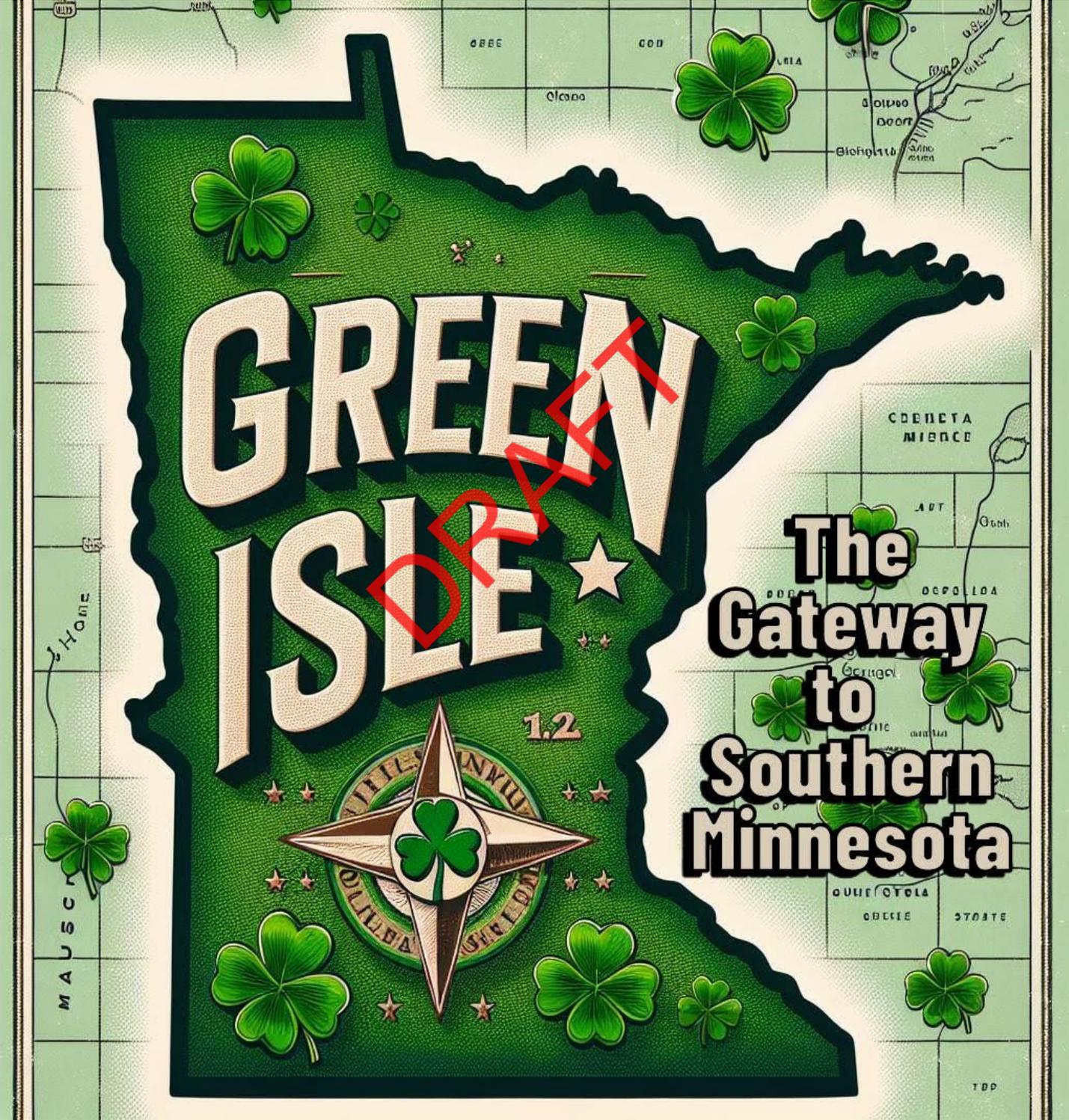


# Comprehensive Plan 2024-2040



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Members of the Comprehensive Plan Working Group

The City of Green Isle acknowledges the contributions of all who participated in creating the City's first comprehensive plan. The City of Green is thankful to all the people that provided feedback and input at public meetings.

#### City Council

- Mayor Shane Sheets
- Councilmember Ed Zimmerman

#### EDA

- EDA Member Denise Schuft
- EDA Member Joe Kreger

#### Planning and Zoning

- Councilmember Schawn Lindquist
- Hunter Pederson

#### Green Isle community School

- Serenity Cox
- Lindsay Paschke

#### Community Members

- Cindy Pieper
- Harrison DeBoer
- Danielle DeBoer

#### Consultants

- EDA Director Amy Soeffker
- P&Z Administrator Phil Mangis III
- Kyle Ten Napal – ISG
- Amanda Prosser – ISG
- Shane Wynkoop
- Dan Shaughnessy



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Green Isle Comprehensive Plan is a visionary document that charts the course for our community's growth and development over the next two decades. This plan, born from extensive community engagement and rigorous analysis, serves as a roadmap for sustainable growth, economic vitality, and an enhanced quality of life for all residents. It reflects our community's aspirations and provides a framework for decision-making that will shape the future of Green Isle.

Vision Statement: "Green Isle is a safe, engaged, and pristine environment with a developing industrial and residential community guided by input from all, with the focus on the future success of the City."

Community Profile and Regional Context: Green Isle, a small rural community in Sibley County, Minnesota, is characterized by its agricultural heritage, close-knit community, and potential for growth. Located approximately 45 miles southwest of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, Green Isle benefits from its proximity to urban amenities while maintaining its distinct rural character. With a population of 606 (as of 2021) and a median age of 37 years, our city has seen significant population growth of 81.4% since 2000, outpacing the state average. This growth underscores the need for thoughtful, strategic planning to manage our expansion while preserving our cherished small-town character.

Green Isle's strategic location along State Highway 25 provides crucial links to broader regional markets and employment centers. The city plays a vital role in the regional agricultural economy while also attracting workers to its industrial park. As part of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District, Green Isle collaborates with neighboring communities on water management and other regional issues.

### Key Plan Elements:

1. **Land Use:** Emphasizes preserving Green Isle's rural feel while accommodating growth, proposing strategies for balanced development including residential expansion and industrial park development.
2. **Housing:** Promotes a diverse mix of housing types, addresses affordability challenges, and ensures accessibility for residents with diverse needs.
3. **Economic Development:** Outlines strategies to foster a thriving local economy, including tax incentives, a revolving loan fund, and targeted development areas.
4. **Infrastructure and Utilities:** Prioritizes maintaining and upgrading essential systems, promoting renewable energy, and expanding high-speed internet access.
5. **Parks, Trails, and Recreation:** Focuses on enhancing existing parks, expanding the trail network, and exploring new recreational opportunities.
6. **Transportation:** Emphasizes maintaining and improving the street network, designating truck routes, and incorporating "complete streets" principles.

Implementation Strategy: The plan outlines a comprehensive implementation strategy divided into short-term (2024-2026), mid-range (2027-2030), and long-range (2031-2040) phases. Key

actions include establishing a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, updating zoning ordinances, developing a capital improvement plan, launching economic development initiatives, and creating various community-enhancing programs and facilities.

The plan emphasizes ongoing public engagement, regular progress monitoring, and collaboration with various partners to ensure successful implementation. It also recognizes the importance of regional cooperation and Green Isle's role in the broader south-central Minnesota context.

Conclusion: This Comprehensive Plan is more than a document; it's a testament to Green Isle's commitment to proactive planning and community-driven development. By providing a clear vision and actionable strategies, this plan aims to guide our city towards a future that balances growth with preservation, economic development with environmental stewardship, and individual needs with community well-being. As we implement this plan, we envision a Green Isle that retains its small-town charm while offering enhanced opportunities, amenities, and quality of life for all residents. Together, we can build a thriving, sustainable, and vibrant Green Isle for generations to come, one that plays a vital and harmonious role in the broader regional community.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The City of Green Isle Comprehensive Plan is a forward-thinking document that sets the course for our community's growth and development over the next two decades. This chapter provides an overview of Green Isle, its unique characteristics, and the purpose and process behind creating this comprehensive plan. As we embark on this journey of strategic planning, it is essential to understand the context of our community – its history, its people, and its place within the broader region. This introduction sets the stage for the detailed analyses, goals, and strategies that follow, offering a foundation for the vision we collectively hold for Green Isle's future. Through this plan, we aim to preserve the cherished aspects of our small-town character while embracing opportunities for sustainable growth and enhanced quality of life for all residents.

