

CITY OF WILLMAR

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
7:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2020
VIRTUAL
GoTo MEETING**

Chair: Christina Nelson

Vice Chair: Rolf Standfuss

Members: Steve Gardner, Jeffery Kimpling, Cletus Frank, Jonathan Marchand, Terry Sieck, Dr. Jerry Kjergaard, and Khalif Ahmed Bashir.

AGENDA

1. Meeting Called to Order
2. Minutes of May 6, 2020 meeting
3. 2021 CIP Review
4. Miscellany
5. Adjourn

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2020**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. virtually via GoTo Meeting.

**** Members Present:** Christina Nelson, Jeff Kimpling, Steve Gardner, Cletus Frank, Rolf Standfuss, Jonathan Marchand, and Khalif Ahmed Bashir.

**** Members Absent:** Terry Sieck and Dr. Jerry Kjergaard.

**** Others Present:** Sarah Swedburg – Planner, Daniel Tempel -- Willmar, MN.

2. MINUTES: Minutes of the April 15, 2020 meetings were approved as presented.
3. TEMPEL PROPERTIES, LLC PLAN REVIEW – FILE NO. 20-02: Staff presented the request by Tempel Properties, LLC of Willmar for a plan review to allow a contractor shop & storage on property described as follows: The South 100 feet of Lot 7, Block 2, LEE-DON as measured along the east line of said Lot 7 (1611 15th St SE). The property is zoned GB, and the existing Dog Grooming business is anticipated to continue operation, renting space from Tempel Properties, LLC as the new property owners. The additional building constructed on the East portion of the lot would be used for a painting contractor shop & storage.

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed staff comments (see Attachment A).

Rolf Standfuss inquired about stormwater runoff. Staff reminded the Commission about the Stormwater Ordinance requirements and recommended compliance with the Ordinance be an additional condition of the approval of this request. Daniel Tempel stated that they have contracted with Bollig to plan for these requirements.

Steve Gardner inquired about alignment of the driveway & outdoor storage. Mr. Tempel informed the commission that the building is being built of size for interior storage for the business. Staff has also shared the exterior maintenance portion of the zoning ordinance with Mr. Tempel.

Cletus Frank asked for clarification on the easement. Mr. Tempel explained that they will be filing a completed easement agreement with 15th St Flats at the time of closing (end of May). This easement will include both ingress/egress access and private utility lines.

Mr. Gardner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Frank, to approve the Plan Review... with the following conditions:

- A. A site plan indicating parking lot layout shall be provided to staff prior to issuing building permits. Parking spaces provided shall meet minimum Zoning Ordinance requirements (11 spaces) or a Variance shall be obtained.
- B. The easement agreement created for the existing encroachment and private utility lines shall be properly executed and recorded. Any future utility lines requiring access from neighboring properties shall be covered by additional fully-executed easement agreements.
- C. The Stormwater Ordinance shall be complied with and plans shall be approved by the City Engineering Department.
- D. Use shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal rules, laws, and regulations at all times.

The Planning Commission reviewed and made affirmative findings of fact as per Zoning Ordinance Section 9.E.3.a.1-7.

The motion carried.

4. WILLMAR PUBLIC SCHOOLS (HIGH SCHOOL) SIGN PERMIT REVIEW – APPLICATION NO 20-16: Staff presented the request by Quick Signs, representative for Willmar Public Schools, an application for a wall sign (67 square feet) located at 2701 30th St NE. Planning Commission approval is required for any sign permit in a Government/Institution Zone other than freestanding signs of 20 square feet or less.

Staff reminded the commission of a number of sign permits approved for public school properties in the last several years. This sign is well within the precedent set for a wall sign size allowed on properties in a Government/Institution Zone and other zones throughout the City.

The Commission inquired about the Zoning Ordinance Standards for the G/I Zone. Staff will research standards for signs in this type of zone in other communities & bring back to the Commission for discussion at a future meeting.

Mr. Frank made a motion, seconded by Mr. Standfuss, to approve the wall sign as requested.

The motion carried.

