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Faribault County	MN	US
2012	7,636	7,168	468	6.10%	5.60%	8.10%
2011	8,062	7,494	568	7.00%	6.50%	8.90%
2010	7,916	7,288	628	7.90%	7.40%	9.60%
2009	7,740	7,002	738	9.50%	8.00%	9.30%
2008	7,780	7,299	481	6.20%	5.40%	5.80%
2007	7,788	7,375	413	5.30%	4.70%	4.60%
2006	7,857	7,501	356	4.50%	4.10%	4.60%
2005	8,050	7,653	397	4.90%	4.20%	5.10%
2004	8,284	7,816	468	5.60%	4.60%	5.50%
2003	8,624	8,177	447	5.20%	4.90%	6.00%
2002	8,906	8,521	385	4.30%	4.50%	5.80%
2001	8,591	8,218	373	4.30%	3.80%	4.70%
2000	8,604	8,284	320	3.70%	3.10%	4.00%
1999	8,191	7,881	310	3.80%	2.80%	4.20%
1998	8,107	7,802	305	3.80%	2.70%	4.50%
1997	8,313	7,948	365	4.40%	3.30%	4.90%
1996	8,447	8,017	430	5.10%	3.90%	5.40%
1995	8,335	7,900	435	5.20%	3.70%	5.60%
1994	8,378	7,962	416	5.00%	4.10%	6.10%
1993	8,161	7,631	530	6.50%	4.90%	6.90%
1992	8,131	7,660	471	5.80%	5.10%	7.50%
1991	8,188	7,674	514	6.30%	5.20%	6.80%
1990	8,288	7,877	411	5.00%	4.80%	5.60%
Average	8,190	7,746	445	5.45%	4.67%	6.07%

Table 6-2: Major Employers

Employer	Location
Aerospace Systems	1930 W 1st St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Bevcomm	123 W 7th St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Blue Earth School District	315 E 6th St. , Blue Earth, MN 56013
Cargill	8334 430th Ave., Elmore, MN 56027
Cemstone	190 Franklin St. NE, Wells, MN 56097
Continental Carbonic Products	721 6th Ave SE. , Winnebago, MN 56098
Corn Plus	7116th Ave. SE., Winnebago, MN 56098
Crown Fixtures Inc.	304 Main St N. , Winnebago, MN 56098
Dahl Trucking Inc.	305 S. Highway 169 , Elmore, MN 56027
Darling International	9000 382nd Ave., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Express Diagnostics International	1550 Industrial Dr., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Faribault County	415 N Main St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Kerry Ingredients & Flavors	1640 W 1st St. , Blue Earth, MN 56013
Kibble Equipment	107 Faribault Drive, Blue Earth, MN 56013
Parker Oaks Communities Inc.	211 6th St NW. , Winnebago, MN 56098
Parkview Care Center	55 10th St. S.E. Wells, MN 56097
Seneca Foods Corp	710 E 7th St. , Blue Earth, MN 56013
St Luke's Lutheran Care Center	1219 S Ramsey St. , Blue Earth, MN 56013
StateLine Cooperative	34125 110th St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
SUPERVALU	219 S Main St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Tafco Equipment Co	1304 W 1st St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
United Hospital Districts	515 S Moore St., Blue Earth, MN 56013
United South Central School District	250 2nd Ave SW. , Wells, MN 56097
Wal-Mart	1210 Giant Dr., Blue Earth, MN 56013
Watonwan Farm Services	PO Box 68, Truman, MN 56088
Wells Concrete	835 St Hwy 109, Wells, MN 56097
Wells Federal Bank	53 1st St SW, Wells, MN 56097

Changing Labor Force

Given the agricultural influence, industry categories, and climate, Faribault County sees a great deal of seasonal economic growth. Spring, Summer and Fall see a peak in the construction industry; from roads to structures, agricultural industries are also in full production during this same time period. Winter months, when the ground freezes, construction and agricultural industries incur layoffs. This trend is visible when looking at month by month unemployment rates in a year; it is not as evident in an annual average.

The change in labor force over twenty years was not linear, and in fact varied considerably as described in the following Table 6-3 based on 5-year increments. In the first half of the 1990's, the labor force change was barely noticeable. In the second half of that decade, the change was a positive 3.23%. However, in the first five years of the 21st Century, Faribault County's labor force actually decreased by nearly 6.5%, a change that slowed slightly between 2005 and 2010.

Table 6-3: Change in County Labor Force

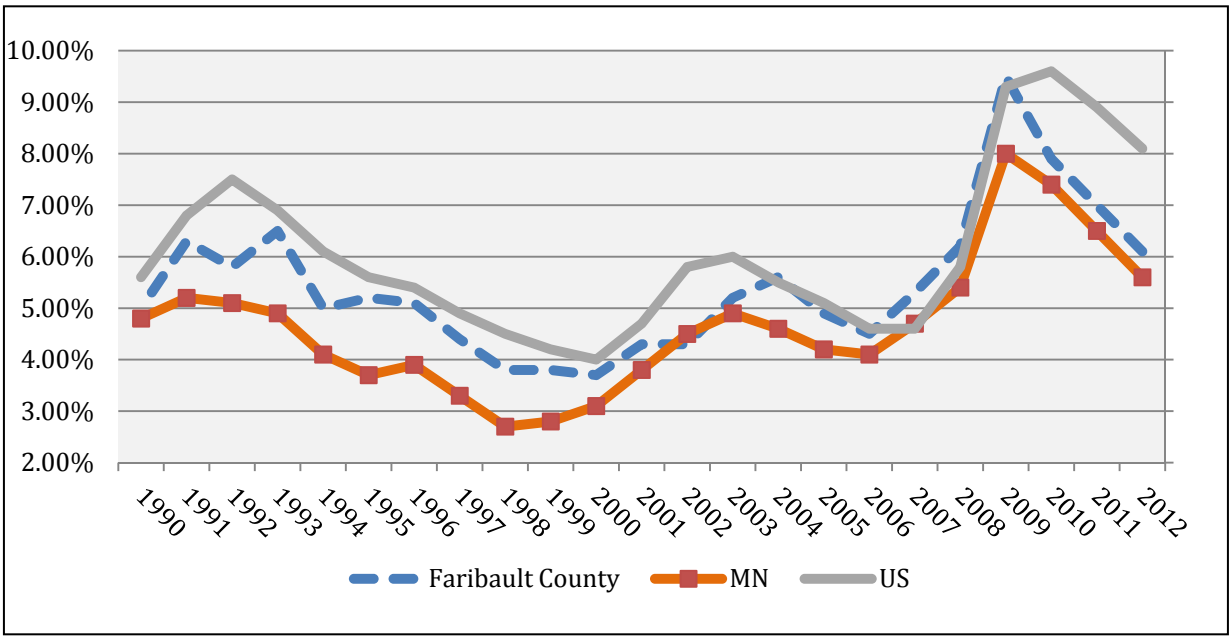
Years	Annual Average			5-Year Change		
	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
2010	7,916	7,288	628	-1.66%	-4.77%	58.19%
2005	8,050	7,653	397	-6.44%	-7.62%	24.06%
2000	8,604	8,284	320	3.23%	4.86%	-26.44%
1995	8,335	7,900	435	0.57%	0.29%	5.84%
1990	8,288	7,877	411			
Average	8,239	7,800	438	-1.08%	-1.81%	15.41%

Unemployment

Faribault County has a unique stand point in unemployment rates due to the strong agricultural base. While the County follows unemployment trends with the rest of the nation, it's unemployment rate tends to be below the national unemployment level. Minnesota typically has a lower unemployment level than the national average; Faribault County generally fits somewhere between the Minnesota and the National unemployment rates. As the figure below shows, during the recent recession the county unemployment rate peaked earlier than the U.S. unemployment rate, but it also recovered more quickly.

Due to the high rate of agriculture related industry, there is an increased amount of seasonal work available within the county; as is traditional in the Corn Belt. There are a number of industries related to agriculture that have an influx of business during the growing and construction seasons. Depending on the climate of the given year, the construction season may be longer and would therefore cause a lower annual unemployment rate for the annual average.

Figure 6-1: Average Annual Unemployment



6.3.2 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

In terms of recession recovery, by late 2012 many industry sectors were making a healthy come-back and equaling or coming close to pre-2008 employment numbers.

As noted by the growth of Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting by 193.8%, that sector has grown dramatically over the past 20 years. When a single industry grows by that much, other industry sectors grow to support that industry. As can be seen in the Finance and Insurance Industry; crop insurance and financial services are needed by all agricultural producers. Other sectors that grew over the past 20 years include Health Care and Social Assistance, as is expected with an aging community; those services are required.

Table 6-4: Employment Change by Industry, 1994 to 2012

Industry	Years		Percent Change 1994-2012	
	1994	2012	Number	Percent
Wholesale Trade	271	133	-138	-50.9%
Construction	352	225	-127	-36.1%
Manufacturing	1,733	1,184	-549	-31.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	20	14	-6	-30.0%
Utilities	56	40	-16	-28.6%
Retail Trade	428	316	-112	-26.2%
Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation	39	29	-10	-25.6%
Information	170	133	-37	-21.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	69	58	-11	-15.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	67	59	-8	-11.9%
Educational Services	685	619	-66	-9.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12	11	-1	-8.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	158	154	-4	-2.5%
Public Administration	335	329	-6	-1.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	651	712	61	9.4%
Finance and Insurance	214	242	28	13.1%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	140	179	39	27.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	32	94	62	193.8%
Total	5,063	4,086	-977	-19.3%

Fastest Growing Industries

The nine-county South-central Minnesota region that includes Faribault County is very unique economically, as shown in the following chart from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's Business Employment Dynamics reports for 2012. The data shows the percent of growth between 2008 and 2012 for the top fourteen industries in the region. As the top performers for the region, they all experienced positive employment growth during this time period. But these industries did not fare as well in either the Twin Cities metropolitan area or the State. While care must be taken in comparing the percentage data for these greatly varying political entities, it is useful to observe that while none of the regional industries experienced less than 10% growth between 2008 and 2012, there were twelve industries that fit that category for the Twin

Cities, and eleven from the State data. This data suggests that these are the industries that drive the economy in Faribault County and that they may also be the specific industries that the county should focus their efforts on in terms of business retention and expansion.

Table 6-5: Fastest Growing Industries in South Central Minnesota

Industries	Employment (Region Nine)		Percent Growth (2008 to 2012)	
	2008	*2012*	*Region Nine*	*Minnesota*
Warehousing and Storage	63	129	104.76%	3.37%
Administration of Human Resource Programs	581	848	45.96%	-1.80%
Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers	92	132	43.48%	0.00%
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	53	75	41.51%	4.91%
Non-Store Retailers	154	195	26.62%	-5.16%
Telecommunications	980	1,172	19.59%	-7.60%
Support Activities for Transportation	94	112	19.15%	15.09%
Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions	55	65	18.18%	6.28%
Crop Production	191	225	17.80%	26.60%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	2,744	3,208	16.91%	5.74%
Social Assistance	3,534	4,126	16.75%	11.02%
Gasoline Stations	1,126	1,301	15.54%	0.22%
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	694	787	13.40%	7.13%
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	1,369	1,514	10.59%	-3.50%
Industry Average			18.41%	
Industry Total	11,730	13,889		

Labor Force Projections

Table 6-6. Another way of trying to determine where to apply scarce economic resources is to focus on industries that are expected to experience the greatest labor force growth in the future. It is interesting to note the two primary growth industries on the list (Construction and Health Care/Social Assistance) are also at the top of the list for the Twin Cities metropolitan area, Minnesota, and the United States (1).

Table 6-6: Labor Force Projections

Industry	Southwest Minnesota	Minnesota	United States
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	15.7%	3.5%	-3.6%
Construction	31.6%	39.3%	33.3%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	16.8%	12.3%	14.2%
Professional and Technical Services	14.5%	20.1%	28.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	25.0%	8.4%	5.5%
Administrative and Waste Services	23.7%	17.9%	21.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	31.5%	32.7%	32.7%
Federal Government	-14.2%	-15.7%	-12.5%

Retail Trade

Table 6-7. As anyone who follows the discussions taking place at the state capital and in Washington D.C. knows, the face of retail trade across the country is changing quickly. Locally and nationally, fair trade and locally grown initiatives are expanding rapidly, and Congress is debating the pros and cons of allowing states to collect taxes for on-line purchases.

In Faribault County, between 2005 and 2010 only three (electronics/appliances, food and beverages, and general merchandise) of the twelve listed types of retail trade grew in number of establishments. In terms of sales, motor vehicle and parts dealers saw a decrease of 82% during this period, and "sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book stores" experienced a 41% drop. Sales for "non-store retailers" (think internet shopping) went up by 27%.

Table 6-7: Retail Trade

Type	Number of Establishments		Sales ($1,000)		Number of Employees	
	2005	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	15	12	501	91	74	52
Furniture and home furnishings stores	5	3	(D)	(D)	16	A
Electronics and appliance stores	1	2	(D)	(D)	A	A
Building material, garden equipment and supplies dealers	17	15	S	(D)	101	B
Food and beverage stores	15	16	317	NA	270	247
Health and personal care stores	4	2	D	33	33	B
Gasoline stations	12	8	(D)	(D)	78	B
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2	2	(S)	77	A	A
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, and book stores	3	2	235	139	A	A
General merchandise stores	3	5	124	(D)	C	B
Miscellaneous store retailers	4	3	562	591	20	A
Non-store retailers	4	2	2,392	3,048	11	A
Total	85	72	4,489	5,172	740	572

(D) = Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies.
(S) = Withheld because estimate did not meet publication standards.
A = 0-19 B = 20-99 C = 100-249

6.3.3 EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

Comparative Income

Table 6-8. The mean per capita income of the nine counties in south central Minnesota is $24,925, and the mean median household and mean median family incomes are $50,796 and $63,026, respectively (2). Of the nine counties in South Central Minnesota, Faribault County has the lowest per capita, median household, and median family income levels at $23,185, $43,214 and $55,323, respectively. These low incomes, due primarily to low wages, are a telling indicator of a county that is struggling to maintain a high quality of living and a healthy tax base.

Table 6-8: Comparative Income Levels

County	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	Median Family Income
Blue Earth	$23,996	$48,911	$65,574
Brown	$26,046	$48,149	$62,244
Faribault	$23,185	$43,214	$55,323
Le Sueur	$26,481	$58,074	$69,011
Martin	$25,354	$44,791	$58,825
Nicollet	$26,108	$59,877	$71,616
Sibley	$24,563	$52,482	$62,197
Waseca	$24,408	$52,357	$62,771
Watonwan	$24,187	$49,307	$59,672
Average	$24,925	$50,796	$63,026

Poverty Level

Table 6-9. Another indicator of socioeconomic health is the number or percentage of the population living below the poverty level. In Faribault County, in 2011 over 26% of all children less than 12 years of age, 12% of all people between 18 and 24, and 13% of all people aged 75+ were living below the poverty line. However, the overall poverty rate for Faribault County, at 11.83%, was less than the state (11.93%) and the nation as a whole (14.34%) (3).

Figure 6-2: Population below Poverty Line by Age

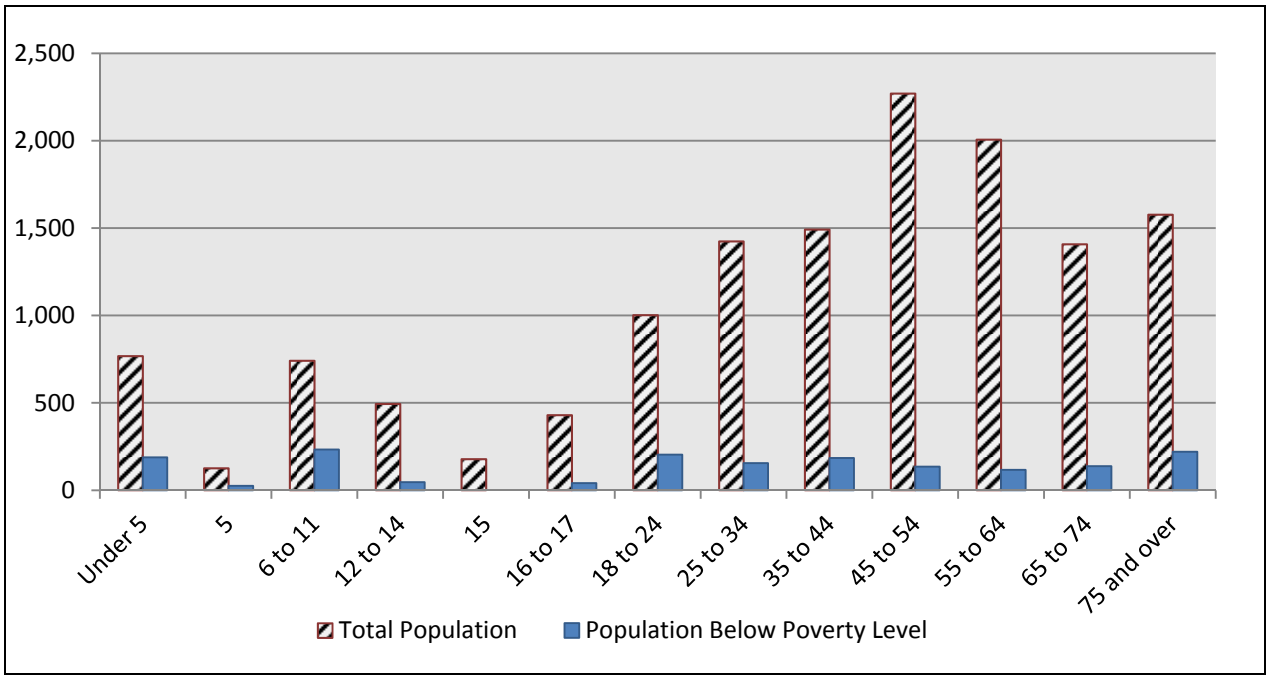
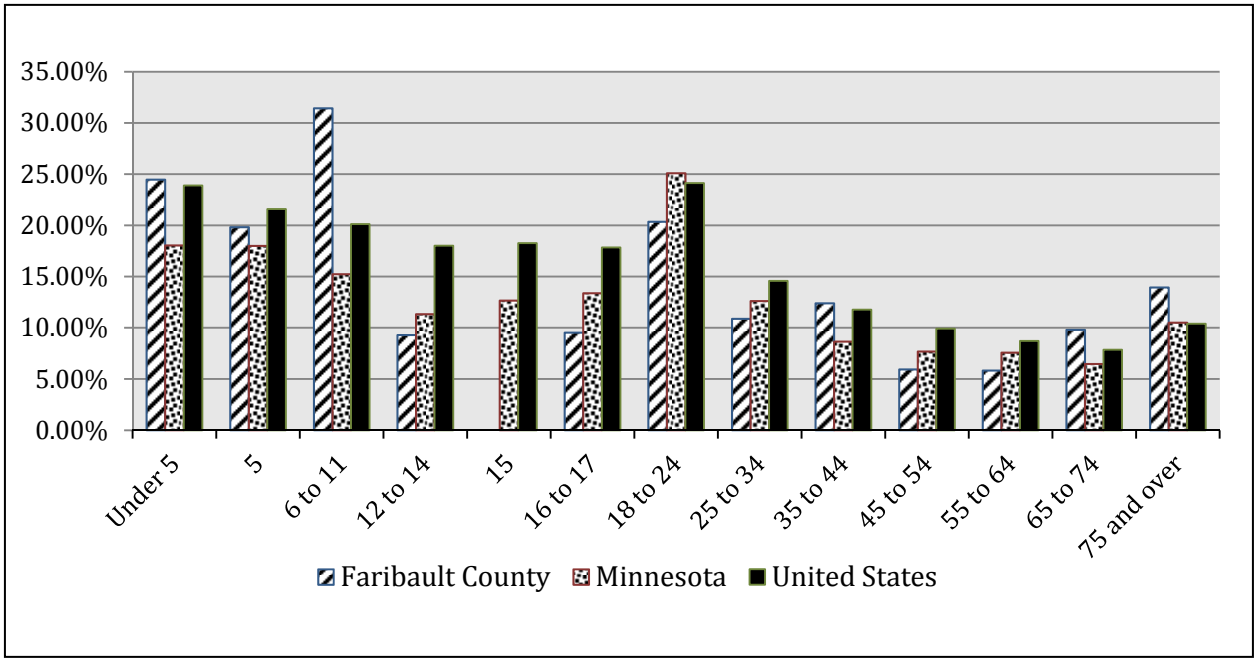


Table 6-9: Population below Poverty Line by Age (County, State, and National)

Age	Faribault County		Minnesota		United States	
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	Population	Percent
Under 5	188	24.48%	64,112	18.05%	4,602,972	23.89%
5	25	19.84%	12,606	18.01%	842,414	21.60%
6 to 11	233	31.44%	64,790	15.23%	4,730,735	20.13%
12 to 14	46	9.31%	23,560	11.33%	2,144,926	18.02%
15	0	0.00%	9,163	12.66%	751,149	18.27%
16 to 17	41	9.53%	20,029	13.38%	1,478,609	17.86%
18 to 24	204	20.36%	115,007	25.09%	6,590,989	24.13%
25 to 34	155	10.88%	89,932	12.62%	5,804,397	14.58%
35 to 44	185	12.40%	60,409	8.66%	4,655,058	11.78%
45 to 54	135	5.95%	62,218	7.70%	4,303,252	9.92%
55 to 64	117	5.83%	46,539	7.58%	3,241,843	8.73%
65 to 74	138	9.80%	22,098	6.47%	1,738,023	7.86%
75 and over	220	13.95%	31,507	10.50%	1,855,557	10.40%
Total	1,687	11.83%	621,970	11.93%	42,739,924	14.34%

Figure 6-3: Population below Poverty Line by Age (County, State, and National)



Employment and Wages

Two bright spots in the employment picture for Faribault County are reflected in the comparative wages for the county, the region, the Twin Cities and the State. As table 6-10 below, between 2000 and 2011, total wages increased in Faribault County at a higher annual rate (4.05%) than Region Nine (3.13%), the Twin Cities (2.85%), and the state (3.16%). In addition, the Average Weekly Wage also increased at a faster annual pace, (6.59%) compared to Region Nine (3.38%), the Twin cities (3.14%), and the state (3.19%). Although wages are generally much lower in outstate Minnesota compared to the Twin Cities metropolitan area, at least the rate of increase is a positive sign for Faribault County.

Table 6-10: Employment and Wages, 2000 to 2011

	Faribault County			Region Nine			Minnesota		
	2000	2011	Change	2000	2011	Change	2000	2011	Change
Number of Establishments	506	476	-5.9%	6,587	6,571	-0.2%	156,083	164,501	5.4%
Average Annual Employment	6,024	5,032	-16.5%	103,240	100,995	-2.2%	2,608,844	2,603,459	-0.2%
Total Wages Paid*	$134	$194	44.5%	$2,586	$3,477	34.4%	$92,437	$124,597	34.8%
Average Weekly Wage	$429	$740	72.5%	$482	$661	37.1%	$681	$920	35.1%

*In millions of dollars, adjusted for inflation.

Employment and Wages Summary

Although Faribault County had the lowest per capita, median household, and median family income levels in Region Nine, the average weekly wage appears to be growing at a significantly higher rate than that of Region Nine, the Twin Cities, or the state as a whole. Total wages paid by employers in Faribault County have also been increasing much faster than the averages for the other geographic regions listed in Figure 6-10. Additionally, Faribault County has a significantly lower poverty rate than the nation as a whole, and is just under the state average. Despite this, the number of business establishments and employees has decreased much faster than average for the county – a symptom of sustained population loss.

6.3.4 AGRICULTURE

South central Minnesota has some of the most productive farmland in the nation; with the region's counties consistently ranking among the top producers of corn, soybeans, hogs and other commodities. Over ninety percent of the region is under cultivation or pastureland making agriculture the predominant land use in the region. Faribault County, with the second lowest population of the regional counties, has the third-highest total acreage with 462,000 acres.

Agriculture is Minnesota's number one industry, employing one-fourth of the State's labor force. In Faribault County, the labor force employed in agriculture is expected to grow by over 15% in the next decade. Due to the high amount of acres planted into corn and soybeans every year, there are a number of businesses in the area that support agricultural producers. These businesses may range from selling products, servicing machinery, and research plots utilized to develop new hybrids.

Number of Farms and Farm Values

As anyone who has lived in Faribault County or another area within the Corn Belt over the past twenty years can attest; the number and size of farm operations has changed dramatically. The number of family farms and the number of people living in rural areas has dropped drastically. This change in farming style has had a drastic impact on the characteristics of smaller rural communities.

Table 6-11. The type of farm operations varies considerably by size, so has the percentage of change. For instance, the two smallest size categories, "Hobby" and "Very Small" (together up to 50-acres) both experienced positive growth (11.84% and 97.01%). Conversely, the next three size categories (totaling between 50 and 999-acres) all experienced a decrease in the number of farms per category. Finally, and not unexpectedly, the largest category of 1,000 plus acres shows an increase of 128.07% in number of farms during this time period (4).

Table 6-11: Farms in Faribault County

Farm Sizes	Years					
	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	Percent Change (1987-2007)
1 to 9 acres (Hobby)	76	56	47	57	85	11.84%
10 to 49 acres (Very Small)	67	84	71	151	132	97.01%
50 to 179 acres	236	181	139	140	178	-24.58%
180 to 499 acres	495	381	314	258	257	-48.08%
500 to 999 acres	229	231	208	168	170	-25.76%
1,000 acres or more	57	83	99	135	130	128.07%
Average Farm Size (Acres)	369	408	471	475	477	29.27%

These changes can be partially attributed to an outmigration of rural youth from the farm. As existing farmers grow old and look to pass on their operations, they are often faced with the prospect of leasing or selling their land to other farmers or corporations that manage large portions of crop land. This results in a declining number of small and medium farms and an increase in the number of large corporate farms. Another factor contributing to the change is an influx of residents from urban areas who enjoy the more relaxed country lifestyle but do not want the responsibility of maintaining a large farm.

Statistics for the value of sales for farming in Faribault County very closely mirror the changes described above in number of farms by size. Between 1987 and 2007 for Faribault

County, the number of farms with sales less than $2,500 increased by nearly 340%. Table 6-12. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the number of farms with annual sales of more than $100,000 increased by over 40%. But in the middle, the number of farms with sales in the four categories between $5,000 and $99,000 decreased by an average of 69% (4).

Table 6-12: Farms by Value of Sales

Annual Sales	Years					
	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	Percent Change (1987-2007)
Less than $2,500	46	43	46	160	202	339.13%
$2,500 to $4,999	26	26	17	15	30	15.38%
$5,000 to $9,999	41	32	23	23	17	-58.54%
$10,000 to $24,999	142	95	67	57	38	-73.24%
$25,000 to $49,999	244	178	85	93	53	-78.28%
$50,000 to $99,999	297	218	167	131	99	-66.67%
$100,000 or more	364	424	473	430	513	40.93%

Crop Production

Table 6-13. Being located in the Corn Belt Region of the country, it is not surprising that rotation row crops dominate the landscape; with corn being the predominant crop. Production of corn far exceeds the next largest crop, soybeans. In 2007, farmers in Faribault County produced over 44 million bushels of corn. In the twenty years between 1987 and 2007, the farming industry saw a number of changes that allowed farmers to increase production.

Technology and hybridization of seed specifically bred to produce higher yields given the farmer specific conditions have been developed. Fertilizers and herbicide technology, variety and availability directly increase yield production. Maybe the biggest change to agriculture can be directly related back to the technology implemented in equipment. The introduction of GPS and computer automated devices allows farmers to accurately report yields. The ever increasing size of planters, sprayers and combines drastically decreases the amount of time that farmers spend planting and harvesting the same fields today as they did in 1987. These trends have allowed a smaller number of farmers to farm more land today than in the 1980's.

Following the trend to larger farms, in Faribault County between 1987 and 2007, is demonstrated by a decrease in farms by nearly 32%, while the number of acres harvested increased by 27% from 329,529 to 418,525 acres.

Table 6-13: Crop Production

Selected Crops	Years			
	1987	1997	2007	Percent Change (1987-2007)
Corn for grain or seed (farms)	1,014	735	628	-38.07%
Corn for grain or seed (acres)	147,202	198,827	247,823	68.36%
Corn for grain or seed (bushels)	20,153,889	28,537,415	44,083,340	118.73%
Corn for silage (farms)	N/A	N/A	25	-28.57%
Corn for silage (acres)	N/A	N/A	2,883	87.57%
Corn for silage (tons)	N/A	N/A	33,616	18.86%
Wheat for grain, (farms)	75	25	9	-88.00%
Wheat for grain (acres)	1,641	812	1,312	-20.05%
Wheat for grain (bushels)	70,253	32,994	49,341	-29.77%
Oats for grain (farms)	206	64	N/A	-68.93%
Oats for grain (acres)	3,136	1,198	N/A	-61.80%
Oats for grain (bushels)	201,169	88,416	N/A	-56.05%
Soybeans for beans (farms)	1,001	710	N/A	-29.07%
Soybeans for beans (acres)	157,383	168,806	N/A	7.26%
Soybeans for beans (bushels)	6,413,555	7,367,588	N/A	14.88%
Hay, alfalfa, other tame, small grain, wild, grass silage, green chop, etc. (farms)	260	135	N/A	-48.08%
Hay, alfalfa, other tame, small grain, wild, grass silage, green chop, etc. (acres)	6,681	3,569	N/A	-46.58%
Hay, alfalfa, other tame, small grain, wild, grass silage, green chop, etc. (tons, dry)	22,330	8,692	N/A	-61.07%
Total Cropland (acres)	400,981	388,825	429,245	7.05%
Farms with harvested cropland	1,067	801	730	-31.58%
Harvested Cropland (acres)	329,529	383,623	418,525	27.01%

Organic Agriculture

As the demands of producers change, so must the farmers. In the late 1990's, organic farming saw an increase in demand. As genetically modified organisms (GMO) were introduced into the food supply, the demand for organic products, including corn, saw a drastic spike. While organic farming is still a small percentage of the farm industry, there are a number of certified organic farming operations within Faribault County.