### OVERVIEW OF GREEN ISLE

Green Isle, located in the southern part of Minnesota within Sibley County, is a small community characterized by its rural setting and agricultural heritage. With a modest population size, the town fosters a close-knit community where residents often share common values and traditions associated with rural living. The surrounding geography contributes to the town's identity, offering a backdrop of fertile lands that historically supported agricultural activities.

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Green Isle's economy, and the town maintains a connection to both traditional and modern farming practices. The local economy is a mix of agricultural enterprises, local businesses, and services. The town's economic landscape reflects the balance between preserving its rural character and adapting to contemporary economic demands.

In addition to its agricultural focus, Green Isle provides essential community services, including schools, and local government services. These services contribute to the well-being and functionality of the community, supporting the needs of its residents.

Smaller communities like Green Isle often have cultural and recreational activities that bring residents together. Local events, festivals, and community gatherings play a role in celebrating the town's identity and fostering a sense of community pride. The natural surroundings, including farmlands and open spaces, contribute to the town's aesthetic appeal and offers opportunities for outdoor activities.

THE CITY OFFERS AFFORDABLE HOMES IN A SMALL TOWN, FRIENDLY, CLEAN, AND SAFE ATMOSPHERE, WITH EASE OF ACCESS TO THE STATE HIGHWAYS 5 AND 25, AND TO NEARBY BUSINESSES AND SERVICES. THE LOTS ARE WELL EQUIPPED WITH ONE OF THE NEWEST AND MOST ADVANCED WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS.

THERE ARE OVER 212 HOUSEHOLDS IN THE CITY WITH AN AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE OF 2.62 PEOPLE.

Community engagement is a key aspect of life in smaller towns, and residents are likely to actively participate in local decision-making processes and community initiatives.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Green Isle, a small rural community in Sibley County, Minnesota, is characterized by its agricultural heritage, close-knit community, and potential for growth. Located approximately 45 miles southwest of Minneapolis-St. Paul, our city offers a unique blend of rural charm and proximity to urban amenities.

Key demographics and characteristics include:

- Population: 606 (as of 2021)
- Median age: 37 years
- Population growth: 81.4% since 2000, significantly outpacing the state average of 12.6%
- Racial composition: 86.2% White, 4.8% Hispanic, with a growing diversity
- Median household income: \$68,137
- Homeownership rate: 70.6%
- Median home value: \$165,514

Green Isle's economy is diverse, with major industries including construction, food/agriculture, and retail. The city is home to several key businesses, including Dahlheimer Beverage, which employs about 70 people, making it the largest employer in the city.

Our community boasts excellent educational facilities, including the Green Isle Community School, which serves as a vital center for learning and community engagement. The city also features several parks, including Veterans Park, Lions Park, and the Irish Yard, which offer recreational opportunities and community gathering spaces.

Green Isle's small-town atmosphere is complemented by its commitment to progress, as evidenced by recent infrastructure improvements and the availability of high-speed internet, including fiber-to-the-home services. This blend of traditional values and modern amenities makes Green Isle an attractive location for families, retirees, and businesses alike.

As we look to the future, Green Isle faces both opportunities and challenges. Our significant population growth underscores the need for thoughtful, strategic planning to manage our expansion while preserving our cherished small-town character. This comprehensive plan aims to address these needs, ensuring that Green Isle remains a vibrant, sustainable, and welcoming community for generations to come.

## HISTORY OF GREEN ISLE

Green Isle, situated in Sibley County, Minnesota, has a history deeply rooted in the patterns of European-American settlement in the Midwest. The area, originally inhabited by indigenous Dakota Sioux, witnessed a significant influx of European settlers in the mid-19th century. The area around Green Isle was settled by several families as early as 1855. Green Isle Township was settled in 1857 and

organized on May 11th, 1858. The city received its name referring to Ireland, “The Emerald Isle” by suggestion of Christopher Dolan, an Irish immigrant. Early settlers were drawn to the region by the prospects of agriculture. The fertile lands surrounding Green Isle became the foundation for farming and dairy activities, establishing the town's agricultural heritage.

The development of Green Isle was significantly influenced by the expansion of the railroad during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The railroad not only facilitated the transportation of agricultural products but also connected the town to regional markets, playing a pivotal role in the town's growth. In 1891, Green Isle was officially incorporated as a city, marking a period of increased economic and civic development. Agricultural trade and services became central to the town's identity. The Minneapolis and St Louis railroad with the station came through in 1881. The city of this name, in the adjacent section 18 of Washington was platted in August 1881 and incorporated as a village on December 8, 1883. The city had a station of the Minneapolis and St Louis railroad and has had a post office since 1866.

Agriculture continued to be the backbone of Green Isle's economy, with the town evolving into a hub for agricultural commerce and services. The community established essential institutions such as schools, churches, and social organizations that contributed to the fabric of local life. The town's history reflects the resilience and close-knit nature of its community.

Over the 20th century, Green Isle, like many rural communities, witnessed changes in agriculture due to technological advancements and shifts in farming practices. These changes impacted the local economy and community dynamics. However, Green Isle remained steadfast in preserving its agricultural heritage and adapting to the evolving needs of its residents.

In more recent times, Green Isle has faced both opportunities and challenges that are characteristic of small towns. Efforts to preserve and celebrate its historical heritage have been ongoing, with a focus on maintaining the community's unique identity. Today, Green Isle stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of rural communities, navigating changes while holding onto the rich history that has shaped its character. Exploring local archives, historical documents, and engaging with the community provides a more nuanced understanding of Green Isle's distinct and evolving history.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Green Isle</b>	<b>Minnesota</b>
<b>Population (2021)</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>5.7 million</b>
<b>Population change since 2000</b>	<b>+81.4%</b>	<b>+12.6%</b>
<b>Median age</b>	<b>37.0 years</b>	<b>38.8 years</b>
<b>White population</b>	<b>86.2%</b>	<b>83.8%</b>
<b>Hispanic population</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>

**REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Green Isle, a small but vibrant community in Sibley County, Minnesota, plays a unique role in the broader regional context of south-central Minnesota. Located approximately 45 miles southwest of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, Green Isle benefits from its proximity to urban amenities while maintaining its distinct rural character.

**Geographic Setting:** Green Isle is situated in a predominantly agricultural region, characterized by gently rolling plains and fertile farmland. The city is bordered by Green Isle Township to the north and east, and Washington Lake Township to the south and west. This location places Green Isle at the intersection of rural agricultural traditions and growing suburban influences from the expanding Twin Cities metro area.

**Regional Transportation:** The city's accessibility is enhanced by its proximity to major transportation corridors. State Highway 25 runs through the heart of Green Isle, connecting it to larger regional centers such as Norwood Young America to the north and Arlington to the south. This strategic location along a state highway provides Green Isle with crucial links to broader regional markets and employment centers.

**Economic Relationships:** While Green Isle maintains a distinct local economy, it is intricately connected to the larger regional economic ecosystem. Many residents commute to nearby cities for work, including Arlington, Glencoe, and even the Twin Cities metro area. Conversely, Green Isle's industrial park and local businesses attract workers from surrounding communities, contributing to a regional flow of labor and commerce.

The city's agricultural heritage aligns with the broader regional economy, with many local businesses and services supporting the agricultural sector. This connection to the regional agricultural economy provides both opportunities and challenges as the sector evolves.

**Natural Resources and Recreation:** Green Isle shares in the stewardship of regional natural resources, particularly in relation to water management. The city falls within the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District, necessitating cooperation with neighboring communities and regional entities in water quality and flood management efforts.

The development of trails and recreational amenities in Green Isle has the potential to connect with broader regional trail systems, enhancing recreational opportunities not just for local residents but for the wider region as well.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation:** Green Isle actively participates in regional planning efforts and collaborates with neighboring jurisdictions on issues of mutual concern. The city is a member of the Minnesota Valley Council of Governments, which facilitates regional cooperation on planning, economic development, and public services.

**Future Growth and Development:** As the Twin Cities metropolitan area continues to expand, Green Isle may experience increasing development pressures. The city's comprehensive planning efforts must balance local desires for growth with regional trends and the preservation of its rural character.

Challenges and Opportunities: Green Isle faces both challenges and opportunities due to its regional context. The city must navigate the complexities of maintaining its small-town atmosphere while leveraging its strategic location for economic growth. Balancing agricultural preservation with potential development pressures from the expanding metro area will be a key consideration in the coming years.

By understanding and embracing its role in the regional context, Green Isle can position itself to capitalize on regional strengths while preserving its unique local identity. This comprehensive plan aims to guide Green Isle's development in a way that harmonizes local goals with regional realities, ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for the community.