5. MISCELLANY: Staff informed the Commission that an amendment to City Code regarding the allowance of chickens on residential properties may be discussed at a future time. As an amendment to the City Code, the Community Development Committee will be reviewing first.

Commissioners inquired about the status of the Thein Land Sale & House Move, as well as the Anderson & Burgett building project. Staff informed the Commission that both projects have been withdrawn at this time.

6. There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah Swedburg".

Sarah Swedburg
Planner

PLANNING COMMISSION – MAY 6, 2020

STAFF COMMENTS

1. TEMPEL PROPERTIES, LLC PLAN REVIEW – FILE NO 20-02:

- The applicant is Tempel Properties, LLC of Willmar, MN.
- The applicant is requesting a plan review to allow an addition of a contractor storage/shop on property described as follows: The South 100 feet of Lot 7, Block 2, LEE-DON as measured along the east line of said Lot 7 (1611 15th St SE).
- The property is zoned GB (General Business).
- Lot width, area, and setbacks are well exceeded.
- The property is about 20,000 sq ft, and the proposed building is 2,160 sq ft with an additional 2,890 sq ft of bituminous..
- Parking requirements for this use are as follows: “At least eight (8) spaces, plus one (1) space for each two (2) employees on each shift based on maximum planned employment, or at least eight (8) spaces plus one (1) space for each eight hundred (800) square feet of floor area, whichever is greater.”
 - Based on size of building (2,160 sq ft): 11 spaces required
 - Based on maximum planned employment (5): 11 spaces required
- The site will be accessed off of 15th St SE via the existing curb cut
- There was an easement created for the encroachment, but it was never executed or recorded. The seller is currently working on finalizing this issue, and hope to record the easement before or with the closing (May 30th). According to the title company, the closing can take place without it.
- The building façade is of similar colors to the existing building on the property.
- A dog grooming business currently operates out of the existing building on this property. It is intended for this business to continue to operate & rent from the new owners.
- Construction is scheduled to begin in 2020.
- Signage approvals are ancillary from site plan review/approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve plan review with the following conditions:

- A. A site plan indicating parking lot layout shall be provided to staff prior to issuing building permits. Parking spaces provided shall meet minimum Zoning Ordinance requirements or a variance shall be obtained.
- B. The easement agreement created for the encroachment shall be properly executed and recorded.
- C. The use shall meet all applicable local, state, and federal rules and regulations at all times.

2. HIGH SCHOOL SIGN REVIEW - APPLICATION NO 20-16:

- The applicant is Quick Signs, on behalf of Willmar Public Schools.
- The request is for a wall sign located at 2701 30th St NE (Public High School).
- The applicant is requesting a 67 square foot wall sign on the south side of the building, just west of the main entrance.
- The applicant was approved for a freestanding sign at the end of 2019.
- Zoning Ordinance requires Planning Commission approval of any sign in Government/Institution Zone other than a freestanding sign 20 square feet or less in size.
- The sign request is well within the standards of all other allowable freestanding signs in comparison to other Zoning Districts.

RECOMMENDATION: Motion to approve sign application 20-12 as requested.