Feedlots

Row crops are not the only production operation in Faribault County; animal production also plays a major role in the agricultural industry.

Minnesota's regulatory feedlot program is conducted through a cooperative arrangement between the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and County Government. This cooperative program is known as "county delegation" or the "county feedlot program." A county feedlot program is established by the transfer of regulatory authority from the

MPCA to the county. County feedlot programs have responsibility for implementing state feedlot regulations including registration, permitting, inspections, education and assistance, and complaint follow up.

6.3.5 RENEWABLE ENERGY

South Central Minnesota Regional Energy Study

In 2010-2011, a study of energy usage and the potential for the use of renewable energy alternatives in the nine county region of South Central Minnesota was conducted. The study measured energy consumption across all sectors of the economy, and a long list of other resources to predict energy expenditures.

The study revealed that Faribault County stands out as having the greatest possibility in several areas of renewable energy resources expansion; with the resources to create 14.8% of the region's renewable energy total.

Wind energy was the dominant renewable energy source identified in the study, accounting for 87% of the total renewable energy resources. Biomass from crops, livestock and wood accounted for the bulk of the remaining balance, with about 11%; at 13.2 trillion Btu's.

Ethanol

Minnesota is a leader in the ethanol industry in the United States, ranking fifth in ethanol production with 1.1 billion gallons per year. At present, there are twenty-one ethanol plants in the state; with 11,000 farmers supplying corn for ethanol production.

The ethanol industry in Minnesota has had a rocky road in the recent past, with several plant closings and some re-openings, but overall the past decade has been very successful. At the beginning of the recession, in 2008, the ethanol industry lost over 2,400 jobs, but by 2011 had gained all of those back plus an additional 3,400. Between 2000 and 2011, the industry grew from 1,330 to 12,686 jobs with production at 1.1 billion gallons in 2011, Minnesota's ethanol industry generated an estimated $5 billion in total economic output.

> **Corn Plus**, Winnebago, MN
> Corn Plus is one of the veteran ethanol plants in the State of Minnesota, having been constructed in 1993. Permitted to produce 49 million gallons of ethanol annually, Corn Plus is owned and supported by over 700 local shareholders, many of whom produce and deliver corn to the plant. In 2014, several capital improvements were put in to enhancing operational efficiencies.

Renewable Energy as an Economic Development Tool

In order to be competitive with traditional fossil fuels; renewable energy needs a level playing field. That level field is often provided by the government providing subsidies that make the new resource more economically competitive while new technology is being designed, tested, produced and marketed on a large scale. In order to take advantage of

renewable energy as an economic development tool, local leaders need to be aware of the potential value of the new resource, and be ready to support its development until it can compete with traditional fuels. Development of wind energy in southwest Minnesota, east of Faribault County in Freeborn and Mower Counties, and in northern Iowa has shown that the technology has been tested and is ready for Faribault County leaders to take advantage of.

Big Blue Wind Farm, Blue Earth, MN

Big Blue Wind Farm, currently the only wind farm in Faribault County, is located west of Blue Earth in Jo Daviess Township and consists of 18 Gamesa G87/2000 wind turbines. The 36 MW utilizes turbines specifically designed for low-wind sites and features nacelle enhancements and a newer, more aerodynamic blade design that optimizes energy output. The wind farm has been operational since 2012.

6.3.6 TOURISM

Tourism is not a big part of the economy in Faribault County, yet there is no shortage of things to see and do. There is the Jolly Green Giant, standing 55 feet tall on the north side of the City of Blue Earth, and the Giant Museum with a large collection of Green Giant memorabilia. There is the Blue Earth River and its tributaries running north through the heart of the county, providing kayaking and canoeing for enthusiasts from around the region in the spring, summer and fall. Nearly every community has a summer festival, including more than a few with car and/or motorcycle shows and swap meets. There are a number of museums and historic sites scattered throughout the county. There is also a circular bird watching route that connects dozens of wildlife and natural areas throughout the county. The Public Recreational Opportunities, Section 7, of this Plan provides details on bird watching in the County.

6.4 FUTURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As Faribault County looks forward, there is a pretty clear path that needs to be followed in order to maintain and enhance an upward trend in economic development indicators. Additional political and financial support will act to keep the county a great place to live and raise a family. Because successful economic development is much more than smokestack chasing, we now understand that taking care of the existing housing stock and developing alternatives to single-family homes is an important element of a strong economy. In the same way, we now understand the importance of maintaining a strong education system that includes buildings (this year we completed construction on a new public school building in Wells), teachers, and administration. Finally, in 2013 the term "health care" is on everyone's mind, and in Faribault County, preparing to take good care of an aging population is more than the benchmark of a strong society – it can also be part of the web of industries that make up a strong local economy. Because agriculture is such a large part of the Faribault County economy, it is not often acknowledged that a weakened agriculture sector could influence every community and most households in the county.

6.5 SUMMARY

The agricultural trends in Faribault County appear to mirror national trends. The introduction of new technology offered new jobs to residents that are directly related to agriculture without actually owning and operating a farm. This trend can be seen in the increased number of acres farmed by an individual farming operation and the number of agribusinesses that developed between the 1930s and today. Corn, soybeans, and other cash crops have become the dominant source of revenues despite declining government subsidies. These trends are likely to continue into the immediate future. The majority of Faribault County's economic development will more than likely continue to revolve around the agricultural industry, however; it is not limited to that industry. Faribault County is located within a web of distribution; rail, interstate and air transport are all available within the county. Members of the Faribault County Development Corporation (FCDC) are aware of these issues and are in an excellent position to work on these goals and the accompanying objectives and action steps throughout the next decade.

6.6 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Retain a strong agriculture-based economy.

Promote economic diversity.

Enhance and improve the county's efforts to retain and grow the current workforce and to increase worker skills

- Implement an apprentice/internship program in high school curriculum with assistance from the business community.
- Partner with aging agencies such as MNRAAA to host an annual forum that matches the talents of our senior population with the needs of the business community.
- Promote broadband as a tool for the business community and telecommuters.

Increase efforts to assist building owners so that existing buildings can be maintained / updated and new buildings constructed and made available to existing and new / start-up businesses.

- Support the business community by considering the development of a downtown revitalization program.
- Local financing program opportunities.

Develop and expand upon current marketing efforts with new promotional materials and one-stop shopping to attract new businesses and developers.

Maintain the consistent population by focusing on services and opportunities for all age groups (youth retention and aging population).

- Work with the business community to identify and recruit people with the needed talents and skills.

- Identify and encourage the development of entertainment opportunities for all ages.

Funding Opportunities

- Work with communities and the county to access grants and financing for businesses.
- Work with communities to access state and federal funds to finance repairs and improvements to infrastructure.

Business Retention

- Work with businesses to access grants and financing opportunities for businesses.
- Encourage local units of government to partner with local and county EDA to host an annual educational workshop for succession planning.
- Continued focus on retaining and attracting businesses will serve to keep the county's economy strong**.**
    - Manufacturing,
    - Construction,
    - Health care,
    - Renewable energy.

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7. PUBLIC RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Recreation and Leisure have multiple meanings based on each individuals perceptions. It involves; watching television, fishing, hunting, going to the zoo, an evening on the town, basically whatever one chooses to make it. Today, recreational opportunities are a major force in local economies and are responsible for a number of jobs in varied fields; such as government, travel and tourism, arts, health and fitness, hobbies, and spectator sports. Beyond its economic value, recreation also provides personal benefits in terms of meeting physical, emotional, philosophical, and other important health-related needs of participants.

Among the most important amenities for residents and tourists alike are the opportunities for outdoor recreation. The ability for residents and tourists to enjoy and benefit from natural outdoor recreational opportunities is essential to maintaining a high standard of living and a healthy, vibrant community for today and for future generations.

Much of the information obtained for this section is general knowledge of County staff and/or was obtained from the Faribault County Soil and Water GIS data layers. Faribault County Recreational Opportunities are included on the newly amended (2014) Faribault County Minnesota 911 map.

7.2 PUBLIC RECREATION SNAPSHOT

- There are a variety of public recreational activities available throughout the county;
- Affordability of recreational opportunities;
- Limited funding for new and existing parks;
- Protection and promotion of wildlife areas;
- Promotion of amenities that are in Faribault County;
- Promote healthy living initiatives.

7.3 PUBLIC RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND HEALTHY INITIATIVES

Faribault County has a diverse assortment of recreational opportunities ranging from natural areas that are simply designated recreation areas, to facilities such as swimming pools. The county and its communities offer a variety of Healthy Initiatives promoting a healthier Faribault County.

7.3.1 PUBLIC WATER ACCESS

There are nine public water access points in Faribault County, providing a variety of recreational opportunities from swimming to boating and fishing. The Minnesota DNR

manages most of these access points. Table 7-1 lists these locations in the county along with information on what species of fish are available from each point.

Table 7-1: Public Water Access Points

Access Point	Type	Fish Species	Responsible Entity
Bass Lake	Concrete	C, CF, LB, N, L, W	DNR
Guckeen Lake	Concrete	C, N	DNR
Minnesota Lake	Carry In	Wildlife	County
Rice Lake (Winnebago)	Concrete	Wildlife	DNR
Rice Lake (#2)	Concrete	Wildlife	DNR
Rice Lake (Wells)	Concrete	C, LB, N, S	DNR
Rice Lake (Pihl's Park)	Fishing Pier	C, LB, N, S	County
South Walnut Lake	Concrete	N, W, Wildlife	DNR
Walnut Lake	Concrete	N, W, Wildlife	DNR

C = Crappie, CF = Catfish, LB = Largemouth Bass, N = Northern Pike, S = Sunfish, W = Walleye, Wildlife = Wildlife Lake

7.3.2 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are part of Minnesota's outdoor recreation system and are established to protect those lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing and other compatible recreational uses. They are the backbone to DNR's wildlife management efforts in Minnesota and are key to:

- Protecting wildlife habitat for future generations,
- Providing citizens with opportunities for hunting, fishing and wildlife watching, and
- Promoting important wildlife-based tourism in the state;
- Protecting endangered, threatened, and special concern species.

WMAs are open to the public during specific times of the year and are regulated by the Minnesota DNR. These areas are protected from encroaching housing and agricultural activities, which make them attractive places for wildlife to seek refuge. Within Faribault County, there are 9 WMAs with a total area of 3,850 acres. Table 7-2 lists these areas in detail (1).

Table 7-2: Wildlife Management Areas (1)

Name	Accessible	Deer	Bear	Moose	Small Game	Forest Birds	Sharptails	Pheasants	Waterfowl	Turkey	Doves	Wolves	Acres	Nearest Population Center
Charlotte Hynes	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	72	Winnebago
Dean Christensen Memorial	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	78	Wells
Lake Guckeen	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	146	Guckeen
Lane	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	60	Guckeen
Rice Lake	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	136	Winnebago
Save the Wetlands	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	100	Walters

Name	Accessible	Deer	Bear	Moose	Small Game	Forest Birds	Sharptails	Pheasants	Waterfowl	Turkey	Doves	Wolves	Acres	Nearest Population Center
Smith	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	337	Delavan
Stokman	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	456	Minnesota Lake
Walnut Lake*	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	2,516	Wells
Wells	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	27	Wells
													3,928	

*Restrictions: This WMA contains the 200 acre Walnut Lake WMA Game Refuge which is off limits to all activities. The refuge is located on the southeast end of South Walnut Lake.

7.3.3 AQUATIC MANAGEMENT AREAS

Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) are the aquatic versions of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). For these areas, land is purchased by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from willing landowners, to provide protection to environmentally sensitive sections of lakes, streams and rivers. Once purchased, the area is protected from development, pollution, and other damage. Faribault County includes one AMA. The Blue Earth AMA is located in Winnebago Township, Sections 21 and 28, and contains 294 acres (1).

7.3.4 SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS

The Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) program protects distinct natural features that have significant scientific and educational value. The Minnesota DNR manages a number of SNAs. SNAs are open year-round for visitors to enjoy undisturbed natural habitat sites. Hiking, bird-watching, nature photography, snowshoeing or other activities that do not disturb natural conditions are allowed. Most SNAs do not have trails or other facilities and none have restrooms.

The Osmundson Prairie SNA is the only SNA in Faribault County; it's a small natural prairie remnant, surrounded by intensively managed agricultural land. Although only six acres, this postage size remnant provides vital habitat for prairie plants and birds. The area protects a rare remnant of the mesic blacksoil prairie community, as well as two rare plant species: the Rattlesnake Master and the Tuberous Indian Plantain. Located on the rolling topography of the Emmons-Faribault moraine, the prairie is dominated by Indian grass, big bluestem, and grama grasses. There are no trails, but walking is easy through the prairie. A total of 55 bird species have been documented on this particular SNA. Birding at this site is best during migration season. Birding access is very good.

7.3.5 WATERFOWL PRODUCTION AREAS

Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) preserve small natural wetlands and their associated uplands. WPAs provide valuable habitat for migratory birds and care should be taken to discourage development in close proximity to them. There are over 2 million acres of WPA

ground, mostly located in the prairie potholes of the Dakotas, Minnesota and Montana. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) owns, leases or holds easements on the lands. Within Faribault County there are five WPAs: Kiester WPA, Lura Lake WPA, Maple River WPA, Pilot Grove Lake WPA, and Prescott WPA. These WPAs are open to the public for hunting and fishing during certain times of the year and are regulated by the FWS under MN DNR hunting regulations and seasons (2).

7.3.6 WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

A wildlife corridor is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures (such as roads, development, or farming). These corridors allow an exchange of individuals between populations, which may help prevent the negative effects of inbreeding and reduced genetic diversity that often occur within isolated populations. Corridors potentially moderate some of the worst effects of habitat fragmentation, wherein urbanization and agriculture can split up habitat areas, causing animals to lose both their natural habitat and the ability to move between regions to use all the resources needed to survive. Habitat fragmentation due to human activity is an ever-increasing threat to wildlife populations, these corridors are essential to sustain healthy populations. There are two types of wildlife corridors in Faribault County that enable wildlife migration and provide valuable habitat.

Transportation Corridor Management and Development

Transportation corridors such as I-90 between Blue Earth and Guckeen, include narrow strips of undeveloped land adjacent to roadways and railroads. These lands connect disparate patches of managed wildlife habitat across the county and not only provide migratory routes, but also provide additional habitat. Policies restricting mowing and herbicide use in these corridors along with a program to restore native vegetation to these lands will ensure that their health is maintained.

Riparian Corridor Management and Development

Riparian corridors make up the bulk of wildlife habitat in the county. These corridors are located along rivers, streams, and lakes. Some of these areas are managed by the DNR (e.g. WMAs, WPAs, and SNAs), however, many of these areas are located on private land. Therefore, cooperation with private landowners is critical to maintaining the health and vitality of these areas.

7.3.7 HEALTHY COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Throughout Faribault County Healthy Community Initiatives are on the rise. These initiatives are built on the concept that by working together, the county and its communities together, can give all residents healthy choices and support the pursuit of healthy lifestyles for individuals of all ages.

Statewide Heath Improvement Program (SHIP)

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) oversees SHIP. We all want to be healthy, but sometimes we need a helping hand. SHIP is about creating good health for parents, kids and

the community as a whole by decreasing obesity and reducing the number of people who use tobacco and those who are exposed to second hand smoke from tobacco.

Two out of every three Minnesotans are overweight or obese, caused by insufficient physical activity and unhealthy eating. Obesity increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other chronic illnesses. One in six Minnesotans still smoke, leading to cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Obesity, tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke from tobacco are the two leading causes of death in Minnesota. Preventing illness saves money, a lot of money.

SHIP aids Minnesotans by providing safer walking and biking routes to schools, farmers markets, and workplace wellness programs and facilities. SHIP has strategies to provide healthier eating, increased non-motorized transportation, healthier eating in child care facilities, more physical activity in child care facilities, tobacco free parks, smoke-free housing, safe routes to school, physical activity in schools and tobacco free schools; as well as working with employers and healthcare providers.

Healthy Faribault County

The SHIP program was established with health care reform in 2008 and is designed to improve health and reduce health care costs. Healthy Faribault County is a direct result of SHIP. Through various SHIP grants and funding sources, there are various Farmer's Markets that provide locally grown foods, Food Shelves, Summer Food Programs, Weight Loss Support, Community Gardens, Senior Nutrition and Dining, and Food Support Programs. City parks and trails, County parks and trails, swimming pools, golf courses, playgrounds, cross country ski trails, snow mobile trails, ice skating rinks, disc golf courses, tennis courts, indoor recreation, community education and recreation and other resources have all become available or been updated with SHIP funds.

Community Education

Both the Blue Earth Area and United South Central have Community Education programs that offer activities for all ages of citizens.

7.3.8 STATE PARKS

There are currently no state parks in Faribault County.

7.3.9 COUNTY PARKS

Faribault County currently has two county parks: Woods Lake Park and Pihl's Park. Moving forward, the county needs to examine the possibility of creating a capital improvement plan (CIP) for its county park system in conjunction with the development of a countywide trail system, in order to increase the variety of outdoor recreational facilities available to the public.

Woods Lake Park

Woods Lake Park is located just outside Elmore off State Highway 169. It is open seasonally from May 1st to October 1st and offers a variety of amenities, including:

- 20 camp sites with electric hookups;
- 10 tent sites;
- Public restroom and shower facilities;
- Shelters available for reservation; and
- Grills and picnic tables.
- Natural pond style swimming facility
- Native prairie plantings
- Playground
- Trails
- Sand Volleyball

Pihl's Park

Pihl's Park is located just one mile southeast of the Walnut Lake State Wildlife Management Area on the northeastern edge of Rice Lake, south of the MN-22 exit from Interstate 90. It is open seasonally from May 1st to October 1st and offers the following amenities:

- 30 camp sites with electric hookups and RV access;
- Handicap accessible restroom and shower facilities;
- Playground with a variety of equipment;
- A horseshoe pit;
- A disc-golf course;
- A 3-hole mini-golf course;
- A scenic nature trail;
- Public water access to Rice Lake; and
- Grills and picnic tables;

7.3.10 MUNICIPAL PARKS

There are 21 municipal parks, Table 7-3, in Faribault County, most of which are located in the City of Blue Earth. These facilities are a valuable component of the county's outdoor recreation resources because they allow residents to enjoy the outdoors without the need to leave their community. These parks are especially beneficial to children, who are much more likely to use them than other age groups.

Table 7-3: Municipal Parks

City	Park Name	Location
City of Blue Earth	Blue Earth Area School Park	315 E 6th Street
	Faribault County Fairgrounds	1129 North Main Street
	Green Giant Park	Giant Drive
	Leland Park and Beyer Field	1010 North Main Street
	Putnam Park	111 W 14th Street
	Steinberg Nature Park	East 7th Street
	Third Ward Park	East 5th Street
City of Bricelyn	City Park	North Quinn Street and N 2nd Street
	Prairie River Camp	52792 80th Street
City of Delavan	City Park	East 2nd Street and North School St.

City	Park Name	Location
City of Easton	City Park	4th Street and Elm Street
City of Elmore	City Park	W. Willis Street
City of Frost	City Park	Stanley Street and 1st Street
City of Kiester	City Park	North Main St. and West Roberts St.
City of Walters	City Park	East 3rd Street and Meyer Street
City of Wells	Half Moon Park	Half Moon Road
	Skate Park	Half Moon Road
	Thompson Park	East 10th Street SE and 7th Street SE
City of Minnesota Lake	Old Mill Park	5th Street
City of Winnebago	West City Park	420 3rd Ave SW
	Whiting Park	Main Street

7.3.11 WALKING & CYCLING TRAILS

Faribault County does not currently have any state trails or a countywide trail system linking its communities and parks together. There are three smaller trail systems in the county; Dexter Bicentennial Trail, Interstate 90 Rest Stop Nature Trail and Unity Trail, and Steinberg Park.

7.3.12 SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

Faribault County currently has an extensive network of snowmobile trails, which link all of the major municipalities together. These trails are generally groomed and open throughout the winter season to snowmobile users. The Faribault County recreation map in Appendix A depicts the county's snowmobile trails. Snowmobile clubs operating within the county are responsible for maintenance and signage of these trails.

7.3.13 SWIMMING POOLS

During the summer months, swimming outdoors is among the most popular activities, especially with younger age groups. The county currently has four municipal swimming pools, located Blue Earth, Bricelyn, Wells, and Winnebago. All of these pools are outdoor pools and open only during the summer months.

- The Blue Earth pool is a zero depth pool with water slides and additional amenities.
- The Bricelyn pool is a standard pool with diving boards and a water slide.
- The Wells pool has both a standard pool with diving boards in addition to a wading pool.
- The Winnebago pool includes a diving board and waterslide in addition to a wading pool.

Each facility is operated independently and hours and fees vary by location.

7.3.14 GOLF COURSES

Golf courses are another important amenity for residents throughout Faribault County. Golf is a lifelong sport where participants can range from 7 years of age to 90+.

Table 7-4: Golf Courses

Name	Location	No. of Holes	Ownership
Riverside Town & Country Club	4 miles North of Blue Earth on Hwy 169	9 Holes	Semi-private
Wells Golf Club	Wells	9 Holes	Public
Minn Iowa Golf Course	1 mile North of Elmore on Hwy 169	9 Holes	Public

7.3.15 BIRD WATCHING

Among Faribault County's most developed recreation resources is its bird watching trail. The trail route utilizes existing county highways to link together a number of viewing locations throughout the county where migratory birds can be viewed and photographed by the public. The trail is open year round free of charge. A map of the Faribault County Bird Watching Trail can be found in Appendix A.

7.3.16 GUN CLUBS

Wells and Huntley have organized Gun Clubs that promote and support the avid hunting participants in Faribault County.

7.3.17 INDOOR RECREATION

The number of indoor recreational facilities has declined with the population decline. Types of indoor recreation include community education, fitness centers, gun and archery ranges, movie theatres and bowling alleys.

7.4 CURRENT STATUS OF PUBLIC RECREATION

7.4.1 OUTDOOR RECREATION

Currently there is a variety of public outdoor recreation opportunities including walk able neighborhoods, parks and open spaces, bird watching and federal program locations that generate economic benefits to local governments and businesses.

7.4.2 INDOOR RECREATION

Community Education

Both Blue Earth Area and United South Central have Community Education programs that offer activities for all ages of citizens across the county. Alden-Conger and Maple River also have community education programs.

Fitness Centers

There are various fitness centers located in Blue Earth, Wells and Winnebago that offer year round recreation to different degrees for local residents.

Gun and Archery Ranges

Gun clubs in the county include the Well Pistol and Rifle Club, located just West of the city, and the Center Creek Gun Club located east of Huntley. In addition, there are private ranges throughout the County.

Movie Theaters
There are two movie theatres in the county and both were digitally upgraded in 2012. The Kee Theatre is located in Kiester, and The Flame Theatre in Wells

Bowling Alley
Winnebago is host to the only bowling alley in the County, Lucky Lanes.

7.5 FUTURE OF PUBLIC RECREATION

7.5.1 OUTDOOR RECREATION
As outdoor recreational trends change, facilities and the promotion of activities also need to change. While there are a number of recreational facilities available, they are generally concentrated in the Blue Earth area.

7.5.2 INDOOR RECREATION
Indoor recreation lacks in diversity, mainly consisting of fitness centers or gyms.

7.6 SUMMARY
Presently, there are a variety of seasonal and year-round recreation opportunities for all age groups in the county, including parks, pools, golf courses, snowmobile trails, bird watching, and more. Looking ahead to the future, it will be important for the county to continue to adequately maintain these existing opportunities for residents while identifying ways to expand them and offer new opportunities. With the given demographics of the county and its aging population, it is important to expand upon facilities that provide lifetime activities; meaning that a large age span of participants can utilize the years to come.

7.7 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

1. **Seek opportunities to expand the availability and diversity of both indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.**
    a. Raise public awareness of these opportunities.
    b. Promote the development of year round activities.
    c. Continued funding sources for recreational opportunities.
    d. Incorporate the Blue Earth River and other rivers and lakes.
    e. Promote wildlife areas

2. **Seek funding sources to update existing and to establish new recreational facilities throughout the county.**
    a. Seed funding for development of a county wide trail.
    b. Ensure that existing facilities are adequately funded.
    c. Add more uses to current facilities
    d. Continue to be proactive.

3. **Pursue additional Healthy Initiatives**
    a. Promote a healthy and active population.

b. Continue to work with Insurance Companies to support healthy lifestyle opportunities.

7.8 BIBLOGRAPHY

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8. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues are harmful aspects of human activity on the biophysical environment. Environmental resource management is the "management of the interaction and impact of human societies on the environment".

8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS SNAPSHOT

- Protect and promote the limited wildlife habitat
- Protect vulnerable areas
- Low land use diversity
- Changes in climate patterns and trends
- Groundwater and recharge
- Impaired waters

8.3 ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

Soil and water are Faribault County's most important natural resources. To understand how this came about, it is necessary to look backward many centuries to a time when a series of glaciers moved over most of Canada and much of the northern United States. The slow moving ice constantly eroded the surface of the land incorporating into its mass, pushing it forward or sideways. As climate changed, the ice melted and accumulations of debris, known as drift, were left behind, covering the bedrock underneath. This process is what created the fertile soils that cover Faribault County and helped create our agriculturally dominated economy.

8.3.1 CLIMATE

To say that Minnesota has extreme weather is an understatement. As a whole, Minnesota has seen significant changes in recent climate trends that include; warmer winters, higher overnight temperatures, greater frequency of tropical-like atmospheric water vapor and amplified thunderstorms. Faribault County is no exception to these changes.

Faribault County has a continental climate characterized by extreme seasonal variations in temperature and precipitation patterns. From 1921 to 1950 Faribault County had an annual average of 27.55 inches of precipitation. By 2010 Faribault County's annual average precipitation was 35.72 inches per year. Not only is Faribault County experiencing more precipitation, it is coming at different times of the year. Historically, slightly more than 2/3 of the annual precipitation fell during the spring and summer; averaging about 22 inches of rainfall between April and September. Currently, the highest concentrations of precipitation are being experienced in the fall, during harvest season. Traditionally, the least amount of precipitation falls in the winter, averaging 32 inches of snow per year. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) updated their Plant Hardiness Zone Map and for the first time, sections of Faribault County are now Zone 5a. A plant hardiness zone is a geographical defined area in which a specific category of plant life is capable of

growing, as defined by climate conditions, including its ability to withstand the minimal temperatures of the zone. For example, a plant that does well in Zone 5a can withstand temperatures as low as -20˚ F and a plant in Zone 4b can withstand temperatures as low as -25˚F.

In the earlier years of settlement, storms were a very serious matter. Heavy winds and tornados made 'cyclone' cellars a must. There was a time when it was not unusual to see ropes connecting rural out buildings throughout the county; these ropes were utilized in the winter to ensure that people could find their way from one building to another during a blizzard. Minnesota's extreme weather of dramatic droughts, dust storms, heat waves, early freezes and tornados kept settlers on their toes. Today, Faribault County still experiences these same extreme weather conditions; however, meteorological advancing in predicting weather, and a county Hazardous Mitigation plan, residents are more informed in a timely manner, allowing for protection practices of people and property to be implemented.

8.3.2 AIR QUALITY

Minnesota's air quality is generally good and has been improving. Concentrations of most toxic air pollutants have gradually decreased. Much of the decline is attributed to lower emissions from major facilities, cleaner cars and fuels, due to the enforcement of the Clean Air Act of 1970 and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 and 1990, as well as voluntary reductions undertaken at various facilities.