## **PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The purpose of our Comprehensive Plan is to serve as a vision and roadmap for where the community of Green Isle is headed. The ideas and goals expressed in this plan are proposed to reflect the community's values and the desire for what Green Isle is to become.

Each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides the “big picture” of several important areas that are interwoven and have an impact on quality of life in Green Isle.

It is the intention that this plan will be used on a day-to-day basis by city staff, the City Councilmembers, and stakeholders to drive important policy decisions, such as decisions involving infrastructure and development, the acquisition and sale of public land, capital improvements, zoning, and regulatory changes, and communicating a consistent vision.

It is anticipated that residents may use the plan to determine property use, understand decisions made by the City, and make improvements to regarding investment into the community.

### **Green Isle values:**

Safe – Close-knit rural community

Engaged – Community members coming together

Environment – Balance of people, buildings, nature

Developing – Increasing prosperity for the community

## ***AUTHORITY TO PLAN***

Communities are given the legal authority to adopt a Plan according to Minnesota State Statute 462.353 subd. 1. The statute enables cities to promote the “public health, safety, and general welfare” of the community. The following describes in detail the State's Municipal Planning and Development Policy Statement (462.311).

### **462.351 MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT; POLICY STATEMENT.**

The legislature finds that municipalities are faced with mounting problems in providing means of guiding future development of land so as to insure a safer, more pleasant and more economical

environment for residential, commercial, industrial and public activities, to preserve agricultural and other open lands, and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Municipalities can prepare for anticipated changes and by such preparations bring about significant savings in both private and public expenditures. Municipal planning, by providing public guides to future municipal action, enables other public and private agencies to plan their activities in harmony with the municipality's plans. Municipal planning will assist in developing lands more wisely to serve citizens more effectively, will make the provision of public services less costly, and will achieve a more secure tax base. It is the purpose of sections 462.351 to 462.364 to provide municipalities, in a single body of law, with the necessary powers and a uniform procedure for adequately conducting and implementing municipal planning.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The comprehensive planning process is a structured and iterative approach that involves several key stages in developing a roadmap for the future of a community. It typically begins with initiation and preparation, where the need for a comprehensive plan is identified, and an understanding of the legal framework governing planning in the jurisdiction is established. This stage sets the foundation for the entire process, laying the groundwork for subsequent steps.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical aspect, emphasizing the importance of involving the public and key community stakeholders from the outset. Through community workshops, surveys, interviews, and meetings, planners gather diverse perspectives, ensuring that the comprehensive plan reflects the values, priorities, and concerns of the community. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership among residents.

The analysis of existing conditions follows, where comprehensive data is collected on demographics, land use, infrastructure, transportation, and other relevant factors. A SWOT analysis helps assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the community. This thorough examination provides a factual basis for decision-making and goal setting.

Visioning becomes a pivotal stage as the community works together to articulate a shared vision for its future. This vision becomes the guiding star for subsequent planning activities. Goal setting follows, translating the community vision into concrete objectives across key areas such as land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental sustainability. These goals form the foundation for the comprehensive plan's content.

Land use planning involves the development of land use maps that designate different areas for various uses, integrating zoning considerations to align with the overall vision and goals. Simultaneously, action plans are formulated, detailing specific strategies, policies, and projects to achieve the established goals. This includes setting a timeline and prioritizing initiatives based on community needs and available resources.

Policy development is a crucial aspect of the planning process, encompassing the formulation of policies that guide decision-making related to growth, development, and community services. This stage often involves recommending updates to zoning codes, development regulations, and other policies to ensure alignment with the comprehensive plan.

With the plan taking shape, the document preparation stage involves compiling all components, including analyses, goals, objectives, and action plans, into a cohesive document. This draft plan is then shared with the community, local officials, and stakeholders for review and feedback. The iterative nature of this process allows for refinements based on input received.

The approval and adoption stage involve public hearings to gather input on the final plan and presenting it to relevant governing bodies for approval. This may include city councils, planning commissions, or other decision-making bodies. Once adopted, the comprehensive plan enters the implementation and monitoring phase, where oversight mechanisms are established to track progress regularly. Monitoring and evaluation ensure that the plan remains dynamic and responsive to changing conditions, fostering sustainable and resilient communities over time.

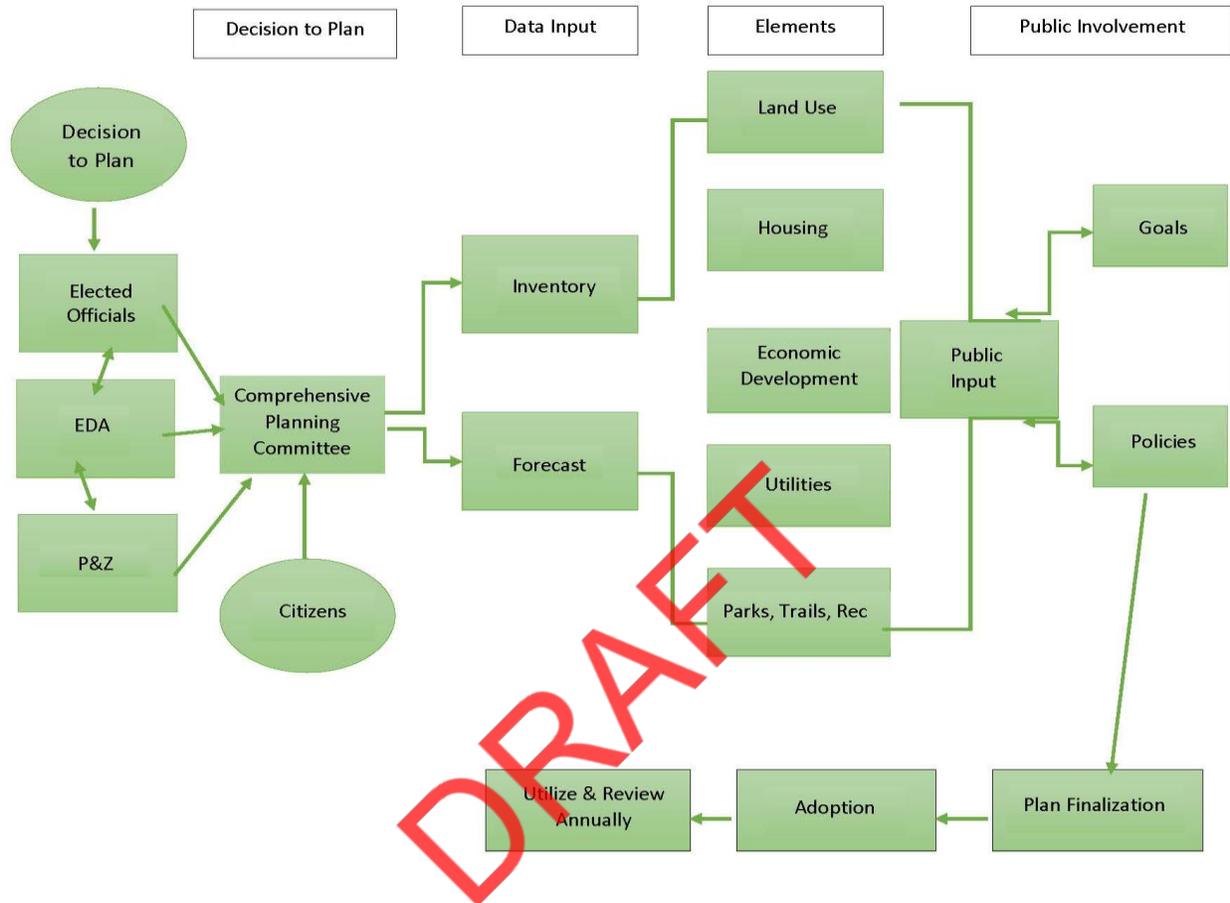
The Comprehensive Plan process began in the summer of 2022 and is the first Comprehensive Plan for the City of Green Isle. At the beginning of the process, a team of varied individuals was created, known as the Comprehensive Plan Working Group.

Relevant background information was collected and reviewed including demographic data, zoning and subdivision regulations, and housing and building permit data.

Valuable input was also gathered from those in the community. The plan was shared during the summer's music series as well as with the local school to gather input from local stakeholders.

As each chapter of the plan was developed, drafts were available on the City's website and were individually presented and commented on at the City Council meetings. Comments were also received via the City's website and Facebook page. The plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission, Economic Development Authority, and the City Council at their respective meetings in December of 2023 and December 2024. A public hearing was held before the Planning and Zoning Commission December 4, 2024 and was henceforth adopted by the Green Ise City Council on December 26, 2024.