2021

Score	Project	Budget	General Revenue	Bond	Sales Tax Bonds	WWTP Fund	Federal/State Aid
NA	Recreation Fields Invest in Willmar	Civic Center			\$ 6,000,000		
NA	Event/Rec Center Invest in Willmar	Civic Center			\$ 10,000,000		
NA	Community Center LOST Project	Community Center			\$ 500,000		
NA	Garfield/Molly Ponds	Stormwater			\$ 100,000		
50	Eagle Lake #3 - New Pumps	Wastewater				\$ 17,500	
47	Exterior Door Replacement/ADA Door Req	Auditorium	\$ 15,000				
46	Street Improvement Program	Engineering		\$ 5,380,000			\$ 1,000,000
46	Second set of Firefighting gear	Fire	\$ 100,000				
44	Hwy 12 LS Elimination; Construction; CRS	Wastewater				\$ 700,000	
43	Fire Station Parking Lots	Pavement Mang.		\$ 130,000			
42	Roof & Gutter Replacement	Auditorium	\$ 350,000				
42	Sperryville Park Improvements	Engineering		\$ 375,000			
42	PD Video Server	Infor Systems	\$ 20,000				
39	Playground Equipment	Parks and Rec	\$ 160,000				
39	Tightrope Cablecast VOD Server	WRAC	\$ 8,500				
38	BLA Insulation	Civic Center	\$ 350,000				
38	7th Street Parking Lot	Pavement Mang.		\$ 170,000			
37	100 X 100 Public Hangar & Apron Expansion Design Only	Airport	\$ 137,370				\$ 1,236,329
37	Outdoor Community Sign	Fire	\$ 22,000				
36	Swansson Field - Lights Softball - 3 Fields	Parks and Rec	\$ 233,000				
36	Swansson Field - Lights Softball - 3 Fields	Parks and Rec	\$ 233,000				
36	Swansson Field - Lights Softball - 3 Fields	Parks and Rec	\$ 233,000				
36	Rebuild Rau Park Fishing Pier	Public Works	\$ 15,000				
34	Windows	City Hall	\$ 40,000				
34	Roof Replacement	City Hall	\$ 65,000				
34	Public Restrooms ADA/Remodel	City Hall	\$ 15,000				
34	Basketball Courts	Parks and Rec	\$ 150,000				
34	Secure Garage	Police	\$ 35,000				
32	19th Avenue SW Path/5th E-15th W	Pavement Mang.		\$ 200,000			
31	Downtown Streetscape Project	Engineering		\$ 450,000			
29	6th St. Pedestrian Bridge over RR	Engineering		\$ 200,000			
28	Signal Pole Painting	Public Works	\$ 70,000				
27	Shop Drain Reconstruct	Public Works	\$ 20,000				
26	Storage Shed	Fire	\$ 10,000				
23	TriShaw Bike	Parks and Rec	\$ 12,000				
21	Carpet	City Hall	\$ 15,000				
19	Extra Patio Space - Cement Work	DOAC	\$ 25,000				
			\$ 2,333,870	\$ 6,905,000	\$ 16,600,000	\$ 717,500	\$ 2,236,329

2022

Score	Project	Budget	Cash	Bond	Sales Tax Bonds	WWTP Fund	State Aid/Federal
	Apron Expansion- Construction	Airport	\$ 22,017				\$ 418,330
	Apron Expansion- Design	Airport	\$ 3,750				\$ 71,250
	Tuck Pointing	Auditorium	\$ 400,000				
	ADA Requirements; Elevator & Bathroom	Auditorium	\$ 600,000				
	Interior Door Replacement	Auditorium	\$ 15,000				
	Tuck Pointing	City Hall	\$ 50,000				
	Ceiling in Basement	City Hall	\$ 10,000				
	Door Replacement	Civic Center	\$ 50,000				
	Locker room/Storage	Civic Center	\$ 400,000				
	Community Center LOST Project	Community Center			\$ 1,500,000		
	Concessions/Storage Unit	DOAC	\$ 350,000				
	Downtown Streetlights	Engineering		\$ 250,000			
	6th St Pedestrian Bridge over RR	Engineering		\$ 600,000			
	Street Improvement Program	Engineering		\$ 5,000,000			\$ 1,000,000
	Mobile and portable radio replacement	Fire	\$ 90,000				
	Thermal Imaging Camera Replacement	Fire	\$ 12,000				
	Park Shelter at Robbins Island	Parks and Rec	\$ 320,000				
	Playground Equipment	Parks and Rec	\$ 160,000				
	Pickleball Courts	Parks and Rec	\$ 120,000				
	19th Avenue SW Path/5th E-15th W	Pavement Mang.		\$ 100,000			
	Block 50 Parking Lot	Pavement Mang.		\$ 500,000			
	Drone Replacement	Police	\$ 5,000				
	Thermal Imaging/Night Vision Camera	Police	\$ 8,000				
	Signal Pole Painting	Public Works	\$ 70,000				
	Siding/Insulation/Windows in Shop	Public Works	\$ 200,000				
	Garfield/Molly Ponds	Stormwater			\$ 500,000		
	Southern Detention Pond	Stormwater			\$ 500,000		
	Eagle Lake No. 7 LS; construction; CRS	WWTP				\$ 650,000	
			\$ 2,885,767	\$ 6,450,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 1,489,580