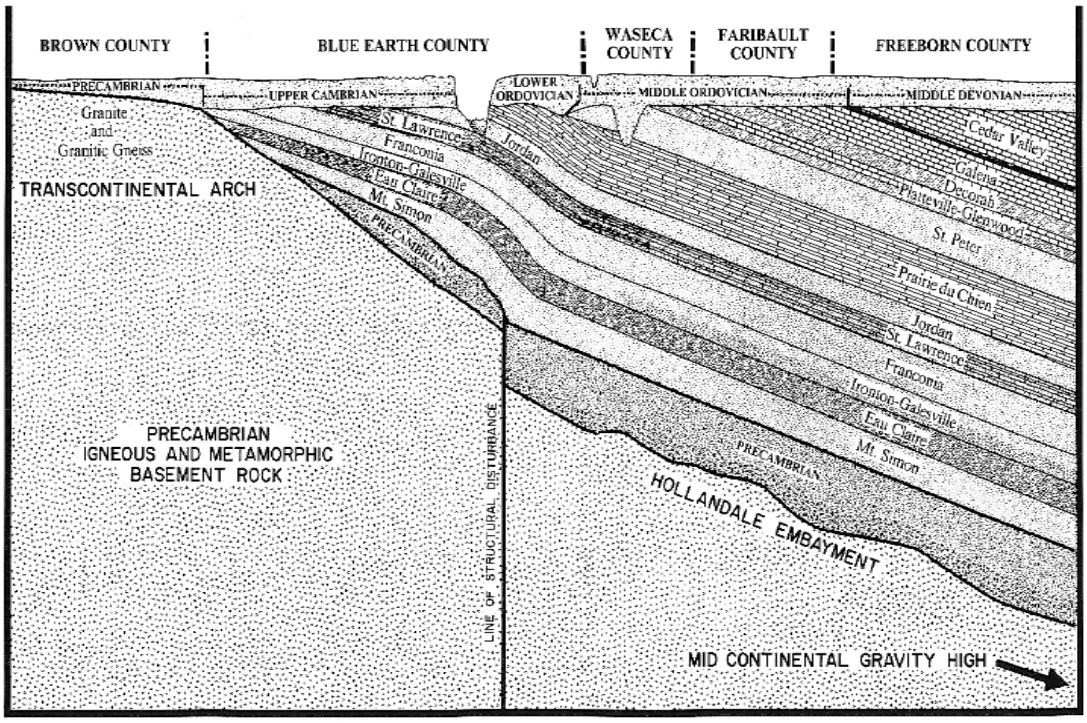
Increased understanding of serious health effects has resulted in stricter national ambient air quality standards. Even as emission and concentrations of key pollutants have decreased, the number of poor air quality days has increased. Faribault County, being located outside the seven county metropolitan area, generally has better air quality than the St. Paul/Minneapolis area. (2)

8.3.3 GROUNDWATER

According to the Faribault County Local Water Management Plan, ground water refers to "water beneath the land surface that fills the spaces in rock and sediment". For the most part, ground water comes directly from precipitation or surface water that infiltrates below the land surface. In turn, ground water flows into many streams and lakes, allowing streams to flow beyond rain and snowmelt periods and sustain lake levels during dry spells.

The bedrock that underlies Faribault County is part of a sequence of Late Cambrian to Early Ordovician sedimentary rock which consists of three major rock types; sandstone, shale and carbonates. The bedrock was deposited layer upon layer in shallow marine waters that flooded southern Minnesota about 500 million years ago.

Figure 8-1: Bedrock Cross Section (3)



Faribault County's citizens depend on ground water for drinking. All drinking water supplies within Faribault County come from ground water wells. No water supplies come from lakes or rivers as they do in other parts of the state. For our municipal wells, wellhead protection efforts have begun and are scheduled for completion within all of the communities by 2014. All municipal public water systems within the county may be found in the appropriate city's appendix. Our private wells also need protection from potential contamination sources. Many human activities such as urban development, industrial processing, agriculture, chemical spills and even individual wastewater treatment systems have caused ground-water contamination in areas that previously had clean, potable ground water. Making sure safe and healthy ground water is available, is a vital component to being able to provide a stable population. A water use permit from the DNR is required for all users withdrawing more than 10,000 gallons of water per day or 1 million gallons per year.

In Faribault County, water well drilling and water well construction will vary from place to place due to variations in bedrock geologic conditions. In 1974, implementation of the Minnesota Water Well Code standardized water well construction practices and required all water well drillers to be licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Licenses are issued on the basis of one's knowledge of the regulations governing well construction and proof of drilling experience. All water wells drilled since 1974 may use water from only one aquifer, and each well must meet minimum standards of depth,

distance from possible contamination sources, and have a water sample analysis that confirms it potability. Subsequently, all newly constructed wells must use standardized well construction materials and installation procedures.

The largest source of information used to develop the geologic and hydrogeology maps are the Faribault County Geologic atlas, and MDH well drilling and sealing records. Drillers are required to record the physical characteristics of the penetrated rock and the depth at which these characteristics change significantly. Information from the log should include: a description of the main rock types encountered during drilling, their thickness and depth; a description of the well casing diameter, length, and screening zones; hydrologic data, such as the static water level after the well has been completed and a report of a production test; and the direction and distance to the nearest source of possible contamination.

Equally important, as approved well construction, is proper sealing of wells that are no longer in use. In most cases, unused wells are domestic wells that no longer provide water to the homes for which they were drilled or dug. Reasons for properly sealing a well and proper grouting of wells include; physical hazard considerations, to prevent surface water contamination, prevention the intermixing of water between aquifers, preservation of hydrogeology conditions and to prevent direct disposal of contamination of unused wells. Just like water well drillers, water well sealers must be licensed with the MDH.

Table 8-1: Description of Aquifers (3)

Description of Aquifers		
Aquifer System	***Aquifer***	***Aquifer Characteristics***
Cedar ValMaquoley-keta-Galena Aquifer System	Cedar Valley Limestone	Limited to erosional remnants in southeastern part of the county. Its presence is only inferred.
	Maquoketa Limestone	Carbonated rock; has direct hydrogeologic connection with surficial glacial deposits. Yields water for domestic use.
	Gelena Limestone	Carbonate rock; comes in direct hydrogeologic connection with surficial glacial deposits. Yields water through solution cavities, fracture zones and crevices. Provides water for domestic, commercial, industrial and municipal supplies.
Confining Layer	Decorah Shale	Shales are generally not water yielding; act as confining beds at the base of the Cedar Valley-Maquoketa-Galena Aquifer System
Aquifer and Non Aquifer	Platteville & Glenwood	Limestone can yield small quantities of water. Shales not water yielding act as confining beds.
St. Peter -Prairie Du Chien - Jordan Aquifer System	St. Peter Sandstone	Highly permeable quartzose sandstone; has direct hydrogeologic contact with surficial glacial deposits. Yields large volumes of water where overlain by the Decorah confining layer; provides moderate supplies where the St. Peter forms the bedrock surface.

Description of Aquifers		
Aquifer System	***Aquifer***	***Aquifer Characteristics***
Confining Layer	Priarie Du Chien Dolomite	Carbonate rock, dolomite; has direct hydrogeologic connection with surficial glacial deposits. Wide zones of fractures and crevices generally yield small to moderate quantities of water. Well-creviced dolomite can provide local high water yields. Limited shaly layers may form localized confining conditions. The top of the Prairie Du Chien marks a major erosional unconformity; it may greatly in thickness.
	Jordan Sandstone	Highly permeable quartzose sandstone; has direct hydrogeologic contact with surface and shallow groundwater systems. Contributes water for municipal and industrial supplies.
	St. Lawrence Dolomite Siltsone	Rocks of low permeability; act as confining bed at the base of the St. Peter -Prairie Du Chien - Jordan Aquifer System
Franconia - Ironton - Galesville Aquifer System	Franconia Sandstone	Sandstone, glauconitic; has no direct hydrogeologic contact with surface and shallow groundwater systems. Contributes water for municipal and industrial supplies
Confining Layer	Ironton & Galesville Sandstone	Highly permeable quartzose sandstone; has no direct hydrogeologic contact with surface and shallow groundwater systems. Contributes water for municipal and industrial supplies
	Eau Clair Shale	Shales are generally not water yielding; act as confining beds at the base of the Franconia- Ironton-Galesville Aquifer System
Mt. Simon - Hinckley Aquifer System	Mt Simon Sandstone	Quartzose sandstone, data sparse; has not direct hydrogeologic contact with surface and shallow groundwater systems. Aquifer use is minimal
Basement Rock	Hinckley Sandstone	Data absent; water contribution for aquifer use is unknown
	Not an Aquifer	Not water bearing rock; represents the base of all aquifers and aquifer systems

Table 8-2: Stratigraphic Classification and Description of Rock Units (3)

Stratigraphic Classification		Description of Rock Units	
System Series	***Group or Formation Name***	***Thickness***	***Dominant Rock Types***
Middle Devonian	Cedar Valle Group	Limited to erosional remnants	Carbonate rock, fine-grained; limited to erosional remnants; base marks erosional unconformity
Middle Ordovician	Maquoketa Group	Uncertain; as thick as 80 feet	Carbonate rock, fine-grained; limestone, shaly-limestone and shale. Its base is gradational
	Galena Group	Occurs primarily as present bedrock surface; recorded as 260 feet	Carbonate rock, fine-grained; white, yellow, and yellowish grey; primarily limestone and dolomite limestone, may contain some sandy, shaly, or silty beds. Contact with overlying Maquoketa is gradational; elsewhere its top forms the bedrock surface
	Decorah Group	50-60 feet	Shale; greenish grey; uniform throughout; may include carbonate beds at the base
	Platteville ,Glenwood Formations	20-30 feet	Carbonate rock over shale; contact may be gradational or well defined
	St. Peter Formation	90-100 feet	Quartzose sandstone; white or yellow; may be thin shale or siltstone beds in lower part of formation. Basal contact with Prairie Du Chien in unconformable.
Lower Ordovician	Prairie Du Chien	Upper contact with St. Peter is nconformable; ranges from feather edge at erosional imits to as thick as 280 feet	Dolomite and sandy dolomite with beds of quartzose sandstone; may contain thin beds of soft shale or sediment filled crevices. The top of the Prairie Du Chien marks a major erosional unconformity; it disappears as an erosional edge in extreme northwestern part of the county
Upper Cambria	Jordan Formation	60-100 feet	Quartzose sandstone; white or yellow; fine to coarse grained, soft-poorly cemented
	St. Lawerence Formation	90-120 feet	Data sparse; primarily dolomite, siltstone and shale. Transition with the underlying Franconia may be gradational
	Franconia Formation	100-120 feet	Fine-grained quartzose sandstone; glauconitic; may contain thin beds of dolomite, siltstone or shale
	Ironton & Galensville Formation	80-90 feet	Quartzose sandstone; data sparse. Poorly cemented sandstone
	Eau Claire Formation	Typically greater than 100 feet	Mainly shale and siltstone with some beds of sandstone, transition with the underlying Mt. Simon is gradational
	Mt. Simon Formation	Unknown; probably attains several hundred feet	Quartzose sandstone; may contain shale and siltstone. Transition with the overlying Eau Claire is gradational; its base marks a major erosional unconformity
Precambrian	Hinckley & Fond Du Lac Formations	Unknown; may exceed 1,000 feet	Driller data unavailable; other sources suggest mainly quartzose sandstone and shale. Its base marks a major disconformity
	Metamorphic Igneous	unknown; several miles	Igneous and metamorphic rocks undifferentiated

8.3.4 WATERSHEDS

Faribault County is essentially a region of gently rolling ground moraine that was deposited by the late Wisconsin Des Moines lobe, the last glacier to advance over southern Minnesota. The county is divided into 3 major and 14 minor watersheds. The 3 major watersheds include the Blue Earth, Le Sueur, and the Winnebago River watersheds. Table 8-3 shows the major and minor watersheds in Faribault County by area.

The Blue Earth Watershed consists of 304,817 acres in the southern and western portion of Faribault County. In the western part of the county, regional drainage is from south to north along the Blue Earth River system, while local drainage flows eastward through Elm, Center, South, and Badger Creeks. The East Fork of the Blue Earth River and Coon Creek together drain the southeastern part of the county and join the main system in the City of Blue Earth. As a whole the Blue Earth River Watershed is 992,034 acres; with 216,444 acres of the watershed being located in Iowa; since the water in the Blue Earth Watershed flows north, Faribault County receives water from Iowa. (4)

The Le Sueur River Watershed consists of 156,365 acres in the north central and northeastern portions of Faribault County. In this area, regional drainage is from south to north along Rice Creek, Maple River and Cobb River. They flow north and eventually join the Le Sueur River, which empties into the Blue Earth River near Mankato. (5)

The Winnebago River Watershed consists of 449 acres and is located in the very southeastern corner of Faribault County. Whereas the Blue Earth River and LeSueur River are both located within the Minnesota River Basin, the Winnebago River is located within the Lower Mississippi River Basin. (6)

Table 8-3: Major and Minor Watersheds (1)

Major & Minor Watersheds	HUC Code	Acres
Blue Earth River	**7020009**	**304,817**
West Branch Blue Earth River	*702000902*	*17,325*
Middle Branch Blue Earth River	*702000903*	*8,537*
East Branch Blue Earth River	*702000905*	*152,813*
Badger Creek-Blue Earth River	*702000908*	*59,833*
Blue Earth River	*702000911*	*12,471*
Coon Creek	*702000904*	*38,649*
South Creek	*702000906*	*5,086*
Center Creek	*702000907*	*3,688*
Elm Creek	*702000909*	*2,695*
Willow Creek	*702000910*	*3,720*
Le Sueur River	**7020011**	**156,365**
Cobb River	*702001103*	*11,307*
Rice Creek	*702001104*	*44,045*
Maple River	*702001105*	*101,014*
Winnebago River	**7080203**	**449**
Upper Winnebago River	*708020301*	*449*
TOTAL		**461,631***

Note: Minor Watersheds are in italics

***** Total is the sum of either the three major watersheds (in bold) or the minor watersheds (in italics)

8.3.5 LAKES

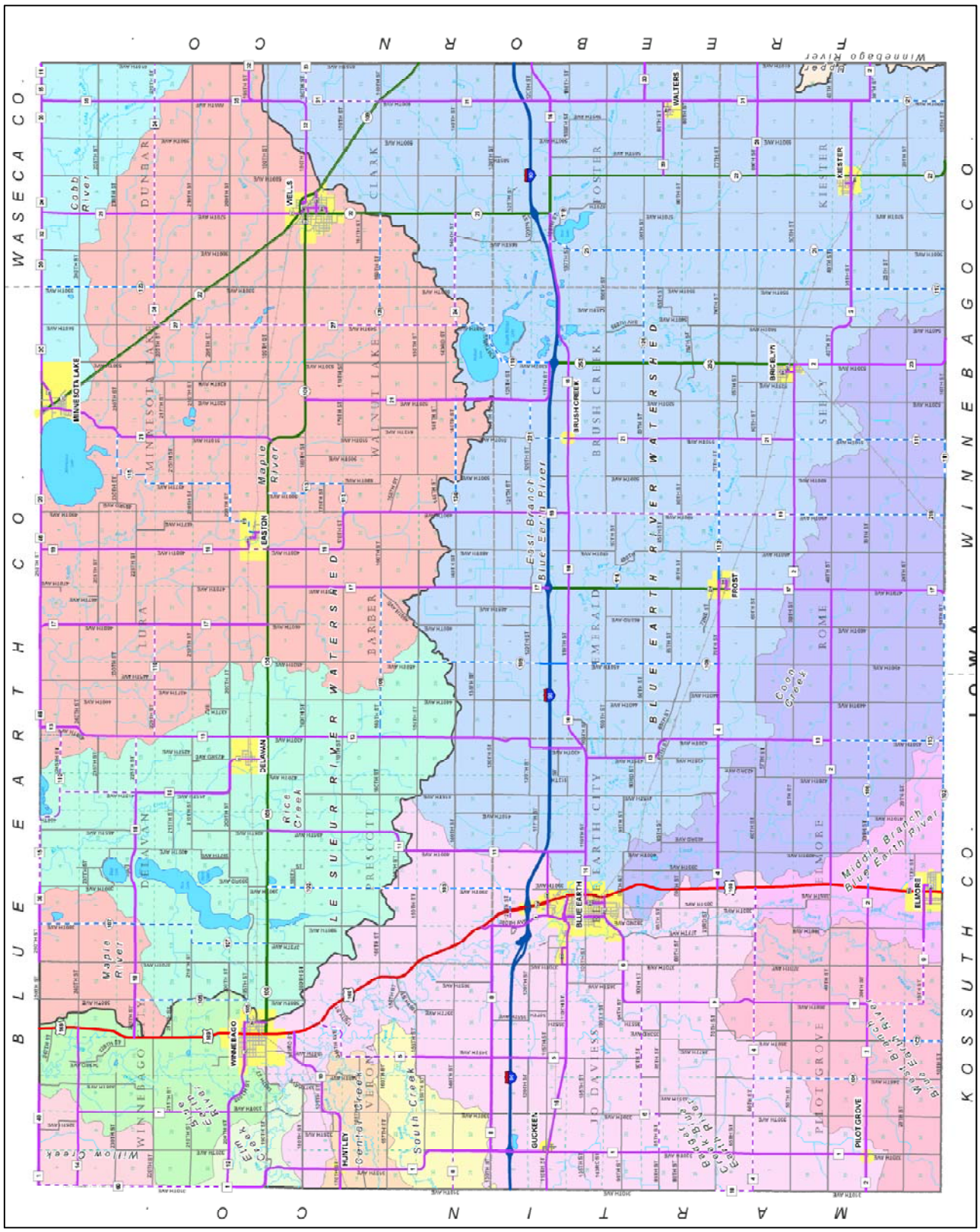
There are nine lakes that are completely or partially located within Faribault County with a combined surface area totaling over 5,000 acres. Three of these lakes currently have residential development, Rice Lake (Foster Township), Minnesota Lake, and Bass Lake.

As described in Section 7, Faribault County has a variety of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) that are regulated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), these lakes are Rice Lake (Winnebago Township) and Minnesota Lake.

Table 8-4: Developed and Undeveloped Lakes (1)

Name	Surface Area	MN DNR #	Developable
Bass Lake	196	0022-74	Yes
Guckeen Lake	28	0022-88	No
Hart Lake	n/a	0022-76	No
Lura Lake	110	0022-79	No
Minnesota Lake	1,915	0022-33	Yes
Rice Lake (Delavan Twp.)	1,216	0022-75	No
Rice Lake (Foster Twp.)	268	0022-07	Yes
South Walnut Lake	392	0022-22	No
North Walnut Lake	827	0022-23	No
TOTAL	4,952		

Figure 8-2 Watersheds Map



8.3.6 WETLANDS

Minnesota has an estimated 10.6 million acres (19 percent of the state) of wetlands remaining. Prior to settlement, Minnesota had about 18.6 million acres of wetlands. Wetlands provide vital habitat to a wide array of plants and animals and play an imperative role in Minnesota's water resources. Wetlands have long been considered a nuisance and have been drained or filled for agricultural production or urban development. While some wetlands such as, bogs, sloughs, swamps and marshes are visible, many seasonal wetlands are not visible throughout the year. All wetlands share these same characteristics; contain mostly hydric soils (soils that developed in wet conditions), they are wet either above the ground or within 12 inches of the surface during all or part of the growing season, they contain vegetation adapted to wet soil conditions. Table 8-5 outlines the various types of wetlands and their descriptions (1).

Classifications of Wetlands

Two different systems are commonly used in Minnesota to classify wetlands.

The Circular 39 System, developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1956, divides wetlands in Minnesota into eight types. The main differences between them are depth of waters and variety of vegetation

The Cowardin classification, developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1979, is far more precise. It uses a tier system, with each tier describing the component of a wetland more specifically and narrowly than the last.

Table 8-5: Types of Wetlands (7)

Type	Name	Description
1	Seasonally Flooded Basin or Flat	These are areas that are normally well drained during the growing season, but become seasonally inundated.
2	Wet Meadow	Soil that is free of standing water during most of the growing season, but inundated up to a few inches below the surface.
3	Shallow Marsh	Soil that is waterlogged throughout the early growing season and covered by more than six inches of water.
4	Deep Marsh	Soil that is waterlogged throughout the growing season and covered by six inches to three feet of water.
5	Shallow Open Water (Lake)	Shallow bodies of water that are not more than 10 feet deep.
6	Shrub Swamps	Soil that is waterlogged throughout the early growing season and covered by up to six inches of water.
7	Wooded Swamps	Soil that is waterlogged within a few inches of the surface and covered by up to a foot of water.
8	Bogs	Soil that is usually waterlogged and supports a spongy covering. They normally occur in shallow basins, on flat uplands, and along sluggish streams.

Benefits of Wetlands

Wetlands were once considered wasted space, a hindrance to urban development and crop production. While Minnesota has seen a 50 percent statewide loss in wetlands, some areas have seen a loss of more than 90 percent of their original wetlands, such as Faribault County. Wetlands provide; multiple benefits to the health of the environment, habitat for countless species of plants and animals', including amphibians and migratory waterfowl, and are natural filters for environmental contaminants found in runoff.

Wetland Regulations

In most cases, draining or filling a wetland will require a permit or some type of authorization in Faribault County. Work in wetlands that are determined to be "Waters of the United States" under the federal Clean Water Act requires a USACE permit. The Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) was established in 1991 with a goal of no net loss of wetlands within the state. WCA requires that any proposed development in or adjacent to wetlands must avoid disturbing the wetlands, minimize disturbance to wetlands and/or replace any damaged or destroyed wetland at an area ratio of 2 to 1. The following agencies are typically involved in the process.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Work in any wetland or water area generally requires a permit from the USACE regardless of whether other state or local permits are required.

U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) & Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Under a stipulation contained in the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act, a land user who alters a wetland for agricultural purposes loses eligibility for many USDA benefits including the Conservation Reserve Program, federal farm loans, price support programs, etc. NRCS personnel should be contacted for specific information based on location, type and condition of the wetland.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) The Department of Natural Resources administers the Public Waters Work Permit Program on certain lakes, watercourses and wetlands in Minnesota. At the state level, there are two regulatory schemes for wetlands. Larger and deeper wetlands, such as Types 3, 4, and 5, (see Figure 8-2) that are greater than 10 acres in rural areas, or 2.5 acres within municipal boundaries and have been identified and cataloged as Protected Waters under the Minnesota DNR's Division of Waters' Protect Waters program. Only wetlands that were included in the original inventory are regulated under this program.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) At the state level, BWSR is responsible for regulating all wetlands within the state that were not included on the original Protected Waters list.

Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) At the local level, the SWCD oversees the implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) throughout the county.

8.3.7 SOIL HEALTH

In 1938, Franklin Roosevelt stated, "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself," this statement is as true today as it was then. Agriculture is the leading economic industry in Faribault County leaving soil and soil health a critical resource. Good soil health protects vital natural resources on and off the farm. Healthy soils are high-performing, productive soils that reduce production costs and improve profits, reduce nutrient loading and sediment runoff, increase efficiencies, sustain wildlife habitat, are beneficial to any farm operation by providing soils that hold more water (by binding it to organic matter), and reduce water loss to evaporation and runoff.

Agricultural practices are ever changing. With research and technology, farmers are not operating the same today as they did in the 1970s. Today, there are fewer farms producing higher yields. While advances are being made in seeds, chemicals and equipment, the land that nurtures that seed is weakening.

The worlds' population is projected to increase from 7 billion in 2013 to more than 9 billion in 2050. In order to sustain this level of growth, food production will need to rise by 70 percent. However, urban sprawl is taking land out of production while higher yields are needed. The Dust Bowl of the 1930s sparked conservation efforts, which continue to evolve today. Principles of improving soil health and sustainability are to use plant diversity, manage soils by disturbing them less, keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil, and keep the soil covered as much as possible.

Minnesota lies at the intersection of North America's prairie, eastern broadleaf forest, and boreal forest/peatlands. At the time of the Public Land Survey (1847-1908), Minnesota had 18 million acres of prairie. Today only a little over 1 percent of native prairie remains.

Minnesota has a Prairie Conservation Plan that addresses the protection of grassland and wetland habitat as one of the most critical environmental challenges facing Minnesota. The plan focuses efforts on grassland and wetland, and demonstrates unprecedented cooperation between federal agencies, state agencies and the state's most active conservation organization. The plan identifies core conservation areas and creates a vision of a connected landscape from Canada to Iowa. (8)

8.3.8 POINT SOURCE POLLUTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines point source pollution as "any single identifiable source of pollution from which pollutants are discharged, such as a pipe, ditch, ship or factory smokestack". Factories and sewage treatment plants are two common types of point sources. Factories, including ethanol plants, paper mills and chemical manufacturers, typically discharge one or more pollutants in their discharge

waters (called effluents). Some facilities discharge their effluents directly into a water body. Others treat it themselves before it is released, and still others send their waste to sewage treatment plants for treatment. Sewage treatment plants treat human waste and send the treated effluents to a stream or river.

Unregulated discharge from point sources can result in water pollution and unsafe drinking water, and can restrict activities like fishing and swimming. Some of the chemicals discharged by point sources are harmless, but others are toxic to people and wildlife.

8.3.9 NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION

Clean water is a necessity. People and industries, fish and wildlife, crops and forests, city and country – all need clean water to thrive. Whether we live in urban or rural areas, clean water depends on the thoughtful, informed choices of every individual, when in the house, in the yard, at work, enjoying the outdoors, or being involved in government.

Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS) generally results from land runoff, precipitation, and drainage. The term 'nonpoint source' is defined to mean "any source of water pollution that does meet regulation requirements for a 'point source'" according to Section 502(14) of the Clean Water Act. Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, NPS pollution comes from multiple diffused sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground.

There are a number of NPS pollutants that highly impact the waters of Faribault County. Excess fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides from agricultural and residential applications are high contributors to NPS pollution. Sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop land, and eroding stream banks are all contributing sources to our elevated turbidity. Bacteria and nutrients from feedlots and faulty septic systems are another provider to NPS pollution in Faribault County. Additionally, oil, grease and toxic chemicals from urban runoff are also large contributors.

The key to addressing NPS pollution is to first identify the sources and properly select best management practices in order to reduce our pollutant loadings. (10)

Feedlots

Minnesota's regulatory feedlot program (MN Rules 7020) is conducted through a cooperative arrangement between the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and County Government. This cooperative program is known as "county delegation" or the "county feedlot program," and is established by the transfer of regulatory authority from the MPCA to the county. Faribault County is a delegated county for the feedlot program, and as such has the responsibility of implementing state feedlot regulations including registration, permitting, inspections, education and assistance, and compliant follow up for feedlots less than 1,000 Animal Units (AU). In the State of MN, all feedlots capable of holding 50 AU or greater or 10 AU in shoreland, are required to be permitted.

One of the primary concerns about feedlots in protecting the water quality of our agricultural areas is ensuring that manure on a feedlot or manure storage area does not run into surface or groundwater. For this reason, Faribault County works with producers to ensure that livestock facilities are environmentally safe and that they comply with environmental regulations. (11)

Wastewater

Subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) treat and disperse relatively small volumes of wastewater from individual or small numbers of homes and commercial buildings. Over one-third of Faribault County residents rely on these systems to treat sewage from their household. Proper treatment of wastewater reduces health risks to humans and animals and prevents surface and groundwater contamination. Proper management of these systems is also crucial to ensure that new and existing onsite wastewater treatment systems continue to function properly. If these systems fail, wastewater can pool on ground surfaces or migrate to aquifers or surface waters and cause significant public health or environmental problems.

Within Faribault County, eleven incorporated communities provide wastewater treatment for the remaining two-thirds of the county's population. A list of these communities, type of treatment system, and receiving waters can be found in Table 9-10 the Critical Facilities and Infrastructure Chapter of this plan. These systems are considered point source pollution, as they have distinct discharge points for treated wastewater into surface waters; therefore, the systems are permitted and regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). In addition, two unincorporated communities within the county are currently working toward the implementation of wastewater treatment facilities.

On December 14, 1999, the Faribault County Board of Commissioners passed a plan that would bring all septic systems throughout Faribault County into compliance by the year 2012. This plan, also known as the Faribault County 12 Year Plan, divided up each township uniformly with 2-4 sections per year being requested to upgrade. The plan has encouraged and educated numerous homeowners on the importance and benefits of having a compliant system. (12)

Urban Stormwater

In accordance to the 1996 National Water Quality Inventory, stormwater runoff is a leading source of water pollution. Lakes, rivers, forests and farms all depend on the replenishing of waters from precipitation. However, when rain falls on developed urban areas, or impervious surfaces such as paved streets, parking lots and building rooftops, it can wash away pollutants. This runoff is deposited via storm sewers into nearby lakes, creeks, and rivers. Small amounts of these materials entering a lake or river are not generally considered harmful. But when these small amounts are multiplied by thousands or tens of thousands, they raise serious water quality concerns.

Stormwater runoff can change both water quality and quantity; thus affecting water resources physically, chemically and biologically. Polluted runoff containing oil, grease,

chemicals, nutrients, metals, litter and pathogens for example, severely reduce the quality of water.

When an area is developed, natural drainage patterns are modified as runoff channeled from road gutters to storm sewers where it traditionally combines with multiple other streets and eventually outlets into a water body that naturally conveys water. The amount of rainfall that can infiltrate into the soil is reduced, which increases the volume of runoff, decreasing groundwater recharge from the watershed. These types of drainage modifications increase the velocity of runoff and decrease the time it previously took to go from the outlet to the watershed. The increased volume and velocity of the runoff results in higher peak discharge more quickly following a storm or snow melt event. This causes higher flows, flash flooding, increased erosion and negative effects on habitat in receiving water bodies.

In response to the Clean Water Act, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) administers multiple stormwater management programs. There are three different categories for stormwater management; municipal separated storm sewer permits, industrial stormwater (MS4) permits and construction stormwater permits. Since Faribault County does not have a municipality with a population high enough to require an NPDES permit or SWPPP plan, obtaining construction permits or any other federal, state and local permits is the responsibility of the landowner. (13)

Nitrates

Excessive nutrient levels pose a substantial threat to Minnesota's lakes and rivers, as well as downstream waters. A number of federal, regional and state initiatives drive the need for a statewide nutrient reduction strategy in Minnesota. Elevated nitrate levels can be harmful to fish and aquatic life, human consumption and recreation.