FIGURE 1-1 PLANNING PROCESS FLOW CHART



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The City of Green Isle is committed to ensuring that this Comprehensive Plan reflects the values, needs, and aspirations of all community members. To achieve this goal, we implemented a robust public participation process throughout the development of this plan.

Key elements of our public participation process included:

1. **Monthly Public Meetings:** Regular monthly meetings were held throughout the planning process. These meetings were open to all members of the public, providing ongoing opportunities for community input and engagement.
2. **Housing Survey:** A comprehensive housing survey was mailed to all households in Green Isle. This survey gathered valuable feedback on current housing conditions, future housing needs, and preferences of our residents.

3. **Implementation Strategy Survey:** We conducted a survey focused on short-term, mid-range, and long-term implementation strategies. This allowed community members to provide input on prioritizing actions and shaping the future of Green Isle.
4. **Stakeholder Presentations:** The draft plan was presented to key stakeholder groups including the Economic Development Authority (EDA), Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z), and City Council. These presentations provided opportunities for detailed review and feedback from these important civic bodies.
5. **Public Review Period:** The draft plan was made available for public review, allowing all community members the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions.

This multi-faceted approach to public participation ensured that a diverse range of voices and perspectives were incorporated into the planning process. The feedback received through these various channels has been instrumental in shaping the vision, goals, and strategies outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.

We are grateful to all community members who participated in this process. Your input has been invaluable in creating a plan that truly reflects the aspirations of Green Isle.

This section provides a clear overview of the public participation process and emphasizes the city's commitment to community engagement. It also helps to establish the credibility and community-driven nature of the plan.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN**

The Comprehensive Plan provides a “big picture” look at several important areas that impact the quality of life in Green Isle. The Comprehensive Plan covers the following chapters:

**Chapter 1: Introduction** – This chapter provides an overview of what the Comprehensive Plan is and its purpose. It discusses the process for developing the plan and how it is organized.

**Chapter 2: Vision** – This chapter outlines the vision for the community that is intended to be expressed through all other chapters.

**Chapter 3: Land Use** – This chapter established an existing and future land use for all property in the City.

**Chapter 4: Housing** – This chapter provides an overview of existing housing conditions and a plan for maintaining and developing a quality future housing stock.

**Chapter 5 Economic Development** – This chapter provides an analysis of the existing economic climate and opportunities for economic growth and redevelopment areas.

**Chapter 6: Utilities** – This chapter examines the existing system and future improvements to public utilities as it relates to water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.

Chapter 7: Parks, Trails, and Recreation – This chapter examines the existing park and trail system, as well as recreational opportunities and establishes planning criteria, guidelines, and standards for future development of these amenities.

Chapter 8: Implementation – This chapter will address the plan elements, action items, priority of action items, short and long-term actions, as well as ongoing action items to make the Comprehensive Plan workable.

Appendix A: Green Isle Citywide Trails Plan – This appendix will address long-range trail planning within the City.

## USE OF THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan presents a vision for the future of Green Isle. It is based on locally established visions, goals and policies derived through public participation. The individual chapters outline in more specific terms the goals and policies to ensure Green Isle grows in a way that supports the values of the community. The plan is designed to be a working document that defines the future and provides a working program for realizing the City's future potential.

A comprehensive plan, often referred to as a master plan or general plan, serves as a long-term guiding document for the development and growth of a community, city, or region. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is multifaceted, encompassing social, economic, environmental, and physical considerations. Here are the key purposes of a comprehensive plan:

- **Long-Term Vision and Goals:** A comprehensive plan establishes a community's long-term vision and goals, outlining the desired future state. It provides a roadmap for decision-makers and stakeholders to work towards a shared vision of the community's development.
- **Land Use Planning:** One of the primary purposes is to guide land use planning. It defines how different areas should be used—residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, etc. This helps create a cohesive and organized spatial structure for the community.
- **Infrastructure Planning:** The plan addresses the needs for infrastructure development, including transportation, utilities, parks, and public facilities. It ensures that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support current and future population needs.
- **Economic Development:** Comprehensive plans often incorporate strategies for economic development. This may involve identifying areas for commercial or industrial growth, fostering job creation, and supporting a diverse and sustainable local economy.
- **Housing Strategies:** The plan outlines housing strategies, addressing the types of housing needed, affordability, and distribution. It ensures a balanced and inclusive approach to housing that meets the needs of various demographic groups.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Comprehensive plans often include considerations for environmental sustainability. This may involve strategies for conservation, open space preservation, and promoting environmentally friendly practices in development.
- **Community Engagement:** It provides a platform for community engagement and involvement in the planning process. Public input is often sought to ensure that the plan reflects the values and priorities of the residents.
- **Zoning and Development Regulations:** A comprehensive plan sets the stage for zoning and development regulations. Zoning ordinances and regulations are aligned with the goals and vision outlined in the plan.
- **Resilience and Adaptation:** In the face of changing circumstances, such as population growth, economic shifts, or environmental challenges, a comprehensive plan provides a framework for resilience and adaptation, allowing the community to respond effectively to changes.

In summary, a comprehensive plan serves as a foundational document that guides the physical, social, and economic development of a community over an extended period. It aims to create a sustainable, vibrant, and well-functioning community that meets the needs of its residents.

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## CHAPTER 2: VISION

The comprehensive plan is a tool used to guide future growth and development of the City of Green Isle. The comprehensive plan serves as a foundational document that guides the physical, social, and economic development of a community over an extended period. It aims to create a sustainable, vibrant, and well-functioning community that meets the needs of its residents

Focusing solely on individual projects rather than considering the broader perspective of the entire city can become a common tendency. Therefore, Green Isle will be guided by their Vision Statement. The guiding principle for the city is the Vision Statement which tells us what the City of Green Isle would like to become.

Vision gives the community a stated goal of what their future will be and is paramount in managing the growth and development within the community.

Vision is a framework to be used by policy makers, appointments, and staff members to make decisions on the future growth and development of the city. The vision statement ensures that decisions are not made in an isolated manner that detracts or endangers the community's ability to achieve its plans.

Early in the planning process to create the comprehensive plan, community members were asked to describe what they felt were the strengths and weaknesses in the city of Green Isle. The strengths represented the things they liked about the city, what they were proud of and what they wanted to see continue or grow in Green Isle.

The weaknesses were things that the community members felt detracted from the city and were areas that they felt the community could improve upon.

The vision statement was developed after multiple meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Working Group.

The vision statement process was shared on the city website and the city Facebook page asking for public input. Updates on the vision statement and comprehensive planning were shared with the Economic Development Authority, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and finally the City Council. Two representatives from the Green Isle Community School were part of the conversation to create a Vision Statement.

After several exercises in creating a vision statement the committee created a Vision for the City of Green Isle.

## Vision Statement

**Green Isle is a safe, engaged, and pristine environment with a developing industrial and residential community guided by input from all, with the focus on the future success of the city.**

The vision statement for Green Isle emphasizes the city's goals of being a tight-knit, safe community that values public engagement, environmental stewardship, and inclusive planning for the future. Specifically, it conveys that Green Isle aims to have a pristine natural environment and be a safe place for residents. It wants citizens to actively participate and provide input into decisions. The statement also signals desires for steady industrial and residential growth with a focus on long-term success driven by input from all stakeholders.

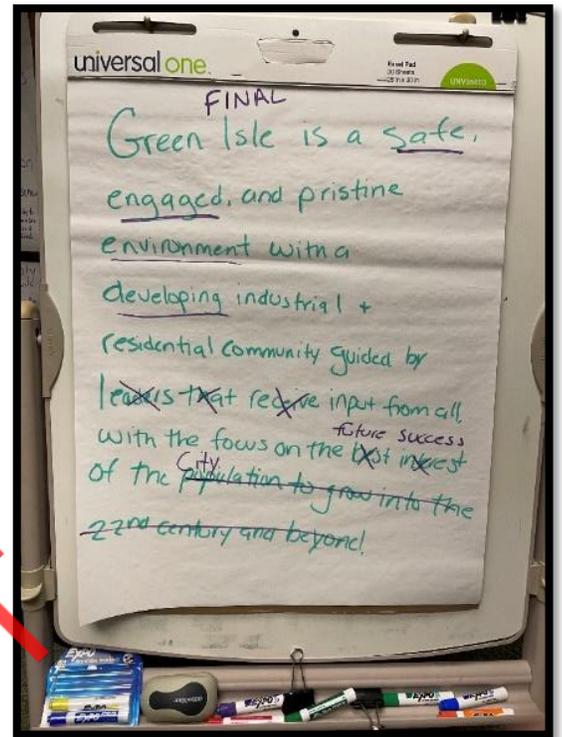
Overall, the vision statement paints a picture of Green Isle as an inclusive, forward-thinking city that strives to balance development with maintaining its small-town feel, natural beauty, and public safety through community participation in planning for the future.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS ANALYSIS

As part of our strategic planning process, we conducted an analysis of the opportunities and threats facing Green Isle. This analysis helps us identify areas of potential growth and development, as well as challenges we need to address to ensure the continued success and vitality of our community.