2023

Score	Project	Budget	Cash	Bond	Sales Tax Bonds	WWTP Fund	Federal/State Aid
	Hangar 120'x90'	Airport	\$ 51,890				\$ 467,010
	Hangar Site Prep	Airport	\$ 231,592				\$ 540,382
	Air Conditioning	Auditorium	\$ 150,000				
	Locker Rooms	Auditorium	\$ 200,000				
	Ceiling	Auditorium	\$ 110,000				
	Subsurface Water Penetration Repair	Auditorium	\$ 750,000				
	Civic Center Lighting Project Inside and Out	Civic Center	\$ 230,000				
	Water Feature Resurface	DOAC	\$ 15,000				
	Pump/Filter Replacement	DOAC	\$ 75,000				
	Traffic Signals - Interconnect 1st Street Signals	Engineering		\$ 150,000			
	Downtown Streetlights	Engineering		\$ 250,000			
	Street Improvement Program	Engineering		\$ 5,000,000			\$ 1,000,000
	Mobile and portable radio replacement	Fire	\$ 90,000				
	Training / Burn Facility	Fire	\$ 650,000				
	Playground Equipment	Parks and Rec	\$ 160,000				
	Swansson Field Lights - Blue	Parks and Rec	\$ 340,000				
	10th Street RR Repair	Pavement Manag.		\$ 300,000			
	Forcible Entry Equipment	Police	\$ 5,000				
	Public Works Storage	Public Works	\$ 185,000				
	Southern Detention Pond	Stormwater			\$ 1,000,000		
	Vos Park Pond	Stormwater			\$ 300,000		
	Eagle Lake No. 8; construction & CRS	WWTP				\$ 520,000	
	Phase II Iverson Park LS; design	WWTP				\$ 105,000	
			\$ 3,243,482	\$ 5,700,000	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 625,000	\$ 2,007,392

2024

Score	Project	Budget	Cash	Bond	Sales Tax Bonds	WWTP Fund	Federal/State Aid
	Access road gates for MALSAR and VOR	Airport	\$ 12,000				
	Upgrade Terminal Building Furniture	Airport	\$ 2,250				
	Design Report - Sanitary Sewer Alt.	Airport	\$ 5,000				\$ 45,000
	Extend Sanitary Sewer	Airport	\$ 38,500				\$ 346,500
	Air Conditioning	Auditorium	\$ 150,000				
	Interior Door Replacement	Auditorium	\$ 15,000				
	Gun Range Lane Remodel	Auditorium	\$ 60,000				
	Isolate Gun Range Entrance	Auditorium	\$ 75,000				
	Cardinal Arena Ceiling	Civic Center	\$ 175,000				
	Traffic Signals Co Road 5/Willmar Ave	Engineering		\$ 400,000			
	Downtown Streetlights	Engineering		\$ 250,000			
	Street Improvement Program	Engineering		\$ 5,000,000			\$ 1,000,000
	Mobile and portable radio replacement	Fire	\$ 90,000				
	Thermal Imaging Camera Replacement	Fire	\$ 12,000				
	Playground Equipment	Parks and Rec	\$ 160,000				
	Northside Park Development	Parks and Rec	\$ 1,000,000				
	Truck Wash	Public Works	\$ 150,000				
	Vos Park Pond	Stormwater			\$ 500,000		
	Kennedy Pond	Stormwater			\$ 250,000		
	Iverson Park LS: design; construction, CRS	WWTF				\$ 520,000	
			\$ 1,944,750	\$ 5,650,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 520,000	\$ 1,391,500

2025

Score	Project	Budget	Cash	Bond	Sale Tax Bonds	WWTP Fund	Federal/State Aid
	2nd Floor Office Remodel	Auditorium	\$ 100,000				
	Stage Area Remodel	Auditorium	\$ 100,000				
	Street Improvement Program	Engineering		\$ 5,000,000			\$ 1,000,000
	Substation	Fire		\$ 2,000,000			
	Playground Equipment	Parks and Rec	\$ 160,000				
	Forensic Computer Upgrade & Related Equipment	Police	\$ 15,000				
	Fence/Gate PW Property	Public Works	\$ 60,000				
	Kennedy Pond	Stormwater			\$ 500,000		
	Western Interceptor Storm (Phase 2)	Stormwater			\$ 325,000		
	Welshire LS; design	WWTF				\$ 120,000	
			\$ 435,000	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 825,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 1,000,000