Although the numbers continue to change, it is currently anticipated that more than 70 percent of the nitrate in Minnesota's waters is coming from cropland. The remaining 30 percent is coming from wastewater treatment plants, non-compliant septic systems, urban runoff, and the atmosphere. Nitrates leaching into groundwater below cropped fields, and moving underground until it reaches streams, contributes an estimated 30 percent of nitrates to surface waters. Accelerated or tile drainage is the highest estimated cropland source pathway. The amount of nitrates reaching surface waters from cropland varies tremendously, depending on the type of crops, tile drainage practices, cropland management, soils, climate, geology and other factors.

We must keep in mind that nitrogen is essential for all living plants and animals and it is one of the most widely distributed elements in nature. Nitrate, a form of nitrogen, is commonly found in ground and surface waters throughout the country. Human activities can increase nitrate levels in lakes, streams and groundwater. Typically, nitrate levels are quite low in undisturbed landscapes.

Due to the landscape and high percentage of crop land, it is believed that a large amount of the nitrate load is perhaps coming from the abundant amount of existing and ongoing tile drainage. The Blue Earth and Le Sueur River Watersheds are considered as being two of the three highest nitrate yielding watersheds in the state. (14)

Total Suspended Solids

Total Suspended Solids is a water quality measurement usually abbreviated as TSS. TSS are solids in water that can be trapped by a filter and can include a wide variety of material, such as silt, decaying plant material, animal matter, industrial waste and sewage. High concentrations of suspended solids can cause many problems for stream health and aquatic life. The main source of TSS is flash flooding and peak flow discharge.

High TSS can block light from reaching submerged vegetation. As the amount of light passing through water is reduced, photosynthesis slows down. Reduced rates of photosynthesis causes less dissolved oxygen to be released into the water by plants.

The decrease in water clarity caused by TSS can affect the ability of fish to see and catch food. Suspended sediment can also clog fish gills, reduce growth rates, decrease resistance to disease, and prevent egg and larval development. When suspended solids settle to the bottom of a water body, it can smoother the eggs of aquatic life and suffocate newly hatched insect larvae. Settling sediment can fill in space between rocks which provide habitat.

High TSS rates in a water body can often mean higher concentrations of bacteria, nutrients, pesticides and metals in the water. These pollutants may attach to sediment particles on the land and be carried into water bodies with stormwater. In the water, the pollutants may be released from the sediment and travel farther downstream. (1)

8.3.10 IMPAIRED WATERS

Pollution from various sources has caused the majority of Faribault County's waterways to be classified as impaired by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Most runoff in our rural areas and all urban runoff is considered non-point. These pollutants enter the waterways and have detrimental effects on aquatic ecosystems.

The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to adopt water quality standards to protect lakes, streams and wetlands from becoming polluted. These standards define how much of a specific pollutant (bacteria, nutrients, turbidity, mercury, etc.) can appear in the water and still meet standards for its designated uses (drinking, fishing, swimming, irrigation, and consumption of aquatic life). A water body becomes 'impaired' if it fails to meet one or more water quality parameters for its designated use.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is responsible for enforcing and monitoring all CWA activities. Every two years, the CWA requires states to publish an

updated list of rivers, streams and lakes that are not meeting their designated thresholds due to excess pollutants.

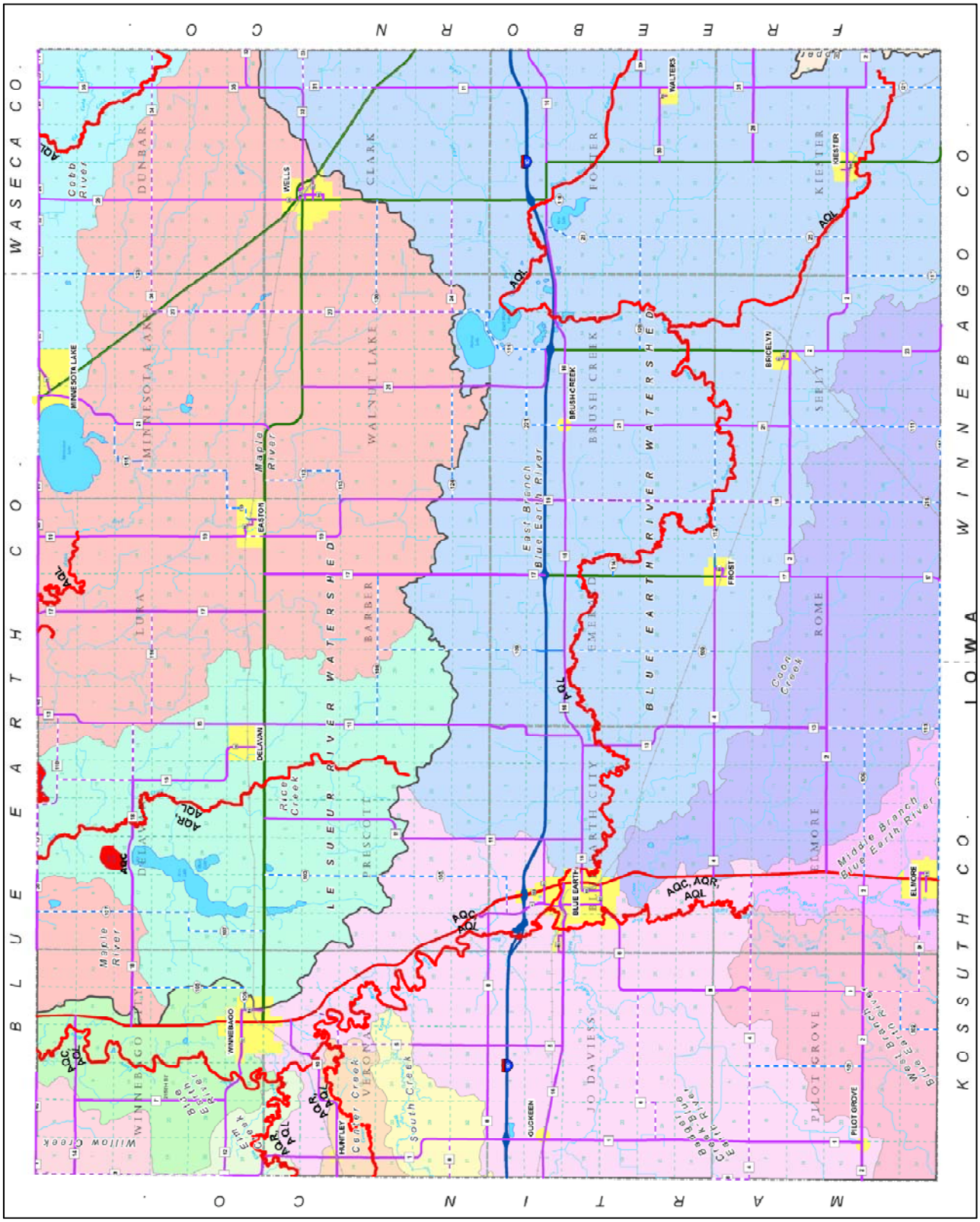
The MPCA is responsible for identifying and restoring impaired waters, in accordance to Section 303(d) of the CWA. Every even numbered year the MPCA releases an updated list and designates specific priority waters for Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies. A TMDL is specific to each water body based on the maximum amount of a specific substance that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standards. The TMDL also helps to set limits and reduction goals for restoring impaired waters to meet standards. A TMDL study identifies both point and non-point sources of each pollutant that fails to meet water quality standards. Rivers and streams may have several TMDL's, each one determining the limit for a different pollutant. (15)

Table 8-6: MPCA Impaired Waterways, 2009 (1)

Rivers	Streams	Lakes
Blue Earth	Brush Creek	Bass Lake
Blue Earth River, East Branch	Center Creek	Lura Lake
Cobb River	Elm Creek	
Maple River	Rice Creek	

Figure 8-3 on the following page is a map of the impaired reaches in Faribault County according to the 2012 Impaired Waters Map.

Figure 8-3: Impaired Waters Map (2012) (15)

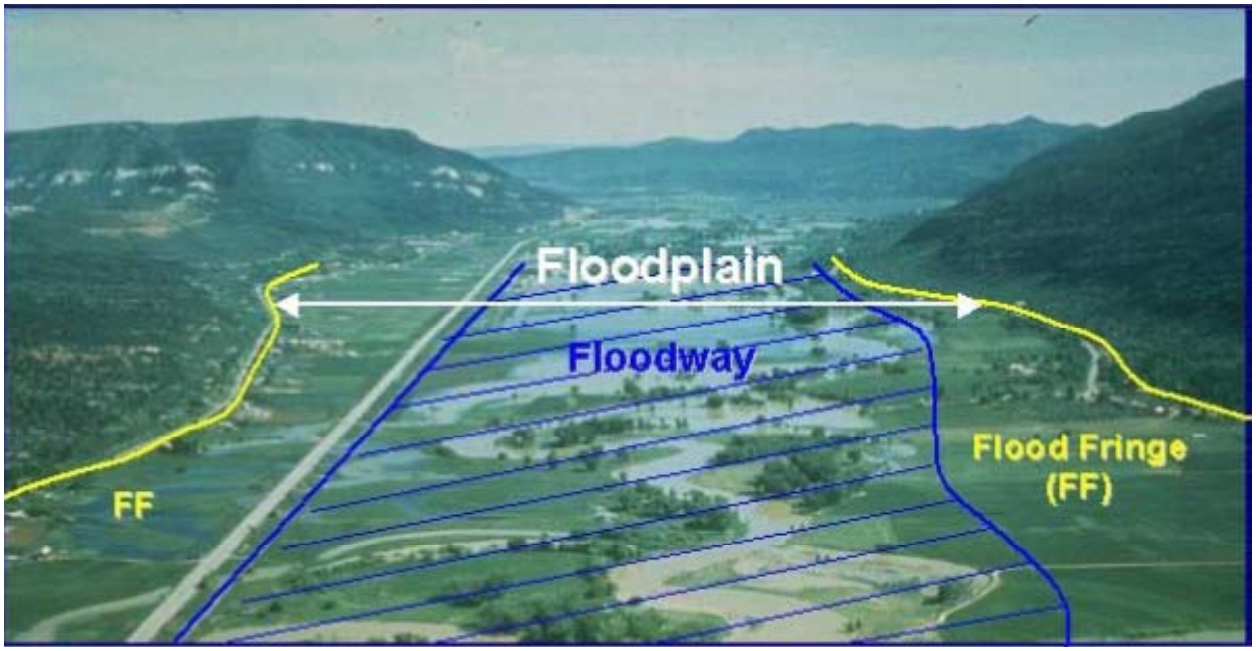


8.3.11 FLOODPLAINS, FLOODWAY, AND FLOOD FRINGE

Floodplains are lowland areas susceptible to flooding that are adjacent to rivers, streams, and lakes. In flat areas, the floodplain can extend more than a mile from the flooding source. The regulatory floodplain is the area covered by a flood that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year, often referred to as the 100-year flood. There are two components of the floodplain; floodway and flood fringe (see Figure 8-4 for an illustration). Floodway is the river channel and the areas immediately adjacent to the channel which are required to pass 100 year floodwaters without increasing the water surface elevation 6" more than the designated height. The floodway is the area that experiences the deepest water and the highest flow velocities. Because of this, cities and counties within these unique areas are required to have an adopted Floodplain Ordinance. Most structures are not allowed within this district (including principal or accessory structures for residential, commercial or industrial purposes) due to increased flood damage potential. Those uses that are allowed, such as fill or accessory structures for open space uses, require special attention prior to being proposed to ensure that the proposed use will not cause an increase to the 100-year flood elevation by encroachment.

Flood fringe is the part of the floodplain outside of the floodway. The flood fringe is primarily a flood water storage area, so fill and elevated structures can be placed in this area. Depths and velocities of floodwater in flood fringe areas are generally lower than in the floodway. Most development activities are allowed in the flood fringe as long as structures are elevated above the regulatory flood protection elevation and if it can be demonstrated through a hydraulic study that the fill will not increase or change the floodplain boundaries. (16)

Figure 8-4: Illustration of a Floodplain (16)



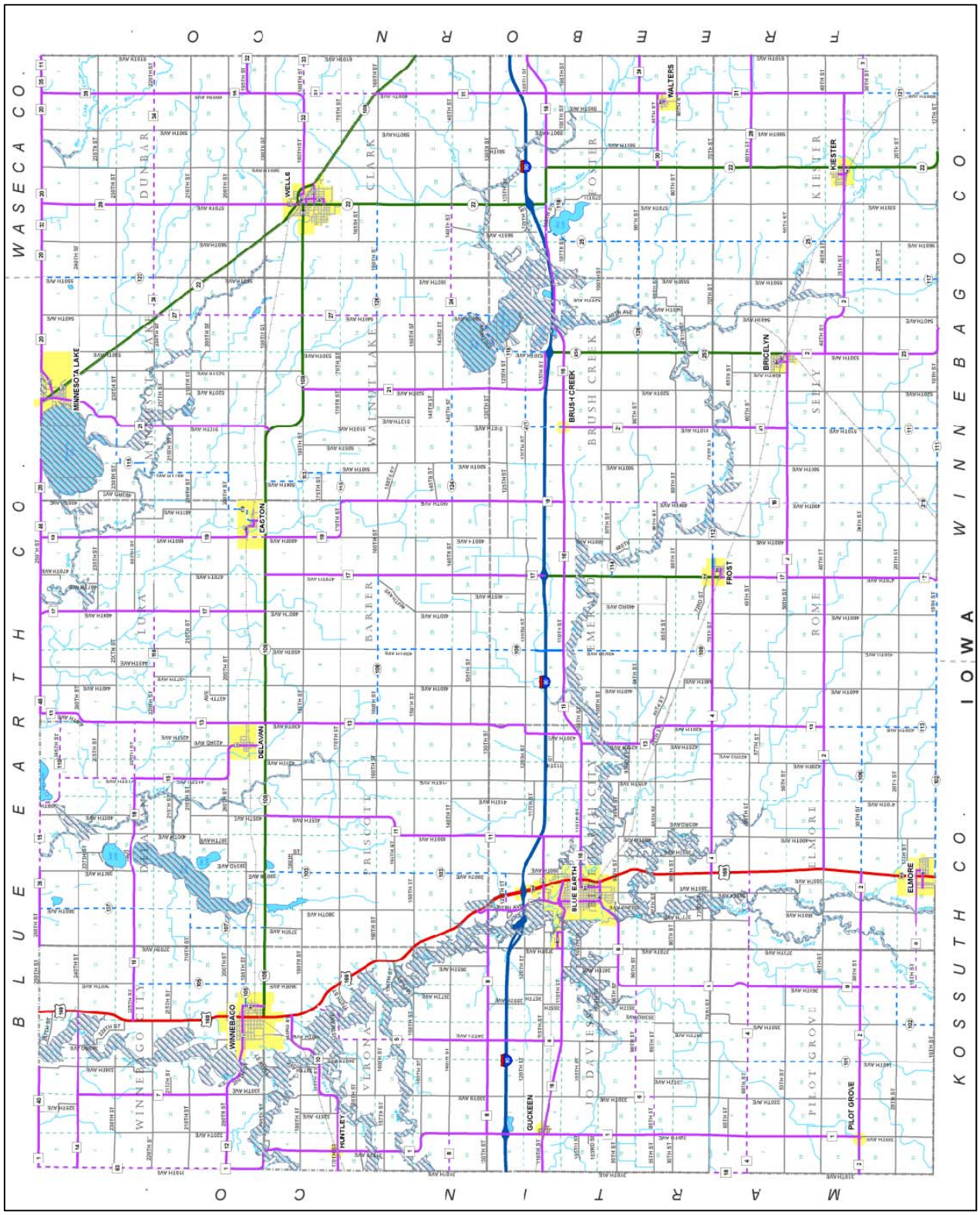
Designation of Floodway and Flood Fringe

Floodway and flood fringe areas are designated only after a detailed hydraulic study has been performed and a 100-year flood elevation has been determined. Due to the cost of these hydraulic studies, some floodplain areas are mapped as general floodplains. The general floodplain is also called an approximate study area or Unnumbered A Zone. Due to this lack of 100-year flood elevations and floodway/flood fringe determinations in a general floodplain area, it is the property owner's responsibility to pay for this hydraulic analysis before the community can authorize any development.

The related floodway, flood fringe and general floodplain areas are delineated on maps called Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) published by the National Flood Insurance Program. The related floodway, flood fringe and general floodplain are portrayed as shaded areas on the FIRM maps. Figure 8-6 shows a general floodplain map of Faribault County. The best way to find out if a home or property is located in the floodplain is by visiting the Faribault County SWCD or your city office. The county currently has floodplain ordinance that is considered “restrictive”. A revision of this is planned in the future.

The natural floodplain is an important part of Faribault County’s water system. It affects storm runoff, water quality, vegetative diversity, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic qualities of our rivers and lakes. Any alteration of the floodplain should be carefully evaluated. The least amount of alteration to the natural system is usually the most ecologically sound development decision. (16)

Figure 8-5 Floodplain Map



8.3.12 SHORELAND

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulates and enforces shoreland rules. However, each local government is responsible for administration and enforcement of its shoreland management controls adopted in compliance with standards and criteria set forth by the DNR. Shoreland means "land located within the following distances from public water: 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water level of a lake, pond, or flowage; and 300 feet from a river or stream, or the landward extent of a flood plain designated by ordinance on a river or stream, whichever is greater".

Various programs and practices have been implemented to help retain the vital shoreland that remains, and to protect and restore shorelands that have been destroyed or may be disturbed by development and other human actions. Currently, in Faribault County there are 4 categories of lakes, or basins, and 2 classifications for our streams. (17)

Preservation

There are lakes within Faribault County that are appropriate for preservation. These lakes do not currently have any development or infrastructure in place to support development. These lakes are listed in Table 8-7. Any proposed future developments around these lakes should be prohibited in order to preserve their unique ecological characteristics.

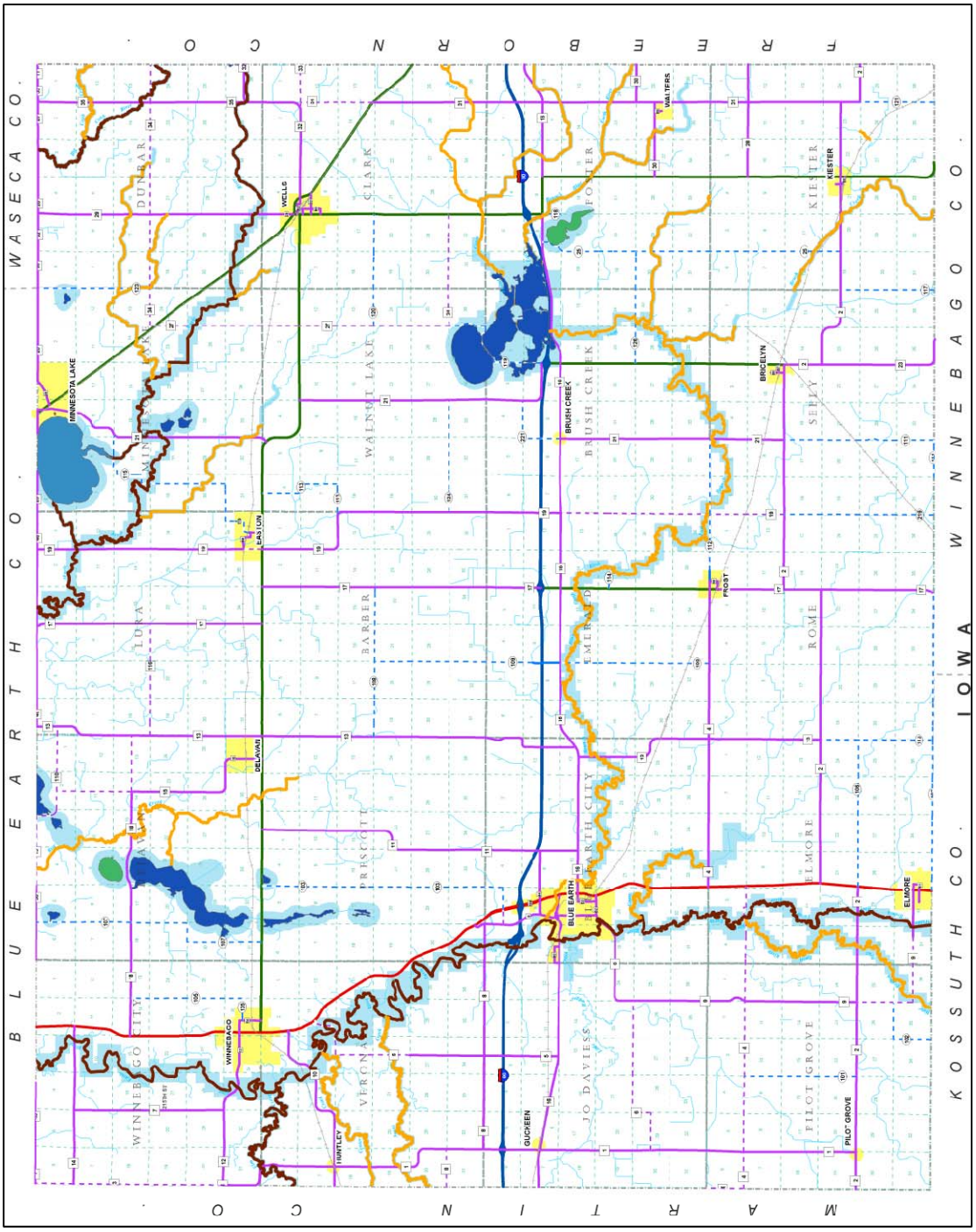
The DNR's Shoreland Management Program provides the backbone for statewide standards. Faribault County has adopted these standards to provide land use controls to provide for orderly development and protection of our shorelands. DNR Area Hydrologists and Shoreland Management staff provide assistance and guidance to local staff in shoreland enforcement. When working in shoreland areas, a permit is generally required. Due to the large variety of lakes in Minnesota, the DNR has classifications for lakes based on size and development.

8.3.13 CLASSES OF PUBLIC WATERS

Table 8-7: DNR's Lake Classification (17)

Type	Acres	Dwellings	Depth
Natural Environmental Lake Goose, Krause Slough, Lura, Olson's Slough, Walnut, Stockman Marsh and several unnamed basins.	Less than 150 total Acres, less than 60 acres per mile of shoreline	Less than 3 per mile of shoreline	They may have some winter kill of fish; may have shallow, swampy shoreline; and are less than 15 feet deep
Recreational Development Lake Minnesota Lake	60-225 acres per mile of shoreline	3-25 dwellings per mile of shoreline	More than 15 feet deep
General Development Lake Bass Lake, Rice Lake	More than 225 acres per mile of shoreline	25 dwellings per mile of shoreline	More than 15 feet deep

Figure 8-6 Shoreland Map



As defined by the DNR, the classes of public waters are natural environment lakes, recreational development lakes, and general development lakes.

- **Natural Environment Lakes** include Goose (22001500), Krause Slough (22007200), Lura (07007900), Olson's Slough (22002700), Penny (24004800), Rice (22007500), South Walnut (22002200), Walnut (22002300), Stockman Marsh (07000500), Unnamed (22001800), (2200300), (22003100), (22006400), (22006500), (22006900), (22007100), (22009200).
  They are generally small, often shallow lakes with limited capacities for assimilating the impacts of development and recreational use. They often have adjacent lands with substantial constraints for development such as high water tables, exposed bedrock, and unsuitable soils. These lakes, particularly in rural areas, usually do not have much existing development or recreational use.

- **Recreational Development Lakes** include Minnesota Lake (22003300).
  They are generally medium-sized lakes of varying depths and shapes with a variety of landform, soil, and groundwater situations on the lands around them. They often are characterized by moderate levels of recreational use and existing development. Development consists mainly of seasonal and year-round residences and recreationally-oriented commercial uses. Many of these lakes have capacities for accommodating additional development and use.

- **General Development Lakes** include Bass Lake (22007400), and Rice Lake (2200700).
  They are generally large, deep lakes or lakes of varying sizes and depths with high levels and mixes of existing development. These lakes often are extensively used for recreation and, except for the very large lakes, are heavily developed around the shore. Second and third tiers of development are fairly common. The larger examples in this class can accommodate additional development and use. Over the years, Bass Lake has experienced the most changes. Seasonal cabins have been replaced or converted to single family dwellings, limiting the land area available for future development. (1)

8.3.14 RIVERS/STREAMS

Table 8-8: DNR's Stream Classification (17)

River	Section	From Twp	Range	Section	To Twp	Range	Shoreland Classification
Blue Earth River	32	101	27	3	104	28	Agricultural
W. Fk. Blue Earth River	35	101	28	8	101	27	Tributary
Coon Creek	33	102	27	29	102	27	Tributary
South Creek	30	103	28	23	103	28	Tributary
Center Creek	19	103	28	10	103	28	Tributary
Elm Creek	6	103	28	4	103	28	Agricultural
Rice Creek (RC)	2	103	27	4	104	27	Tributary
Unnamed to RC	21 (Rice Lk)	104	27	22	104	27	Tributary
Maple River (MR)	36	104	24	3	104	26	Agricultural
Unnamed to MR	6	103	24	36	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to MR	20	104	24	22	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to Unnamed	15	104	24	13	104	25	Tributary
Unnamed to MR	16	104	25	12	104	26	Agricultural
Unnamed to MR	33	104	25	13	104	26	Tributary
N. Br. E. Fk. Blue Earth River (NBEFBER)	24	102	24	8	102	27	Tributary
S. Br. E. Fk. Blue Earth River	2	101	25	26	102	25	Tributary
Unnamed to NBEFBER	26	102	24	22	102	24	Tributary
Foster Creek (FC)	25	103	24	33	103	24	Tributary
Unnamed to FC	12	102	24	33	103	24	Tributary
Unnamed to South Walnut Lake	35 (Walnut Lk)	103 23)	25	2 (S Walnut Lk) 22)	102	25	Tributary
Unnamed to EFBER	33	102	24	25	102	25	Tributary
Brush Creek	33	101	24	18	101	24	Tributary
Big Cobb River	24	104	24	3	104	24	Agricultural
Cobb Creek	12	104	24	11	104	24	Tributary

As defined by the DNR, the six classes of public waters are **remote river segments, forested river segments, transition river segments, agricultural river segments, urban river segments, and tributary river segments.** All of the river classes except tributary consist of watercourses that have been identified as being recreationally

significant on a statewide basis. The tributary class consists of all other watercourses identified in the protected waters inventory.

In Faribault County, only two types of River Segments exist:

- **Agricultural River Segments** are located in well-roaded, intensively cultivated areas of the western and southern regions of the state. Cultivated crops are the predominant land use, with some pasture and occasional feedlots, small municipalities, and small forested areas. Residential development is not common, but some year-round residential use is occurring within commuting distances of major communities. Some intensive recreational use occurs on these river segments in particular areas, but overall recreational use of these waters and adjacent lands is low. Although potential exists for additional development and recreation, water quality constraints and competing land uses, particularly agriculture, will inhibit expansions. (18)

- **Tributary River Segments** consist of watercourses mapped in the Protected Waters Inventory that have not been assigned one of the river classes in items D to H. These segments have a wide variety of existing land and recreational use characteristics. The segments have considerable potential for additional development and recreational use, particularly those located near roads and communities. (18)

8.3.15 BUFFERS

Buffers, or grass filter strips, are planted strategically between fields and surface waters (rivers, streams, lakes and drainage ditches) to protect water quality. They slow runoff from fields, trapping and filtering sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other potential pollutants before they reach surface waters. They can also be planted around drainage tile inlets for the same purpose.

Grass filter strips are especially important in Minnesota, which has more surface water than any of the 48 contiguous states. Grass filter strips can also help protect groundwater when planted around sinkholes (common in the karst regions of southeastern Minnesota) or in wellhead protection areas.

Grass filter strips in Minnesota typically range from 20 to 120 feet wide, depending on site characteristics, landowner goals, applicable regulations and voluntary conservation program requirements. Wider filter strips provide greater wildlife habitat benefits. Ongoing management of grass filter strips is needed to maintain the health of the vegetation and to repair rills running through the strip or channels that may develop along the edges.

Grass filter strips are useful in meeting Minnesota laws regarding vegetative buffers along streams and drainage ditches in agricultural areas. Minnesota drainage laws require a

minimum 16.5 foot (1 rod) buffer strip along public drainage ditches. (Individual counties may require a wider buffer.) Minnesota shoreland management rules require a minimum 50-foot wide buffer on agricultural land in shoreland areas adjacent to designated public waters. (Shoreland areas include land within 1,000 feet of lakes or 300 feet of perennial rivers and streams)

Grass filter strips are also useful in meeting manure application setback requirements in the Minnesota feedlot rules and Minnesota Department of Agriculture best management practice recommendations for herbicide and pesticide use. (19)

8.4 CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

8.4.1 CLIMATE

According to the Minnesota State Climatology Office and Dr. Mark Seeley, there are three recent and significant climate trends in Minnesota; the increase in average temperature, the increase in the average number of days with a high dew point, and the quality and character of precipitation is changing.

