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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

At its core, comprehensive planning is a vehicle for democracy in today's society. It is a way to bring the people of a community together to discuss the issues facing that community and together develop a plan that will guide the way for the future. The Minnesota Planning Office describes the comprehensive planning process in the following way in its book "Under Construction: Tools and Techniques for Local Planning"

Comprehensive planning can be defined as deciding where you want to go and how you will get there. This sounds easy enough. Yet planning for economic development, housing, roads, sewers, schools, environmental quality and parks is obviously more complex than planning a family trip, and it requires broad participation from the community. There are seven key steps in developing a comprehensive plan.

A comprehensive plan generally includes background information on the essential cultural, demographic, economic, environmental, historic, physical and social elements of a community, the community's vision, and the collection of goals, policies and strategies that will be used to realize that vision.

SEVEN KEY STEPS IN PLANNING

1. **Organizing the process and engaging people in the Community to participate throughout**
2. **Establishing a shared understanding of the most important issues and asking core questions about economic, environmental and social implications of these issues**
3. **Identifying future needs and desires, and developing the vision; goals, policies and progress indicators that reflect them**
4. **Developing alternative strategies for addressing a Community's vision, goals and policies**
5. **Understanding relationships between possible plan strategies, accounting for their long-term costs and benefits, and choosing those that best fit a community**
6. **Selecting plan monitoring indicators, and completing and adopting the plan**
7. **Implementing the plan, tracking progress and changing the plan in future years as needed**

Comprehensive planning is as much a process to engage the public in local decisions as it is to create a document for guiding development. The planning process is fundamentally a way for people with different perspectives to articulate the sort of community they would like to live in and leave behind. Planning can also help create a stable, predictable, fair set of policies and

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ground rules within which development, entrepreneurship and the marketplace can flourish. Above all, it is about making places better.

A Comprehensive Plan establishes long-term goals, policies and strategies. The plan examines where we are today, and sets a course for where we want to be in the future. The plan needs to remain flexible enough to allow for revision and continued enhancement. A plan may include recommendations for ordinances and maps to guide future development. A city's main responsibility is to protect the general health, safety and welfare of citizens. The law specifies that when adopted by ordinance, a comprehensive plan "must be the basis for official controls." Official controls include zoning and subdivision regulations and official maps. A comprehensive plan may also provide guidelines for the timing and sequencing of the official controls to ensure planned and orderly development that is consistent with the comprehensive plan. This document presents the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Kasson, Minnesota. It sets forth the ground work on which the City of Kasson can build its future.

The City of Kasson has found several reasons for engaging in such a planning effort. They are:

- **Engagement in and a concern for the community's future;**
- **To protect property values and promote community economic health**
- **Prevention of potential conflicts in land use;**
- **To protect the public safety, health and general welfare;**
- **Natural resource protection; and**
- **To coordinate private land uses and public services.**

Planning is a rational basis upon which land use decisions, laws and regulations are based. The resultant document, the Plan, is a written record of the planning process that can be cited by local officials in modifying existing or drafting new regulations. In summary, planning is an educated basis for decision-making.

The plan will consist of eight functional elements beginning with a **community profile** followed by **economic development, housing, transportation, public and community facilities, natural resources, schools and land use.**

Goals and objectives statements are then derived from each of the elements. These statements are translated and summarized into an overall **land use and development plan.**

Finally, an **implementation plan** is suggested. Implementation would take place over an extended period of time based on the capabilities of the City of Kasson.

With these steps in mind, the following **Mission Statement** has been put forth for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Kasson Comprehensive Plan will document who we are now and what we want for our future. It will act as a guide for growth and change in the community with a focus on retaining the area's unique character which ultimately fosters a greater sense of community.

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SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

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GENERAL TRENDS

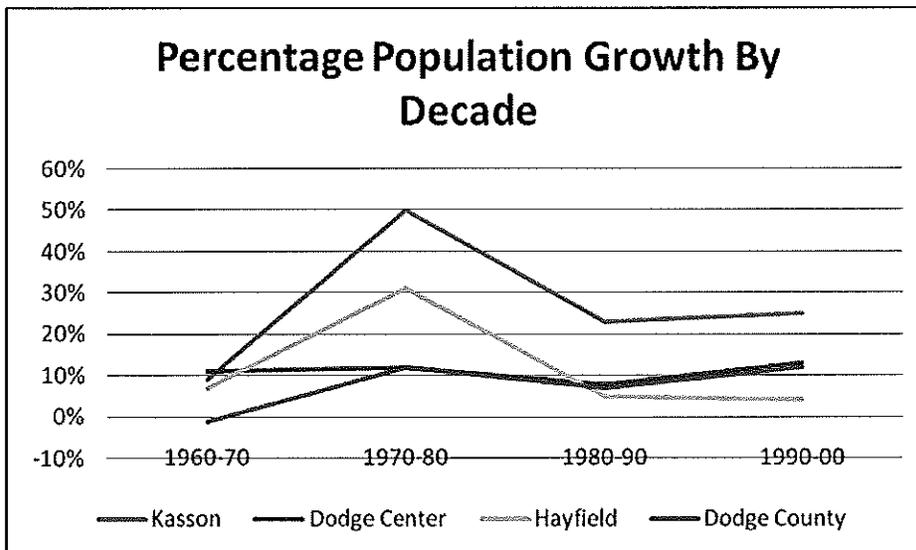
Understanding population and demographic trends is important for planning purposes to determine the amount of infrastructure and type of services that will be required. For instance, if it can be determined that a large cohort of residences is likely going to be retiring over the next decade, adequate facilities can be planned.

Kasson is the largest city in Dodge County. By 2009, the population of Kasson was estimated to be 5,564. In 2000, 25% of the people in Dodge County resided in Kasson compared with 1960 when only 13% of the people resided in Kasson. Between 1960 and 2000 the City grew by 154%. Much of this growth has been spurred by the growth of the Rochester Metropolitan area.

Kasson lies along the Highway 14 corridor which provides direct and convenient access to the core of Rochester. This has provided Kasson with the opportunity to attract families from Rochester seeking lower costs of living and amenities such as good schools and open space.

The growth rate has leveled off a bit in the past decade, however is still strong; estimated at 23.4% between 2000 and 2009. Figure 1 below shows the rate of growth for peer communities within Dodge County. The growth trend has been the same for all communities. However, since 1960, the growth rate in Kasson has substantially outpaced other communities within the area. Most of this growth can be attributed to access and proximity to Rochester. The rate of growth is expected to level off in the coming years due to troubled housing markets and an economic slump, but will remain relatively high compared with surrounding communities.

Figure 1

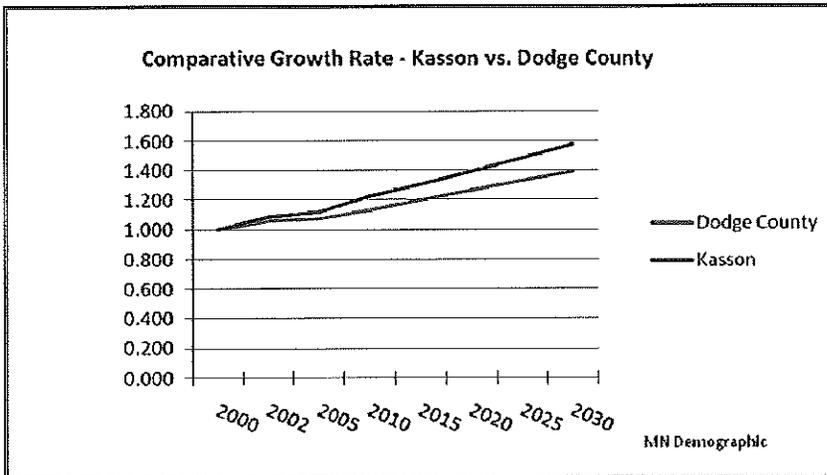


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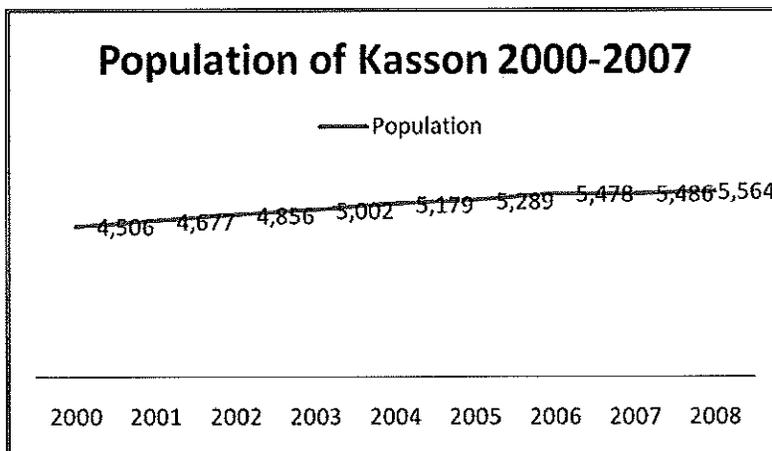
Further, Kasson is expected to grow at a higher rate than Dodge County as a whole. Figure 2 below shows the linear proportional rate of growth for both Kasson and Dodge County. By 2030, Kasson is projected to grow to 160% of its size in the year 2000 (approximately 7000 residents).

Figure 2



The population of Kasson in 2000 was 4,398, which was a 25.2% increase from 1990. The rate of growth was projected to continue at approximately the same pace placing the population growth at the following levels for each year in the previous decade (see Figure 3).

Figure 3



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Factors that may slow growth

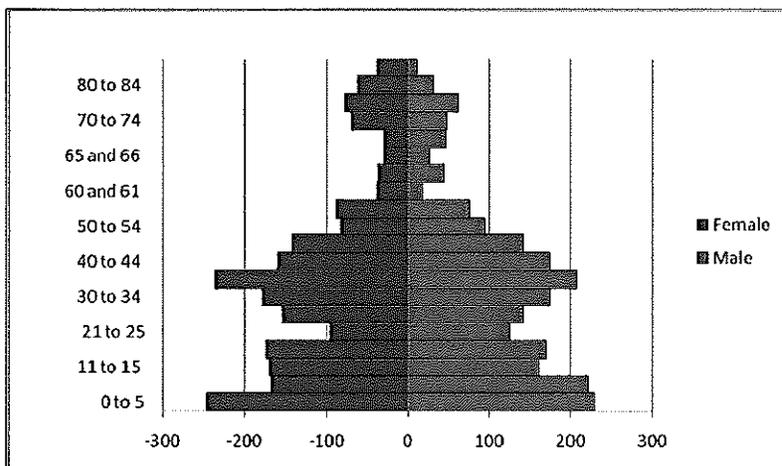
It is important to keep in mind that consumer attitudes and cost shifting on goods have changed the economic landscape substantially since the last census (on which these data projections are based). Rising transportation costs have changed location decisions made by individuals and families. Higher gas prices mean that people may choose to locate closer to work, or may consider mass transit options. This could have considerable consequences for the population growth of communities like Kasson on the periphery of a metropolitan area. Additionally, slumping housing markets and lack of liquidity in the financial industry have slowed new development. It is difficult to predict when housing development might increase.

AGE GROUPS

Over the past half century, Kasson has undergone a transformation in the demographic makeup in regard to age. The distribution of age in a community can have many effects on the services that are required as well as workforce availability and business customer base. Figure 5 below shows the age distribution of the population within Kasson. There are significant concentrations of the population in two major categories; 1) Working age population between 26 and 54 and 2) dependent children age 18 and under. A concentration in the working age population is positive in that it indicates there is a capable workforce that can support local business. However, given the high percentage of commuters that reside in the community but work elsewhere, many of the local businesses are unable to capitalize on the skilled and able-bodied residents.

A concentration in the dependent child population may require an increase in services and amenities that children utilize. Education, parks, libraries, recreational activities and transportation services all must be considered.