Chapter Five: Goals, Objectives, and Policies

This section of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the City of Willmar's goals, objectives and policy guidelines. They will be used to help make land use and planning decisions by those responsible for Willmar's future. The goals have been organized into eight topic areas. The goals are used as a framework for the objectives and policy guidelines. The policies, in turn, provide specific information on what values and issues are important to Willmar residents. More importantly, the objectives and policies clearly identify how decisions should be made by City officials on a day-to-day basis.

After discussion of issues and alternative overall growth policies, the following goals and policies are suggested for future growth and development for the City of Willmar. It is important to note that a goal is a long-range objective, whereas a policy is an action statement intended to implement the goal. These goals and policies are important because they constitute the land use plan and serve as the basis for the ordinances used to implement the plan. The courts have increasingly held that the goals and policies of a comprehensive plan are important determinants in interpreting different provisions of a zoning ordinance.

The community's nine goal areas are listed below:

- A. Economic Growth**
- B. Public Utilities**
- C. Transportation**
- D. Natural Resources & Environmental Quality**
- E. Parks & Open Space**
- F. Residential & Social Development**
- G. Historic Preservation & Aesthetics**
- H. Downtown**
- I. Citizen Participation & Intergovernmental Cooperation**

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

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

Objectives: Statements designed to achieve a goal. Objectives always begin with an action verb (i.e., promote, expand, design, etc.) and can be measurable if a date, dollar amount, or similar value is identified.

Policies: Statements which support the action of the objective. Policies are more specific recommendations and can be converted into action work plans.

Section A: Economic Growth

- 1. GOAL:** To have an economically sustainable community offering a diverse set of services, goods, and employment opportunities.

- 2. OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Promote economic development which will be beneficial to the community, including tax base enhancement, increased aesthetics, and expanded employment opportunities.
 - b. Promote the existing economic base and the expansion of existing businesses.
 - c. Work with the Economic Development Commission on a variety of business retention and expansion activities.

- 3. POLICIES:**
 - a. Encourage programs that promote diversified commercial growth to meet the needs of West-Central Minnesota.
 - b. Strengthen the business districts through various development and redevelopment programs.
 - c. Encourage full development of existing industrial and commercial land within the City.
 - d. Encourage the expansion of existing, and development of new, businesses at suitable locations.
 - e. Encourage commercial property owners to maintain and upgrade their existing buildings and land through reasonable design standards and maintenance ordinances.
 - f. Vacant properties should meet property maintenance standards.
 - g. Provide reasonable and safe access to all retail and industrial uses.
 - h. Provide adequate parking for all business and community needs, when feasible.
 - i. The impact on parking should be examined prior to making land use decisions.
 - j. Industrial and commercial land uses shall be located in areas where the adverse impact on surrounding land uses is minimized.

- k. Commercial and industrial uses should be located on soil types that are most able to accommodate such development.
- l. Industrial sites should have good access to utilities and transportation routes.
- m. Air, water and noise pollution from industry should be monitored and regulated in accordance with the MPCA (and MS4 requirements).
- n. Industrial and commercial sites should be preserved for future growth and not utilized for further residential development.
- o. Development should occur only in areas where utilities can be provided with optimal efficiency and cost.
- p. Provide for the orderly expansion of commercial, industrial, and residential areas.
- q. Encourage development through government participation in public finance programs such as JOBZ, tax increment financing, Economic Development Commission programs, etc.
- r. Promote green space and outdoor amenities by incorporating them into commercial and industrial development plans.
- s. Cultivate positive aesthetics and image of commercial, industrial, and residential areas, encouraging continual renewal and improvement.
- t. Encourage the expansion of medical services in the community, recognizing these services as a major industry bringing jobs and visitors to the City.
- u. Facilitate housing and community services as demographics change, in preparation for the baby boomers as seniors, when reviewing development plans.
- v. Promote activities of the Economic Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce, and other community organizations for both business retention and expansion.
- w. Promote Willmar as a great location to host conferences and other special events.
- x. Recognize the importance of Ridgewater College in contributing to the city's economy, diversity, identity, activity, arts, entertainment, opportunity, and social fabric.
- y. Continue to maintain, expand, and develop important public/semi-public community facilities, such as the Civic Center, Library, Aquatic Center, parks, and other key activity venues.
- z. Promote the use of the Willmar Municipal Airport as an economic development tool.