8.4.2 AIR QUALITY

As the understanding of air pollution continues to evolve, new methods of environmental protection must be explored. It is increasingly obvious that it is not enough to control single pollutants from individual sources. There is a growing recognition of the need to reduce air pollution emissions from scattered, less regulated sources such as transportation and residential burning. (9)

8.4.3 GROUNDWATER

Currently groundwater conditions in Faribault County, as a whole, are in better condition than other areas of the state. Due to the soil types and bedrock geology that cover the majority of the county, groundwater is not as susceptible to nitrates and other contaminants. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) regulates well sealing and well drilling programs and shares this data with the Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District. (1) In addition, the DNR requires a water use permit for all users withdrawing more than 10,000 gallons of water per day or 1 million gallons per year

8.4.4 WATERSHEDS

Faribault County has 3 major watersheds. The Blue Earth, LeSueur, and a tine portion of the Winnebago. Currently the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and many other agencies are conducting studies throughout the watersheds. It is very difficult to keep track of the many ongoing studies, reports, and assessments. However, the county staff continues to be involved in various groups, training, input sessions and others to stay informed and be a spokesperson to ensure that the beliefs and values of the residents of the county are always being considered.

The Blue Earth River Watershed also has ongoing studies that will lead into the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) which will begin in 2016. Currently discussions are being held to determine potential opportunities for the Blue Earth Watershed.

In the LeSueur River Watershed, a LeSueur River Monitoring and Assessment Report was completed in March 2012. An Integrated Sediment Budget final report came out in June 2011, all leading in a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study. In 2010, the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) began. (15)

Due to the size of the Winnebago Watershed in Faribault County, little information is known.

8.4.5 SOIL HEALTH

The health of the soil in Faribault County varies greatly, depending on type and use. In general, the main concern for the soil is keeping it in place and educating our landowners on the importance of striking a balance between production and soil-friendly techniques. Soil is an ecosystem that can be managed to provide nutrients for plant growth absorption and holding rainwater for use during dryer periods, filter and buffer potential pollutants from leaving our fields, serve as a firm foundation for agricultural activities, and provide habitat for soil microbes to flourish and diversify to keep the ecosystem running smoothly.

8.4.6 POINT SOURCE POLLUTION

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) regulates and monitors all point source permits. There are no facilities or businesses in Faribault County that currently hold a point source pollution permit on file with the MPCA. (9)

8.4.7 NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION

Pollution from nonpoint sources, such as storm sewers, failing septic systems, runoff from construction sites, animal feedlots, paved surfaces, and lawns, contribute large amounts of phosphorus, bacteria, sediment, nitrates, and other pollutants to our lakes and streams. Nonpoint sources represent the largest combined threat (an estimated 86%) of the state's water pollution.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) monitors and regulates a variety of activities that contribute to nonpoint source pollution. NSP pollution is extremely hard to regulate, while at the same time, it is currently the biggest contributor to pollutant loads entering our local water bodies resulting in impairments.

Faribault County residents understand they live in a landscape dominated by agriculture and small urban communities and our residents cherish hunting and related recreational opportunities. We must continue to support programs made available to landowners and homeowners that promote conservation, and generally support funding these opportunities. Faribault County must continue to pursue funding through available

private, state, and federal sources to identify problems, target areas, and to implement necessary rural and urban best management practices.

8.4.8 NITRATES

The current "Nitrogen in Surface Waters" study indicates that there are elevated levels of nitrates in the waters located in southern Minnesota. The comprehensive study was conducted to better understand the effect nitrates are having in Minnesota's surface waters and to identify the nitrate sources and potential reduction strategies. The study shows that a primary source of the nitrates (70 percent) is cropland agriculture. Concern about nitrate has grown in recent years because studies show that nitrate in surface water is toxic to fish and the aquatic life food chain and nitrate in drinking water is potentially harmful to humans. (14)

Because much of our landscape is currently in row crop production and system tiled, in order to make progress in reducing nitrate from agricultural lands, farmers are encouraged to better optimize their use of fertilizers. Nitrogen fertilizer efficiency has improved during the past two decades. Further refinements in fertilizer rates and application timing can be expected to reduce nitrogen loads by roughly 13 percent statewide, according to the study. Additional and potentially more costly practices are also needed to achieve the overall statewide nitrate-reduction goal of 45 percent or more to meet downstream needs.
The county will continue to be involved in the ongoing monitoring and studies that are taking place. In addition, the county will continue to work with our landowners and residents to address the nitrate reduction needs.

8.4.9 FLOODPLAIN

Floodplain management regulations are administered by the local Planning and Zoning department through the local Floodplain Ordinance. Faribault County has a FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that shows flood-prone areas throughout the county.

The current ordinance is considered a "restrictive" ordinance by definition, and restricts many activities being allowed within the floodplain areas. Faribault County currently does not allow for new structures to be built in these areas.

8.4.10 SHORELANDS

Faribault County has miles of shoreland. This zone is anything within 1,000 feet of a lake, or 300' of a river and is regulated through the shoreland section of the Zoning Ordinance, and the DNR. The current shoreland ordinance is outdated. And will be revised as part of the ordinance update. Minnesota Rules 6120.2500-3900 provides the backbone of statewide standards that the county must adopt to provide for the orderly development and protection of our rivers and lakes. The DNR provides technical assistance in the adoption and administration of their shoreland regulations.

8.4.11 BUFFERS

Grass filter strips, or vegetation buffers are strips of land with permanent vegetation designed to intercept urban stormwater and rural runoff, minimize soil erosion, provide

wildlife habitat, and help to stabilize stream banks. Buffers can reduce the amount of sediment and pollutants carried by runoff to our nearby lakes, wetlands, or streams.

Once established, buffers are a low maintenance water quality best management practice. Buffers help to protect surface water quality by trapping and filtering sediment, nutrients, pesticides and pathogens in agricultural runoff. They create food and cover for wildlife, may stabilize eroding banks, and may reduce downstream flooding.

Currently, the county is implementing a Redetermination of Benefits process on all county ditches. Once a ditch has gone through this process, a mandatory 16.5 foot buffer must be installed. Once established, it is expected that buffers will lower expenses for drainage ditch maintenance, reduce flood damage to adjacent cropland, and will keep farm machinery away from the banks to help minimize bank erosion.

Buffer installation can be financially aided by a number of programs such as: enrolling these strips of land into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Reinvest in Minnesota Program (RIM), and potentially including installing additional riparian area practices such as: alternative tile intakes, side inlet structures, and others that aide in the reduction of sediment loading. (19)

8.5 FUTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

8.5.1 CLIMATE

According to a 2013 Adapting to Climate Change in Minnesota report by the Interagency Climate Adaption Team, climate change is already occurring in Minnesota and is affecting our state's environmental, economic and social systems. Minnesota state government is concerned about the impacts of changing climate on our natural resources, economy, health, and quality of life, and is taking action to address these emerging challenges.

8.5.2 AIR QUALITY

According to a 2015 Air Quality in Minnesota a Report to the Legislature, the overall air quality in Minnesota has improved over the past 20 years, but current levels of air pollution still contribute to health impacts. The economic costs of health effects associated with exposure to current level of air pollution in Minnesota may exceed $30 billion every year. The report states a variety of options on how to improve air quality.

8.5.3 GROUNDWATER PROTECTION

The protection of the county's groundwater resources continues to be a top priority for the county. Partnerships through the Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) will be utilized to identify, manage and enforce groundwater management and enforcement efforts. All communities in Faribault County have worked with MDH on obtaining Wellhead Protection Plans. Throughout the rural areas, the county will continue to enforce BMP's that provide

groundwater protection. A water use permit from the DNR is required for all users withdrawing more than 10,000 gallons of water per day or 1 million gallons per year

8.5.4 WATERSHEDS

As the movement towards watershed management continues within the state, the County will continue its work with Local Units of Government (LGU's), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and their Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) on their conservation efforts and funding policies, and other groups and agencies in regard to watershed protection.

8.5.5 SOIL HEALTH

Faribault County will accelerate educational opportunities and expand upon implementation efforts in regard to Soil Health with our landowners and homeowners. As it takes generations to repair our soil, once it is no longer capable of sustaining our agricultural needs, it will be too late.

8.5.6 POINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT

The county will maintain a partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) point source staff in regard to new permits and regulations.

8.5.7 NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT

Because of the current status of our public waters, the county needs to continue working with the Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), along with other groups and agencies to identify, manage, and reduce runoff to these precious resources.

8.5.8 NITRATES

With Minnesota being the sixth highest contributor of nitrogen loads to the Gulf of Mexico, and with the ongoing efforts of state and federal agencies evaluating the effect nitrate has on aquatic life, it is important to stay involved. The county will need to be actively involved and updated on what is being included in studies, strategies, and efforts being discussed.

8.5.9 FLOODPLAIN

Floodplains were identified based on flooding potential, hydrology, and distance from lakes, rivers, and streams. With increased drainage, these areas will continue to be challenged, and will need to be targeted for potential storage areas. In addition, it will be important for these areas to be protected from structures, or alterations that could result in these areas not functioning naturally. This could be accomplished through the Floodplain Ordinance.

8.5.10 SHORELAND

Because of state statutes and rules, shoreland areas throughout the county will continue to be regulated and enforced through the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Zoning Ordinance. These areas are sensitive and need to be protected.

8.5.11 BUFFERS

Buffers are an important BMP to sustain banks and filter runoff. Efforts will continue to implement where needed.

8.5.12 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, CONSERVATION, AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practices that are capable of protecting the environment all while considering economic factors, availability, technical feasibility, and effectiveness. The implementation of BMPs is the key to providing a sustainable environment.

There are many categories of BMPs and many of the practices can be used in multiple categories. Some of the more popular BMPs utilized in Faribault County include:

- Composting - the controlled aerobic decomposition of raw organic material;
- Conservation Crop Rotation - a system for growing several different crops in planned succession on the same field;
- Conservation Drainage - refers to several emerging technologies and methods that provide the benefits of conventional agricultural drainage;
- Conservation Planning - involves assessing a farm's natural resource challenges and opportunities and identifying appropriate actions and BMPs efforts;
- Conservation Tillage - any method of soil cultivation that leaves the previous year's crop residue on fields;
- Contour Buffer Strips - permanent, narrow bands of grasses/legumes planted on the contour;
- Controlled Burning - the intentional periodic use of fire to manage perennial vegetation;
- Cover Crops - grasses, legumes, forbs or other herbaceous plants that provide seasonal cover on cropland;
- Feedlot Runoff Control Systems - integrated structures and practices for collecting, storing and treating livestock manure and feed wastes;
- Feedlot/Wastewater Filter Strips - areas of grassy vegetation engineered to receive and treat feedlot wastewater;
- Grass Planting - establishing or restoring permanent, perennial conservation cover consisting of native or non-native grass mixes;
- Grass Waterway - a type of conservation buffer, designed to prevent soil erosion while draining runoff water from adjacent cropland;
- Gully/Grade Stabilization - an embankment or spillway built across a drainage way to prevent soil erosion;
- Invasive Species Management - specialized weed management strategies to suppress invasive plant species;
- Manure/Ag Waste Storage - pit, lagoon or above-ground structure that safely holds manure or other ag waste;
- Manure Management - planning ensures careful handling and use of livestock manure to obtain its full value as a crop nutrient;

- Nutrient Management - using crop nutrients as efficiently as possible to improve productivity while protecting the environment;
- Pest Management - in agriculture involves the safe and environmentally sound use of pesticides to control crop pests;
- Streambank & Lakeshore Protection - using vegetation or materials such as riprap or gabions to stabilize stream, river;
- Terraces - earthen embankments, ridges or ridge-and-channels built across a slope to intercept runoff water and reduce soil erosion;
- Tree/Shrub Planting - for conservation purposes is establishing perennial woody plants for reforestation, habitat restoration;
- Well Sealing - permanently closing a well that is no longer used or is deemed unsafe;
- Wetland Restoration - reestablishes or repairs the hydrology, plants and soils of a former or degraded wetland;
- Wetlands, Constructed - are man-made systems engineered to approximate the water-cleansing process of natural wetlands;
- Wind Erosion Control - practices reduce soil erosion by slowing wind speed, which prevents soil particles from detaching and becoming airborne;
- Windbreak, Field - linear plantings of trees/shrubs designed to reduce wind speed in open fields;
- Windbreak, Living Snow Fences - trees/shrubs planted strategically along roads to trap snow and keep it from blowing and drifting;
- Windbreak, Shelterbelt - windbreaks designed to protect farmsteads and livestock from wind and blowing snow;
- Bioretention - shallow depression designed to temporarily store and infiltrate runoff; and
- Pervious Pavements - pavements that allow water to infiltrate and provide groundwater recharge. (20)

8.6 SUMMARY

Due to the demographics, economy, and industry in Faribault County, it is imperative that measures are taken to preserve and protect the environment in the most economically feasible and environmentally beneficial way possible. With very little undisturbed natural areas remaining, restoration efforts must continue to be promoted and implemented. It is not realistic to think that the county will ever look like it did in the past with historic prairies and wetlands.

The Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Services Agency, and other environmental organizations, will continue to work toward educating landowners on the importance of environmental protection and conservation. It is critical that continued efforts be made by the public and our elected officials to understand why specific areas need to remain as they are today, and other areas will need to be restored or made to react differently. We have changed the landscape in many ways over the past decades, so it is realistic to understand that in order to put it back, it may take several decades.

As new environmental concerns arise, the county will need to address them with policies and procedures that protect our current, and future generations.

Agriculture has dominated the lands since the settlers first arrived in Faribault County and started tilling up the prairie for crops. Posing some unforeseen disaster, agriculture will continue to be the economic leader in the county. Given the fact that nonpoint source pollution is such a large contributor to pollutants in the surface waters of Faribault County. Education and conservation efforts must continue in regard to both agricultural and urban settings for future generations to enjoy.

8.7 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Faribault County will need to stay consistent with State regulations, and make appropriate modifications to their permits and ordinances.

- Floodplain
- Shoreland and Shoreland Preservation Areas
- Special Protection Districts
- Feedlots
- Septics

Groundwater Resource Protection and Implementation

- Continue observation well monitoring;
- Continue to offer well sealing aid to landowners;
- Continue inventory well sealing and drilling records;
- Continue to pursue and provide financial incentives to landowners and homeowners;
- Address above ground storage tanks in accordance with Minnesota State Fire Code;
- Enforce regulation, if necessary, to protect groundwater through the DNR waters appropriations permit process.

Watershed Planning and Implementation

- New Water Plan that aligns with BWSR's One Watershed One Plan process;
- Continuation of the South Central Drainage Group;
- Involvement with watershed management development.

Education efforts

- Soil Health
  - Utilize existing materials for education of landowners.
- Groundwater concerns;
- Nitrates;
  - Buffers
- Environmental concerns.

Prairie Conservation Plan

- Protection
  - Maintain habitat through conservation easements on private land or acquisition of public land.
- Restoration
  - Grassland and wetland reconstruction to contribute to functional systems and viable species populations.
- Enhancement
  - Activities that improve habitats and functionality of a grassland or wetland (prescribed burning, conservation grazing/haying, control of invasive species). (8)

Surface Water Concerns

- Utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to inventory sub-watersheds and target areas for best management practices and water retention;
- Continue to support the MPCA's Citizen Stream Monitoring Program (CSMP) and Citizen Lake Monitoring Program (CLMP) to expand monitoring efforts within Faribault County;
- Utilize LeSueur River Watershed TMDL Study results and implementation strategies;
- Utilize Blue Earth River Watershed TMDL Study results and implementation strategies;
- Utilize MPCA's Nitrate Strategies resulting from the Nitrates Surface Water Study; and
- Update ordinances that have direct effects on Nonpoint source issues.

Nitrates

- Updating ordinances in accordance with updated State Statues;
- Seek funding for the implementation of Best Management Practices;
- Continue to establish the one rod (16.5') buffer on county ditches as required;
- Consider setting and enforcing existing buffer policies based on the waterbody's classification.

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9. CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Few things are more important to the health and vitality of Faribault County than its stock of critical facilities and infrastructure. These components of the so-called built environment are at the center of social and economic life in the county. They include everything from must haves of wastewater treatment plants and electrical transmission lines, to beneficial facilities of health care and education.

Critical Facilities are described as: a structure or other improvement that, because of its function, size, service area, or uniqueness, has the potential to cause serious bodily harm, extensive property damage, or description of vital socio-economical activities if it is destroyed or damaged or if its functionality is impaired. Critical facilities include health and safety facilities, utilities, government facilities and hazardous material facilities. Due to safety concerns, there are critical facilities that are not public information at this time.(5)

What is meant by essential services depends to a large extent on the particular circumstances prevailing in a county. Moreover, this concept is not absolute, in the sense that a non-essential service may become essential if a circumstance lasts beyond a certain time or extends beyond a certain scope, thus endangering the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population. (6) In regard to zoning, essential services are either minor or major. Minor essential services are defined as any new lines or replacement lines (both above and below ground) that directly service individuals. Major essential services are defined as any new lines or replacement lines (both above and below ground) that do not directly service any individuals in route.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Faribault County is home to a vast array of critical facilities and physical infrastructure, which must be adequately maintained for the benefit of the county's residents and businesses. It is vitally important that these facilities are properly maintained, staffed, and in some cases, secured against potential threats. These facilities and infrastructure support the standard of living that residents have grown accustomed to. While some may simply be maintained, others must continually be upgraded to keep up with technology and change.

The majority of the information utilized to complete this section was obtained from the Faribault County Sherriff's Department and GIS data that the county has established. (1) (2)

9.2 CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES SNAPSHOT

- Quality school districts
- Access to quality health care and assisted living services
- Mutual Aid Agreements and declining volunteers for emergency response pose geographic difficulties and increased response times
- Telecommunication capabilities

- Major highway thoroughfares
- Costly upgrades pose threats to the already aging and out dated infrastructure
- Staying updated on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations and requirements
- Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation

9.3 CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES TRENDS

Critical facilities are those facilities that are crucial to the livelihood of the community, without which daily life and business becomes difficult if not impossible to conduct. These include county and city government facilities, medical facilities, education facilities, law enforcement and emergency response.

9.3.1 COUNTY AND CITY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Table 9-1: County and City Offices

Office	Location
Faribault County Courthouse	415 North Main
City of Blue Earth	125 West 6th Street
City of Bricelyn	309 N Main
City of Delavan	103 S Main Street
City of Easton	51 Main St
City of Elmore	202 S Hwy 169
City of Frost	110 Main St
City of Kiester	116 N Main St
City of Minnesota Lake	103 Main St North
City of Walters	108 W 3rd St
City of Wells	125 South Broadway
City of Winnebago	140 South Main St

9.3.2 LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police and Sheriff's Departments

In addition to the Faribault County Sheriff's Department, five communities in the county have municipal police departments. These communities include Blue Earth, Elmore, Minnesota Lake, Wells, and Winnebago. Table 9-2 outlines the county's law enforcement departments.

Table 9-2: Police and Sheriff's Departments

Facility	Location
Faribault County Sheriff's Office & Jail	320 Dr. H. Russ Street, Blue Earth
Blue Earth Police Department	120 S Walnut Street, Blue Earth
Elmore Police Department	201 E. Willis Street, Elmore
Wells Police Department	125 S Broadway, Wells
Minnesota Lake Police Department	103 Main St N, Minnesota Lake
Winnebago Police Department	140 St S, Winnebago

9.3.3 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Fire Departments

All communities in Faribault County have Fire Departments that are served by volunteers. When needed, multiple departments are called to provide service.

Table 9-3A: Fire Departments

City	Location
Blue Earth Fire Department	125 W 6th Street
Bricelyn Fire Department	203 Main Street
Delavan Fire Department	103 S Main Street
Easton Fire Department	51 Cedar Street
Elmore Fire Department	202 U.S. Highway 169 South
Frost Fire Department	110 Main Street
Kiester Fire Department	202 1st Street N
Minnesota Lake Fire Department	10 Main Street
Walters Fire Department	108 W 3rd Street
Wells Fire Department	180 3rd Street SE
Winnebago Fire Department	140 S. Main Street

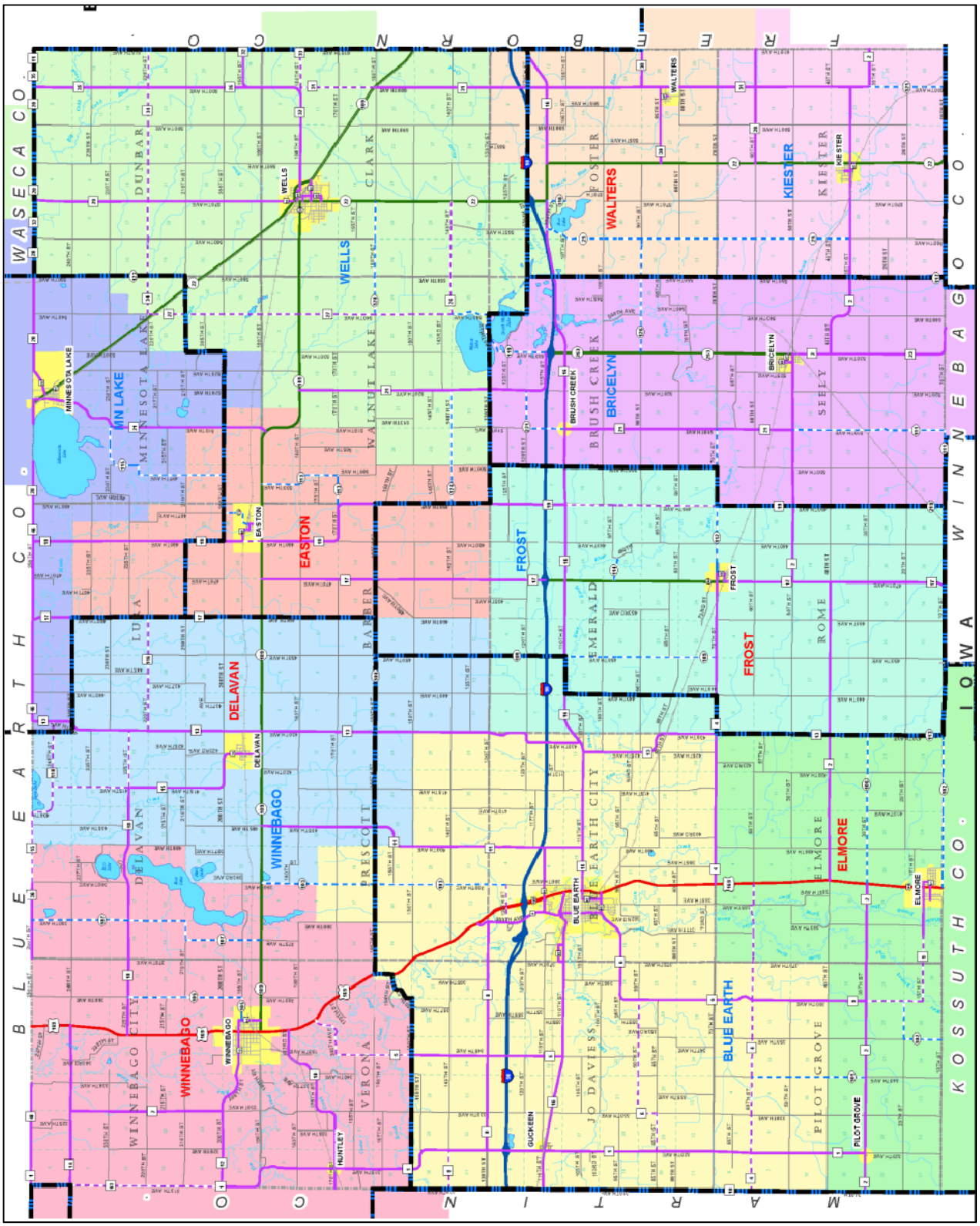
Ambulance Services, Paramedics and First Responders

The ability of each community's service differs and is represented in the table below. Services are shared and multiple communities may be involved per call. Most of these services are all served by volunteers within the community. Ambulance service provides transportation of sick or injured people to, from or between places of treatment. By definition, a paramedic is a healthcare professional who works in emergency medical situations. Services include the initial assessment of the patient after a particular health crisis with treatment continuing in route to medical facilities. A certified first responder is someone who has completed course and received certification in providing pre-hospital care for medical emergencies. They have more skill than someone trained in basic first aid but they are not a substitute for advanced medical care from an emergency medical technician (EMT), emergency physicians, nurses, or paramedics. Most police officers and firefighters in MN are certified first responders.

Table 9-3B: Ambulance Services, Paramedics and First Responders (1)

City	Location
Blue Earth	Ambulance Service
Bricelyn	Ambulance Service
Delavan	First Responder Services
Easton	First Responder Services
Elmore	First Responder Services
Frost	Shared services with Blue Earth
Kiester	Ambulance Service
Minnesota Lake	Ambulance Service
Walters	Shared services with Kiester
Wells	Ambulance Service
Winnebago	Ambulance Service

Figure 9-1 Emergency Service Districts Map



Hazard Mitigation Planning

The Faribault County Sheriff's Department serves as the county's Emergency Response Coordinators. As part of that program, they oversee Hazard Mitigation Planning needs for the county. Emergency planners must have the ability to reach everyone in their communities to help them prepare for, respond to and recover from all types of emergencies. Everyone in the community need to have accurate and trusted information in order to know what to do and when to do it. Hazard Mitigation plans are part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under federal statute. Mitigation activities provide a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk from natural hazards and disasters. Ideas for mitigation actions are presented in the following natural hazards: drought, erosion, extreme temperature, flood, hail, lightning, severe wind, severe winter weather, tornado and wildfires. In 2010, FEMA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed the FEMA-EPA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the two agencies to work together to help communities become safer, healthier, and more resilient. The two agencies will collaborate to help communities that have been hit by disasters to recover and mitigate in ways to protect the environment, create long-term economic prosperity, and enhance neighborhoods. In Faribault County, this same style of partnership occurs between the Faribault County Sheriff's Department, the Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Planning and Zoning Office.

Hospitals and Clinics

There is one hospital in Blue Earth and 5 clinics throughout Faribault County. Table 9-4 lists the hospital and clinics in the county.

Table 9-4: Hospital and Clinics (2)

Facility	Location
Adolescent Treatment Center	620 1st Avenue Southwest, Winnebago
Kiester Medical Center	120 N. Main Street, Kiester
United Hospital District	515 Moore Street S, Blue Earth
United Hospital District Clinic	1 Main Street N., Winnebago
United Hospital District Clinic	55 1st Street SE, Wells
Wells Clinic	301 S Broadway, Wells

Assisted Living and Nursing Homes

There are also a number of assisted living facilities and nursing homes located throughout the county. These facilities are identified in Table 9-5.

Table 9-5: Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes (2)

Facility	Location
Friendship Court	1228 S. Rice Street, Blue Earth
Nicollet Place	311 S. Nicollet Street, Blue Earth
Parker Oaks Communities, Inc.	211 Sixth Street Northwest, Winnebago
Parkview Care Center, Inc.	55 10th Street SE., Wells
St. Luke's Lutheran Care Center	1219 South Ramsey, Blue Earth
The Shepherd's Inn	46 First Ave SW., Wells

Public Health and Human Services

The Faribault/Martin County Human Services Center (FMCHS) oversees the administration of public health and social service programs within the county. This facility is located at 412 Nicollet Street N. in Blue Earth.

9.3.4 EDUCATION FACILITIES

School Districts

Faribault County is divided amongst six school districts (Figure 9-2). All districts have open enrollment policies, meaning that students and families/guardians have a wide range of school options. .

Table 9-6: School Districts, 2014 (2)

District Number	District Name
242	Alden-Conger
2860	Blue Earth Area
2536	Granada-Huntley-East Chain
2835	Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton
2135	Maple River
2134	United South Central

Public Schools

List of school districts and their corresponding facilities located in Faribault County.