Figure 4 Population Pyramid for Kasson (2000 Census, EPSC-Sonoma Institute)



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Figure 5

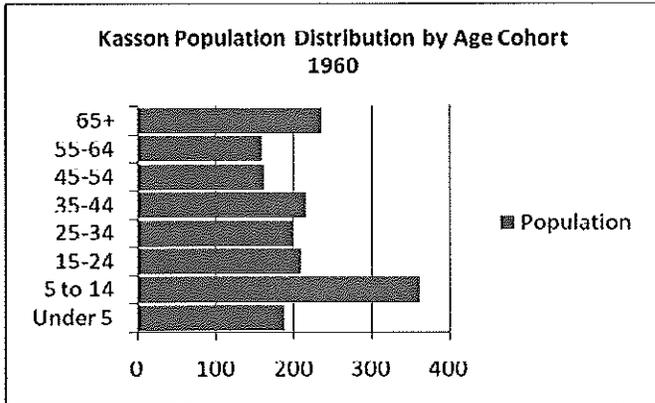


Figure 6

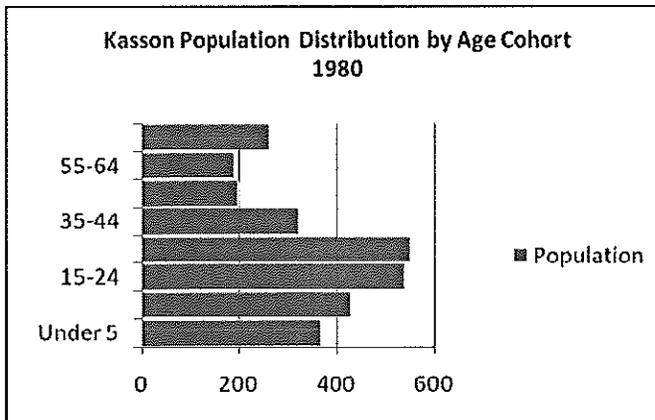
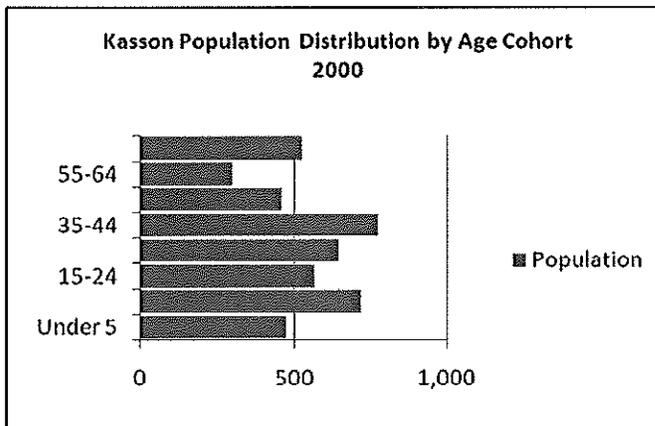


Figure 7



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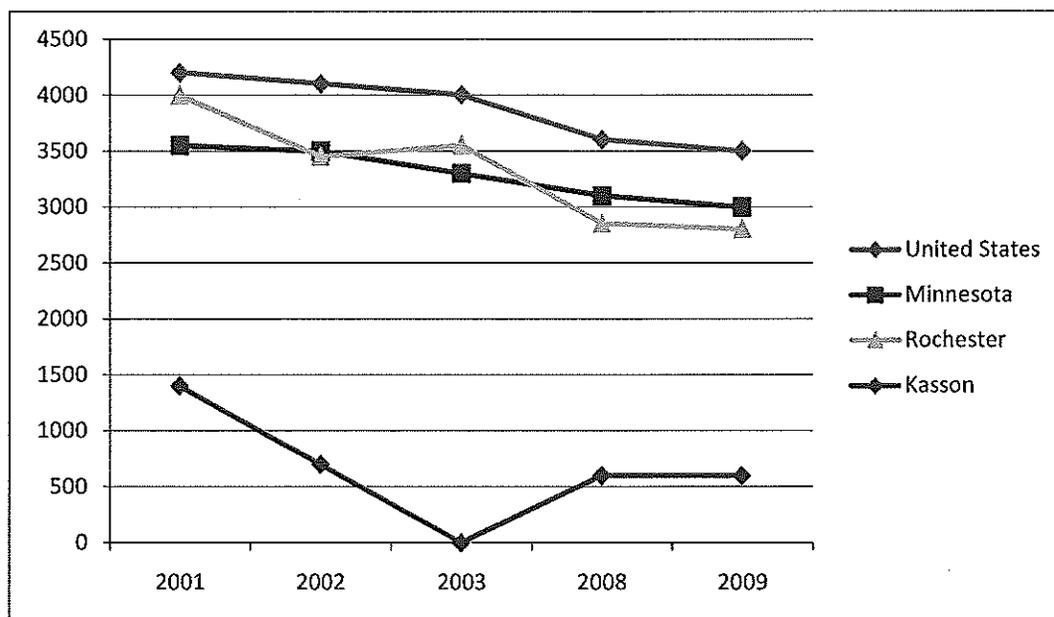
ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Despite the influx of working families from Rochester and other areas, incomes of families are still lagging behind the median family income of Minnesota and Dodge County. Median per capita income is substantially lower in Kasson than in Dodge County or Minnesota.

MN incomes	2008	2009
Median Per Capita	\$41,236	\$41,983
Median HH Income	\$57,795	\$54,925
Median Family Income	\$77,395	\$81,477
Dodge County Income	2008	2009
Median Per Capita	\$43,079	\$43,859
Median HH Income	\$60,378	\$57,380
Median Family Income	\$80,854	\$85,118
Kasson Incomes	2008	2009
Median Per Capita	\$34,216	\$34,836
Median HH Income	\$60,139	\$57,153
Median Family Income	\$76,042	\$80,053

Despite lower per capita income, there is only a very small proportion of the Kasson population in poverty. In 2000, only 2.5% families in Kasson were below the poverty level, this is compared with a 9.2% average nationally. Concurrently, only 4.2% of individuals were below the poverty level compared with 12.4% annually.

Figure 8 Crime Rate Statistics



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CRIME RATE STATISTICS

Figure 8 shows the Crime Rate Index Comparison for the City of Kasson as compared to the City of Rochester, the State of Minnesota, and the United States. The Crime index rate is composed of seven index crimes: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny (theft), and motor vehicle theft. The rate is based on per 100,000 people.

WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION

Kasson has a relatively high rate of workforce participation at 76.7% compared with 63.9% nationally. This is a reflection of a greater proportion of the population being of working age, but also a reflection of a relatively skilled workforce. Educational attainment is relatively high. Percentage of residents that graduated high school or higher is substantially higher than the national average. However, many businesses are reliant upon a highly skilled and educated workforce. Even jobs in the manufacturing sector require greater skills as the low-skilled positions continue to be outsourced to less expensive labor markets.

Kasson's population is lagging relative to the nation in percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher. It would be deceiving to characterize Kasson's population as relatively unskilled. A great proportion of the population has some higher education. Over 55% of the population has some college education or higher. This shows that Kasson's workforce has a good deal of skilled labor that could potentially benefit local employers.

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Kasson</u>	<u>National</u>
Percent high school graduate or higher	88.9	80.4
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	19.0	24.4

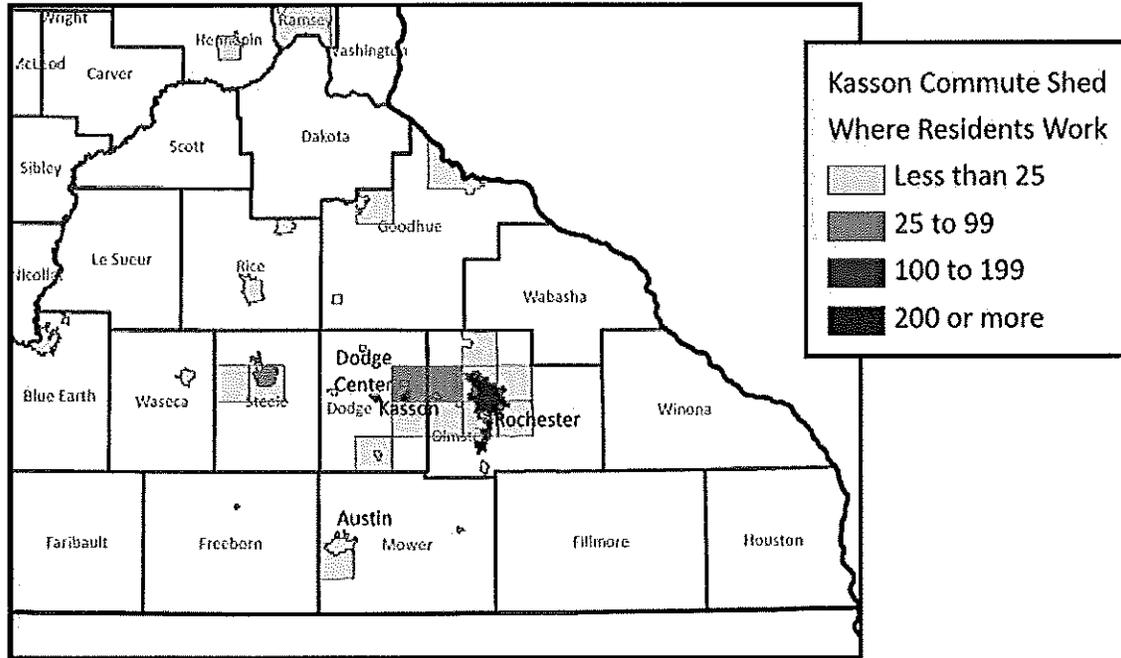
<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>%</u>
Below High School	11.1
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	33.7
Some college, no degree	26.9
Associate degree	9.4
Bachelor's degree	15.5
Graduate or professional degree	3.5

The majority of working Kasson residents commute to jobs outside of city limits with the highest percentage of commuters heading to Rochester. The majority of jobs within the City of Kasson are held by people living outside of the city limits of Kasson with the largest single outside community providing employees being Rochester. The following maps and tables depict the breakdown of the "Commute Shed" (Where the residents of Kasson work) and "Labor Shed" (Where the workers in Kasson commute from).

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Kasson Commute Shed – Where Residents Work



Total Primary Jobs				
	2008		2002	
Total Primary Jobs	Count	Share	Count	Share
	2,558	100.0%	2,454	100.0%
Jobs in Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers are Employed				
	2008		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Rochester city, MN	1,143	44.7%	1,174	47.8%
Kasson city, MN	378	14.8%	410	16.7%
Dodge Center city, MN	203	7.9%	96	3.9%
Mantorville city, MN	76	3.0%	75	3.1%
Byron city, MN	70	2.7%	79	3.2%
Orwatonna city, MN	69	2.7%	83	3.4%
Minneapolis city, MN	23	0.9%	33	1.3%
Austin city, MN	23	0.9%	20	0.8%
St. Paul city, MN	22	0.9%	18	0.7%
Bloomington city, MN	20	0.8%	16	0.7%
All Other Locations	531	20.8%	450	18.3%
Jobs in Counties Where Workers are Employed				
	2008		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Obosted County, MN	1,262	49.3%	1,297	52.9%
Dodge County, MN	796	31.1%	664	27.1%
Hennepin County, MN	92	3.6%	113	4.6%
Steele County, MN	76	3.0%	87	3.5%
Dakota County, MN	39	1.5%	33	1.3%
Ramsey County, MN	37	1.4%	52	2.1%
Mower County, MN	33	1.3%	22	0.9%
Goodhue County, MN	21	0.8%	21	0.8%
Blue Earth County, MN	21	0.8%	17	0.7%
Rice County, MN	20	0.8%	12	0.5%
All Other Locations	159	6.2%	136	5.5%
Jobs in States Where Workers are Employed				
	2008		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Minnesota	2,521	98.6%	2,438	99.3%
Iowa	18	0.7%	4	0.2%
Wisconsin	9	0.4%	7	0.3%
Texas	3	0.1%	1	0.0%
Washington	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
All Other Locations	6	0.2%	4	0.2%