### Opportunities:

1. Shovel-ready lots: Available for immediate development, attracting new businesses and industries.
2. Vacant buildings with potential: Such as the Foster Building on Parnell Street, which could be repurposed for new businesses or community uses.
3. Expansion of programs for kids and families: Enhancing quality of life and attracting young families to the area.
4. Room for new housing and growth: Potential for residential expansion to accommodate population growth.
5. Development of walking paths and trails: Particularly around Lake Erin, improving recreational opportunities and community connectivity.
6. Potential for new businesses: Such as another gas station or restaurant, diversifying local services and creating jobs.
7. Expansion of childcare services: Meeting a crucial need for working families and supporting workforce participation.



### Threats:

1. School closing: Potential loss of a key community institution.
2. Businesses leaving: Risk of job losses and reduced local services.
3. Economic challenges: Such as inflation, economic downturns, or increasing fuel prices.
4. Competition with other communities: For residents, businesses, and resources.
5. Loss of volunteers/workforce: Affecting community services and local businesses.
6. Potential loss of essential services: Such as the post office.
7. Infrastructure challenges: Such as deteriorating streets and sidewalks.

This opportunities and threats analysis provides a framework for our strategic planning efforts. By leveraging our opportunities and addressing our threats, we can work towards achieving our vision for Green Isle's future.

This opportunities and threats analysis played a crucial role in shaping the goals and strategies outlined in this comprehensive plan. By identifying key areas of potential growth, such as shovel-ready lots and room for new housing, we were able to develop targeted strategies for economic development and housing expansion. The recognition of opportunities like walking paths and programs for families guided our focus on enhancing parks, recreation, and community services. Similarly, understanding the threats facing our community, such as potential business closures or infrastructure challenges, allowed us to prioritize initiatives aimed at business retention, workforce development, and infrastructure improvement. Each chapter of this plan reflects our commitment to capitalizing on Green Isle's unique opportunities while proactively addressing potential threats. This balanced approach ensures that our plan is both aspirational and pragmatic, providing a roadmap for sustainable growth and community resilience in the face of challenges. By aligning our goals and strategies with this analysis, we aim to create a future for Green Isle that maximizes our potential while safeguarding against potential setbacks.

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Future land use planning holds paramount importance for rural communities, providing a strategic framework that shapes the trajectory of development and growth. One of its primary roles is the preservation of rural character. By defining areas for agriculture, open spaces, and

low-density development, land use planning helps strike a balance between accommodating growth and safeguarding the distinctive rural landscapes that define the community's identity. This preservation is crucial for maintaining the charm and cultural heritage of rural areas.



Agricultural preservation is another critical aspect addressed by future land use planning. Given that many rural communities rely on agriculture as a cornerstone of their economy, effective planning ensures the protection of farmland from incompatible development. This safeguarding of agricultural zones supports the sustainability of the farming sector, securing the livelihoods of rural residents and

contributing to the overall economic health of the community.

Natural resource conservation is integral to future land use planning in rural areas. By identifying and protecting vital resources like water bodies, wetlands, and wildlife habitats, planners contribute to the sustainability of rural ecosystems. This proactive approach guards against environmental degradation and fosters a harmonious coexistence between human activities and the natural environment.

Infrastructure planning is a practical outcome of future land use planning, enabling rural communities to allocate land strategically for roads, utilities, and other essential services. This ensures that infrastructure development aligns with the needs of both current and future residents, promoting efficient and well-coordinated growth.

Economic development is facilitated through land use planning by designating areas for commercial and industrial activities. This strategic allocation attracts businesses, creates job opportunities, and stimulates economic growth in a manner that respects and complements the rural setting. Housing allocation is also addressed, with land use plans identifying suitable areas for residential development while considering factors such as infrastructure capacity, environmental considerations, and the overarching vision for the community.

Future land use planning contributes to the provision of community services by guiding the placement of essential facilities such as schools, healthcare centers, and recreational spaces. This ensures that services are strategically located, promoting accessibility and meeting the diverse needs of residents. Zoning regulations, a byproduct of land use planning, help manage land uses, densities, and building standards, fostering orderly growth and protecting the community's interests.

Disaster mitigation is a forward-thinking aspect of land use planning, considering areas prone to natural hazards and incorporating measures to reduce vulnerability. By identifying risks and planning accordingly, rural communities can enhance their resilience to disasters such as floods, wildfires, or storms.

Lastly, community engagement is inherent in the land use planning process. Involving residents in shaping the future of their community ensures that the plan is reflective of local values, preferences, and aspirations. This participatory approach strengthens community cohesion and empowers residents to take an active role in the development and sustainability of their rural surroundings.

The city offers affordable homes in a small town, friendly, clean, and safe atmosphere, with ease of access to State Highways 5 and 25, and to nearby businesses and services. The lots are well equipped with one of the newest and most advanced water and wastewater systems.

There are over 212 households in the city with an average household size of 2.62 people.

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*New home construction remains strong, particularly by builders like Loomis Homes and Miller Homes. They are consistently building new homes each year in the Lake Erin and Lakeview additions. Roofing, siding, and window replacement projects are common maintenance/upgrade projects each year for existing homes. Several commercial projects like the baseball complex upgrades, Circle City Signs building, and Fill Me Up Station projects in 2019-2022. Solar installations have become more popular in recent years like the community solar garden in 2019 and several residential solar arrays in 2022-2023. Plumbing and mechanical permits for things like water heaters, HVAC, and appliances are steady each year. Miscellaneous projects like decks, fences, sheds occur regularly. Permit fees, review fees, state surcharges, etc. generate significant annual revenue for the city. New home construction appears to have dipped slightly in 2023 compared to 2021-2022 based on permits so far. But this may pick up again in 2024-2025. Overall, the permits show continued investment in new construction and upgrades to existing properties each year indicating an active local economy.*

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The land use chapter is a roadmap that helps guide Planning and Zoning Commissioners, City Council members, and staff on how to make decisions relating to land use and future growth. This chapter is intended to result in orderly and efficient development of Green Isle land, making the most of the community's resources. It offers guidance on decisions for the community which are consistent with the city's vision and goals.

In this chapter is a description of existing land use patterns, as well as an overview of how the city anticipates how land will be used and developed in the future. It accommodates growth and applies the desired qualities for the community.