Table 9-7: Public Schools (2)

Facility	Location
Blue Earth Area Elementary / Middle School	315 East 6th Street, Blue Earth
Blue Earth Area Senior High School	1125 N Grove Street, Blue Earth
Maple River East Elementary / Middle School	126 Higbie Avenue SE, Minnesota Lake
United South Central Elementary / High School	600 11th St. SW, Wells
Winnebago Elementary Primary School	132 1st Avenue SE, Winnebago

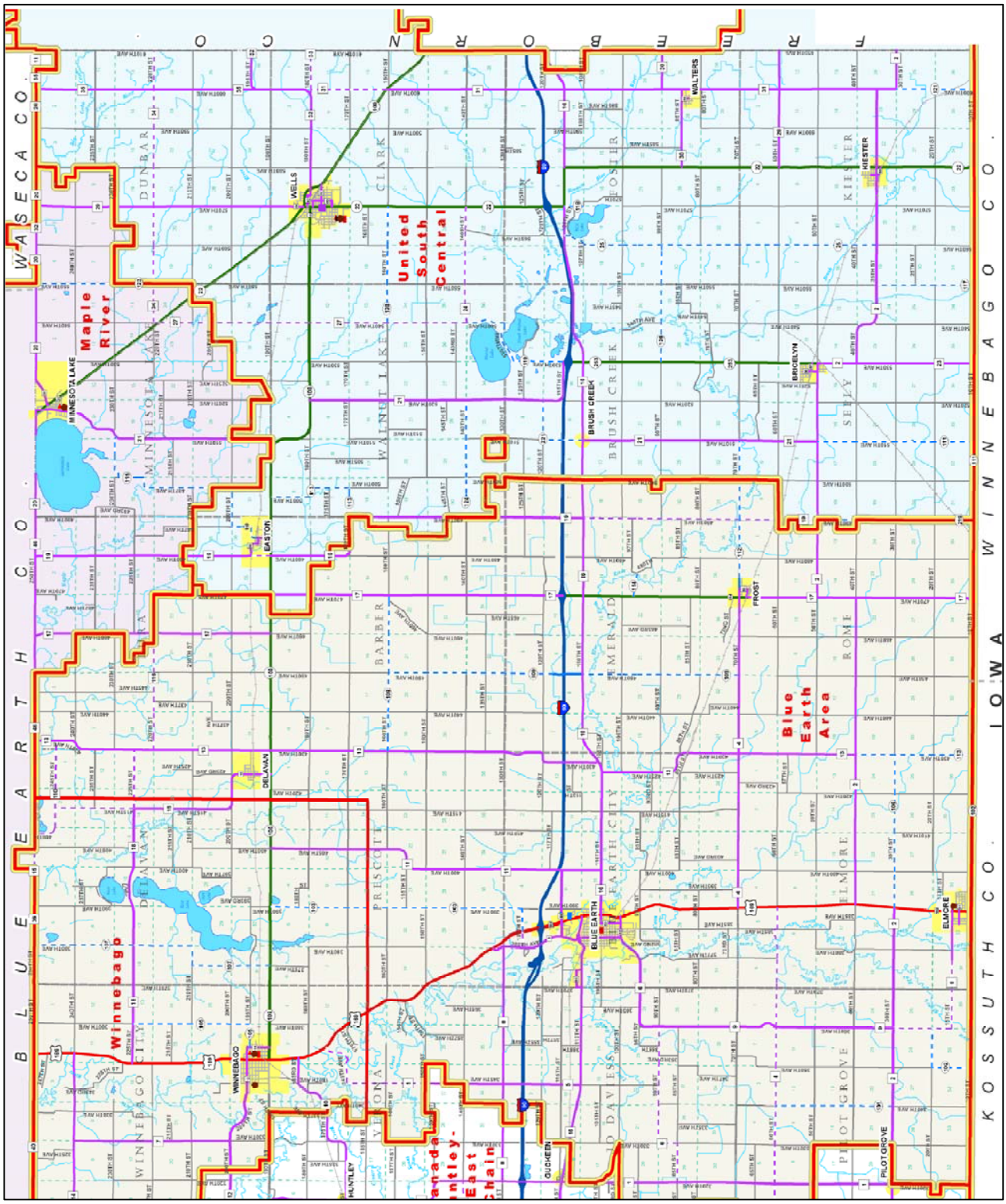
Other Educational Facilities

In addition to the traditional primary and secondary schools, there are also a number of other educational opportunities in the county that serve young children as well as the general adult population. These facilities are outlined in Table 9-8.

Table 9-8: Other Educational Facilities (2)

Facility	School Districts or Location
Blue Earth Community Education	BEA School District
Head Start	Both BEA and USC School Districts
Little Giant's	425 S. Grove St, Blue Earth
Little Lambs	10 1st Ave SW, Wells
Maple River Community Ed	Maple River School District
Southern Plains Education Co-Op	Based in Fairmont, works with BEA and USC School Districts
St. Casimir's Parochial School	300 2nd Avenue SW., Wells
USC Community Education	USC School District

Figure 9-2 Educational Facilities and School Districts 2014-2015



9.3.5 PRIVATE WELLS

Approximately 70 percent of all Minnesotans rely on groundwater as their primary source of drinking water, and one million Minnesotans rely on private wells. Wells and borings used for drinking water, irrigation, industry, groundwater monitoring, heat pumps, hydraulic elevators, and other purposes must be properly constructed, maintained, and sealed (filled with impervious material) when removed from service, to protect both public health and and our invaluable groundwater resources. The Minnesota Department of Health's (MDH) Well Management Program protects both public health and groundwater by assuring the proper construction on new wells and boring, and the proper sealing of unused wells and borings. (9)

9.3.6 COMMUNITY PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY

A community public water supplies at least 25 persons or 15 service connections year-round, which includes municipalities, manufactured mobile home parks, unincorporated communities, etc. These systems are required to provide a safe and adequate supply of water under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). (9)

9.3.7 POTABLE WATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

All communities in Faribault County are served by their own potable water treatment facilities. These facilities and associated infrastructure for the storage, movement, and delivery of potable water are outlined below. The Unincorporated Areas rely on private wells. (3)

Table 9-9: Potable Water Treatment Facilities, Water Towers, and Wells

Owner	Description
City of Blue Earth	Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 617517,
City of Bricelyn	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 240636
City of Delavan	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 217069, 241963
City of Easton	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 241461
City of Elmore	Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 112236, 217013
City of Frost	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 217007, 502220
City of Minnesota Lake	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 213177

Owner	Description
City of Kiester	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 240773, 222332
City of Wells	Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 241139, 217048, 217046
City of Winnebago	Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 242059, 217074
City of Walters	No Water Treatment Plant
	Water Tower
	Well (s) 241138

9.3.8 SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SSTS)

Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS), commonly known as septic systems, are required by Minnesota Statute 115.55 and 115.56, and Minnesota Rules Chapters 7080-7083. These regulations detail; minimum technical standards for individual and mid-size SSTS, a framework for local administration of SSTS programs, and statewide licensing and certification of SSTS professionals, SSTS product review and registration, and establishment of the SSTS Advisory Committee. The goal of the SSTS program is to protect the public health of the environment through adequate dispersal and treatment of domestic sewage from dwellings or other establishments generating less than 10,000 gallons per day. (10)

9.3.9 WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Each of the communities of Faribault County is served by municipal wastewater treatment facilities. Most communities have their own treatment facility, but two Easton and Minnesota Lake share a single treatment plant that is located in the City of Wells. Any additional facilities that require a treatment facility are permitted through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and information on those permits can be obtained through them.

Table 9-10: Public Wastewater Treatment Facilities (3)

City or Village	Description	Location
City of Blue Earth	Wastewater Treatment Facility	T 101 R 27 Sec.18
City of Bricelyn	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 101 R 25 Sec.11
City of Delavan	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 104 R 27 Sec.36
City of Easton	Combined with the City of Wells	T 103 R 24 Sec.6 and 7
City of Elmore	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 101 R 27 Sec.29
City of Frost	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 101 R 26 Sec.2
City of Kiester	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 101 R 24 Sec.21
City of Minnesota Lake	Combined with the City of Wells	T 103 R 24 Sec.6 and 7
City of Walters	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 104 R 24 Sec.26
City of Wells	Multi-Stage Ponds	T 103 R 24 Sec.6 and 7
City of Winnebago	Wastewater Treatment Facility	T 104 R 28 Sec.34
Village of Huntley	Extension of City of Winnebago	T 104 R 28 Sec.34

9.3.10 DRAINAGE

Public Drainage Systems

It's understandable that with over 80 percent of the land in Faribault County being utilized to grow crops that there is a need for agricultural drainage. Agricultural drainage is defined as the removal of excess water from fields through the use of ditches and subsurface pipe (often called "drainage tile"). Typically, drainage ditches were developed first, then subsurface drainage pipes were installed to take water from poorly drained soils and convey it to the ditches or nearby streams. Drainage tile was typically installed a few feet below the surface and can be made of concrete, clay, or now, more commonly, plastic. (4)

Conservation drainage, a more recently developed term, is when the use drainage practices are designed and installed to drain the land in a manner that minimized negative environmental impacts. (4)

Faribault County utilizes 114 drainage systems, consisting of 725 miles of subsurface tile and 245 miles of open ditches to convey both agricultural and urban runoff. Increasing amounts of private subsurface tile are being added to these drainage systems making it critical that local collaborative efforts provide information about the infrastructural capacity of these systems and how their outlets affect water quality.

Stormwater Infrastructure

Every community, except the City of Walters, has stormwater infrastructure. These systems were originally designed as combined systems that conveyed both waste water and stormwater to local waterbodies or public drainage systems. Systems have since been separated so wastewater is treated, while stormwater continues to flow untreated to local waterbodies or public drainage systems.

9.3.11 SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

Faribault County currently utilizes Prairieland Solid Waste for handling the recycling, household hazardous waste, garbage collection and other solid waste matters for the county and its residents.

There are various other private companies that provide services to the communities and residents based on individual contract of service agreements.

9.3.12 OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINES

An overhead power line is a structure used in electric power transmission and distribution to transmit electrical energy along large distances. It consists of one or more conductors (commonly multiples of three) suspended by towers or poles. Since most of the insulation is provided by air, overhead power lines are generally the lowest-cost method of power transmission for large quantities of electric energy.

Towers for support of the line are made of wood (as-grown or laminated), steel (either lattice structures or tubular poles), concrete, aluminum, and occasionally reinforced plastics. The bare wire conductors on the line are generally made of aluminum, through

some copper wires are used in medium-voltage distribution and low-voltage connections to customers premises. A major goal of overhead power line design is to maintain adequate clearance between energized conductors and the ground so as to prevent dangerous contact with the line, and to provide reliable support for the conductors, resilient to storm, ice load, earthquakes and other potential causes of damage. Today overhead lines are routinely operated at voltages exceeding 765,000 volts between conductors, with even higher voltages possible in some cases. (7)

9.3.13 PIPELINES

Pipeline transport is the transportation of goods through a pipe. Liquids and gases are transported in pipelines and any chemically stable substance can be sent through a pipeline. Pipelines exist for the transportation of crude and refined petroleum, fuels (oil, natural gas and biofuels) and other fluids (sewage, slurry and water).

Oil pipelines are made from steel or plastic tubes which are usually buried. The oil is moved through the pipelines by pump stations along the pipeline. Natural gas (and similar gaseous fuels) are lightly pressurized into liquids knows as Natural Gas Liquids (NGLs). Natural gas pipelines are constructed of carbon steel. Highly toxic ammonia is theoretically the most dangerous substance to be transported through long-distance pipelines, but accidents have been rare. Hydrogen pipeline transport is the transportation of hydrogen through a pipe.

Pipelines conveying flammable or explosive material, such as natural gas or oil, pose special safety concerns and there have been various accidents. Pipelines can be the target of vandalism, sabotage, or even terrorist attacks. In war, pipelines are often the target of military attacks. (8)

9.3.14 NEW ENERGY FACILITIES

New energy development in the United States could take up a land area roughly twice the size of Maine by 2040, according to a new estimate. Building the coal mines, oil and gas wells, and solar and wind farms needed to meet projected energy production levels could require an additional 175,000 to 250,000 square kilometers or real estate. Such "energy sprawl" will complicate efforts to preserve wildlife habitat and natural resources. (11)

9.4 CURRENT STATUS OF CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

9.4.1 COUNTY AND CITY GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Faribault County has a courthouse with historic value, but at the same time poses security and infrastructure constraints. Upgrades for not only historic value but employee safety are required.

9.4.2 LAW ENFORCEMENT

In 2009, the Faribault County Sheriff's office moved to its currently location. These new facilities are located in close proximity to US HWY 169 and US Interstate 90. The Sheriff's

Department currently provides a variety of services for not only the county, but the communities as well.

9.4.3 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Many of the communities share services and utilize joint efforts when needed. In recent years there has been a decline in volunteers, foreshadowing a declining number of services in the future. Funding for these services and training of the volunteers has also been declining and poses a second set of issues.

9.4.4 MEDICAL

With Faribault County's aging populations (see Section 4 for more details) high quality and a variety of health care is necessary. United Hospital District in Blue Earth has recently updated its facilities with a large reconstruction project in 2013. There are a variety of clinic facilities serving the smaller communities. These facilities are listed in Table 9-4.

9.4.5 EDUCATION

Blue Earth Area and United South Central both have upgraded facilities. Most currently, United South Central started the 2014 school year in a new school for kindergarten through 12 grade students. As with all school districts, the safety of the students and staff is a large concern, ensuring that there are policies and safety measures are in place is a must now and into the future.

9.4.6 PRIVATE WELLS

The majority of Faribault County residents obtain their drinking water from private wells. Ensuring that the public is educated on groundwater protection, and abide by state standards, has fallen to the licensed well driller. Sealing of unused wells will need to continue to be addressed as these are potential sources of groundwater pollution. Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District has limited funds available each year for well sealing assistance and additional funds will continue to be necessary.

9.4.7 COMMUNITY PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY

Each of the public water suppliers currently has an updated and active Wellhead Protection Plan. Full copies of those plans can either be obtained from the Minnesota Department of Health or the supplier. With these plans completed, the communities need to make certain that the implementation of the goals and actions continue to be a high priority and that in order to maintain groundwater protection, that necessary rules and regulations are in place and followed.

9.4.8 POTABLE WATER

While all eleven of the communities are currently in compliance with state drinking water regulations, the cost to ensure these standards are being met is quite costly. In addition, when this aging infrastructure fails, many communities are enduring high costs that are not affordable to the residents. Therefore, it is important that our communities continue to focus on maintaining and repairing, in addition to making sure that potential sources of

funding that would allow them to replace and update this critical infrastructure is being applied for in a timely fashion.

9.4.9 SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SSTS)

Beginning in 2001, Faribault County developed a plan for the upgrade of non-compliant septic systems in the non-shoreland area. The plan consisted of dividing up the county uniformly by section. This way contractors would be distributed evenly throughout the county in a given year. In doing this, it was determined that the county could install the number of systems needed to be upgraded over a 12 year period.

All building permit application must either submit a Certificate of Compliance or valid inspection form at the time an application is made. This also includes proof that the system has been maintained (pumped) within the last 3 years.

When selling a property, the seller is required to provide information to the buyer regarding the status of the septic system on the property. A SSTS Property Transaction Form must be provided by the seller to the buyer at or before the time of closing. If the existing SSTS is out of compliance, a septic system which meets existing ordinance requirement needs to be installed within 10 months of the date of the transaction. At the conclusion of 2014, approximately 80% of the systems are in compliance. (12)

9.4.10 WASTEWATER

Currently all communities and unincorporated communities are meeting the state standards for wastewater treatment. As with drinking water infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure compliance has put the strain on our small communities budgets. Future resources for assistance to upgrade and repair should be researched and applied for into the future.

9.4.11 DRAINAGE

Public Drainage Systems

The vast majority of our public drainage systems are well over a 100 years old. As times have changed, and with the increased volume of water that these systems are now conveying , it was necessary for the county to hire drainage staff , establish a Drainage Policy, and develop a schedule to systematically proceed with the Redetermination of Benefits process. As with most programs administered or managed by the county, Drainage staff and the Drainage Authority must follow Minnesota State Statute 103E when dealing with landowners on the public drainage systems in the county.

Stormwater

All of the communities in Faribault County have and currently worked with the Faribault County Soil and Water Conservation District to address their stormwater needs.

9.4.12 SOLID WASTE

Faribault County independently developed an integrated solid waste management system to protect public health and the environment, and to offer convenient and efficient services for residents and businesses of these counties. Prairieland Solid Waste Management Facility oversees this plan.

9.4.13 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Technology is constantly changing and keeping updating infrastructure is costly. A systematic plan for upgrades needs to be addressed.

9.4.14 OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINES

Currently ITC Midwest LLC is in the process of a large Minnesota-Iowa 345kV Transmission Project and Associated Facilities in Jackson, Martin, and Faribault Counties.

9.4.15 PIPELINES

In 2013 Faribault County adopted its first pipeline Ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance shall set forth a process to allow for the permitting of pipelines, which will discharge into protected waters, to assure the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Faribault County. The ordinance does not apply to pipelines regulated under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216G, private agricultural drainage, public agricultural drainage under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103E

9.3.16 NEW ENERGY FACILITIES

As part of our membership with Region Nine, Faribault County is a member of the Renewable Energy Task Force. This dedicated group of citizens, elected officials, business owners, education institutions, nonprofit agencies and governmental agencies that share a passionate interest in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The Task Force actively pursues opportunities to promote energy saving technologies, develop the renewable energy industry in southern Minnesota and the use of clean energy, all of which improve the economic and environmental well-being of the region.

In 2010, Faribault County adopted its first Wind Energy Ordinance and Big Blue Wind Farm started commissioning in 2011. Faribault County's goal is to promote the effective and efficient use of Wind Energy Conversion Systems and to facilitate economic opportunities for local residents consistent with the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens.

Currently, Faribault County does not have a solar ordinance or any other renewable energy programs.

9.5 FUTURE OF CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Critical facilities are those facilities that are crucial to the livelihood of both the county and the communities. Essential Services are the type of services that are both minor such as adding any new lines or replacement lines that service individual landowners, and major, which are any new or replacement lines that do not serve individuals on their route.

Future projects including new and replacement will be important for infrastructure and Economic Development opportunities in the County.

9.6 SUMMARY

Faribault County faces unique challenges when addressing critical facilities and infrastructure. All infrastructural costs are high and with a decreasing tax base and land use dominated by agriculture both county and community elected official face challenges in financing large infrastructure upgrades. Due to the demographics and structure of the county there are a number of shared services. While they may reduce the annual budget, the sharing of services comes with their own set of obstacles. Overcoming these barriers is not something new to Faribault County, and is something that they will continue to conquer in the future.

9.7 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Update and maintain County and City Governmental facilities and safety measures for employees and the general public.

Continue to discuss the potential of shared law enforcement services to increase time of response.

Update and implement the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Health Care Facilities

- Maintain existing and research potential for new facilities.
- Change in medical facilities to match demographics and needs of residents.
- Increased options for residents prior to needed medical facilities. (see Housing Section 5 for more details)
- Continue to allow two dwellings in the Ag District for in home care of the elderly.

Educational Facilities in the County.

- Maintain and upgrade facilities as needed.
- Maintain and increase level of enrollment with goal of 100% graduation rate.
- Update technology in all educational facilities.

Potable Water Facilities

- Maintain and upgrade facilities as needed.
- Pursue funding opportunities for repairs and upgrades.
- Be aware and prepared for the potential of a rural water supply system.

Wastewater Facilities

- Maintain and upgrade existing wastewater ponds and facilities as needed.
- Pursue funding opportunities for repairs and upgrades.
- Septic System Compliance.

- Update ordinances in accordance with State Statutes.

Electrical Transmission Lines
- Continue to upgrade to provide quality infrastructure into the future.
- Work with developers to practice health and safety measures.

Pipelines
- Maintain ordinance.
- Continual upgrades to provide quality infrastructure.
- Ensure public safety.
- Work with potential developers.

Drainage
- Continue to educate on ditch systems, benefits, and processes.
- Continue to monitor and provide technical resources.
- Continue and expand partnerships within the Urban areas.

Telecommunication
- Expand speed and capacity.
- Promote telecommuting.

Solid Waste
- Expanded rural garbage and rural recycling options.
- Continue hazardous waste collection sites.
- More recycling/re-use options.

Renewable Energy Sources
- Develop Solar Energy Ordinance
- Update and maintain Wind Ordinance
- Encourage development

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10. TRANSPORTATION

America's transportation system is an important tie binding our economy together. Our strong and efficient transportation system provides businesses with access to materials and markets, and provides people with access to goods, services, recreation, jobs, and other people. Transportation touches each one of us every day in all aspects of our lives (1).

10.1 INTRODUCTION

A strong transportation system is absolutely essential for the successful economic development of an area. The strength of the economy is directly related to the quality of transportation systems. In Faribault County, that transportation system includes Interstate 90 running east and west through the heart of the county with state highways, County State Aid Highways (CSAH), county roads, township roads, and city streets. In addition to the roadway system there are over 250 bridges in Faribault County. The transportation system also includes rail lines, airports and a public transit programs.

10.2 TRANSPORTATION SNAPSHOT

- Low traffic volumes
- Mix of road classifications provides a good network for timely travel and distribution of goods
- Minimal public transit available
- Good rail access and network
- Funding poses a threat to aging infrastructure
- Good pavement quality
- Few spring load restrictions
- No weight posted bridges

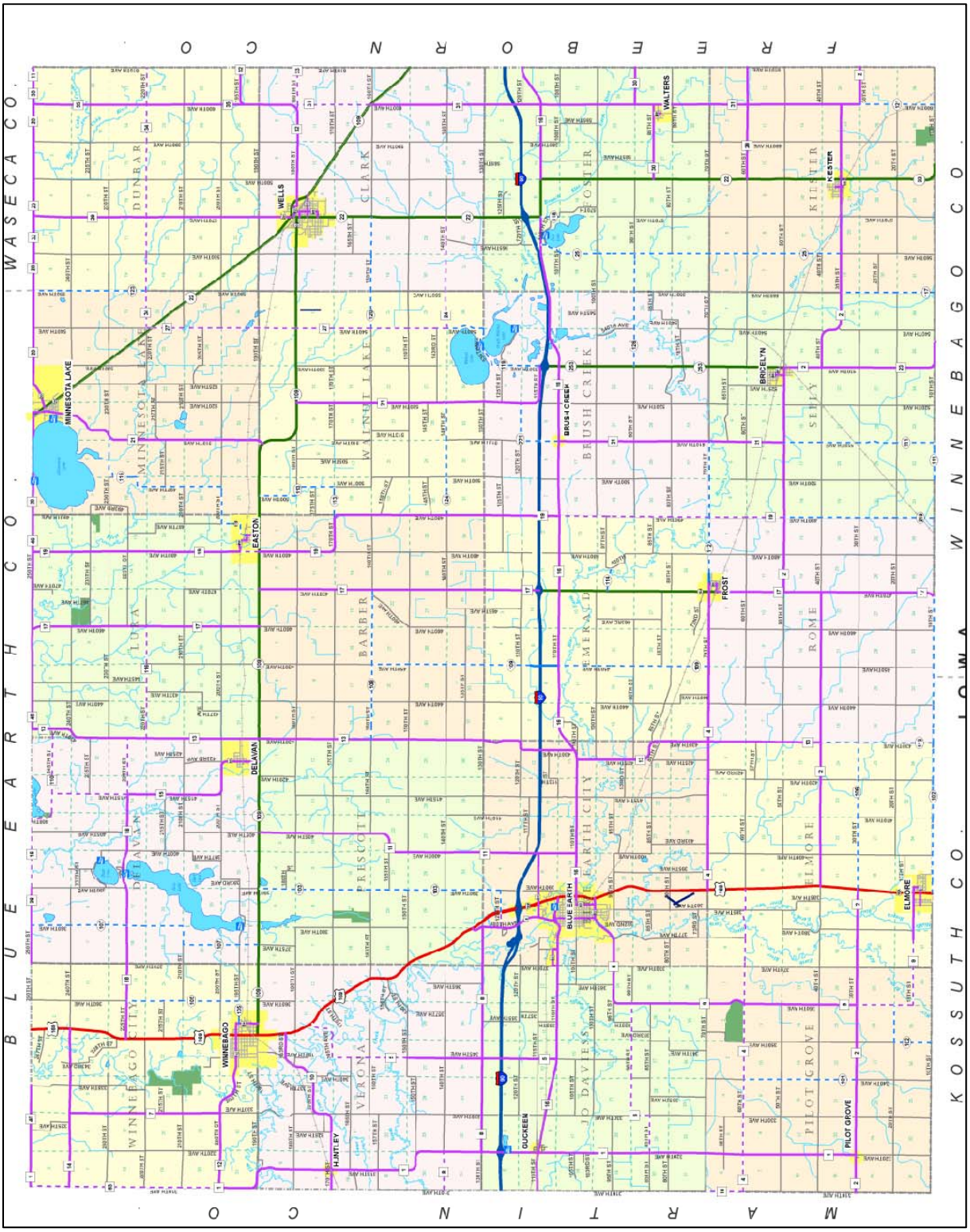
10.3 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TRENDS

Faribault County currently has a robust transportation network, which supports a variety of modes of travel. The majority of movement within the county is done via an extensive network of roads and highways. Freight rail lines running across the county facilitate the movement of large quantities of agricultural products to regional and national markets. The county also has two municipally owned airports.

10.3.1 ROADWAYS

Faribault County has an extensive network of roads and highways connecting communities of Faribault County to other parts of the state and country. When the first settlers came to settle in Faribault County it took over two days to travel from Blue Earth to Mankato. Today it takes around 45 minutes. There are seven different road system classifications within the county that provide varying levels of mobility and access to communities and properties.

Figure 10-1: Transportation Map



State Highways
In 1920, seventy routes in Minnesota, totaling nearly seven thousand miles were created by the state. These roads constitute part of the Minnesota Trunk Highway System (MNTH) and the U.S. Trunk Highway System (USTH). In the late 1970's, Interstate 90 was completed across Faribault County.

In Faribault County these state and U.S. highways include:

- U.S. Interstate 90
- U.S. Highway 169
- MN Highway 22
- MN Highway 109
- MN Highway 253
- MN Highway 254

These roads were constructed and are maintained by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT). Trunk highways are always paved and typically have a posted speed limit of 55, except when they run through urbanized areas. Within Faribault County there are 25.3 miles of U.S. Highway, 66.2 miles of Minnesota Trunk Highway and 30.48 miles of Interstate.

County Roads
These roads were constructed and are maintained by Faribault County. They have a bituminous aggregate surface and have speed limits of between 30 and 55 miles per hour. In Faribault County there are 103.3 miles of county roads.

County State Aid Highways
In 1957, in Minnesota, a County State Aid Highway (CSAH) system was established that provides for state funding assistance for construction and maintenance assistance of higher traffic county roads. In Faribault County there are 346.1 miles of County State Aid Highways (CSAH); of these, 282 miles are paved and 64 miles have an aggregate surface.

Township Roads
These roads were created by the Township Boards or were reverted to township responsibility by the County Board. They are maintained by the individual Township Boards and have a gravel surface with no posted speed limit. There are 795.1 miles of township roads in Faribault County.

Municipal Streets
These roads provide direct access to residential and commercial properties within city limits. All roads within city limits are considered to be municipal roads unless they are designated as Trunk Highways, County State Aid Highways, or County Highways. City streets are usually paved two-lane roads with a speed limit of 30 miles per hour.

Table 10-1: Route Miles of Road by Type

Class	Name	Jurisdiction	Route Miles	Lane Miles
01	Interstate Trunk Highway	MNDOT	30.48	121.90
02	U.S. Trunk Highway	MNDOT	25.31	55.25
03	Minnesota Trunk Highway	MNDOT	66.23	132.45
04	County State Aid Highway	County	346.06	692.26
07	County Road	County	103.34	206.67
08	Township Road	Townships	795.14	1,590.27
10	Municipal Street	Municipalities	85.11	170.22
	TOTAL		1,451.66	2,969.03

10.3.2 RAILROADS

There are two rail companies that operate four rail lines running through Faribault County. A Union Pacific line runs from the southeast corner of Rome Township to its terminus just east of Bricelyn, this is the shortest rail line in the county. Another Union Pacific line runs east-west across the county, passing through Blue Earth, Frost, Bricelyn and Kiester. This line has been updated and is considered a high speed rail. There are also two Dakota, Minnesota, and Eastern Railroad lines that run through the county. One line runs completely through the county, generally following Trunk Highway 109 and passing through Winnebago, Delavan, Easton, and Wells; with a connecting line from Wells that heads north to Minnesota Lake. In 2011, a grain elevator expansion occurred within the City of Delavan that included a rail loop that provides a distribution location for local commodities. (2)

Table 10-2: Rail Lines

Name	Location
Union Pacific Railroad	From S12 T101N R25W to S36 T101N R26W
Union Pacific Railroad	From S36 T101N R24W to S07 T102N R28W
Dakota, Minnesota, and Eastern Railroad	From S18 T103N R28W to S25 T103N R24W
Dakota, Minnesota, and Eastern Railroad	From S05 T104N R24W to Minnesota Lake

10.3.3 AIRPORTS AND HELIPORTS

Within Faribault County there are two municipal airports – one in Blue Earth, and one in Wells. These airports primarily serve the needs of agricultural crop dusters and hobby pilots. There are also 11 private airstrips in the county, all in the rural area. The United Hospital District Clinic in Blue Earth has a heliport for the transfer of patients.

Table 10-3: Airports

Name	Location	Type
Blue Earth Municipal Airport	7575 U.S. Highway 169, Blue Earth, MN	Municipal Airport
Wells Municipal Airport	54720 Minnesota 109, Wells, MN	Municipal Airport
United Hospital District Clinic	515 S. Moore St., Blue Earth, MN	Private Heliport

10.3.4 TRANSIT

In 2015, Faribault County will be changing its current public transit program, and will be sharing with Martin County.

10.4 CURRENT STATUS OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Faribault County has a well maintained system of public roads and bridges.

10.4.1 ROADWAYS

In Faribault County, the highway system roughly follows a grid pattern that generally follows the land survey section lines. Faribault County follows the same roadway classification system adopted by every other county in the State and includes:

Principal Arterial

Principal arterials are the primary routes that facilitate travel between major centers of population. They are designed to maximize mobility while limiting access. These roads are often two or four lanes wide, are always paved, have few access points, and have speed limits between 55 and 70 miles per hour. They typically serve trips of at least 8 miles and are spaced 6 to 12 miles apart.

Minor Arterial

Minor arterials are secondary routes that facilitate travel across major centers of population. Like principle arterials, they are designed to maximize mobility while limiting access. These roads are often two or four lanes wide, are always paved, have few access points, and have speed limits between 55 and 70 miles per hour. They typically serve trips of at least 8 miles and are spaced 6 to 12 miles apart.

Major Collector

Major collectors serve to move traffic from principle arterials and minor arterials into an urban area. Unlike principle and minor arterials, major collectors are designed to offer a balance between mobility and access to properties. These roads are often two or four lanes wide, are always paved, have many access points, and have speed limits between 30 and 55 miles per hour. They typically serve trips between 5 and 8 miles in length and are spaced ½ to 2 miles apart.