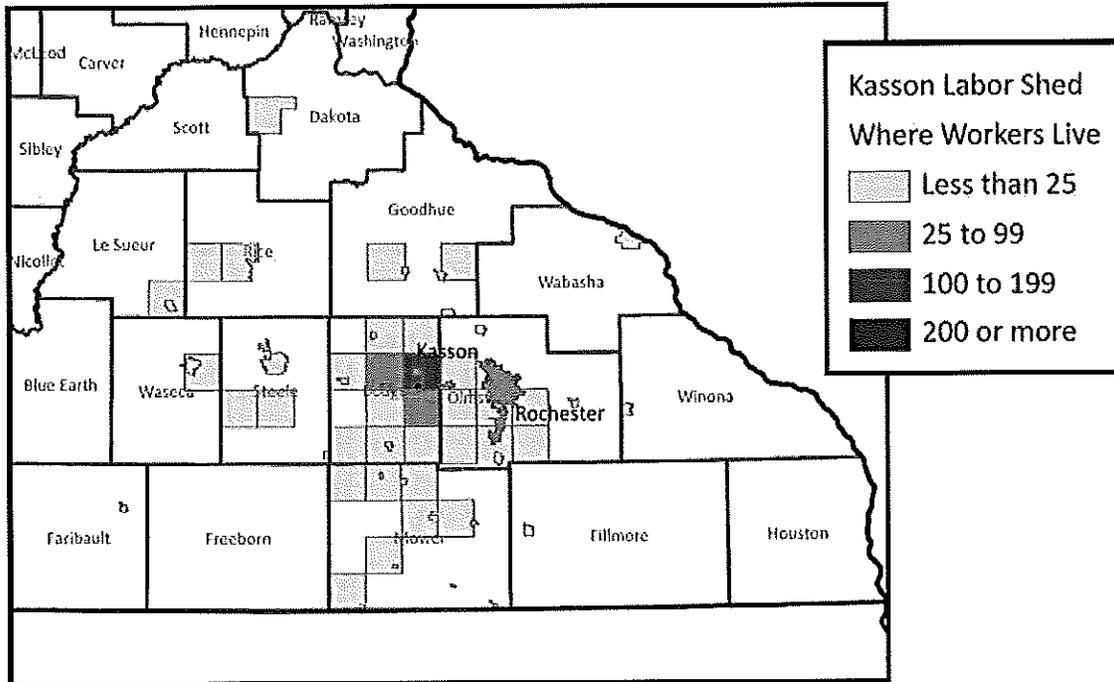
Data Sources

US Census Bureau, LED OnTheMap Origin-Destination Database
(Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, and 2002)

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Kasson Labor Shed – Where Kasson Workers Live



Total Primary Jobs				
	2005		2002	
Total Primary Jobs	Count	Share	Count	Share
	1,106	100.0%	1,069	100.0%
Jobs in Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers Live				
	2005		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Kasson city, MN	378	34.2%	410	37.6%
Rochester city, MN	95	8.6%	118	10.8%
Dodge Center city, MN	61	5.5%	44	4.0%
Mantorville city, MN	59	5.3%	40	3.7%
Byron city, MN	39	3.5%	43	3.9%
Hayfield city, MN	26	2.4%	31	2.8%
Orwatonna city, MN	20	1.8%	10	0.9%
West Concord city, MN	10	0.9%	8	0.7%
Pine Island city, MN	9	0.8%	9	0.8%
Stewartville city, MN	8	0.7%	8	0.7%
All Other Locations	403	36.4%	368	33.8%
Jobs in Counties Where Workers Live				
	2005		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Dodge County, MN	769	69.5%	745	68.4%
Obstert County, MN	174	15.7%	201	18.5%
Steele County, MN	29	2.6%	18	1.7%
Mower County, MN	25	2.3%	11	1.0%
Goodhue County, MN	20	1.8%	35	3.2%
Wabasha County, MN	10	0.9%	7	0.6%
Kandiyohi County, MN	10	0.9%	3	0.3%
Hennepin County, MN	10	0.9%	1	0.1%
Stearns County, MN	6	0.5%	2	0.2%
Rice County, MN	6	0.5%	2	0.2%
All Other Locations	47	4.2%	64	5.9%
Jobs in States Where Workers Live				
	2005		2002	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Minnesota	1,101	99.5%	1,074	98.6%
Wisconsin	4	0.4%	14	1.3%
Missouri	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
All Other Locations	0	0.0%	1	0.1%

Data Sources
 US Census Bureau, LED OnTheMap, Origin-Destination Database
 (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter 2003, 2007, 2006, 2003, 2004, 2003, and 2002)

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IN SUMMARY

The population in Kasson is continuing to grow because of the community's proximity to Rochester, the region's major economic engine, and its high quality of life. This quality of life is based on factors such as quality housing options, strong school systems, and a diverse business sector for goods and services. Kasson has the opportunity to continue to see a growth rate higher than the surrounding area by capitalizing on the strengths listed above and identifying new opportunities for growth and expansion.

As the data shows, Kasson has a large portion of its population that commutes out of the City each day for work. This trend is very likely to continue into the foreseeable future due to the proximity of the community to Rochester. This fact should not be viewed as a negative, but instead be utilized to explore opportunities to make Kasson the most attractive option for people looking to work in Rochester but not live there.

Also, as Rochester continues to grow, and the land prices and costs of doing business there continues to rise, neighboring communities like Kasson offer a more affordable option for industrial and commercial development as well. This creates jobs and tax base for the community. Kasson's job is to continue to position itself for that growth.

SECTION II: HOUSING

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HOUSING OVERVIEW

In a community, buildings and transportation systems define the appearance; but it's the people living there and how they live there that gives that community an identity or a sense of character. Quality, safe, healthy and well-designed housing must be a high priority for the City.

Kasson is a community that respects property rights and wishes to see the value of its properties, based on aesthetic considerations and public services, increase. It is within this context that this Housing section is presented.

The purpose of the Housing section is to identify existing conditions in the city's housing supply, present housing trends, identify goals and objectives, develop alternative approaches to meet housing needs and goals, and evaluate housing alternatives.

Kasson's growth rates in population and in housing units for the period 1990 to 2000 were similar: 25.2% of population increase and with slightly over 400 housing units added during that same timeframe.

Home ownership rates increased in Kasson between 1990 and 2000 from 76.9% to 85.7%. Kasson's home ownership rate is higher than the national and state rates, but slightly lower than the county rate of 87.6%.

Using the standard that most families can afford a home of at least 2.5 times their annual income, in 2009, the average Kasson household could afford a home of approximately \$141,000 (2009 dollars). The median housing value of existing owner-occupied units in 2009 was \$162,000. Therefore, housing costs, relative to income for the community, are high. It appears that for some residents housing affordability may be an issue in Kasson if these trends continue into the future.

GROWTH IN HOUSING

Single-family housing continues to be created, even if its share of the overall housing picture declined. According to U.S. Census figures, just over 400 detached single family homes were added from 1990 to 2000. This represents roughly 25% of the entire housing stock in Kasson. This growth in housing is significant and continues to promote the fact that Kasson has an extremely new housing stock as almost 70% of the houses being built since 1970.

The median year built in Kasson is 1979, which is very recent in comparison to the State of Minnesota with a median year built of 1969 and a U.S. median of 1971. Despite the amount of new homes constructed in the last 30 years as a proportion of the total housing stock, a significant percentage of Kasson's existing units were also built prior to World War II (See Figure 3-1). This might indicate that many vintage homes have been maintained and remain desirable for a wide range of income groups. Of the existing units in Kasson, construction was

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leanest between 1940 and 1970. This period includes the World War II years, when housing construction came to a standstill. That a relatively small percentage of the existing units were built during this 1940-1970 period bodes well for Kasson's housing stock.

Figure 3-1
Home Construction by Decade

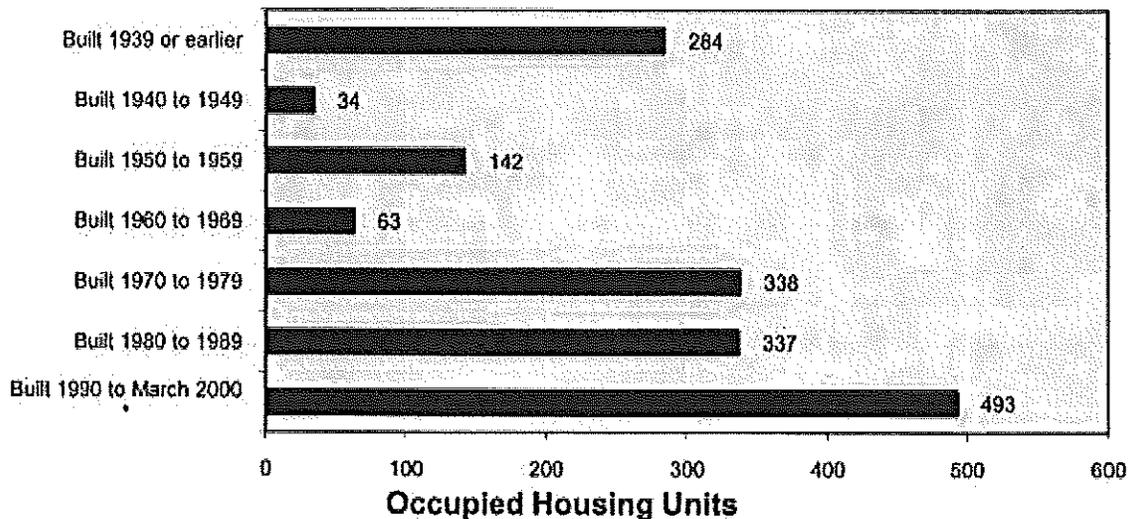


Figure 3-1 illustrates a significant jump in the number of housing units built in the 1990s. This growth parallels population growth and, like population growth, signals an increased need for services and community facilities. Average household size in Kasson has remained relatively constant. It remains 2.61 as compared to 2.52 for Minnesota and 2.59 for the United States. Nationally, average family size has been declining for decades, but in Kasson it has remained fairly constant. This may be due to attractiveness of the area for young families.

Since 2000 the City of Kasson has continue to see significant growth in the residential sector. From 2001 through 2009 437 building permits for single family detached homes have been issued. Although, like the entire housing market, construction in Kasson has slowed significantly since 2007, the community has still averaged 17 new homes a year from 2007 - 2009.

VALUE OF HOUSING

The majority of housing values of owner-occupied units that have sold in Kasson over the last five years are concentrated in the \$130,000 - \$150,000 range, as shown in figure 3-2. Those can be compared with the sales throughout Dodge County for the same time frame as illustrated in figure 3-3.

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Figure 3-2 Home Sales Median Values - Kasson

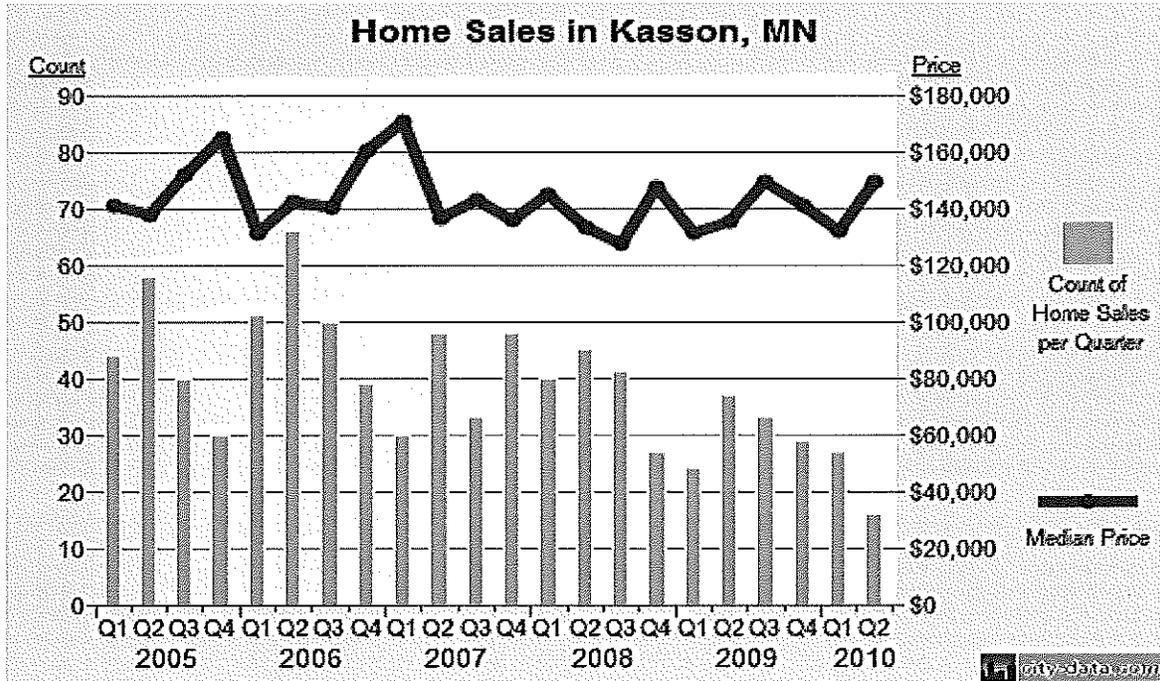
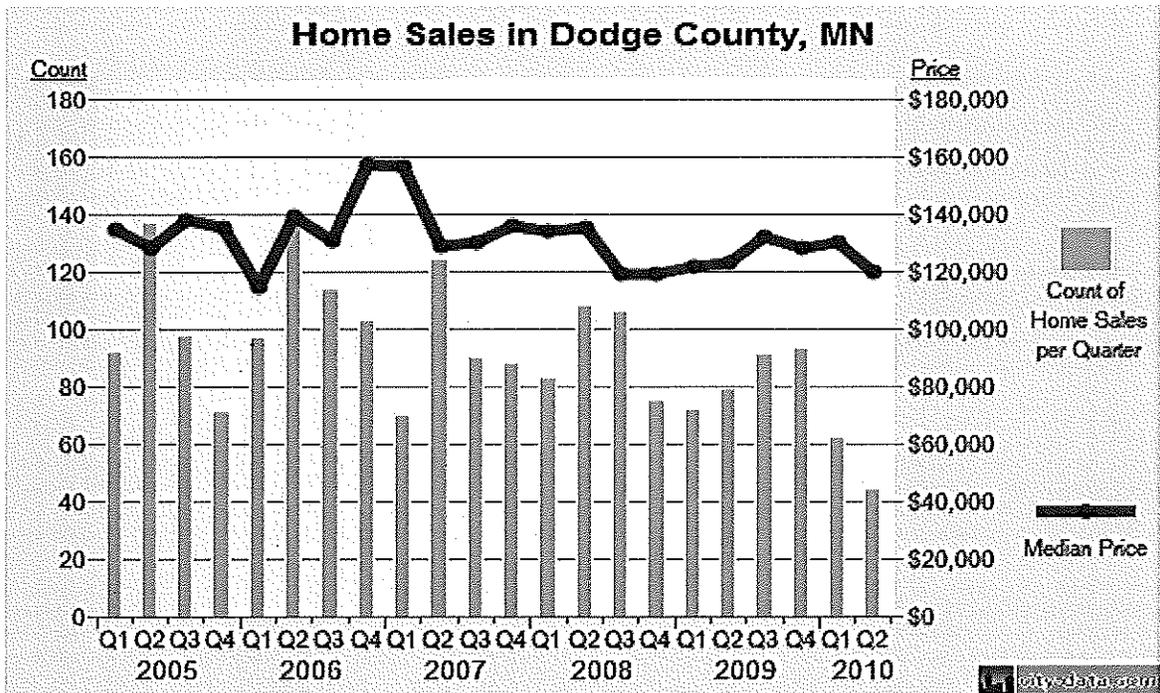