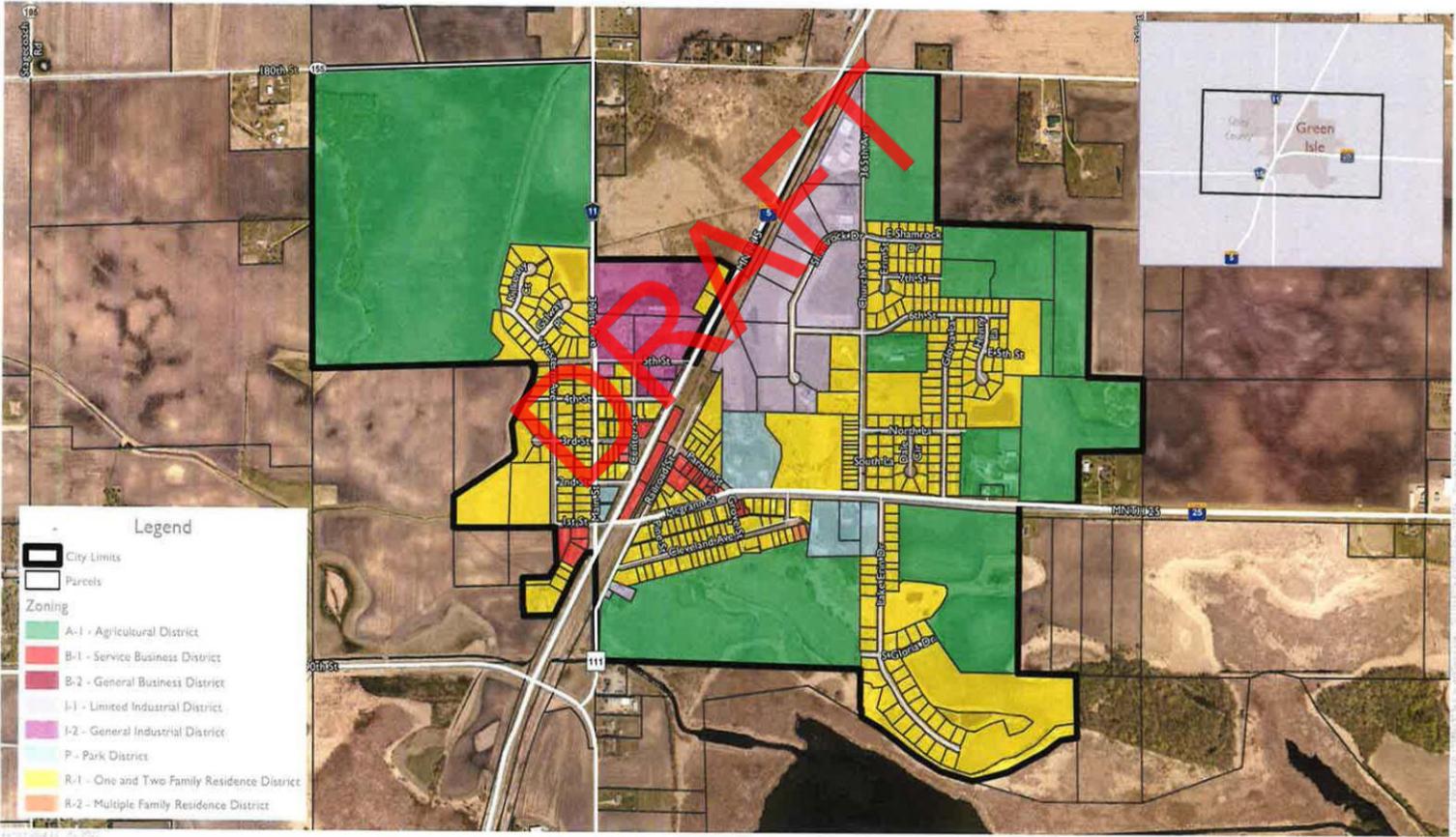
Another important aspect of this chapter is that it also serves as the foundation for reviewing the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, Subdivision Regulations.

Implementation of the land use plan

produces several important effects:

- ❖ Use – Every parcel is placed into a specific land use category. Each category includes a description of the type of land use or uses intended for that category. The description should match the types and forms of development currently found in Green Isle and desired for the future of Green Isle.
- ❖ Relationships – This is the mixing of the construction-built environment with Green Isle's natural environment.
- ❖ Actions – This Comprehensive Land Use Plan will determine Green Isle's future public actions and investments. Future streets, sidewalks, parks, and utilities will be based on the information in this Comprehensive Plan.

Table 3-1 Existing Land Use		
Existing Land Use	Gross Acres	Net Percentage
Residential	253.67	38.7%
Business	8.01	1.2%
Light Industrial	50.41	7.7%
Heavy Industrial	24.36	3.7%
Parks	14.5	2.2%
Agricultural	303.77	46.4%
Vacant	54.33	8.2%



Zoning Map  
City of Green Isle  
Sibley County, Minnesota

Sources:  
Chironago - State County GIS  
Brownsdale County GIS  
Ed. Limits (McGraw Hill)

ISG

FIGURE 3-2: EXISTING LAND USE ZONING MAP

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING LAND USE

### A-1 AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

The Agricultural District makes up the largest land use category in Green Isle. The current District is comprised of land being used for farming activities.

The purpose of the Agricultural District is to preserve areas where urban public utilities are not presently available. These lands are to be retained in a natural state or in agricultural uses pending the proper timing for the economic provision of sewer and water, streets, parks, storm drainage and other public utilities and services so that orderly development can occur. The City may consider rezoning and subdivision of lands within the District to residential and non-residential urban-type uses.



Total acres of the Agricultural District are 303.64.

### B-1 AND B-2 BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Local bars, an auto shop, storage garage, the local bank and a mix of residential housing make up the current Business Districts.



The purpose of the Business Districts is to provide space for concentrated general business and commercial activities dependent upon high volumes of vehicular traffic. The intent is to provide locations where vehicular-oriented activities can be maximized with minimal infringement on residential neighborhoods.

Total acres of Business Districts are 7.12.



## I-1 and I-2 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

Construction warehouses, a local recycling plant, local beer distributor, and the city water tower make up the city's current Industrial Districts.



The purpose of the Industrial Districts is to provide space for light and heavy manufacturing activities. The intent is to provide locations where degree of refuse byproducts and air or noise pollution activities can be maximized with minimal infringement on residential

neighborhoods.

Total acres of Industrial Districts are



68.026.



## P – PARKS DISTRICT

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The city veterans park, archery range located in the city's other local park, and the city baseball field make up the current Park District.

The Parks District is intended to provide rules and regulations for the use of and conduct in the parks and recreation areas of the City.

Total acres of the Parks District are 16.51.

## R-1 AND R-2 DISTRICTS

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The City's Residence Districts are comprised of single-family dwellings, the local churches, the local school, and two multi-family apartment buildings.

The Residence Districts are intended to provide low density residential areas and restrict incompatible commercial and industrial use and to establish residential districts which will allow multiple dwellings (apartments, row houses, town houses, etc.) and which will maintain optimum space, height and lot requirements approximating the standards of single-family residential development.



Total acres of Residence Districts are 259.424.



## RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Year	Number of Permits
2019	2
2020	5
2021	12
2022	10
2023	7

- New home construction has been steady, with Miller Homes and Loomis Homes building the newest homes, particularly around Lake Erin Drive. There were 7 new home permits in 2019, 6 in 2020, 18 in 2021, 9 in 2022 and 16 projected for 2023 so far.
- Reroofing permits are common each year, typically ranging from 10-20 permits annually.
- Several commercial projects like Erin Solar Garden in 2019, OEM addition in 2020, and Fill Me Up signage/fire suppression work in 2021-2022.
- Numerous permits for decks, sheds, fences - typical residential accessory projects. These ranged from 5-15 permits each year.
- Plumbing permits for things like water heaters and softeners have been steady, usually 5-10 per year.
- Some larger municipal projects like water tower antenna replacement, sidewalks, and City Hall reroofing in 2023.
- Permit revenue has grown overall from around \$14,000 in 2019 to \$18,000-\$20,000 in 2023.

In summary, new home building and residential renovation projects make up the bulk of permits and revenue, with commercial projects and municipal work mixed in each year. Trend seems to be continued growth in development and permit activity over the 5-year period.

## SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PRACTICES

As Green Isle plans for its future, it is important to consider sustainable land use practices that preserve our rural character, protect our natural resources, and support long-term community resilience. The following sustainable land use strategies are appropriate for our small rural community:

1. **Agricultural Preservation:** Given that the Agricultural District makes up the largest land use category in Green Isle (46.4% of total land area), we will prioritize the preservation of prime farmland. This not only supports our local agricultural economy but also maintains our rural character and food security.
2. **Open Space Conservation:** We will seek to maintain and potentially expand our Parks District (currently 2.2% of the total land area) to preserve open spaces. These areas

contribute to our community's quality of life, provide recreational opportunities, and help conserve natural habitats.

**Compact Development:** When considering new residential or commercial development, we will encourage infill development and the use of existing infrastructure where possible. This approach helps to minimize sprawl and reduces the need for new infrastructure investments.

**Energy-Efficient Building Practices:** While respecting the scale and character of our community, we will encourage energy-efficient building practices in new construction and renovations. This could include simple measures such as proper insulation, energy-efficient windows, and solar-ready designs where appropriate.

**Natural Resource Protection:** We will pay special attention to protecting our water resources, including wetlands and Lake Erin. Land use decisions will consider potential impacts on these vital natural resources.

**Climate Resilience:** In our land use planning, we will consider potential climate-related risks such as flooding or severe weather events. This may influence decisions about where to locate new development or how to design infrastructure.

**Local Food Production:** We will explore opportunities to support local food production through land use policies, such as allowing for community gardens or small-scale agricultural activities in appropriate areas.

These sustainable land use practices will be integrated into our decision-making processes for zoning, development approvals, and long-term planning. By incorporating these principles, we aim to ensure that Green Isle grows in a way that is environmentally responsible, economically viable, and supportive of our community's long-term well-being.

## Land Use Case Study

Preserving Agricultural Land in Howard Lake, MN Howard Lake (population ~2,000) implemented a growth boundary and transfer of development rights program to preserve farmland while accommodating growth. This resulted in the preservation of over 500 acres of prime agricultural land over a 10-year period.