Minor Collector

Minor collectors serve to move traffic from minor arterials and major collectors into and through an urban area. Minor collectors are distinguished from major collectors by an increased number of access points available. These roads are usually two or four lanes wide, are always paved, have many access points, and have speed limits between 30 and 55 miles per hour. They typically serve trips between 5 and 8 miles in length and are spaced ½ to 2 miles apart.

Local Roadways

Local roadways serve to move traffic around a limited area of a city or county and are connected to major and minor collectors. Local roads have numerous access points, which limit mobility, but allow for easy access to adjacent properties. These roads are usually one or two lanes wide, are usually paved (except in rural areas), and have speed limits up to 30

miles per hour. They typically serve trips less than 2 miles in length and are spaced up to ½ mile apart in rural areas.

10.4.2 ROADWAY SYSTEM LIMITATIONS

Load Weight Restrictions

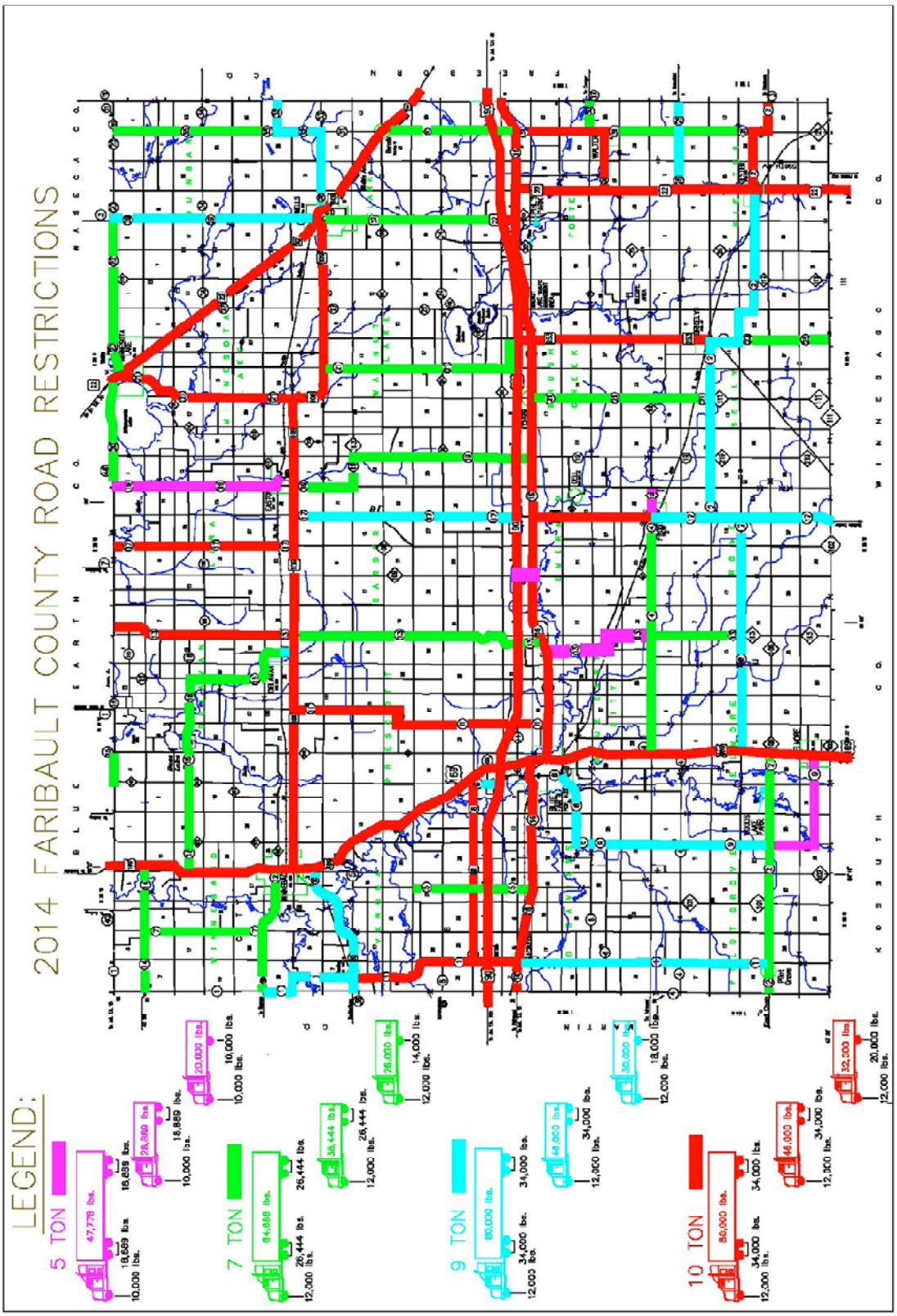
Each spring, the load carrying capacity of highways is reduced as a result of thawing and excess water in the soil beneath the roadway. During this time, axle load restrictions are enforced until the soil has stabilized to the point where larger vehicles will not cause permanent damage to the road. These vehicle weight restrictions protect the roads but cause a certain amount of economic hardship by limiting the amount of weight carried by trucks hauling agriculture products, sand and gravel, heavy equipment or other commodities.

10.4.3 ROADWAY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Faribault County Commissioners are guided in their responsibility to maintain or replace county roads and bridges by a 5 year Road and Bridge Plan. This is put together by the county engineer and is adopted by the commissioners on a yearly basis. This is strictly a planning tool and projects are usually moved throughout the 5 year plan. Funding levels and changes in project scope may cause projects to be moved from year to year. Projects on the CSAH system are funded through the county's share of the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund and through the county's local Road and Bridge fund. Some projects are also funded through the federal aid system. In 2013, Faribault County's share of the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund was $4,322,022; of this amount 60% is allotted for construction and 40% is for maintenance.

The two largest communities in the County, Blue Earth and Wells also develop a 5 year plan for projects in their communities.

Figure 10-2: Load Weight Restrictions Map



10.4.4 BRIDGES

MNDOT maintains an inventory of bridges in the state and records of inspection that identify the condition of each of the bridges under its authority. Bridge deficiency needs are identified by bridge sufficiency ratings. A sufficiency rating includes many factors such as structural condition, detour length, traffic volume, approach angle, length, width, and structural characteristics.

According to MNDOT, a bridge is defined as a structure measuring ten feet or greater in length along the road centerline. Bridges can be either a conventional type or a culvert that has sufficient width to be classified as a bridge.

Local roads play an essential role in the overall state transportation network and local bridges are a critical component of the local road systems. Support from the State for the replacement or rehabilitation of local bridges continues to be crucial to maintaining the integrity of local road systems. This support is also necessary for the county and the townships to proceed with the replacement or rehabilitation of the high priority deficient bridges. The county engineer conducts annual assessments and maintains a prioritized list of bridges that require replacement. Funding for bridge replacement is a function of the road system. Township bridges are funded through the Township Bridge portion of the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund. In 2013, Faribault County's Town Bridge apportionment was $248,551. Funding for bridges on CSAH routes may be funded using federal funds, CSAH funds, Bridge Bonding or local funds. Typically, larger bridges are funded using a combination of federal funds and bridge bonding funds. Bridges on county roads are not eligible for CSAH funds so they are funded through federal funds or bridge bonding funds.

10.4.5 AIRPORTS

The capacity of the two existing airports within the county appears to be adequate for the time being. In 2011, an Airport Safety Zoning Ordinance was adapted by the county which is considered an overlay district within the County's zoning ordinance. These airports primarily service agricultural and recreational users.

10.4.6 RAILROADS

The existing rail lines running through the county serve as vital shipping lines, moving freight and agricultural commodities to market.

10.4.7 TRANSIT

In 2015, Faribault County will be changing its public transit program to be shared with Martin County.

10.5 FUTURE TRANSPORTATION/TRANSIT CONSIDERATIONS

10.5.1 ROADWAYS

Funding

Currently, the majority of the funding for the County State Aide Highway system comes from the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund. The county needs to be vigilant in trying to increase the county's share of this fund. As costs rise, it will be important for the county, communities, and townships to identify and prioritize highway maintenance projects so that the most pressing maintenance needs are adequately funded. The county, communities, and townships should also explore ways of collaborating and sharing resources as a means of holding down maintenance costs.

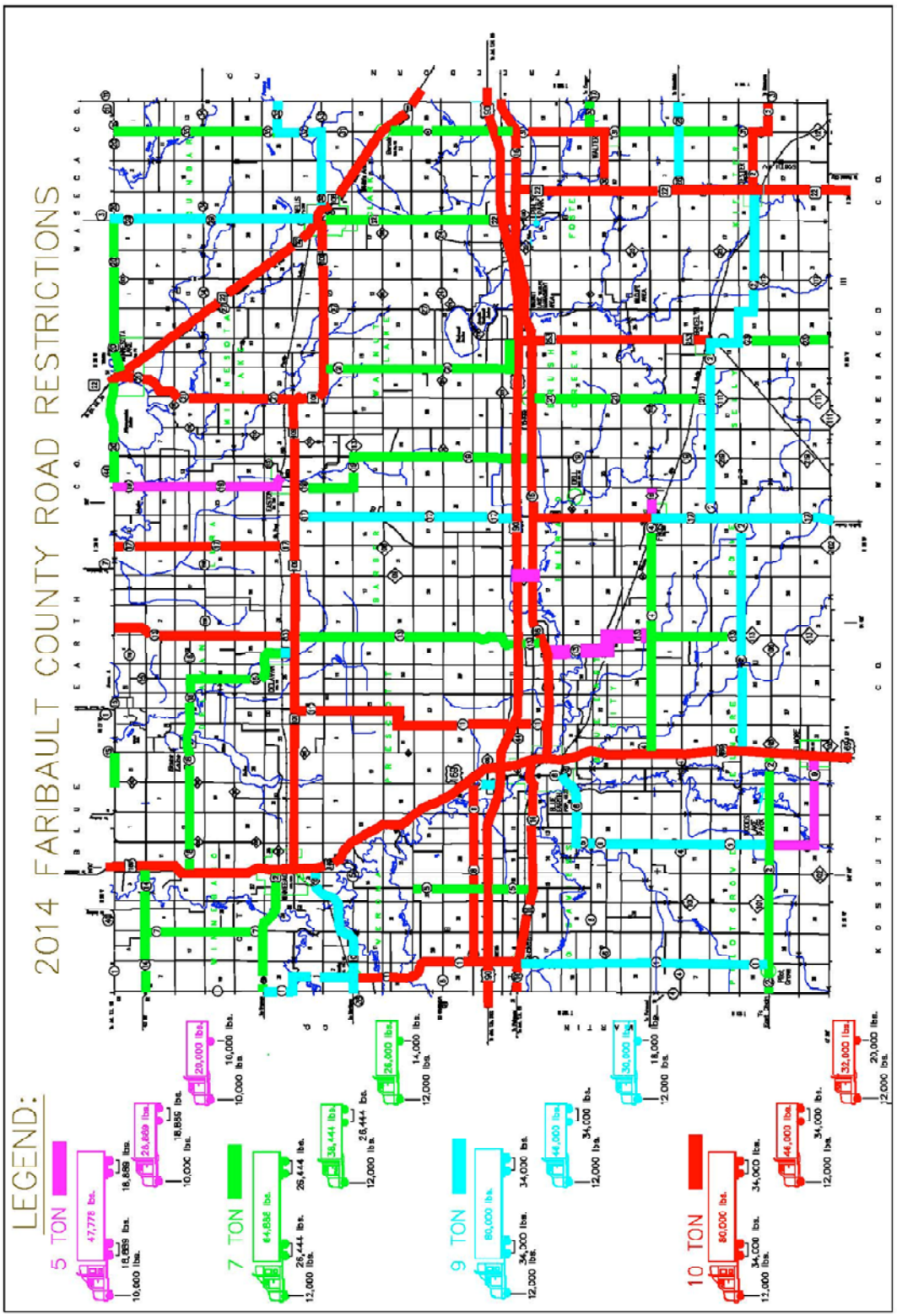
For local bridge funding, the county needs to continue to lobby for additional dollars to maintain and repair our bridges. The county also should continue to apply for state and/or federal funding for large scale bridge projects.

The county should continue to lobby for more transportation funding in general as Minnesota Department of Transportation has many miles of roadway in the county.

Load Weight Restrictions

Load weight restrictions on the county's highway system can often be an impediment to the efficient flow of trucks and farm equipment throughout the county. Spring time can be especially problematic as additional restrictions must be placed on many roads until soils settle. A map showing the weight posted on bridges in Faribault County is shown in Figure 10-3.

Figure 10-3: Weight Restrictions Map (Posted on Bridges)



Jurisdiction Changes

The county will continue to work with MN DOT, the communities within the county and the townships on roadway jurisdictional changes. As traffic generators move into the county, traffic patterns might change. The county should be cognizant of these issues and be willing to work with the various governmental units to make jurisdictional changes.

10.5.2 AIRPORTS

Land use planning best management practices suggest restricted development adjacent to public airports. The county should work with the communities of Blue Earth and Wells to educate property owners on airport zoning requirements and ensure that development does not encroach upon these areas. Of particular concern, is the development of wind energy conservation systems (WECS), or wind turbines. FAA regulations require that structures taller than 200 feet not be constructed within 20,000 feet of airports with runways over 3,200 feet in length, within 10,000 feet of airports with runways less than 3,200 feet in length, or within 5,000 feet of heliports. The complete FAA regulations regarding the construction of tall structures adjacent to airports and heliports can be found in 14 C.F.R. § 77.9 (3). In the future, the county may encourage a survey of businesses to assess the need for expanded airport capacity.

10.5.3 TRANSIT

In 2015, Faribault County will be changing its transit system to a shared system with Martin County.

10.6 SUMMARY

Since Faribault County is primarily agrarian in nature, ensuring efficiency in the movement of agricultural goods will always be one of the primary goals for public officials. Financing improvements to ensure the transportation of agricultural equipment and produced goods is critical.

The main issues of concern with the roads include; improving access to the rural communities, providing funds for road maintenance (including snow removal), and creation of transit alternatives for various population groups. Goals, objectives and implementation action steps formulated by county stakeholders in the planning process listed these issues as well as a reminder to target measures to align the County's current and future transportation potential with economic development opportunities through an updated, efficient and sustainable zoning ordinance.

10.7 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Work with legislature and local, state, and federal agencies to ensure that essential maintenance and repairs on both urban and rural roads are funded.

- Ensure that funding is distributed equitably (gasoline tax)
- All levels of road are of high quality and equally maintained.
- Prevent roads from falling into disrepair
- Develop relationship with local legislators
- Lobby for additional funds for road detour damage to other roads

- Higher standards for road projects

Promote the development of an integrated transportation network.

- Ensure that all infrastructure is developed to need the needs of all users.
- Maintain infrastructure to provide for a high quality of life that keeps current residents and attracts new.
- Promote resources that we have.
- Provide public transit system.

Address safety issues that may adversely impact the economic development or the safety of the county.

- More ten ton road access
- Working together collaboratively to efficiently utilize resources.
- Enforce weight restrictions.

Educate the public

- Work with Minnesota Township Association
- Develop and update 911 paper map

10.8 BIBLOGRAPHY

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11. LAND USE

Land Use planning is a term used for "a type of planning encompassing various disciplines which seek to order and regulate land use in an efficient and ethical manor", thus preventing land use conflicts. Governments use land use planning to manage the development of land within their jurisdiction. In doing so, government units can plan for the needs of the community while safeguarding natural resources. A systematic assessment of land and water potential, alternatives for land use, and economic and social conditions in order to select and adopt the best land use options. While land use is only one section of this Comprehensive Plan, it provides a vision for the future possibility of development in neighborhoods, districts, communities, and other defined planning areas.

Land use is defined as: "the human use of land" and "involves the management and modification of the natural environment into a built environment such as fields, pastures and settlements". This Comprehensive Plan means "the policies, statements, goals, and planning for private and public land and water use, including ordinances and maps, which constitute the guide for the future development of the county". Land use planning often leads to land use regulation, which typically encompasses zoning. Zoning regulates the types of activities that can be accommodated on a given piece of land, as well as the amount of space devoted to those activities, and the way that buildings may be situated and shaped. Planners and citizens often take on an advocacy role during the planning process in an attempt to guide public policy. Due to a host of political and economic factors, governments are slow to adopt land use policies that are congruent with scientific data supporting more environmentally sensitive regulations.

As required by MN Statute 394.21, "for the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, any county in the state having less than 300,000 population, according to the 1950 federal census, is authorized to carry on county planning and zoning activities". In order to fulfill these obligations outlined in this Statute and others, the county must implement land use management measures through its Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations. The current Zoning Ordinance for Faribault County was written in the late 1960's and was derived from the adoption of the 1967 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and MN Statutes and MN Rules. The Comprehensive Plan must provide guidelines for the timing and sequence of the adoption of official controls to ensure planned, orderly, and staged development and redevelopment are consistent.
Subsequent sections of this plan have direct relations to land use, and therefore, information from those sections are utilized to complete this section. It is becoming more widely understood that land has a certain capacity for supporting human, animal, and vegetative life in harmony, and that upsetting this balance has dire consequences on the environment.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The county is known for its "prime farmland." This prime farmland is some of the most productive land in the world in terms of production per-acre. The primary crops and primary plants covering most of the land surface in Faribault County during the 5-month growing season are corn and soybeans. Over the decades, Faribault County's economy and land use has remained and will continue to remain agriculturally based.

While recent years Faribault County have seen the development of the county's shorelands, wind power development, ethanol development and others, its location in Minnesota has provided the county with land use needs that are dominated by corn and soybean farming. According to the 2013 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Cropland Data Layer (Map in Appendix A), Faribault County has 83 percent of its land tied to agricultural use, 5 percent is in forest, pasture or grasses, 7 percent is developed, and 5 percent is water or wetlands. Some of the land is not as suitable for agricultural production, but for the most part, agricultural land uses during the past 25 years has remained agriculturally productive and little unincorporated or incorporated urban growth has occurred.

Whether the county experiences a positive growth or negative decline in population, it is important to include objectives in the plan that ensure the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is being applied and implemented fairly throughout the county. Therefore, it is important to include the following objectives:

- Identify critical areas for potential urban growth;
- Restrict development in environmental sensitive areas and areas not suited for development;
- Encourage preservation of the natural environmentally and protect critical resources such as groundwater;
- Identify rural housing development needs and allow for expansion of existing areas;
- Prevent conflict between urban and rural land users;
- Ensure that future renewable energy facilities are properly placed within the landscape;
- Protection of our sensitive areas;
- Better understanding of the importance of our soil health.

Land use will continue to impact the essential character of the county far into the future. Therefore the county must carefully and systematically evaluate and prepare for growth in a way that minimizes conflict, maintains the character of the county, and protects the natural environment.

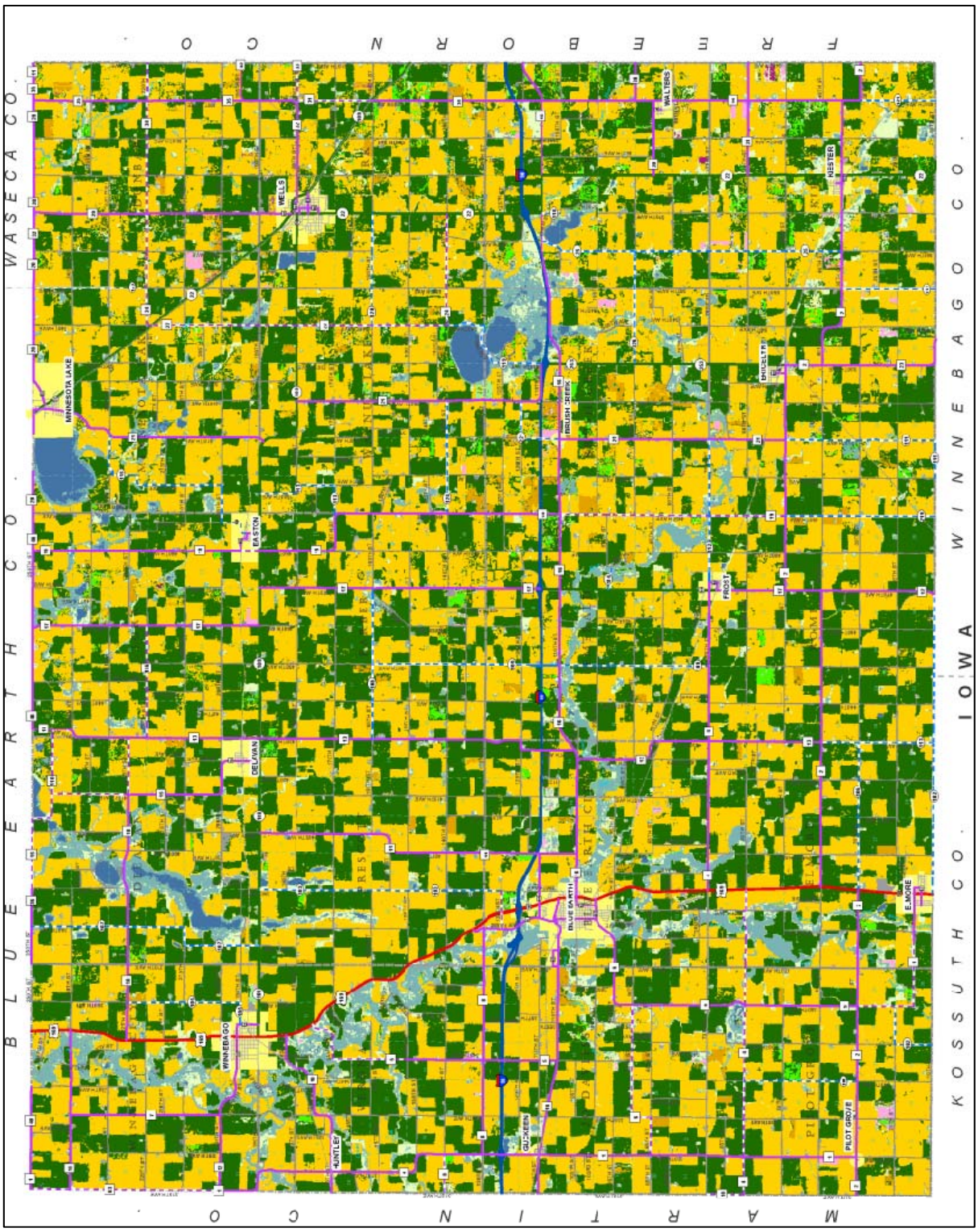
The Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan will guide the county toward protecting the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the residents through its Zoning Ordinance, which was developed and adopted, and will continue to be amended as these land uses change. In addition, this section identifies the county's responsibility in regards to its agriculture, communities, water resources, shorelands, feedlots, and other identified land uses as the county is obligated to protect its cultural, economic, and natural resources.

Efforts have been made to coordinate this plan's goals and implementation strategies with both the local communities and their plans in order to appropriately reflect the values of the County and the importance that it's citizens place on the environment
Because of the geographical location, the State of Minnesota has more freshwater available to us than any of the country's other contiguous 48 states. Water is part of Minnesota's identity and a defining force in our state's history, heritage, environment, and quality of life. Being at the headwaters of three of the largest river basins in North America, Minnesota receive 99% of its water from rain and snow, consequently, most of our water quality problems originate right here in our own state and our own county. While this means we are not forced to respond to water problems originating elsewhere, it also means we have a responsibility to take care of our water for our sake and for all those who are impacted downstream.

Over time, as Faribault County was settled, cleared, developed, and farmed, these human-induced changes took an unintended toll on our lakes, rivers, groundwater, and their related ecosystems. As we will not experience a population growth, it is crucial that any future growth be done while considering the health, safety, and general welfare of our residents. In addition, we will experience the effects of the quality and quantity of water leaving our rural landscape, making it important to work together to maintain our local ordinances, recognize and mitigate future needs, and minimize potential negative land use changes.

While Land Use is only one section in this plan, the previous ten chapters all influence land use. County Profile, who are we; History, how did we get here; Housing, where can homes be built; Economic Development, where can businesses be built without restrictions; Public Recreation, where and what types of recreation can occur; Environmental Concerns, what is influencing the environment in both negative and positive manners; Critical Facilities and Essential Services, what are these facilities and services and where can they take place; and Transportation, how do people get from one place to another; while they all have their own identity they all greatly influence Land Use regulations and Zoning Ordinances.

Figure 11-1 Land Use/Cropland Data - 2013



11.2 LAND USE SNAPSHOT

- Variety of land types
- Need for updated ordinances and codes
- The need and proper placement of new cluster development opportunities
- Identifying potential growth boundaries
- Additional shoreland residential development
- Improved road access for commercial and industrial land use
- Abandoned building removal or renovation
- The change in land use has not been considered in current ordinances
- The push and pressure for renewable energy projects
- Much needed updating of the current Zoning Ordinance

These issues became the building blocks upon which the Future Considerations, Goals, and Objectives were developed.

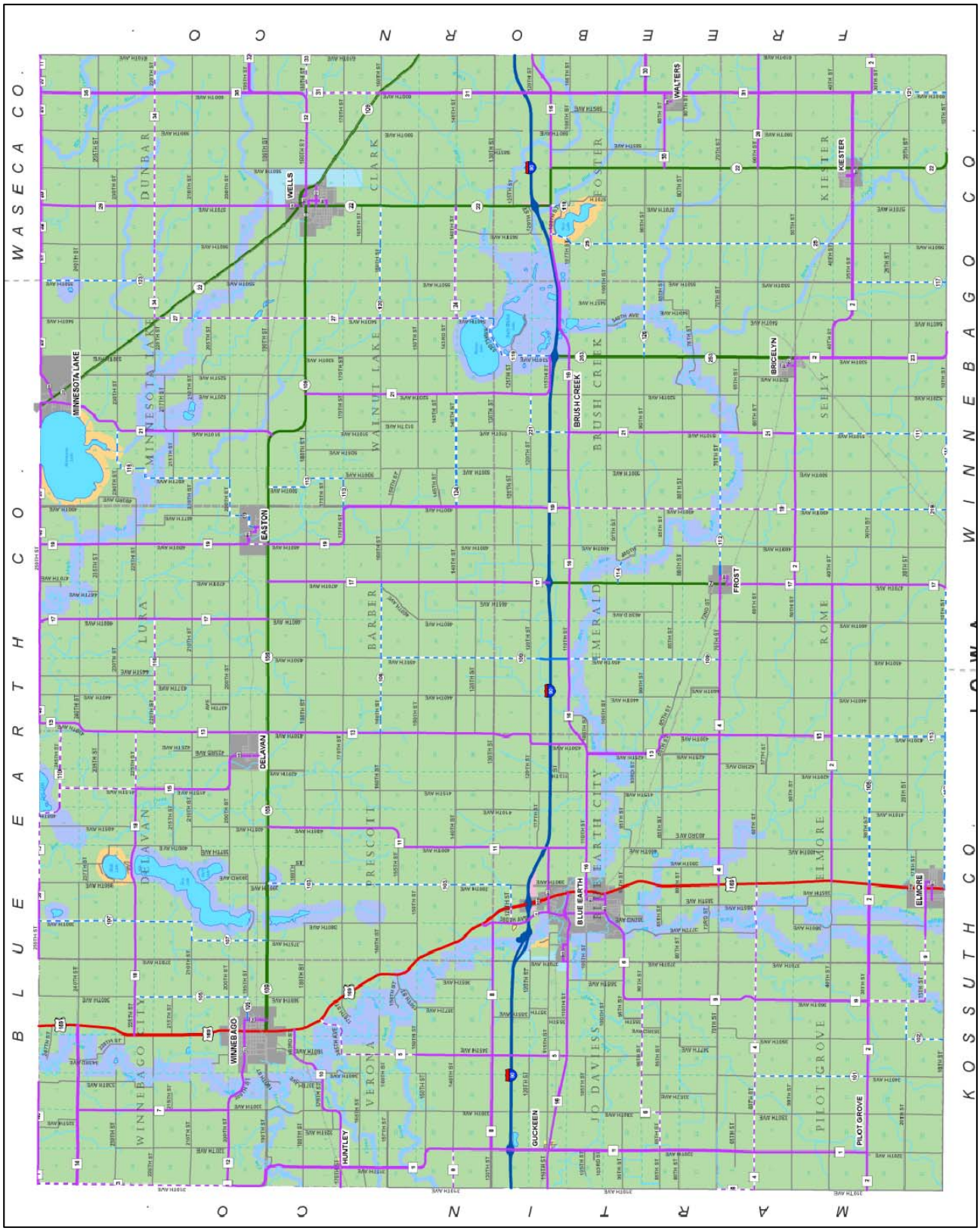
11.3 CURRENT ORDINANCES

Official controls, more commonly known as Ordinances, are laws passed by the county to promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare throughout Faribault County by lessening congestion in the public rights-of-way; securing safety from fire, panic and other dangers; providing adequate light and air; facilitating the adequate provision of water, sewage and other public requirements; conserving the value of properties and encouraging the most appropriate use of land, pursuant to "an act authorizing county planning and zoning activities, establishing a Board of Adjustment and authorizing the enactment of official controls and providing penalties for the violation thereof" as enabled by Minnesota State Statutes 394. 103F, and 103, as amended.