- aa. Expand and promote tourism opportunities throughout the greater Willmar area, including the use of our extensive trails, lakes, and parks.

Section B: Public Utilities

1. **GOAL:** To efficiently make available a full range of public utilities throughout the community.

2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Make public utilities affordable to both residents and business owners.
 - b. Provide public utilities in a manner that reinforces the City’s staged growth and redevelopment policies.

3. **POLICIES:**
 - a. Control City expansion by creating an urban growth boundary map based on public utility extension plans and forecasts.
 - b. Encourage new development in areas contiguous to existing development in the City to bring about orderly expansion of public utilities, thus supporting smart-growth land use practices while at the same time preserving parkland and green space.
 - c. Encourage dense development in areas where the soils, water table, and geological features support the efficient extension of public utilities.
 - d. Require a full complement of public utilities such as sewer, water, gas, electricity, telecommunications, broadband, storm sewer/retention ponds, etc.
 - e. In the upgrading of public utilities in redevelopment areas, refine the assessment policies to encourage the continued use and/or redevelopment of these areas.
 - f. Develop and update a public utilities plan and growth boundary map.
 - g. Affirm the City’s desire to serve all residents and business with municipal power, etc., and to work with other public and private utility entities in regional service matters.
 - h. Endorse technology advancement in industry and technology growth and awareness throughout the community, especially in new development.
 - i. Promote the expansion and use of the district hot water heating system.

Section C: Transportation

- 1. GOAL:** To have a comprehensive and functional public transportation system that serves the entire community.

- 2. OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Provide a transportation system (street, rail, air, pedestrian & bike trails) which complements land use development and reinforces a staged growth approach to future development.
 - b. Encourage street and trail systems which maximize accessibility to places of employment, recreation, shopping, entertainment, and all developed portions of the City
 - c. Cultivate a healthy City that is walkable and bikeable.

- 3. POLICIES:**
 - a. Integrate land use planning with transportation planning to minimize the adverse effects of transportation systems (i.e., noise and air pollution) on adjacent development.
 - b. Avoid developing transportation facilities that will adversely affect natural resources or encourage leap-frog development.
 - c. Develop a transportation system that properly balances considerations of safety, cost, accessibility and environmental protection.
 - d. Control land use development at major intersections and interchanges to avoid compromising the safety, accessibility and function of the streets involved.
 - e. Develop a transportation system that stimulates economic development and provides for the efficient, non-disruptive flow of goods, especially from rural to urban markets.
 - f. **Develop a transportation system that properly integrates all modes of transportation.**
 - g. **Develop and participate in programs to ensure adequate parking in the downtown area.**
 - h. Utilize existing right-of-way for the expansion of transportation systems to reduce the amount of agricultural land taken out of production, when feasible.
 - i. Develop additional minor arterials and collectors as the City grows.

- j. Encourage the beautification of principal arterial entrances into Willmar.
- k. Encourage expansion of the airport to accommodate larger aircraft and commercial development.
- l. Encourage connectivity of neighborhoods, including through cul-de-sacs via easements along property lines.
- m. Encourage the study and planning of a second crossing over the railroad tracks that is not at grade.
- n. Provide for efficient movement of traffic from residential areas in the north to commercial areas in the south (i.e., 1st St. N to 1st St. S. and 7th St. NW).
- o. Include aesthetic, as well as functional, considerations for all transportation plans.
- p. Encourage residential street design that allows for ancillary sidewalks and bike lanes, and storm water impacts, as well as to reduce residential development costs.
- q. Identify existing streets for designated bike lanes on the master transportation plan.
- r. Develop a bike trail system that encompasses existing and new developments.
- s. Access should be controlled consistent with the functional classification of roadways.