Figure 3-3 Home Sales Median Values – Dodge County



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Figure 3-4

Estimated Median Value of a House or Condo in 2009

Kasson:-----	\$161,811
Dodge County:-----	\$179,051
Minnesota:-----	\$200,400

CONCLUSIONS

The housing supply suggests that Kasson has an abundant housing stock that is relatively low in cost, compared with Dodge County and the state, but may need to continue to diversify with housing that concentrates on both ends of the value range to retain and attract upper level income households as they relocate from the Rochester area and provide a variety of housing options for the existing and future populations. Further, all new housing development should meet quality and design standards set by the City.

The purpose for assessing past and present information on housing is to make sure that the community plans for the needs of our current and future residents. Kasson must try to predict a population that may increase or decrease and what affect that will have on housing. The nature of the future population must also be considered. Considering the age, employment, and income levels of the population of Kasson will help in locating programs and developing plans for future housing. Zoning districts should be analyzed along with the affects of potential development and its impact on the City of Kasson.

SECTION II: HOUSING

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HOUSING GOALS

- ⊕ Increase housing availability and affordability
- ⊕ Promote diverse housing stock to accommodate residents in all stages of life
- ⊕ Rehabilitate older housing stock
- ⊕ Continue to minimize substandard housing through a combination of rehabilitation and code enforcement programs.
- ⊕ Explore policies to promote energy efficient construction
- ⊕ Promote non-motorized transportation connectivity between residential areas
- ⊕ Maintain adequate green space within residential areas

HOUSING POLICIES

- * Limit new residential growth to areas that can be efficiently serviced by or connected to City infrastructure and services.
- * Require an element of green space be required with new residential growth areas
- * Plan for safe non-motorized transportation routes like sidewalks and bikes trails to connect residential areas to commercial areas, schools, and other residential areas.
- * Work to develop programs to promote and possibly incent energy efficient construction
- * Work to develop programs to promote and possibly incent maintenance and rehabilitation of older housing stock to avoid blight

SECTION III: TRANSPORTATION

2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

TRANSPORTATION OVERVIEW

The City of Kasson will promote convenient, accessible, safe, and environmentally responsible transportation for residents, employers, employees, visitors, and commerce. Kasson supports interconnectivity between various modes of transportation motorized and non-motorized. Kasson will work to ensure the transportation system will be integrated, convenient, and reliable, and will encourage connectivity and economic vitality. Kasson's transportation system will support vibrant and healthy neighborhoods and commercial area.

REGIONAL SYSTEMS

Regional Highway System

Kasson is located at the intersection of U.S. Trunk Highway 14 and State Trunk Highway 57.

A trunk road, trunk highway, or strategic road is a major road--usually connecting two or more cities, ports, airports, etc.--which is the recommended route for long-distance and freight traffic. Many trunk roads have segregated lanes in a dual carriageway, or are motorway standard.

C.S.A.H. 34 dissects the City in an east/west direction while T.H. 57 is the main route through the City in a north-south direction.

C.S.A.H. 56 is located approximately 8 miles west of the City and C.S.A.H. 15 is located approximately 3 miles east of the City and serves the rural areas north, northeast and southeast of the City.

The county state-aid highway system is a network of key highways under the jurisdiction of Minnesota's counties. It covers roughly 30,500 miles, comprises just over two-thirds of all county highway miles, and includes roadways within all 87 counties. Counties receive money from the state's county state-aid highway (CSAH) fund for the construction, improvement, and maintenance of their highways included in the state-aid system. Under a 2008 change, two formulas determine how much aid is allocated to each county.

The following is a summary list of regional highways in the area:

U.S. Trunk Highway 14	County State-Aid Highway 34
State Trunk Highway 57	County State-Aid Highway 15
State Trunk Highway 56	

Traffic Patterns

Figure B-1 below show the traffic volumes for the major generators in the community. It illustrates the significant amount of traffic that is generated by U.S. Highway 14 and State Highway 57 within the community. This traffic generation could present a tremendous opportunity for commercial activity in Kasson.

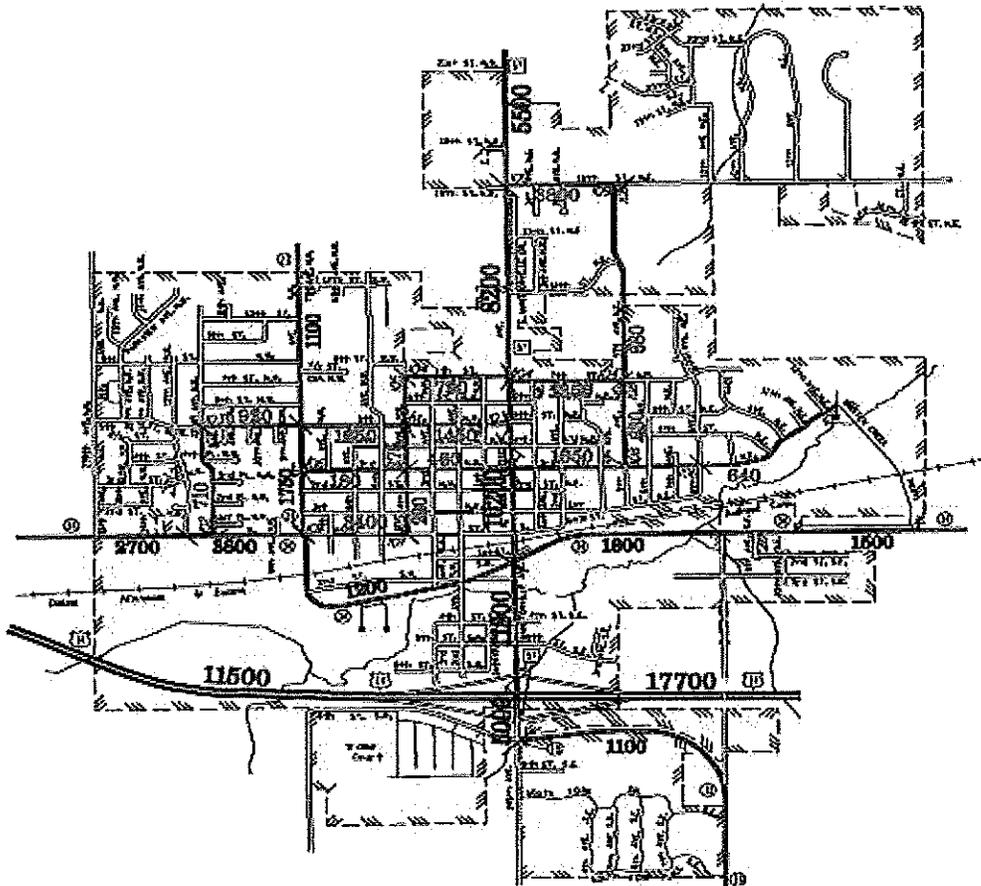
SECTION III: TRANSPORTATION

2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

Also, because of the amount of traffic generated by Minnesota Highway 57 running north and south through the center of the community, care must be taken to provide safe routes to different gathering places within the community such as churches, schools, businesses, etc. In the community survey that was completed as part of the Comprehensive Planning process several citizens noted that the traffic generated on Highway 57 causes the community to have safety concerns with the various intersections with the highway in the community. These concerns are particularly noted at the intersections near the school facilities.

One of the ways to alleviate the congestion around these intersections is to provide additional outlets for this traffic in and out of the area. The most logical outlet would be provided by the continuation on blacktop east on 16th Street N.E. eventually to make the connection with County Road 15. A connection of 16th Street from Highway 57 west to 8th Avenue NW should be explored as well. These connections would provide then needed alternatives for the traffic concerns in the area.

Figure B-1 2009 Traffic Volume Map for Kasson



SECTION III: TRANSPORTATION

2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

PEDESTRIAN AND NON-MOTORIZED SYSTEMS

One of Kasson's most desirable characteristics is its compactness and walkability. The majority of residential areas are within 1.5 miles of the downtown commercial area. However, not all streets are provided with sidewalks, and in recent years the street system itself has become disconnected in several places (i.e. the creation of cul-de-sacs or dead end streets does not provide easy or uninterrupted vehicle and pedestrian access). This trend should be reversed.

Also, several citizens noted in the community survey that considerable care should be taken to ensure safe walking routes to get to and around the schools in the community.

Bike trails that interconnect the different segments of the community to each other and to the schools should also be completed along with a connection to the regional bike trail through the County.

SECTION III: TRANSPORTATION

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TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- ⊕ Create and maintain a safe, interconnected and quality transportation system
- ⊕ Emphasize connectivity within the community utilizing both motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation
- ⊕ Coordinate land uses with traffic patterns
- ⊕ Maintain the high level of road maintenance in Kasson
- ⊕ Improve traffic circulation within the community
- ⊕ Provide safe routes to schools
- ⊕ Maximize safety at busiest intersections within the community

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- * Explore street connections that will provide alternative traffic routes and ease congestion therefore enhancing safety and incorporate those projects into capital improvement plan and budget process (16th Street NE is the most crucial)
- * Coordinate with County and State transportation agencies whenever possible on improvements to overall transportation system in the area
- * Provide pedestrian walkways and bike routes that allow for mobility between neighborhoods and commercial areas and other gathering places like schools and churches
- * Adopt a comprehensive long term sidewalk maintenance and expansion program including budget projection
- * Encourage location of land uses in order to maximize existing traffic patterns and capabilities
- * Continue to provide quality road system by budgeting for annual maintenance of existing roadways, pedestrian walkways, and bike routes
- * Monitor traffic issues at busy intersections in the community and explore options to improve safety and mobility at those intersections whenever possible
- * Maximize safety at road crossing near school facilities
- * Because a large number of Kasson residents commute to Rochester for employment, continue to explore and support public transportation options such as commuter busses for residents.

SECTION IV: PUBLIC FACILITIES

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INVENTORY

Kasson-Mantorville Elementary School

Kasson-Mantorville Elementary School was designed to provide students with an environment that is flexible and conducive to learning for the approximately 830 students in Kindergarten through Grade Four. The elementary curriculum has a "back to the basics" philosophy with an integrated approach to learning that gives students a connection to the real world. The math and science areas are activity-based with a "hands-on" approach. The reading and language program uses a skill-based phonetic approach combined with literature to provide students a good foundation for the reading and writing process. Technology is integrated into the curriculum areas. Continuous improvement is a way of life for the staff. Research, best practices, and staff development provide staff with the knowledge and data to give our students a quality education.