The following is a list of current ordinances and their adoption date, however, some of these ordinances have been amended, from time to time, since their original date of adoption:

- Zoning Ordinance – Adopted July of 1968
- Shoreland Regulations – Adopted July 1968
- Tower Facilities – Adopted March 1, 2005
- Feedlot Ordinance – Adopted September 24, 1997, Amended December 1, 2004
- Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) – Adopted June 19, 2007, Amended June 17, 2014
- 911 – Adopted October 19, 2004
- Floodplain Ordinance – Adopted March 17, 1992
- Huntley Sewer Service District – Adopted December, 2007
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Airport Overlay District – Adopted May 5, 2011
- Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS)- Adopted August 19, 2010
- Adult Use Ordinance – Adopted July 17, 2012
- Pipeline Ordinance - Adopted March 29, 2013

Figure 11-2 Zoning Districts 2015 Map



11.4 CURRENT LAND USE DISTRICTS

Within the Zoning Ordinance, a county is required to identify "districts". A District is defined as "a section of the county for which the regulations governing the height, area, use of buildings and premises are the same". In 1967, the county identified 4 classes of "districts" including Agricultural, Residential, Business, and Industrial.

As with the county, the communities also include "districts" of their own. They are a mixture of residential, business, industrial, and natural areas districts. Although similar to the districts within the county, they have much different rules and regulations. More information on each of our communities can be found in Appendix C.

Faribault County is comprised of twenty organized townships. Three of them include portions of a municipality. Beyond agricultural land cover and land uses, the primary land use issues for townships are related to rural housing, ag. related industrial development, and any development that could occur at the municipal boundaries.

11.4.1 AGRICULTURAL

A-1 Shoreland Agriculture District

Purpose: The intent of the A-1 SHORELAND AGRICULTURE DISTRICT is to provide a district that will: (1) allow limited agricultural activities because of topographic and physiographic characteristics and the public water resource; (2) retain major areas of natural ground cover and surface water for conservation purposes; (3) reduce scattered, non-farm growth and manage it to protect the water resource; and (4) secure economy in governmental expenditures for public services, utilities and schools.

A-2 General Agriculture District

Purpose: The intent of the A-2 GENERAL AGRICULTURE DISTRICT is to provide a district that will:(1) allow suitable areas of Faribault County to be retained in agricultural use; (2) reduce scattered, non-farm development; and (3) secure economy in governmental expenditures for public services, utilities and schools.

11.4.2 RESIDENTIAL

R-1 Rural Residence District

Purpose: The intent of the R-1 RURAL RESIDENCE DISTRICT is to provide a district that will allow low density residential development and on-lot utilities where municipal utilities are not available.

R-2 Shoreland Residential District

Purpose: The purpose of the SHORELAND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT is to provide a district which will (1) allow Shoreland residential development in compliance with the Laws of Minnesota, and (2) allow certain essential shoreland service activities under specified conditions and standards.

R-3 Manufactured Home Park District
Purpose: The intent of the R-3 MANUFACTURED HOME PARK DISTRICT is to provide a district that will accommodate clustered manufactured home placement in accordance with state statutes.

11.4.3 BUSINESS

B-1 Highway Service Business District
Purpose: The intent of the B-1 HIGHWAY SERVICE BUSINESS DISTRICT is to provide a district for uses which require large concentrations of automobile traffic. The district is also designed to accommodate those commercial activities which may be incompatible with the predominantly retail uses permitted in other business districts, and whose service is not confined to any one neighborhood or community

B-2 General Business District
Purpose: The intent of the B-2 GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT is to provide a district that will retain and allow general commercial uses in the small, unincorporated urban communities in the county (Brush Creek, Guckeen, Huntley, and Pilot Grove).

11.4.4 INDUSTRY

I-1 Light Industry District
Purpose: The intent of the I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRY DISTRICT is to provide a district that will (1) allow light industrial development related to the existing development in the urban communities of the county, (2) encourage development that is compatible with surrounding or abutting districts, and (3) provide development standards that will not impair the traffic carrying capabilities of abutting roads and highways.

I-2 Heavy Industry District
Purpose: The I-2 HEAVY INDUSTRY DISTRICT is intended to provide a district which will allow heavy industrial uses which, due to their size and nature, would not be compatible with general rural development patterns of Faribault County.

11.5 CURRENT USES

Uses, as defined by the Zoning Ordinance mean “The purpose for which land or premises or a building thereon is designated, arranged or intended, or for which it is or may be occupied or maintained”.

As defined, a variety of uses occur within each of the mentioned districts. Within each district, there are “uses” that are considered “permitted”, meaning they are allowed, and other uses that are considered “conditionally permitted”, meaning that one must go through the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process in order for the use to be allowed. If the use is neither permitted nor conditionally permitted, the use is not allowed. The majority of the current uses defined in the ordinance today, reflect land use dating back to the late 1960’s. Most of the land use remains and will remain centered around agriculture.

11.6 CURRENT REGULATION

Within each of the districts, there are specific regulations in regard to Height, Yard, Area, Lot Width and Depth, Setback, and Elevation. These regulations differ amongst the districts for a number of reasons.

11.7 CURRENT ZONING MAP

The Official Zoning Map for Faribault County was last updated in 1994. The Districts on the current zoning map were based on 40 acre parcels.

11.8 FUTURE ORDINANCES

Local ordinances are laws passed by the county. Faribault County, as with all counties, experiences both positive and negative changes and challenges in regard to Land Use brought on by potential growth and potential recession. It will always be the responsibility of the county to ensure that all official controls are in place, kept up to date, and in compliance with Minnesota Statutes and Minnesota Rules, as required by the State Legislature. As the county moves forward in updating existing ordinances to ensure compliance, it also offers the county an opportunity to review and discuss in depth the potential positives and negatives these changes will have on the county.

11.8.1 FUTURE ORDINANCE UPDATES

As with all counties, Faribault County will continue, as required, to update current ordinances in order to comply with current legislation.

11.8.2 FUTURE ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the updates mentioned in the future ordinance updates, the county must also respond to state mandates by developing and adopting a Landfill Ordinance, and a Solar Ordinance. The Landfill Ordinance is required as the Faribault County landfill is currently under the State of Minnesota's jurisdiction. The county will develop a Renewable Energy Ordinance that will contain a new Solar Ordinance in addition to the existing Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) Ordinance.

11.9 FUTURE LAND USE DISTRICTS

Since the early 1970's, the county has experienced some minor and more importantly, major land use changes, beginning with the construction of Interstate I-90, a large Wind Project, multiple large Grain Facilities, and large transmission line upgrades. As a result of these changes, it is important that the county actively address the "zoning" needs and required regulations of not only these land use concerns, also looking into the future at any projects that will be moving into Faribault County to ensure the general health, safety, moral, and general welfare of the residents.

11.9.1 AGRICULTURAL

As the future of our agricultural industry continues to change, Faribault County needs to continue to support these future needs. We also need to consider the protection of our prime agricultural lands. Economic development projects such as large wind facilities, solar energy projects, towers, transmission lines, larger feedlots, and businesses are just

examples of land use changes that have occurred in the agricultural district. These and additional opportunities that could remove prime farmland from production will need to be monitored and regulated through the current and updated ordinances.

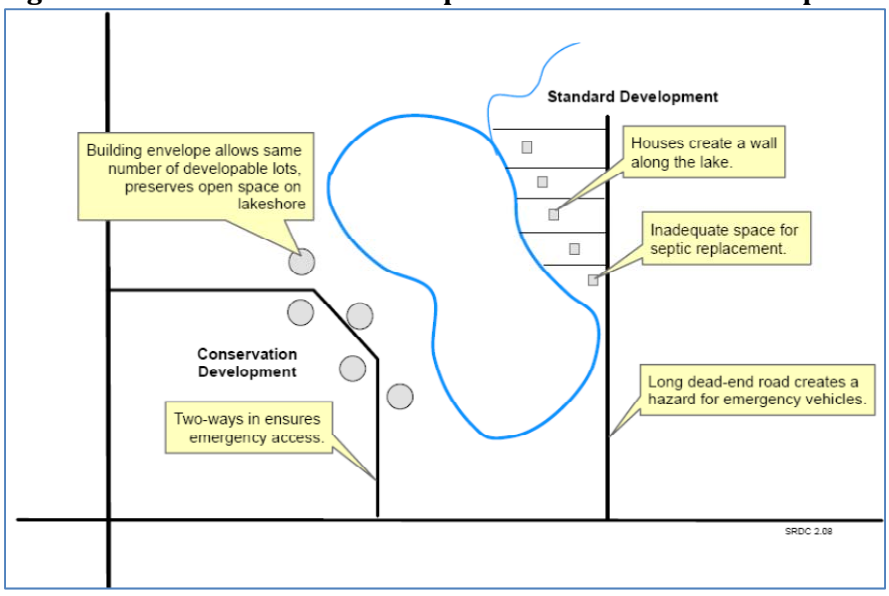
In order to keep our Ag areas productive, the county needs to continue to encourage controls that protect the value of the soil for future agriculture uses by promoting Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will manage soil erosion, increase soil health, and protect the quality and quantity of the surface and groundwater. Housing in the Agricultural District remains to be popular, however, a number of acreages have disappeared over the past decade to make way for additional farm land, making the availability of rural housing limited.

11.9.2 RESIDENTIAL

Future amendments to the Zoning Ordinance should consider combining all residential districts into "General Residential". With the Shoreland Ordinance becoming an "overlay" district, the Shoreland Residential District will no longer be necessary.

Future un-planned rural housing developments in the agricultural district should be allowed due to the lack of high end housing currently available. In allowing this, restrictions that ensure these areas would protect the environment are necessary. One way to achieve this is to promote "Conservation Development". This type of development is more environmentally friendly, and save on development and maintenance costs. Figure 11.1 is a comparison between conservation development and standard development.

Figure 11-3 Conservation Development vs. Standard Development



Currently the ordinance states that in order to construct a new dwelling, 5 acres (400' x 400') is required. This is a good size to ensure enough room for the establishment of a compliant septic system, with alternative site.

11.9.3 BUSINESS

With the future of the county being based on agricultural land and production, many of the new businesses beginning operation in Faribault County tend to be Ag-based in nature. For many reasons, mostly for efficiency, dust, noise, and traffic, they were placed outside of the urban areas.

Over the past years, the desire for home-based businesses, or small businesses wanting to be located on existing farmsteads, or other small parcels, within the Agricultural District has been on the rise. This type of businesses being requested are not clearly defined in the current ordinance, making it important to clarify in future updates to the Zoning Ordinance what is appropriate to consider in the General Ag District.

11.9.4 INDUSTRY

Currently the two Industrial Districts in Faribault County, Heavy Industry and Light Industry, are specific to limited areas within the county. These districts currently exist on the perimeters of Blue Earth and Wells, within our unincorporated communities of Brush Creek, Guckeen, Huntley, and Pilot Grove, and a small sliver of land near the Wells exit to I-90. As these districts were established, these areas made the most sense because of their location along the Highway 16 corridor. However, with the construction of Interstate I-90, these areas may be expanded to allow for future economic development opportunities at all off ramps though Faribault County.

11.9.5 SHORELAND DISTRICT

Faribault County has areas within the county that are considered to be in "shoreland", meaning the land is located within 1,000 feet from the Ordinary High Water Level of a lake, pond, or flowage" 300 feet from a river or stream, or the landward extent of a flood plain as designated by ordinance on a river or stream, whichever is greater. Therefore, shoreland areas are most generally located on Public Waters. Additional information on shorelands can be found in Section 8 of this plan.

The MN Department of Natural Resources, DNR, is the agency in Minnesota charged with conserving and managing the state's natural resources. The DNR has set the "ground rules" and the counties are required to adopt them. These rules, otherwise known as MN Rules 6120.2800, states that "Each local government is responsible for administration and enforcement of its shoreland management controls adopted in compliance with these standards and criteria. Nothing in these standards and criteria shall be construed as prohibiting or discouraging a local government from adopting and enforcing controls that are more restrictive". (4)

Shoreland areas in the current Zoning Ordinance are included in both the Agricultural District, and Residential Districts. For those shoreland areas within the Agricultural District, there are agricultural use standards. They include;

- The shore impact zone for parcels with permitted agricultural land uses equal to a line parallel to and 50 feet from the Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL).

- General cultivation farming, grazing, nurseries, horticulture, truck farming, sod farming, and wild crop harvesting are permitted uses if steep slopes and shore and bluff impact zones are maintained in permanent vegetation.
- Animal feedlots, as defined by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), where allowed by zoning district designations, must be reviewed as conditional uses and must meet specific standards and setbacks.
- Use of fertilizer, pesticides, or animal waste within shorelands must be done in such a way as to minimize impact on the shore impact zone or public water by proper application or use of earth or vegetation.

Vegetation management regulations are often inadequately enforced. Natural vegetation areas not only provide a link to the county's past, they also provide aesthetically pleasing environments and a home to wildlife.

In future amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, Shoreland areas need to be their own "overlay" district. In addition to the re-structuring of the Shoreland areas, Section 20 Shoreland Regulations, must be amended to comply with MN Rule 6120, including defining the classes of public waters and to include the identification of sensitive areas. The classes of Public Waters, including rivers and lakes, can be found in Section 8.

11.9.6 SPECIAL PROTECTION DISTRICT

As part of MN Statutes 6120, Shoreland Management Rules, Faribault County must consider establishing a Special Protection District to be used for two basic purposes.

- To limit and properly manage development in areas that are generally unsuitable for development or uses due to flooding, erosion, limited soil conditions, steep slopes, or other major physical constraints, and
- To manage and preserve areas with special historical, natural, or biological characteristics. This district is necessary for the protection and preservation of our natural resources and is a way to accomplish this for our future generations.

Any updates to the Shoreland Ordinance will address these needs.

11.9.7 FLOODPLAIN DISTRICT

Floodplain is defined as "the land adjoining lakes and rivers that is covered by the "100-year" or "regional" flood. This flood is considered to be "a flood that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year". Many of the floodplain areas within Faribault County are those low areas along public waters. Since Chapter 103F delegates the responsibility to local government units to adopt regulations designed to minimize flood losses, it is important to carefully evaluate any activity that may alter the floodplain.

With the passing of the "State Floodplain Management Act" (MN State Statutes, Chapter 103F), local floodplain regulatory programs, administered by county government, must be compliant with federal and state floodplain management standards, any future updates to the local ordinance will need to meet this criteria. The current Floodplain Ordinance for Faribault County was adopted in 1985, and is considered a "restrictive" ordinance, meaning

that very little activity is allowed and structures are prohibited. Additionally, in the future, it is not necessary to identify a specific "Floodplain District", but to include the floodplain as an "overlay" district similar to shoreland. Additional floodplain information can be found in Section 8 of this plan.

11.10 FUTURE OF LAND USE

Use of land within Faribault County has changed over the past 47 years. Many of the uses that are listed as either allowed, or conditionally allowed are still very viable. However, over the past years, additional uses that are currently not listed, or are similar uses, have occurred. The majority of the additional uses have occurred in the Agricultural District, making it necessary for the county to consider expanding uses that are either allowed, or are conditionally allowed.

Many of these uses are discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan and include issues such as renewable energy, agri-business, economic development along critical corridors, housing opportunities, and transportation needs.

11.11 FUTURE REGULATION

Within the Zoning Ordinance, each district, for many reasons including oversight by outside regulators, has rules and regulations relating to specific land uses. In addition, the ordinance identifies rules and regulations for structure(s) including height, setbacks to roads, water resources, elevation, and parcel area width and depth requirements. These regulations should be reviewed on a regular basis and be amended to conform to MN Statutes, MN Rules, and reflect current land use changes appropriately.

Other topics of concern identified in the county Zoning Ordinance that need to be reviewed and/or amended include issues such as:

11.11.1 SIGNS

Signs are an integral part of any business. MN Statutes, Chapter 173 regulates signs and billboards along our state aide highways (169, I-90, 109, 253, 254, and 22). As stated, it is necessary to reasonably and effectively regulate and control the erection or maintenance of advertising devices on land adjacent to roadways in order to protect the general health, safety, and general welfare of the residents, but mostly in regard to safety.

Faribault County must comply with Chapter 173 in regard to billboards, however, the county must also consider that signs are part of establishing and sustaining a business. Most business being conditionally permitted are within the General Ag District where currently only limited signs are allowed. A review of the existing sign ordinance is necessary.

11.11.2 EXTRACTION OF MINERALS

The exploration and extraction of mineral materials is common throughout Faribault County. Section 15 - General Regulations, Section D of the current ordinance, references

the guidelines required by anyone wishing to excavate, extract, or impound water. As these resources are being investigated, mining and/or excavation is desirable within the county.

11.11.3 ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Everyone depends on electricity, gas, water, cable TV, all types of communication, and other essential services on a daily basis. Essential Services can be categorized into Major and Minor, and policy could be made for each as the two are very different. There will continue to be a need to make modifications to existing services, and to install additional services in the future. However, it is the responsibility of Faribault County to ensure that these services are compliant with public health, safety, and general welfare responsibilities.

More information in regard to Critical Facilities and Essential Services can be found in Section 9 of this plan.

11.11.4 JUNKYARDS

MN Statutes 161.242, as amended, defines a junkyard as: "an establishment, place of business, or place of storage or deposit, which is maintained, operated, or used for storing, keeping, buying, or selling junk, or for the maintenance or operations of an automobile graveyard, and shall include garbage dumps and sanitary fills not regulated by the MN Pollution Control Agency". Any of these which are wholly or partly within one-half mile of any right-of-way of any state trunk highway, including the interstate highways, are regulated by the MN Department of Transportation. However, this leaves much of the county under local control and regulation.

11.11.5 NON-CONFORMING USES

Chapter 394.36 was amended, in 2009, to assist in better identifying particular nonconformities. any nonconformity, including the lawful use or occupation of land or premises existing at the time of the adoption of an official control under this chapter, may be continued, although the use or occupation does not conform to the official control. If the nonconformity or occupancy is discontinued for a period of more than one year, or any nonconforming building or structure is destroyed by fire or other peril to the extent of 50 percent of its estimated market value, any subsequent use or occupancy of the land or premises shall be a conforming use or occupancy. Nonconformities in regard to certain classes of property, and shoreland areas, have additional ruling.

11.12 FUTURE ZONING MAP

The current official zoning map is no longer effective or efficient in assisting the Zoning Department. With current and ongoing technology, including GIS (Geographical Informational Systems) and parcel data, staff and county officials are able to make more precise and accurate determinations such as site, distance, shoreland, floodplain, and location for critical zoning decisions. Most importantly it is much less time consuming, and the information is available for everyone. The county must adopt a new "official" zoning map as part of the ordinance update.

11.13 FUTURE PLANS

Like all counties in the State of Minnesota, Faribault County has other planning documents in place that are necessary for the health, safety, and protection of our residents, and also intersect with the this plan. These plans include, but are not limited to: The Faribault County Solid Waste Plan, the Faribault County Hazardous Mitigation Plan, and the Faribault County Water Plan, just to name a few.

The current Faribault County Hazard Mitigation Plan is currently in the process of being updated. As the county moves forward with this initiative, it is critical that not only the information contained in the land use section of this plan, but other sections as well be referenced. Information such as population, climate, geology, transportation, and others that are required in both plans should be consistent. This will allow all individuals involved in the planning process to strengthen ongoing working relationships.

Ongoing and future land use controls, permitting processes, and regulation must work cooperatively with how the county responds in regard to hazard mitigation.

11.14 FUTURE DRAINAGE

With Faribault County being known for its "prime farmland", in addition to our countless miles of natural waterways, artificial drainage has become necessary throughout the county to remove excess water from the landscape. Agriculture would be limited without over 240 miles of public open ditches and 700 miles of tile. With the continued and future need for artificial drainage, ditch maintenance, repairs, improvements, alternative drainage practices, water storage areas, and restoration practices become a priority for the county. The County should pursue a combination of enforcement and incentive programs to ensure that ditches, rivers, and streams are adequately buffered in order to prevent soil erosion, filter sediments and other pollutants, increase wildlife habitat, and ensure water quality protection of our ditches and waterways. In addition, the county will need to identify areas where water retention projects could be added to the landscape to take the additional pressures off our aged drainage systems, and overloading our natural waterways. Additional information can be found in both Chapters 2 and 8.

11.15 FLOODPLAINS

The natural floodplain is an important part of Faribault County's water system. It affects stormwater runoff, water quality, vegetative diversity, wildlife habitat, flood control, and aesthetic qualities of our rivers and lakes. Because of the important nature of these areas, any future ordinance amendments or development, that could potentially impact the floodplain should be carefully evaluated. More in-depth information on floodplains can be found in Chapter 8.

11.16 RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES - WIND

Faribault County currently has a Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) known as the Big Blue Wind Farm (36MW) Project located mostly in JoDaviess Township, and other Small Wind Energy Conversion Systems (SWECS). The Big Blue project was completed in

2013, and covers approximately 15,000 acres, with the land occupied by the wind farm being less than 1% of this area. As we hear more about harvesting wind to create electricity, there is a strong chance that we will see more activity involving LWECS being proposed in the county. These LWECS must go through the Minnesota State Permitting Process for Large Electric Power Facilities. However, it is important that the county be involved and updated throughout these projects. While the county does not have quite the potential of the "Buffalo Ridge" area of Lincoln, Lyon and Murray Counties for wind energy development, as identified in a study conducted by Region Nine Development Commission in 2010 and 2011, it has more potential than any other county in the 9-county region that stretches from the Iowa border north to Sibley and Nicollet Counties north of the Minnesota River. The reason that this study is mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan is that Faribault County stands out in that study report as having the greatest possibility in several areas to take advantage of renewable energy resources. As of 2010/2011, the nine-county region has the potential to produce 765 trillion BTUs of renewable energy.

Faribault County has the greatest potential with (the resources to create) 14.8% of the region's renewable energy total, or 99.8 trillion BTU's, and wind energy was the dominant renewable energy source identified in the study, accounting for 87% of the total. Meaning that it is important that county officials continue to encourage the development of this renewable energy resource by allowing wind turbine construction.

In 2010, the county adopted a Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) Ordinance, Section 35, which covers Non-Commercial WECS (<100kW and under 200 feet) and Commercial WECS (≥ 100 kW and/or any WECS over 200 feet). The goal of the ordinance is to promote the effective and efficient use of Wind Energy Conversion Systems and to facilitate economic opportunities for local residents consistent with the public health, safety and general welfare. Since the adoption of this ordinance, other forms of renewable energy have made their way onto our landscape. (5)

Faribault County will be moving toward amending our current WECS ordinance to include solar energy, renaming that section to the Renewable Energy Ordinance.

11.17 RENEWABLE ENERGY – SOLAR

In 2013, the MN Legislature established a stand-alone solar energy standard that required, with certain exceptions, 1.5 percent of an investor-owned utility's electrical sales come from solar sources by 2020. The legislature also established a goal of achieving 10 percent of the state's total electrical sales from solar sources by 2030. The growth in installed solar capacity will come from a mix of smaller rooftop residential and commercial installations, but will also include much larger ground installations ranging in size from one to at least 100 megawatts (MW). With approximately seven to ten acres of land per MW required for ground installations, this increase in solar capacity has the potential to result in noticeable changes in the landscape.

With the basic information that was presented, it is imperative that Faribault County develop a Solar Ordinance that would allow for reasonable capture and use, by households, businesses, and property owners, of their solar energy resource, and encourage the development of renewable energy businesses, consistent with development standards. Allowing these new forms of energy is important, but proper location and consideration of health, safety, and general welfare of the residents will be critical. (6)

11.18 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Faribault County must include stormwater management in any amendments or development of ordinances in the future. In addition, the county must consider proper stormwater management in all reviews, approvals, and permits issued within the applicable areas. (7)

11.19 SHORELAND DEVELOPMENT

Although Faribault County is home to numerous lakes, not all of those lakes are equally suitable for development. Table 8-4 is a list of all lakes in Faribault County. Currently three lakes within the county are considered developable by the Department of Natural Resources, or currently have development occurring. They include Bass Lake, Minnesota Lake, and Rice Lake (Foster Township). Any future development around these lakes, or others that may suitable for development should be restricted to conservation development, planned unit development, clustered development, or other development patterns that minimize the need for new infrastructure while protecting the environment and ensuring easy access for emergency vehicles.

11.20 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Enforcement of vegetation management should be strengthened. There are various programs within various agencies that can assist with management along the rivers, lakes, and highways throughout Faribault County. Along with the MN Department of Transportation (Roadside Vegetation Management), the MN Department of Natural Resources (Lake Vegetation Management Plan), the county should continue to pursue these and additional funding sources.

Buffers, or grass filter strips are planted between fields and our surface waters to protect water quality. They slow runoff from fields, trapping and filtering sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other potential pollutants before they reach surface waters. They can be planted around drainage tile inlets for the same purpose. More information on buffers can be found in Section 8. (8)(9)

11.21 CONSERVATION AREAS AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

It is important for resource managers, local governments, community leaders and others to understand how local ecosystems are impacted by everyday decisions. As we move forward with land use regulation in the future, we must consider these potential impacts and work with agency and local professionals while developing ordinances in the future.

Like most counties in the region, Faribault County has conservation areas which include state Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs), Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) lands, and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands. These areas provide a rich mixture of hunting and wildlife observation experiences and should be preserved and encouraged as much as possible. Many of these areas within the county, are home to some of Minnesota's most endangered, threatened, and special concern species. These rare species are protected under MN Rules, Chapter 6134. This statute authorized the DNR to adopt rules that regulate treatment of species designated as endangered and threatened. More information on these particular resource protection areas can be found in Section 7.

11.22 SUMMARY

Land Use is the "human use of land and involves the management and modification of the natural environment into a built environment such as fields, pastures and settlements". In order for Faribault County to maintain a balance between the needs of the public, and the protection of our environment, it is imperative that Land Use controls are in place. In order to sustain this balance, the county must continue to update and maintain this plan, and support efforts that go into future planning, and lastly, the development of official land use controls to ensure the protection of health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of Faribault County.

As MN Statutes and MN Rules are amended, updated, and added by the Legislature, Faribault County must maintain and support a Zoning Ordinance that is consistent with these regulations. As with any regulation, the county has the option to be more restrictive if the need is identified. In the future, many of these changes will include a host of political and economic factors that will greatly impact individual landowners, communities, financial resources, and natural resources throughout the county, making it more difficult and potentially slower to adopt through established policies and procedures.

This section of the plan is reflective of the current ordinance and land use concerns, but more importantly, it identifies the needs, concerns, and priorities in regard to future ordinances, districts, uses, regulation, mapping, and other issues facing Faribault County. Subsequent sections of this plan also have a direct correlation to land use and contain pertinent information that was used while developing this section.

11.23 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Promote a balanced diversity in the use of land.

- Ensure that current and future distribution of land use categories makes land attractive to families and businesses.
- Promote efforts to identify urban area boundaries for each community in the county.
- Identify and protect sensitive areas.
- Design initiatives to develop linked, multi-use trails and natural areas.
- Conduct research on the impacts of adopting the state building code.
- Identify growth areas within the County.

- Provide an interactive online tool that accesses the county's and each community's zoning criteria.
- Develop a Capitol Improvement Plan and a Facilities Plan for all County buildings and sites.
- Provide an online tool for one-stop shop access to financial sources.

Protect vulnerable areas and the unique cultural/historical identity of Faribault County.

- Maintain and enhance ties to the County's natural and historic assets.
- Identify ways to eliminate blight areas.
- Identify grants from the state and historic preservation office.
- Identify historic and natural preservation areas and implement initiatives to protect them
    - Educate residents on the importance of protecting these areas.
    - Future land use regulations should protect the natural preservation and wildlife areas.

Incorporate sustainability values into existing and new design, construction and renovation codes and ordinances.

- Explore renewable energy options and establish guidelines for renewable energy projects.
- Design initiative to develop linked, multi-use trails and natural areas.
- Explore best practices for building designs and managing the built environment.
- Support waste recycling and best practices for managing solid waste.
- Continue to enforce septic compliance.

Encourage infill/redevelopment opportunities to improve on the quality and use of infrastructure.

- Ensure that county and city infrastructure are optimized
- Increase awareness of public and private financial opportunities available for infrastructure improvement initiatives.
- Create regulations that allow for commercial and low density development.
- Create initiative to restrict growth on rural farmlands.
- Work with communities, townships, and school districts on exploring funding options to provide accessible public facilities.

Continue County's involvement in Renewable Energy projects.

- Maintain Zoning Ordinance
- Revise zoning guidelines to include renewable energy projects
- Revise zoning ordinances for all development.
- Inventory electric utility grid for renewable energy "zones".

11.25 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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12. APPENDIX A: Maps

Appendix A includes the following 11" x 17" color maps:

Figure 2-1 Cities and Townships
Figure 2-3 Public Drainage Systems
Figure 8-2 Watersheds
Figure 8-3 Impaired Waters 2012
Figure 8-5 Floodplain
Figure 8-6 2015 Shoreland
Figure 9-1 Emergency Service Districts
Figure 9-2 Educational Facilities and School Districts 2014-2015
Figure 10-1 Transportation
Figure 11-1 Land Use/Cropland Data 2013
Figure 11-2 Zoning Districts 2015

13. APPENDIX B: (SWOT)

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Appendix B contains the information collected at the public work sessions. After the work sessions, the information collected was summarized by Region Nine staff.

14. APPENDIX C: City Addendums

City of Blue Earth
City of Bricelyn
City of Delavan
City of Easton
City of Elmore
City of Frost
City of Kiester
City of Minnesota Lake
City of Walters
City of Wells
City of Winnebago