Section D: Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

1. **GOALS:** To protect and enhance the air, water, and land resources in the City as a vital ingredient of the human living environment.
2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Protect and enhance the existing lakes and wildlife habitat as vital natural resources to the City.
 - b. Promote standards for energy efficient buildings.
 - c. Promote programs to minimize energy consumption.
 - d. Promote recycling and programs to encourage the re-use of solid waste.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Promote land use management policies and programs that will protect the natural resources of the City.
- b. Utilize appropriate state and federal standards related to air, water, and noise pollution.
- c. Use natural resource information, including soils data, as one basis for determining the direction of future expansion of the City and for public open space acquisition programs.
- d. Require the use of natural resource information in subdivision development and project design.
- e. Regulate development in the areas of the City where soil suitability and high water table require such regulation.
- f. Encourage and promote reforestation and tree planting programs within the community as part of the development/redevelopment process.
- g. Participate in tree disease control programs on public and private property.
- h. Regulate development in such a manner as to preserve natural drainage in the community, when possible.
- i. Enact ordinances to control soil erosion and siltation.
- j. Enact standards and ordinances to regulate the removal of natural vegetation.
- k. Require the staging of urban development projects so that the smallest practical area of land is exposed at any one period of time in order to minimize soil erosion.
- l. Encourage the owners of major tracts of undeveloped land to construct and maintain shelter-belts and implement other soil erosion control programs such as contour plowing, strip-cropping, etc.
- m. Preserve prime agricultural land from non-agricultural development to the greatest extent possible without impeding orderly urban and economic expansion.
- n. Promote water management policies/programs to conserve the quantity and maintain the quality of all water resources in the community and its environs.
- o. Encourage the use of energy conservation technology and techniques, such as solar, wind, geo thermal etc.
- p. Protect marshes/wildlife habitat in future development areas.

- q. Encourage programs to retrofit existing buildings to make them more energy efficient.
- r. Promote recycling and the reuse of solid waste products.
- s. Encourage the use of refuse-derived fuels and alternative energies when proven to be safe and efficient.
- t. Promote the use of pedestrian and bike access to public waters , parks, and other public amenities via trails.
- u. Support brownfield redevelopment projects, when feasible.

Section E: Parks and Open Space

1. GOAL: To increase and enhance park and open space recreation opportunities by promoting maximum multi-use of park and recreation resources.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Manage the community’s natural resources to provide appropriate park and open space recreation opportunities.
- b. Provide for new park and open space recreation areas as a part of the residential development process.
- c. Plan street, pedestrian, and trail systems that provide access to all developed portions of the City, connecting parks and open spaces.

3. POLICIES:

- a. As residential and commercial/industrial areas expand, park and recreational facilities designed to serve the developing area should be provided. This should be done either by a dedication of land to the public, or by a payment in lieu of dedication.
- b. Include dedicated areas for parks and open space in new subdivisions, when feasible.
- c. When feasible, all parks and open spaces shall be linked via trails.
- d. **Encourage preservation and management of existing parks and open space areas.**
- e. A system of tree plantings and landscaping, as well as reforestation, should be enacted to enhance the beauty of each area to the extent its primary use will permit.

- f. Parking areas that are provided in parks should be properly landscaped and surfaced.
- g. Where industrial or commercial uses border or are located adjacent to a park, they should be screened by appropriate plantings.
- h. Where recreation areas are located in residential neighborhoods, appropriate plantings and screenings should be provided to protect the neighborhood from noise.
- i. Abandoned railroad areas should be developed as public trails or recreational areas when the future rail use of the site is not foreseeable.
- j. Areas best suited for future parks, open space, and trails should be identified and preserved.

Section F: Residential and Social Development

1. **GOAL:** To preserve and develop a mixture of different housing types, densities, and cost ranges that will meet the needs of all citizens.

2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Establish and maintain safe, healthful, and blight-free residences and neighborhoods.
 - b. Locate housing to provide convenient access to public and private facilities and activities.