Kasson-Mantorville Middle School

Kasson-Mantorville has a new state-of-the-art Middle School. Kasson-Mantorville Middle School serves Grades 5-8 and offers a broad program to address the needs of middle level learners. At the foundation will be a rigorous core curriculum taught by interdisciplinary teams of teachers. In addition, all students will rotate through art, industrial technology, family and consumer science, foreign language, health, and physical education. Band and choir will be electives available to all students. An advisor/advisee program will provide each student with a homebase that meets daily. A wide range of academic, co-curricular, and athletic activities will also be offered.

Kasson-Mantorville High School

Kasson-Mantorville High School is a 9-12 school with an enrollment of approximately 600 students. A comprehensive curriculum and specialized programs prepare our students to be life-long learners and responsible citizens. A full range of extra-curricular, academic, and athletic activities are also available.

The School District is currently exploring a remodel of the existing high school building.

City Hall / Police Department

The building was constructed in 1990 by Peoples Natural Gas for offices; in 1996 the facility was purchased by the City and was remodeled to serve as City Hall. It is a one-story structure and provides adequate space for the City Administrative offices and Police Department. The City Council chamber currently provides an adequate location for public meetings and other City meetings. The City Council Chamber is being rented to the public for meetings during the day and evening. A small meeting room is being rented to the public for day meetings.

Computer enhancements and technology upgrades were installed in January of 1999 to keep up with the progressiveness of the City. Channel 19 services were transferred to the City Hall offices in 1999 to be maintained by the City Staff.

Currently the police department has a staff of 10 people, and has filled the existing location to capacity. As the community continues to grow, the need may arise to add more officers. If this happens, more space would be required to house the police department. The police department

SECTION IV: PUBLIC FACILITIES

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~~will be moving into the former fire hall facility. This facility will provide enough space to meet the growth and storage needs of the department.~~

After the move of the police department, there will be sufficient space for City staff offices and storage at the City Hall building.

Public Library

The library moved to its present location in the former post office, in 1989. The approximately 2,500 square feet of this building is considered the absolute minimum size for a public library by the Office of Library Services and Development, State of Minnesota.

The library was referenced on several of the resident surveys as an area that they would like to see improvement. Many residents feel the library is too small for a community the size of Kasson.

The City of Kasson is currently exploring options for a larger library.

Public Works Facilities

A new public works facility was built in 2009 on 16th Avenue NE, next to the waste water treatment facility.

The wastewater treatment plant was built in 1984, and significantly upgraded in 2002.

Fire Hall

The fire department recently moved into the former public works building. This building will meet the space needs of the department for a minimum of five years. Due to the age of this building, the City should consider the construction of a new facility.

Ambulance

The current facility was constructed in 1985 and is in good condition. No changes, repairs or additions are planned at this time. This structure is owned by a multi-community ambulance association with the City of Kasson being the landowner.

Municipal Liquor Store

The existing facility is located on Main Street between Mantorville Avenue and 1st Avenue W.

In 2001 the interior of the store was redesigned to accommodate changing customer traffic. The walk-in cooler was expanded by four doors and the retail area was opened up to allow 33% more display area. A second cash register and security system was also installed.

Old Elementary School Building and Site

The former elementary building and site are owned by the City of Kasson, and both are available for future public use.

SECTION IV: PUBLIC FACILITIES

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Rental Property

The City owns a house that is adjacent to West Park. It was purchased with the idea that the lot would allow room to expand the park. The City will rent the house in the meantime. The long term plan for the property is to use it for park expansion.

The City also owns and leases out the Prairie Stone Juice and Coffee building as well.

Swimming Pool

Another one of the public facilities that was mentioned on a number of the resident surveys was the public swimming pool. Several residents indicated a desire to explore the opportunity for expanding and remodeling of the public swimming pool. These types of projects are very costly and large percentages do not end up paying for themselves through revenue generated, because of the amount of overhead needed for operations. This does not discourage communities from doing the projects however as they are considered desired quality of life amenities for the communities. Because of the discussion brought forth in the resident survey, the City of Kasson should continue to explore opportunities to improve and expand the swimming pool facilities and should look at identifying a committee of residents to research the potential projects and costs, and develop various fundraising opportunities to support the project.

Parklands

The City of Kasson maintains various parklands throughout the community. The parks in Kasson vary in size and offering but provide recreation and leisure activities for large number of residents and visitors each year. There is a cost to the City for maintaining the parklands of the community, but because of the volume of usage each year these areas have proven to be a valuable asset to the community and well worth the investment. As future development occurs in the community, it will be important for Kasson to require new green space parkland within new development areas to provide residents in those areas to gather and recreate.

SECTION IV: PUBLIC FACILITIES

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PUBLIC FACILITIES GOALS

- ⊕ Maintain the high level of public safety in Kasson as well as maintaining a greatest level of efficiency, effectiveness, and public satisfaction with these services.
- ⊕ Maintain the current high quality, identify any deficiencies and improve when necessary the recreational areas, programs and facilities for the Community.
- ⊕ Continue to provide a safe, high quality and sufficient drinking water supply.
- ⊕ Provide for effective wastewater management which is sensitive to environmental concerns and growth management.
- ⊕ Assist in redevelopment of former elementary school building and/or site.
- ⊕ Improve Kasson's library facilities and maintain the high quality of services, in recognition that they are extremely valuable cultural resources and very important to the Community.
- ⊕ Communicate and coordinate with Kasson-Mantorville Schools with regard to future program and facility needs
- ⊕ Reuse water at wastewater treatment plant
- ⊕ Plan for public charging stations
- ⊕ Encourage outdoor lighting, signals, street lighting, parking lot lighting to be energy efficient and/or Dark-Sky compliant. Re-lamp or de-lamp as possible. Consider solar lighting

PUBLIC FACILITIES POLICIES

- * Develop a Capital Improvement Plan and budget process that explores needs through 2030.
- * Adopt a long-term Parkland Maintenance and Expansion Plan and budget for recreational areas including the public swimming pool.
- * Conduct an assessment of Kasson's water system needs.
- * Explore development of a sanitary sewer district with the community of Mantorville.
- * Clean out and channelize Masten Creek to improved storm water removal.
- * Complete flood plain analysis and plan.
- * Continue maintenance of all underground storm water removal structures.
- * Continue aggressive enforcement of sump pump ordinance.
- * Adopt policy regarding City responsibilities for resolving private storm water runoff issues.
- * Relate municipal personnel needs of the Community to population growth in order to provide the most effective and cost efficient public services.
- * Adopt policies to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- * Consider a vehicle fleet policy
- * Adopt a purchasing policy (i.e. energy star, paper with recycled products, etc.)

SECTION V: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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GENERAL

Kasson supports a wide range of businesses and industries. An established Economic Development Authority (EDA) works to retain existing businesses, assist existing businesses with expansion plans and to develop new businesses and industry within the City.

Connectivity to Rochester has become increasingly important to economic growth in the city of Kasson. Much of the growth in Kasson can be accounted for as young families moving from the Rochester area moving out to find cheaper housing or seeking a more rural, small town environment with amenities such as good education, and a sense of community.

As a consequence, an increasing proportion of the population is commuting into Rochester. This has significant consequences for the direction of development in Kasson in the future. Although business development is still an important component of growth in the city, the city must also focus on developing amenities that will serve to attract and retain residents.

The City of Kasson believes that the private sector is the best source of job creation. The public sector best serves job creation by maintaining an infrastructure (physical, political and cultural) necessary to support the needs of those businesses for whom location in Kasson makes sound business sense. It is not the policy of the City of Kasson to use public subsidies to replace sound business reasons for location in Kasson.

WORKFORCE

Workforce characteristics have changed drastically over the past couple of decades in Kasson. The Table below shows the change in employment for each sector of the workforce since 1990.

Notably, there is a substantial decrease in the proportion of farm employment. As efficiency in farming industry practices increases, and residents of Kasson become less dependent upon local agri-business for employment. Rising population and outsourcing of business has shifted local employment to more service oriented business.

A substantial increase in 'nonfarm proprietary employment' (from 20.4% in 1990, to 34.4% in 2007) reflects the increasing importance of small business as a source of employment for Kasson residents. Non-farm proprietors are individuals who receive their primary income through ownership of a sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC or LLP.

Employment in the retail trade has decreased from approximately 15% in 1990 to 10% in 2007, reflecting the changes in consumption patterns among residents of Kasson due to proximity to Rochester and transportation patterns.

Manufacturing employment has increased from approximately 11% in 1990 to 17% in 2007. This is consistent with a nationwide trend of manufacturing businesses moving from urban areas into rural and exurban locations as transportation networks become enhanced and

SECTION V: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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communication barriers are broken down. This allows manufacturers who once required proximity to resources in an urban area, to locate where they choose. This is a potentially good opportunity for Kasson moving forward into the future. Relatively inexpensive land and labor could be incentives to attract manufacturing companies.

Figure 1 Dodge County Employment by Sector, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Industry	1990		2001		2007	
Wage and Salary Employment	3939	64.54%	5,203	58.78%	5,974	58.35%
Farm and proprietors employment	919	15.06%	764	8.63%	739	7.22%
Nonfarm proprietors employment	1245	20.40%	2,884	32.58%	3,526	34.44%
Farm employment	1200	19.66%	967	10.93%	931	9.09%
Nonfarm employment	4903	80.34%	7,884	89.07%	9,308	90.91%
Construction	424	6.95%	810	9.15%	989	9.66%
Manufacturing	668	10.95%	1,166	13.17%	1,631	15.93%
Wholesale trade	291	4.77%	468	5.29%	560	5.47%
Retail trade	919	15.06%	1,001	11.31%	1,029	10.05%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	317	5.19%	300	3.39%	355	3.47%
Government and government enterprises	1071	17.55%	1,275	14.41%	1,279	12.49%

Employment and Workforce Participation

Over the past decade, Dodge County has a consistently higher unemployment rate than both Rochester and the State of Minnesota. This is a challenge caused by numerous factors including:

- 1) Location
 - Kasson is not located along any interstate highway routes.
 - Proximity to communities such as Owatonna, Rochester, and Faribault with greater resources such as skilled workforce, educational institutions, financial incentives and capital, etc....

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2) Demographics

- A higher proportion of residents are of working age, skewing the unemployment percentage since those in other demographic groups (children and elderly) are not calculated in the unemployment rate.

Unemployment

An economic slump over the past few years has increased unemployment drastically throughout the U.S. Kasson is not immune to the effects of economic recession as the unemployment rate has increased substantially in 2009. However, Kasson and Dodge County as a whole have not seen the unemployment rate spike as high as some other rural communities. This is a result of the increasing connectivity to jobs in Rochester for residents of Kasson and the relative stability of the Rochester market area.

Unemployment for Dodge County and the City of Kasson is relatively high relative to the state of Minnesota and the City of Rochester. This is a reflection of the lack of access to jobs within the area.

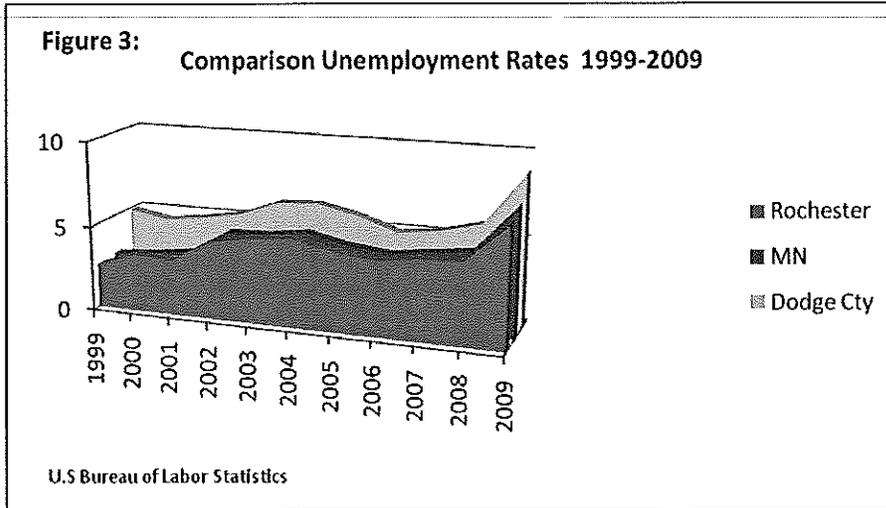
Figure 2 Dodge County Unemployment Trends 1999-2009

Year	Rochester	MN	Dodge County	Kasson ¹
2001	3.3	3.2	4.8	3.8
2002	4.6	4.6	5.2	5.4
2003	5	4.7	6.1	5.5
2004	5.2	5	6.2	5.9
2005	4.7	4.5	5.7	5.3
2006	4.4	4.2	4.9	4.9
2007	4.7	4.5	5.2	5.3
2008	4.8	4.8	5.8	5.6
2009	7	7.5	8.9	8.8

¹ No government agency tracks unemployment specifically for the city of Kasson. Kasson unemployment was calculated as the Kasson unemployment rate gathered from Sperling's Best Places 2009 divided by the unemployment rate for the state of Minnesota and projected for all years.

SECTION V: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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COMMERCIAL/RETAIL INDUSTRY

It appears that the citizens of Kasson are underserved in the commercial and retail sectors. Much smaller neighboring cities offer as many, if not more, opportunities for shopping and spending locally than Kasson. No longer is Kasson the retail and commercial hub of the area.

While Kasson still boasts a strong services sector, especially in the finance, insurance, real estate and legal professions, other opportunities have not kept pace with the growth in population. One item that was noted repeatedly in the community survey was a desire for increased diversity in the restaurant or food service sector, not because of a dissatisfaction with the current food service businesses in but simply a for a broader selection. Options are equally limited in the general merchandise sector.

Part of the decline in the retail sector can be traced to historical changes in shopping patterns observed world-wide. The growth in popularity of “big box” retailers offering a wide variety of merchandise has led to the decline of smaller specialty retailers regardless of their location. The proximity of those big boxes in nearby Rochester has proven to be too much competition for many local retailers and it is unlikely that this trend can be reversed until overall consumer preferences change dramatically.

Even if trends change, the change will likely come slower to Kasson than many communities due to the large number of Kasson residents employed in Rochester. Many would view this proximity to Rochester and the large number of residents that commute there for work as a negative. The term “bedroom community” has developed a negative connotation over time, but it should be viewed as an opportunity for Kasson. Simply because people commute from a community to work does not mean that they are not desiring or expecting a high quality of life

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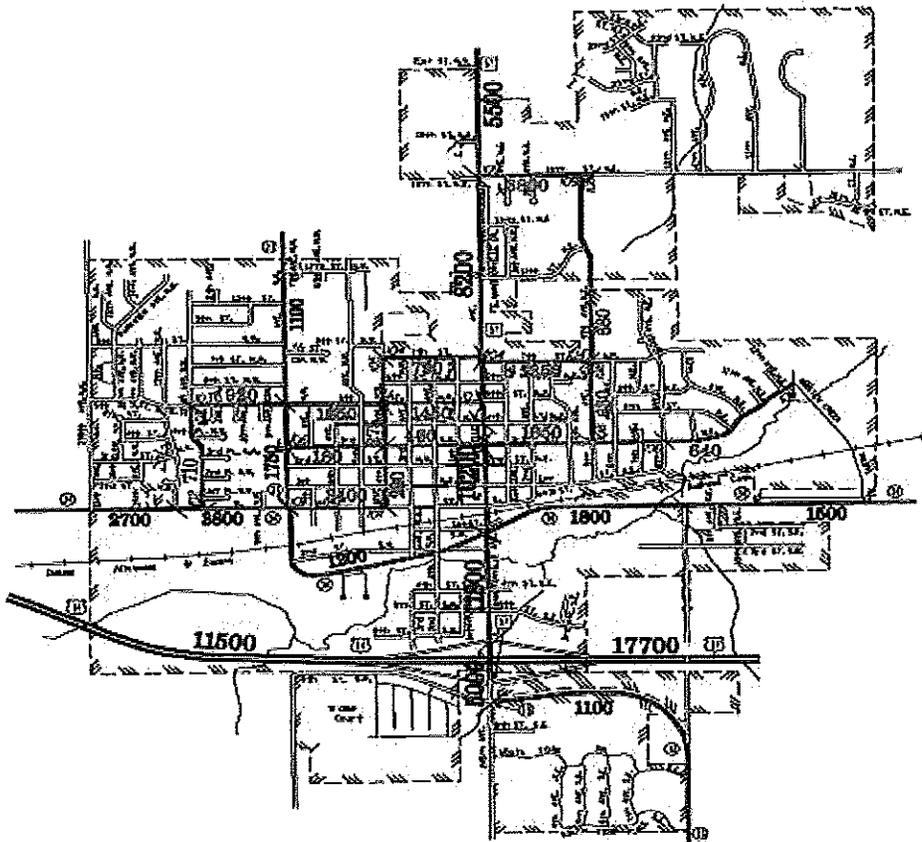
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from the community in which they live and a big part of that quality of life is convenient access to goods and services.

Another factor impacting the retail sector decline in Kasson has to do with shifting transportation patterns. Historically in Kasson, US Highway 14 was the major traffic artery to and through Kasson. It directed many residents and travelers through the heart of the City, through or near the present downtown commercial area. This traffic supported a much wider variety of shops than is presently viable. With the construction of the four-lane Highway 14 by-passing that commercial area, the viability of some of those commercial enterprises was threatened or, in many cases, eliminated.

Any successful retailer will agree that traffic passing by their place of business is the prime external determinant of success or failure. The traffic pattern that presents the biggest opportunity for commercial growth in Kasson is that along Highway 57.

Kasson Traffic Counts – Minnesota Department of Transportation



SECTION V: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Economic Development Resources

The City of Kasson has an Economic Development Authority (EDA) that works to identify opportunities for the Community and can assist in projects that will build jobs and tax base. This assistance in projects can take several forms. One area of assistance is in the form of technical assistance, by which staff provides information or connects businesses with informational resources that can help a new business get started or an existing business expand, adjust, or improve specific aspects of the operation. Another area that the EDA can participate in projects is through financial assistance. This financial assistance can come from funds within the City like the Revolving Loan Fund. Also, it could be through providing access to programs developed by the State or Federal Government through agencies like the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and the United States Department of Agriculture. Often times, access to these dollars cannot be attained by businesses directly but must come through a local entity like an EDA. When providing financial assistance, firm local guidelines should be formalized and used in deciding to participate to insure all projects are treated fairly.

Kasson also has a local Chamber of Commerce, and even though chambers are not always view as economic development resources, they are very often the foremost ambassadors for small business growth in a community. Communications between these two agencies is extremely important in the area of commercial growth in Kasson.

Infrastructure

Another area that is crucial for economic development is access to the necessary quality infrastructure to promote development. Some businesses may have specific needs for electricity such as three-phase power, while others may need accesses to larger volumes of water or capacity for wastewater. Ensuring that a community is prepared for growth means understanding and providing access to this kind of infrastructure along with quality transportation routes and the like.

One area of infrastructure that is becoming more and more vital to business growth is quality telecommunications. With the global economy of today, businesses of all shapes and sizes find themselves connecting to customers in all corners of the world and in order to maintain these connections they are relying more and more on state-of-the-art telecommunications. As this trend will continue communities like Kasson will need to be as proactive as possible in this area to meet the needs of the current business community along with attracting new businesses to town. The Current telecommunications provider in Kasson (KMTelecom) has recently upgraded the entire community to a FTTH (Fiber to the Home) platform. With a FTTH infrastructure, the community of Kasson should be able to handle any future applications that would need to be delivered to businesses or residents.

SECTION V: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- ⊕ Provide commercial sites adequate to meet the needs for expansion in the retail and service sectors of Kasson
- ⊕ Provide an atmosphere that promotes business development and growth by increasing communication between public and private sectors in the Community
- ⊕ Encourage retention and expansion of local businesses
- ⊕ Continue to promote and develop a strong, balanced and sustainable local economy that meets the needs of current and future residents by providing reasonable opportunities to live, work, play and shop in Kasson
- ⊕ Provide adequate land and infrastructure for industrial development that will provide living wage jobs to the Community
- ⊕ Enhance the City's image as an attractive place to live and do business

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- * Maintain an inventory of available commercial and industrial land and buildings on the City website
- * Set up meetings with Chamber of Commerce and large employers to enhance communication and provide a forum to discuss retention and expansion opportunities
- * Explore opportunities for financial assistance to promote updating and rehabilitation of existing commercial core
- * Develop industrial areas that will meet the needs of prospective industrial developers with regard to transportation and infrastructure
- * Improve community signage to maximize exposure to the high volume of traffic on Highway 14 and Highway 57. This should include directional signage within the Community for places of interest
- * Understanding the proximity to the regional economic center of Rochester, promote and encourage commercial development that meets the needs of the large volume of residents that commute from Kasson
- * Seek opportunities to enhance telecommunication infrastructure, through continued partnerships with the private sector
- * Formalize guidelines and standards for providing business subsidies to promote economic development

SECTION VI: LAND USE

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LAND USE OVERVIEW

The goals and policies in the Land Use Section of the Comprehensive Plan provide direction to maintain the quality of life and working environment and ensure that the interests, economy, and welfare of the community are of primary concern as the city matures.

The Land Use Section is an important part of the Comprehensive Plan; in fact, it is sometimes identified as the foundation of the Plan. In that respect, the Land Use Section of the Plan is an explicit statement of the ultimate vision for the city. It outlines the framework by which the plan will be implemented and helps determine things like transportation needs, as well as other infrastructure necessary to serve the land uses.

Development of land, according to the adopted policies and land use designations, will result in an appropriate balance of public facilities, housing, employment, services, and recreational uses.

RESIDENTIAL FOCUS

An essential goal of the Land Use Element is the protection and enhancement of Kasson's residential neighborhoods and maintaining the "small town" atmosphere and feel. The quality and integrity of Kasson's neighborhoods, and the people, who live, work, interact, and recreate within them make the city special. Ensuring that these neighborhoods remain connected, stable, and vibrant is of primary concern.

COMMERCIAL FOCUS

The city recognizes the importance of a strong, vibrant, diverse economy. While the majority of the current commercial land use designation is located within the City's downtown core, future commercial areas of various sizes will probably develop along Highway 57 within the City.

For much of the city's existence, the Downtown area provided most of the amenities necessary for a small community, including a grocery store, drugstore, laundry services, gift shops, *etc.* Both the cities of Rochester to the east and Owatonna to the west have experienced rapid growth in commercial development, which benefit Kasson residents in the availability of choice and flexibility in their service and buying needs. One opportunity for the downtown core to see an increase in traffic for commercial customers could be the location of public buildings that generate significant foot traffic in the area. Careful consideration should be made when exploring locations for City offices and the possible expanded public library. Location of facilities like this near the downtown core could help generate expanded customer opportunity for retail and other commercial businesses located there.

With the high traffic counts along Highway 57, new retail and commercial businesses will desire to locate on this corridor, providing closer availability to goods and services. Much of this area is currently made up of residential land use, and great care must be taken to ensure that the effects of changes in the future land use are as minimal as possible for those residents. The change over

SECTION VI: LAND USE

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in-land use to commercial should happen in phases and as orderly and contiguously as possible. Spot zoning should be avoided.

The City's land use philosophy should support the development of a diverse economy. With the City's expansion and growth, providing opportunities for some commercial development is both desirable and necessary.

INDUSTRIAL FOCUS

The Industrial designation should be characterized by strict development standards, which include well designed buildings, generous landscaping, and limited outdoor operations. These standards assure development in a campus park-like setting, which will be a compatible, visual asset to the community, an employment center, and an economic base within the city.

For the Industrial designation, considerations of infrastructure needs and transportation access needs will be very important for further development. For areas in the City that are designated for this type of development, specific plans for these considerations should be put into place.

SECTION VI: LAND USE

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LAND USE GOALS

- ⊕ Give consideration to the natural elements of Kasson as developments grow.
- ⊕ Promote orderly growth and work with all of our township neighbors to systematically annex land into the City.
- ⊕ Continue to operate programs and policies that promote the restoration, revitalization and rehabilitation of the downtown corridor.
- ⊕ Align land uses with traffic patterns.
- ⊕ Zoning and land use considerations will address water, ground, air, and noise pollution issues.
- ⊕ Eliminate spot zoning, and do not allow spot zoning into the future.
- ⊕ Support the continuation of a strong residential community rooted amid a blend of opportunities for commerce, industry, education, and recreation.
- ⊕ Ensure enough properly zoned land to provide for Kasson's share of the regionally adopted forecasts for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses for the next 20 years.
- ⊕ Promote energy efficient construction and green/sustainable building and land use practices.
- ⊕ Have as a goal to minimize the fragmentation and development of agricultural lands and open spaces in and around the City.