3. **POLICIES:**
 - a. Monitor the existing and future housing needs for the various income and age groups.
 - b. Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing structures in the community.
 - c. Encourage the development of neighborhoods that include a variety of housing types and cost ranges.
 - d. Encourage public and private participation in local, state and federal programs for the provision of low and moderate income housing units.
 - e. Promote the location of higher-density housing units near commercial, medical and employment concentrations.

- f. Encourage design standards in subdivisions and higher-density housing that take into consideration the social and psychological well-being of their residents.
- g. Encourage innovative site and housing unit design for energy conservation, aesthetics, open space preservation, bike and pedestrian access etc.
- h. Regulate home occupations carefully to avoid or minimize traffic problems and incompatible land uses in residential districts.
- i. Regulate industrial or commercial land uses to control truck traffic and to reduce land use conflicts with residential properties.
- j. Encourage the location of residential subdivisions where City services are readily available and in areas which have direct access to existing transportation routes.
- k. Promote the orderly growth of residential developments with logical expansion of municipal services and utilities.
- l. Encourage transition zones between low and high density residential developments.
- m. Restrict the location of mobile homes to mobile home parks where adequate services can be provided.
- n. Promote the use of rain gardens and infiltration basins to reduce storm water impacts.

Section G: Historic Preservation and Aesthetics

- 1. GOAL:** To protect, preserve and enhance valuable historic and aesthetic sites throughout the community.
- 2. OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Protect, preserve, and restore key historic buildings and sites throughout the community.
 - b. Create, maintain, and enhance visually pleasing areas and neighborhoods throughout the community.
- 3. POLICIES:**
 - a. Maintain a historic-design inventory of the community with special emphasis on the Central Business District.

- b. Enforce design, screening and landscape standards in the construction of all public facilities, utilities and buildings, when needed.
- c. Incorporate design and landscaping standards in all private development, including residential, commercial and industrial projects.
- d. Require all land uses which are either a potential source of nuisance or of questionable visual value such as junk yards, gravel and coal storage areas, etc. to be landscaped and screened from adjacent areas.
- e. Regulate the size, placement and visual appearance of all signs, whether private or public.
- f. Cooperate with local historic preservation groups for enhanced urban design throughout the community

Section H: Downtown

Willmar Downtown Planning

The Willmar Design Center and the citizens of Willmar have initiated downtown planning and have outlined a number of strategic actions to enhance the Downtown. The four main recommendations include 1) restoring Litchfield Avenue, 2) establishing a downtown commons area, 3) urbanizing First Street, and 4) developing a connection to the lakes. The Willmar Downtown Visioneer was created to summarize these initiatives. For more information, please contact the Willmar Design Center.

1. **GOAL:** To maintain and enhance the downtown area as a great place to live, work, shop, dine, and entertain.
2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Revitalize the downtown area for both business and residential uses.
 - b. Encourage a quality urban residential and commercial connection to the lakes.
 - c. Facilitate high pedestrian use and green space amenities.
 - d. Maintain and/or increase employment opportunities,

3. POLICIES:

- a. Encourage the restoration of Litchfield Ave. SW and SE by facilitating direct access to the bypass.
- b. Allow development with higher density and relaxed parking requirements beyond the existing Central Business District to facilitate redevelopment.
- c. Encourage development of the downtown commons area/parking.
- d. Support groups such as the Design Center that focus on downtown improvements.

Section I: Citizen Participation and Intergovernmental Cooperation

1. GOAL: To involve citizens, agencies, and organizations in the City's key decisions.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues between different levels of government.
- b. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues between the various community agencies and organizations.
- c. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues with the public.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Encourage open communication relating to all planning and development issues between the different levels of government, including the townships, city, county, school district, regional development commission, and state agencies.
- b. Seek comment from adjacent governmental units on proposed new growth and development policies, comprehensive plans and development ordinances which are likely to have an area-wide effect.
- c. Integrate planning and development by involving the various City departments and appointed commissions in planning and development issues.
- d. Inform and educate the public, encouraging the widest possible citizen participation in the planning and development process.