LAND USE POLICIES

- * Balance consideration for community values, the neighborhoods, the natural elements, and the economic environment.
- * Separate incompatible land uses with the use of zoning and development regulations, and ensure that commercial and industrial land uses are contained within carefully delineated areas with appropriate setbacks, landscaping buffers, and lighting.
- * Locate high-traffic generating land uses along arterial streets whenever possible.
- * Review the City zoning ordinance to meet the goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.
- * Enforce set-back regulations to provide adequate buffer zones between land uses.
- * Establish a local process for locating essential public facilities, based on land use and public service impacts as well as future needs and community vision.
- * Support the purchase, dedication, and preservation of open space and encourage careful consideration and integration of the natural environment in any planning activity.
- * Encourage and support adequate pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhoods and access to transit facilities citywide.

SECTION VI: LAND USE

2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

LAND USE POLICIES (Continued)

- * Consider a landscaping ordinance to allow for low water-use landscaping.
- * Consider MN Tree Trust's Best Practices
- * Consider a policy of No Net Loss of Specified Natural Landscapes
- * Consider a replacement tree policy
- * Consider ordinances to promote native vegetation
- * Consider an ordinance requiring an on-site rainwater infiltration design requirement for construction sites.
- * Maintain and enforce a sump pump ordinance for existing and new structures
- * Consider a policy of no net loss of green space
- * Consider a Right to Farm ordinance
- * Develop a Walkable Streets Network/Plan, and identify any gaps
- * Develop a land use plan
- * Consider a wellhead protection program
- * Encourage and foster economic development in areas designated for commercial development.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

CONCLUSION

The planning process in Kasson is not over. Formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the goals for the direction of the City, including both policy objectives and achievement strategies. One should view the formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan as the beginning of the journey, not the end. Without continuing advancement to implement and update the Plan, community efforts up to this point will have little lasting impact into the future.

There are several critical requirements for effective implementation of this Comprehensive Plan. First, Kasson should continue to evaluate and amend its regulatory measures, such as the zoning ordinance, which can enforce the Plan's policies and recommendations. Second, the City should implement some project scheduling devices, such as a Capital Improvements Program, which implements a priority-based system of the most important public improvements in infrastructure and public facilities within the parameters of budgetary guidelines. Third, City officials must ensure that the citizens of Kasson continue to be actively involved in this and future planning projects to ensure their needs and concerns are being met by these plans. Some good examples of this could be the citizen groups that are exploring the expansion of library facilities and possible group to explore expanded municipal pool facilities in Kasson. Finally, the Comprehensive Plan needs to be monitored, reviewed and assessed. These assessments will allow for changes to be made that address changing conditions of society.

Tools to help Kasson with implementation of the goals and policies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan are discussed below.

DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES

Zoning Ordinance: Zoning is the primary regulatory tool used by governmental units to implement planning policies. It consists of the Official Zoning Map and the supporting ordinance text. The purpose of Kasson's Zoning Ordinance is; 1) To protect the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare, 2) Identify the most appropriate use of land throughout the City 3) Provide for the compatibility of different land uses, 4) Promote orderly development of the residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public areas, 5) Conserve the natural and scenic beauty and attractiveness of Kasson, 6) Conserve the value of properties, and 7) Protect the environment.

The Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map may be amended from time to time to reflect new goals, policies and opportunities identified by the Community. The City Council has tools to make these amendments through review by the Planning Commission. Great care should be taken in reviewing and approving these amendments to minimize affects on neighboring land owners. The City should review its existing Zoning Ordinance and Map for inconsistencies with the adopted Future Land Use Map contained in the new Comprehensive Plan. Any changes in zoning should be done as orderly and contiguously as possible, with great care taken to minimize affects on current and neighboring land owners. Spot zoning should be avoided.

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2011 Comprehensive Plan – City of Kasson

Subdivision Ordinance: This ordinance is enacted for the purpose of safeguarding the best interest of the City of Kasson, the homeowner, and the developer by requiring well planned subdivisions through the establishment of design and construction criteria including things like dedicated green space, and improves land records by establishing standards for surveys and plats.

Parks Ordinance: The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide standards and regulations for the design and construction of any new parkland areas as well as establishing rules for the use of and conduct within the existing parks.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Another potential tool for implementation is the Capital Improvement Program, which would prioritize and schedule large capital projects usually over a five to ten year period. City staff first compiles a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five to ten years, including transportation and public facilities projects. Then all projects are reviewed, priorities are assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified.

In the current fiscal climate, the City's financial resources will always be limited and there will always be competition for those resources. The Capital Improvement Program allows Kasson to provide the most critical public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints. Many of the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan can be articulated in a Capital Improvements Program. Through this CIP, the recommendations can be prioritized, budgeted and programmed into the City's decision making process.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The City of Kasson benefits from an active citizenship, involved and aware of issues and concerns throughout the community. Kasson should continue to encourage opportunities for citizen participation at all levels of the planning and development processes through appointed citizen commissions and boards, and attendance and participation at public meetings. The City should continue to use as many media outlets as possible to provide public information. This can be accomplished through the City's website (the web address is www.cityofkasson.com), local cable access television channels, public service announcements on local radio, informational brochures, and press release distribution to area newspapers. Facebook, Twitter and other social media site are also becoming very popular places for citizens to get information as well.

This Comprehensive Planning effort has begun to establish a healthy dialogue among local residents concerning the future of the community. Wide publicity has been given to this Comprehensive Plan with a number of citizens being involved in the planning discussions. This Plan will affect everyone in the City, and everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to planning decisions.

REVIEW AND REVISION

The Comprehensive Plan is not a static document. The planning process must be continuous. The Plan should be monitored and updated when necessary. If public attitudes change or new issues arise that are beyond the scope of the current Plan, the document should be reviewed and updated. From time to time, certain changes to the Plan document will be required. The Planning

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Commission and City Council should carefully review proposed changes and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If changes are found to be appropriate, they should be formally added to the Plan by legal amendment. Also, the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it continues to be an up-to-date expression of Kasson's goals and intentions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Comprehensive Planning: Kasson should review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary, but at a minimum every five years, to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. The Planning Commission should lead the review and update process with assistance, as needed, by a community volunteer committee.

Development Ordinances: The City should continue to bring the zoning map into conformance with the Land Use Plan as future projects are reviewed. To support the orderly growth of Kasson, the City should continually evaluate, maintain and enforce development performance standards to promote land use efficiency, quality development, and attractive neighborhoods. Kasson should enforce screening and buffering requirements within the zoning code to mitigate the adverse effects along the edges between adjoining land uses. These requirements must be enforced.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan: Kasson should partner with the Department of Transportation to prepare a Comprehensive Transportation Plan that details the current conditions, and highlights any deficiencies, of the transportation system. This plan could explore the current traffic flow issues and outline goals and policies to make the system more efficient. This plan would also outline criteria for prioritizing projects and expenditures, and hopefully provide a mechanism aimed to provide adequate and consistent funding for these projects through budget priority.

Comprehensive Housing Study: Kasson should consider partnering with the local Housing Redevelopment Authority to complete a comprehensive housing study to examine the existing housing conditions in the community in great detail. This study would help identify any deficiencies in the local housing market both now and projected into the future.

Annexation: Kasson should maintain a policy of Orderly Annexation to contain development allowing for the most efficient use of existing utilities and infrastructure. Regular discussions should continue with the neighboring townships as the community continues to grow in size.

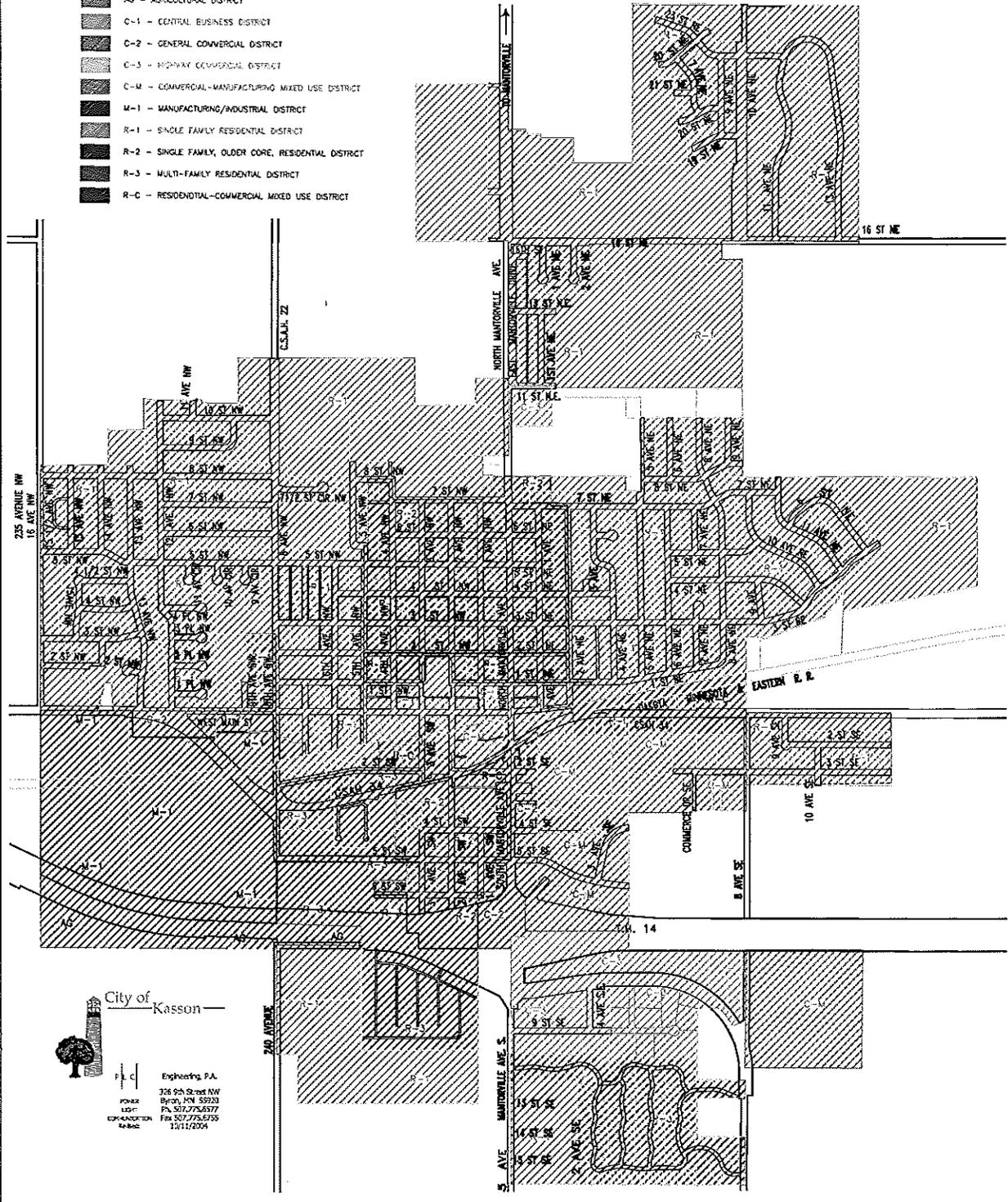
Summary Statement

The goals, policies, and suggestions contained in the Comprehensive Plan are not intended to be the entirety of the answers to Kasson's needs. This Plan is a reviewable document, and is intended as a starting point to make Kasson a better place to live, work, recreate, and do business through community input.

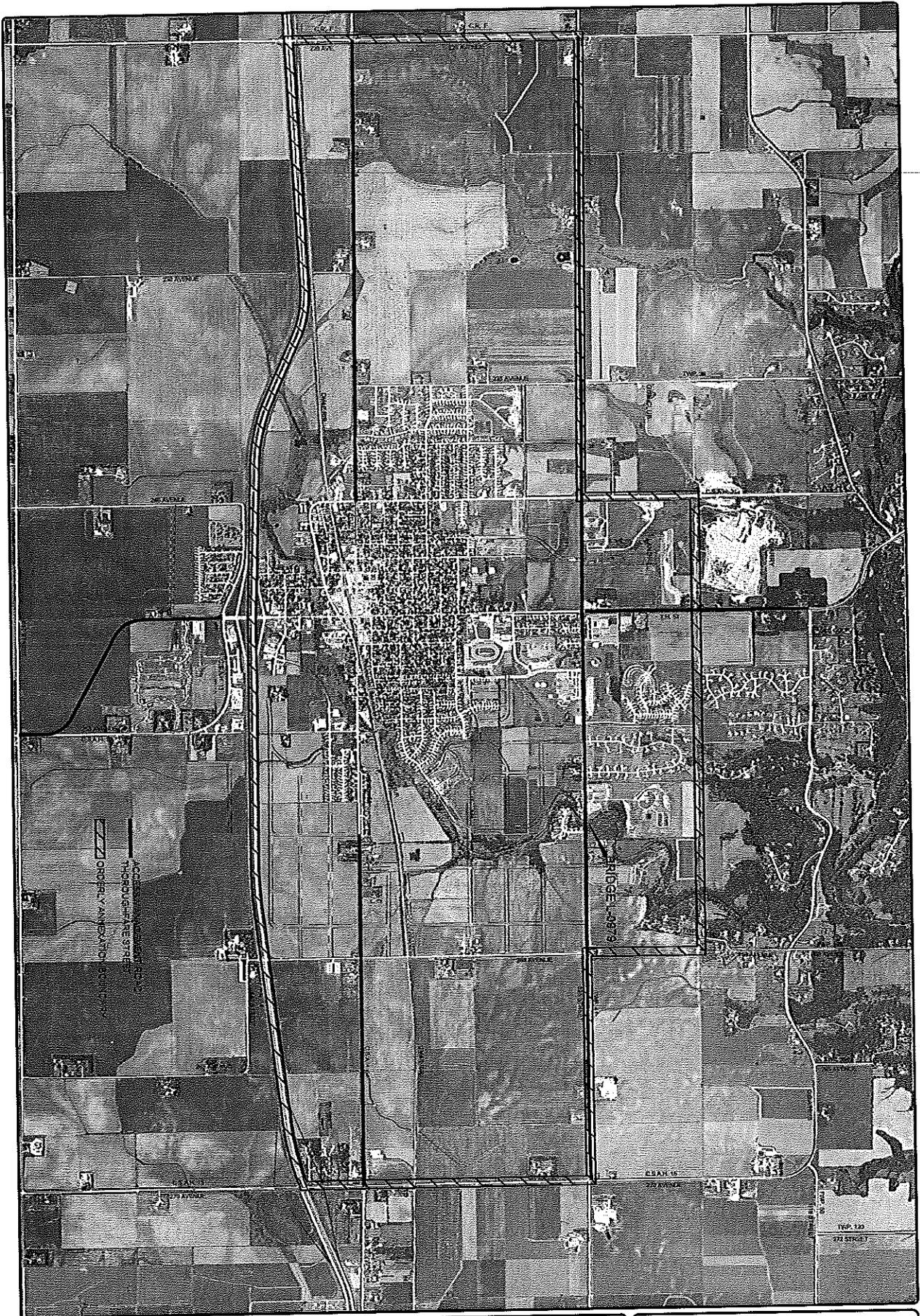
KASSON Official Zoning Map

Legend

-  A-1 - AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
-  C-1 - CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
-  C-2 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
-  C-3 - HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
-  C-4 - COMMERCIAL-MANUFACTURING MIXED USE DISTRICT
-  M-1 - MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
-  R-1 - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
-  R-2 - SINGLE FAMILY, OLDER CORE, RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
-  R-3 - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
-  R-C - RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL MIXED USE DISTRICT




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**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION MAP
ORDERLY ANNEXATION BOUNDARY
CITY OF KASSON, MINNESOTA**



ENGINEERS
 ARCHITECTS
 LAND SURVEYORS
 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

ALEXANDER, MN
 BURNETT, MN
 CROOKSTON, MN
 GRAND RAPIDS, MN
 HENNING, MN
 JOHNSON, MN

11) In Kasson, how favorable would you rate the following factors?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Business Cost Factors					
Wage Rates	5-2	4-5	3-5	2-1	1
Transportation Costs	5-2	4-7	3-4	2-1	1
Energy Costs	5-1	4-1	3-10	2-1	1-1
Local Taxes	5	4-1	3-7	2-5	1
State Taxes	5	4-1	3-9	2-4	1
Interest Rates	5-3	4-1	3-7	2-3	1
Worker's compensation rates	5-1	4-1	3-8	2-3	1-1
Unemployment insurance	5-1	4-1	3-7	2-3	1-2
Employee healthcare costs	5	4-1	3-6	2-5	1-2

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Other Factors					
Availability of labor	5-3	4-5	3-6	2	1
Availability of job training	5	4-5	3-4	2-4	1
Availability of capital (debt/equity)	5-2	4-4	3-5	2-3	1
Proximity of four-lane highway	5-5	4-9	3	2	1
Airport facilities	5-1	4-6	3-5	2-1	1-1
Availability of industrial site	5	4-5	3-5	2-1	1
Quality of telecommunications	5-5	4-6	3-1	2-1	1-1
Availability of Broadband	5-4	4-5	3-3	2	1-2
Availability of housing	5-3	4-6	3-2	2-2	1
Availability of quality infrastructure	5-1	4-8	3-5	2-1	1
Availability of business services	5-1	4-8	3-3	2-1	1
Other (specify)	5-1	4	3	2	1-1

12) In Kasson, how would you rate the following?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
K-12 Schools	5-9	4-4	3-2	2	1
Community Education	5-6	4-6	3-3	2	1
Religious choices	5-8	4-6	3-1	2	1
Childcare	5-4	4-7	3-3	2	1
Access to cultural events	5-3	4-2	3-7	2-2	1
Parks/Recreation	5-2	4-7	3-4	2	1
Ambulance Service	5-5	4-7	3-2	2-1	1
Healthcare service	5-9	4-3	3-2	2	1
Fire Protection	5-7	4-4	3-2	2	1
Police protection	5-6	4-3	3-3	2	1-2

Street maintenance	5 - 3	4 - 7	3 - 2	2 - 2	1
Snow Removal	5 - 3	4 - 8	3 - 2	2 - 2	1
Zoning	5 - 1	4 - 9	3 - 4	2	1
Public library	5 - 1	4 - 3	3 - 7	2 - 3	1 - 1
Availability of parking	5 - 1	4 - 5	3 - 5	2 - 4	1
City government	5 - 2	4 - 7	3 - 3	2 - 1	1 - 1
Chamber of Commerce	5 - 3	4 - 7	3 - 4	2	1 - 1
Water/Waste Water Treatment	5 - 1	4 - 9	3 - 4	2	1
Economic Development	5 - 1	4 - 5	3 - 4	2 - 4	1
Dining Options	5 - 2	4 - 5	3 - 4	2 - 4	1
Entertainment Options	5	4 - 1	3 - 8	2 - 4	1 - 1
Retail Options	5	4 - 2	3 - 8	2 - 4	1
Contractor Services Options	5 - 2	4 - 7	3 - 4	2 - 1	1
Other (specify)	5	4	3	2	1

13) Are there business sectors that you feel are lacking in Kasson? 11 Yes 1 No
If Yes, please list _____

14) What is your overall opinion of Kasson as a place to conduct business?
2 (5) excellent 1 (4) good 5 (3) fair 1 (2) poor (1) very poor
Please explain your answer _____

15) What is your overall opinion of Kasson as a place to live?
4 (5) excellent 9 (4) good 1 (3) fair 1 (2) poor (1) very poor
Please explain your answer _____

16) What efforts do you feel could be made by the city to improve your business and the business climate as a whole?

1. How long have you lived in Kasson? 31 1-3years 83 3-9years 34 10-15years 178 16+years
2. Please rank the following general issues in the order you feel they should have priority throughout the Kasson comprehensive planning process. 1=Greatest priority, 5=Least priority.

- 28 Housing needs
163 Employment and other economic issues
95 Infrastructure (roads, telecommunications, electricity, sewer and water)
23 Environmental quality and natural resource issues
45 Land use (Zoning, guiding growth, maintaining green space, etc.)

3. Do you feel the City needs to be more proactive in guiding the location of future housing development?

152 Yes 78 No 92 Not sure

Comments _____

4. Do you feel it is important to preserve open space (examples recreational, agricultural, woodlands), by regulating developments?

274 Yes 28 No 22 Not Sure

Comments _____

5. Is there a need for commercial and industrial growth in Kasson?

271 Yes 25 No 31 Not Sure

Comments _____

6. Do you feel Kasson should promote commercial and industrial growth?

273 Yes 28 No 25 Not sure

Comments _____

7. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that the following types of development will be beneficial to Kasson:

Tourism:	<u>51</u> Strongly Agree	<u>77</u> Agree	<u>119</u> Neutral	<u>45</u> Disagree	<u>29</u> Strongly Disagree
Industry:	<u>124</u> Strongly Agree	<u>119</u> Agree	<u>56</u> Neutral	<u>15</u> Disagree	<u>9</u> Strongly Disagree
Light Industry:	<u>140</u> Strongly Agree	<u>130</u> Agree	<u>40</u> Neutral	<u>7</u> Disagree	<u>4</u> Strongly Disagree
Retail:	<u>162</u> Strongly Agree	<u>136</u> Agree	<u>21</u> Neutral	<u>5</u> Disagree	<u>1</u> Strongly Disagree
Professional Services:	<u>86</u> Strongly Agree	<u>157</u> Agree	<u>69</u> Neutral	<u>7</u> Disagree	<u>3</u> Strongly Disagree
Hi-Tech:	<u>87</u> Strongly Agree	<u>130</u> Agree	<u>90</u> Neutral	<u>11</u> Disagree	<u>3</u> Strongly Disagree
Agribusiness:	<u>100</u> Strongly Agree	<u>141</u> Agree	<u>66</u> Neutral	<u>5</u> Disagree	<u>5</u> Strongly Disagree
Other: _____	____ Strongly Agree	____ Agree	____ Neutral	____ Disagree	____ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

8. Where are you in favor of expanding/developing commercial/retail or light industrial? (Multiple answers possible).

- 175 Continue development as it relates to existing zoning and land use
- 80 Develop additional new areas outside existing zoning and land use plan
- 10 Not in favor of any expansion/development
- 44 No opinion/not sure

9. Do you feel that the transportation system/roads in the community are adequate today?

- 160 Yes
- 133 No
- 16 Not sure

10. If you believe the transportation network is inadequate, what is needed? (Multiple answers possible).

- 52 More roads
- 18 Wider roads
- 89 Better road surfaces
- 85 Better maintenance
- 27 Senior Mobility
- 42 Public Transit

Other: _____

11. Do you feel there are hazardous or problematic intersections or roads that need more traffic signals or signs in your area? 189 Yes 91 No 28 Not sure

If so, please specify:

12. Do you feel the current road network provides for growth in Kasson?

- 133 Yes
- 84 No
- 81 Not sure

13. Please list any concerns you have regarding transportation in Kasson?

14. Please rank your top three (3) priorities the importance of the following environmental issues as they relate to Kasson.

- 10 City development
- 70 Fertilizer/Pesticide Runoff
- 58 Soil Erosion
- _____ Waste/septic issues
- 33 Industry
- 35 Air quality/pollution
- 39 Habitat Loss
- 117 Water Quality

Other: _____

15. Please list any other concerns you have regarding environmental impacts of current or future land uses in Kasson?

16. What is your opinion on the current land-use regulation (zoning ordinance) in Kasson?

- 37 Too restrictive
- 77 Just fine
- 23 Not restrictive enough
- 178 No opinion / not sure

17. Please indicate where you feel ordinances are most needed in Kasson? 1=most needed 5=least needed
(Please rank all items below)

93 Public nuisance 75 Environmental protection
87 Incoming industrial plants 40 Housing Construction
____ Other: _____

18. Please rank your top five (5) priorities in the order of importance of the following areas in which Kasson should consider in its comprehensive planning process. Highest priority being number 1.

<u>24</u> City Parks	<u>3</u> State Parks
<u>10</u> Recreational Trails	<u>2</u> Traditional Agriculture
<u>18</u> Housing	<u>1</u> Intensive Agriculture
<u>1</u> Campgrounds	<u>12</u> Wildlife conservation
1 st - <u>92</u> Small Businesses	<u>5</u> Sports Fields
4 - <u>36</u> Highways/Roads	<u>11</u> Open Space
2 - <u>65</u> Schools	3 - <u>42</u> Light Industry
<u>12</u> Transit	<u>13</u> Heavy Industry
5 - <u>29</u> Sewer/Water Infrastructure	
____ Other: _____	

19. Please describe how you would like to see Kasson 10 years from now:

20. Please list any additional comments or concerns you would like to address:

Thank you very much for your time and participation!