### Key Strategies:

1. **Urban Growth Boundary:** Howard Lake established a clear urban growth boundary, designating areas for future development and areas to be preserved for agriculture.
2. **Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program:** The city implemented a TDR program, allowing landowners in designated agricultural preservation areas to sell their development rights to developers who could then use these rights to increase density in designated growth areas.
3. **Comprehensive Plan Integration:** The agricultural preservation strategies were deeply integrated into the city's comprehensive plan, ensuring consistent policy support.
4. **Collaboration with Wright County:** Howard Lake worked closely with county officials to align their preservation efforts with broader regional goals.
5. **Education and Outreach:** The city conducted extensive community outreach to build support for the preservation efforts and help residents understand the long-term benefits.

### Results:

- Preservation of over 500 acres of prime agricultural land over a 10-year period
- Concentrated development within the urban growth boundary, leading to more efficient use of infrastructure
- Maintained rural character while still allowing for controlled growth
- Increased property values for both preserved agricultural land and developable land within the growth boundary
- Enhanced local food production and support for the agricultural economy

### Challenges Overcome:

- Initial skepticism from some landowners about the TDR program
- Balancing the interests of developers with preservation goals
- Coordinating efforts with county-level planning initiatives

### Lessons for Green Isle:

1. Clear designation of growth areas and preservation areas can provide certainty for both developers and agricultural landowners.
2. A TDR program can be an effective tool for preserving agricultural land while still allowing for development.
3. Strong community engagement and education are crucial for building support for preservation efforts.
4. Collaboration with county officials can enhance the effectiveness of local preservation strategies.
5. Integrating preservation strategies into the comprehensive plan ensures long-term commitment and policy consistency.

By adopting similar strategies, Green Isle could work towards preserving its valuable agricultural lands while still accommodating necessary growth and development. The Howard Lake case study demonstrates that small cities can successfully implement sophisticated land use tools to achieve their preservation goals.

## LAND USE OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Land use opportunities and threats are critical considerations in the planning process, influencing the development and sustainability of communities. One significant opportunity lies in embracing mixed-use development, where residential, commercial, and recreational spaces are integrated within the same area. This approach creates vibrant, walkable neighborhoods, fostering economic vitality and reducing dependence on extensive commuting. Transit-oriented development is another opportunity that encourages planning around transportation hubs, promoting public transit use, reducing traffic congestion, and enhancing accessibility, making areas more attractive for residents and businesses.

Brownfield redevelopment represents an opportunity to revitalize abandoned or contaminated sites. This not only addresses blight but also supports environmental remediation, turning underutilized spaces into valuable community assets. Green infrastructure is a key opportunity, emphasizing the integration of green spaces, parks, and natural areas into urban planning. This not only contributes to environmental sustainability but also enhances the overall quality of life by providing recreational opportunities and improving aesthetics.

Affordable housing initiatives present an opportunity to address housing needs, promote inclusivity, and support diverse communities. Implementing smart growth principles, such as compact development, mixed land uses, and preservation of open space, can lead to more efficient land use, reduced sprawl, and improved resource utilization. Adaptive reuse, transforming existing structures for new purposes, preserves cultural heritage, reduces demolition waste, and supports sustainable land use practices.

On the flip side, urban sprawl represents a threat to well-planned land use. Uncontrolled expansion into rural areas can lead to fragmented development, increased infrastructure costs, and environmental degradation, posing a threat to agricultural lands and natural habitats. Overdevelopment is another threat, where rapid and unchecked growth may strain infrastructure, exacerbate traffic congestion, and compromise the quality of life for residents.

Environmental degradation is a significant threat associated with poor land use practices, such as inadequate zoning or conservation measures. This can result in soil erosion, habitat loss, and negative impacts on air and water quality. Gentrification poses a threat by potentially displacing existing communities, leading to social and economic inequities. Lack of affordable housing can result in socioeconomic disparities and limit housing options for various income levels.

Infrastructure gaps, arising from inadequate planning, can lead to congestion, strained public services, and decreased overall livability. Climate change risks are also threats associated with poorly planned land use in vulnerable areas, increasing exposure to events such as flooding or wildfires, leading to property damage and threats to community resilience. Additionally, the loss of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses poses a threat to food security, rural economies, and the preservation of open spaces.

Effective land use planning involves maximizing opportunities to create sustainable, well-designed communities while addressing and mitigating potential threats. Balancing growth and conservation, promoting inclusivity, and adopting forward-thinking practices are essential components of comprehensive land use planning.

The Comprehensive Planning Group identified the following opportunities for Green Isle:

- Shovel ready lots in the industrial park
- Empty buildings that could be used in the business district
- Walking path/trails around Lake Erin
- Expand childcare

They group also identified the following threats to the City land use:

- School closing
- Business leaving
- Inflation/economy crashing/increasing fuel prices.
- Competition with other communities
- Loss of volunteers/workforce
- Loss of post office
- Condition of streets/sidewalks

## VISION FOR LAND USE

The City of Green Isle continues to see itself as a rural community, welcoming additional new home construction, filling the industrial park, and planning orderly annexation to continue to grow.

### *RESIDENTIAL*

There are several housing options within the city, including many new homes constructed within the past five years, older single-family homes, twin homes, and two apartment buildings in town. Green Isle offers larger residential lots than those in the metro area. Current residents would like to see more single-family homes in the city.

### *COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL*

Green Isle is home to three businesses in the industrial park, a bank, an elementary school, gas station, and several small businesses. Green Isle residents would like to see more businesses in town and industry in the industrial park.

### *PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL*

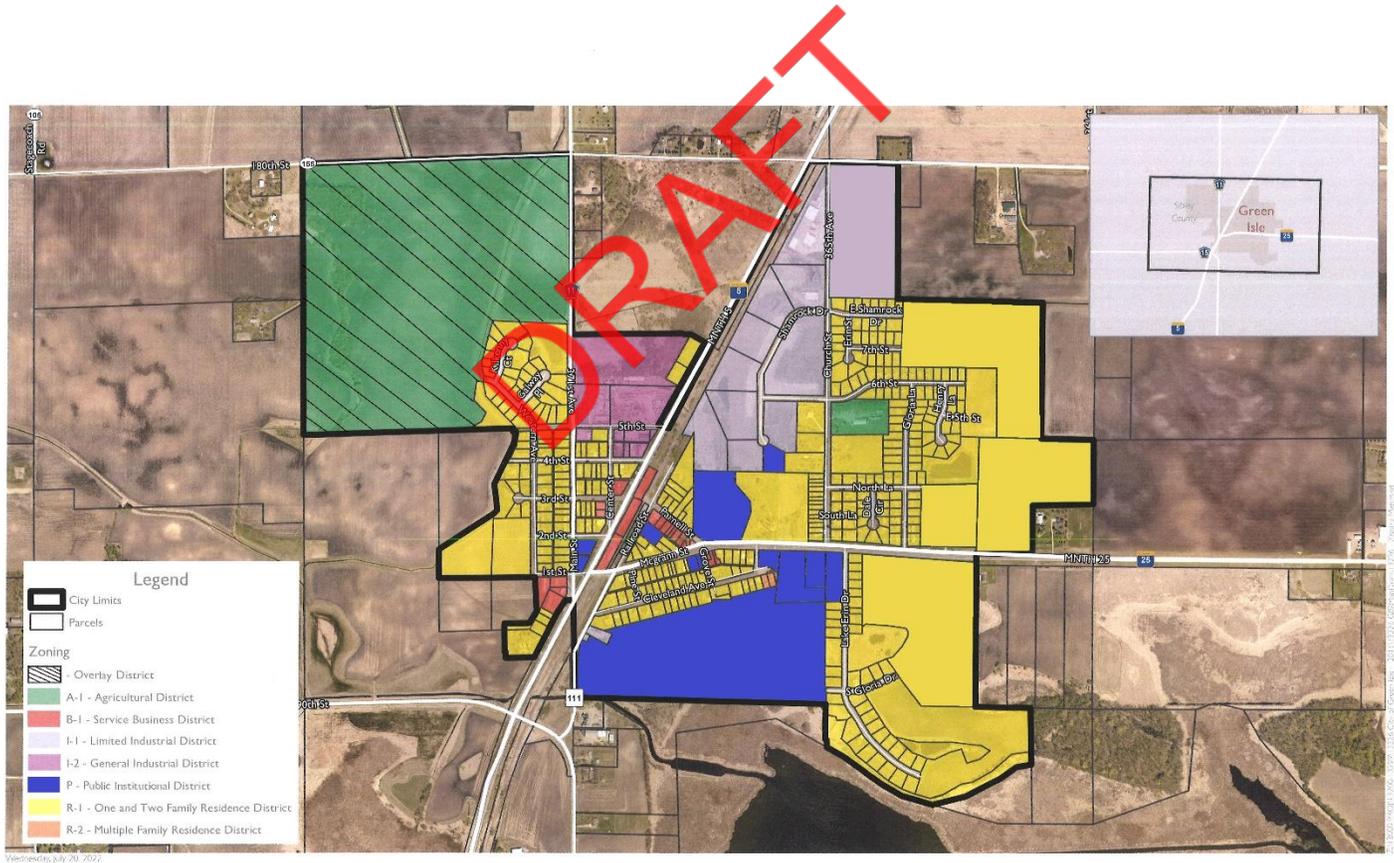
Public and institutional land is public land which is valued resources for city residents. This includes the city hall, water treatment plant, city compost site, and several city parks. Green Isle is very lucky to be home to three city parks including: the Lions Park, the Veterans Park, and the Irish Yard baseball park. Green Isle has been blessed by recent donations that have allowed the parks to purchase new children’s play equipment.

## LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan outlines the intended development and use of land in and around the city of Green Isle. The purpose of the land use plan is to guide the development of land in a way that promotes sustainable growth, balances competing interests, and enhances the overall quality of life for residents.

The future land use map appears in figure 3.3 below.

**FIGURE 3.3 FUTURE LAND USE MAP**



Zoning Map  
City of Green Isle  
Sibley County, Minnesota

Sources:  
Official Agency (Sibley County, 2018)  
Parcels (Sibley County, 2021)  
City Limits (MinGeo, 2017)



## ORDERLY ANNEXATION

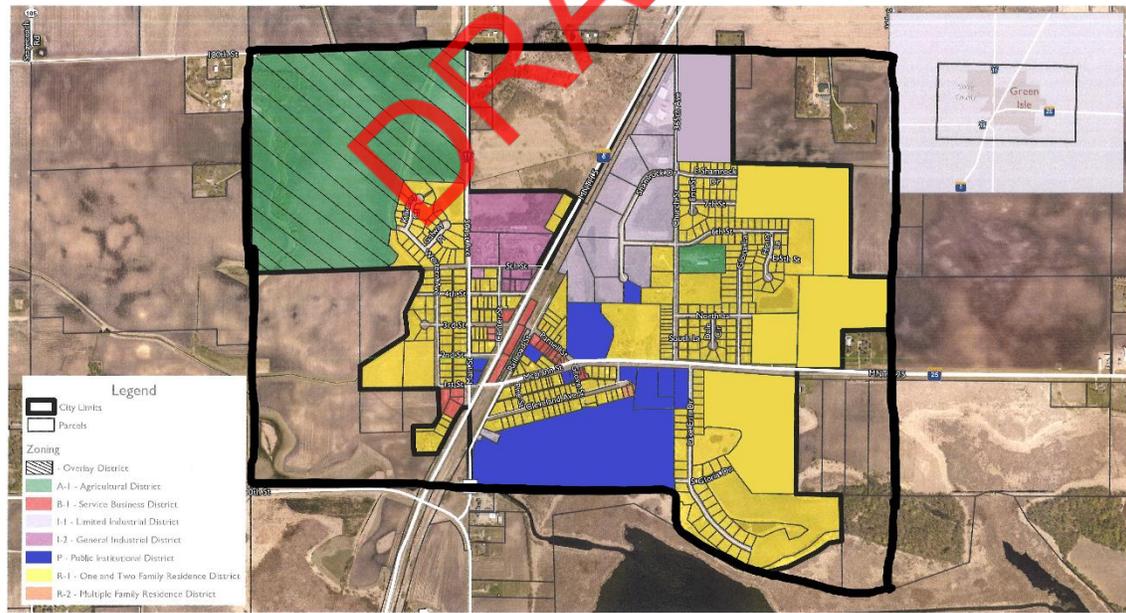
As Green Isle looks to the future, planning for potential growth and expansion is crucial. Orderly annexation is a strategic process that allows cities to incorporate adjacent unincorporated land in a planned, mutually agreed-upon manner. This section outlines Green Isle's approach to orderly annexation, which will guide the city's physical growth in the coming years.

### PURPOSE OF ORDERLY ANNEXATION

The primary purposes of Green Isle's orderly annexation plan are:

1. To ensure that the city's growth occurs in a controlled, efficient manner
2. To provide a framework for extending city services to newly developed areas
3. To preserve the character of Green Isle while accommodating growth
4. To protect agricultural lands and natural resources in the annexation process
5. To create predictability for property owners in potential annexation areas

### ANNEXATION STUDY AREA



The map above illustrates the areas that Green Isle has identified as potential annexation zones. These areas have been selected based on factors including:

- Proximity to existing city boundaries
- Potential for development
- Feasibility of extending city services
- Natural and man-made boundaries
- Preservation of prime agricultural land

## PHASED APPROACH

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Green Isle will pursue a phased approach to annexation:

1. Short-term (1-5 years): Focus on areas immediately adjacent to current city limits that are primed for development.
2. Medium-term (6-10 years): Consider areas that require more significant infrastructure investments or are not immediately needed for growth.
3. Long-term (11-20 years): Reserve for areas that may be needed for future growth but are not currently priorities for development.

## ANNEXATION CRITERIA

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The following criteria will be used to evaluate potential annexation areas:

1. Contiguity to existing city boundaries
2. Ability to efficiently extend city services (water, sewer, roads)
3. Potential for residential, commercial, or industrial development
4. Impact on natural resources and agricultural lands
5. Consistency with the city's comprehensive plan and growth projections
6. Financial feasibility and impact on city resources

## PROCESS FOR ORDERLY ANNEXATION

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1. Identify potential annexation areas based on the criteria above
2. Engage with property owners and township officials to discuss annexation plans
3. Develop orderly annexation agreements with affected townships
4. Conduct public hearings to gather community input
5. Finalize and adopt orderly annexation agreements
6. Submit agreements to the Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings for approval
7. Implement annexation according to the agreed-upon timeline and conditions

## SERVICE EXTENSION PLAN

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As part of the annexation process, Green Isle will develop a plan for extending city services to newly annexed areas. This plan will address:

- Water and sewer infrastructure
- Road maintenance and improvements
- Police and fire protection
- Parks and recreational facilities
- Other municipal services

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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The city will conduct a fiscal impact analysis for each proposed annexation to ensure that the benefits of growth are balanced with the costs of providing services to new areas. This analysis will consider:

- Infrastructure costs
- Ongoing service provision costs
- Potential tax revenue from annexed properties
- Impact on existing city residents and services

## IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

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The Orderly Annexation Plan will be reviewed and updated every five years as part of the comprehensive plan update process. This will ensure that the plan remains relevant and responsive to changing conditions and community needs.

By following this Orderly Annexation Plan, Green Isle aims to manage its growth in a way that enhances the quality of life for current and future residents while preserving the city's unique character and surrounding natural resources.

## LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal: Preserve the rural feel of the community while planning for additional housing and businesses.

Objective 1: Preserve the rural character of the community.

- Policy 1.1: Maintain current residential zoning ordinances.
- Policy 1.2: Increase the number of single-family homes in the city.
- Policy 1.3: Retain some agricultural zoning.

Objective 2: Increase single-family housing within the City of Green Isle.

- Policy 2.1: Collaborate with local developers to create additional single-family housing developments.
- Policy 2.2: Explore incentives for new single-family home construction.

Objective 3: Increase the number of businesses in the industrial park.

- Policy 3.1: Actively market and recruit businesses to fill the industrial park.
- Policy 3.2: Offer incentives to build in the industrial park.
- Policy 3.3: Develop infrastructure to support business growth in the industrial park.

Objective 4: Establish orderly annexation agreements with neighboring townships.

- Policy 4.1: Create an orderly annexation committee.
- Policy 4.2: Meet with Green Isle and Washington Lake townships.
- Policy 4.3: Create an orderly annexation agreement approved by all parties involved.

Objective 5: Implement sustainable land use practices.

- Policy 5.1: Incorporate green infrastructure in new developments.
- Policy 5.2: Encourage energy-efficient building practices.
- Policy 5.3: Protect and enhance natural resources, including Lake Erin.

Objective 6: Enhance community amenities and services.

- Policy 6.1: Develop walking paths and trails, particularly around Lake Erin.
- Policy 6.2: Support the expansion of childcare services.
- Policy 6.3: Maintain and improve existing parks and recreational facilities.

The Land Use Plan for Green Isle sets a clear direction for the community's future development while preserving its rural character and natural resources. By balancing growth with conservation, encouraging sustainable practices, and planning for orderly expansion, Green Isle aims to create a vibrant, resilient community that meets the needs of current and future residents. This plan will guide decision-making processes for zoning, development approvals, and long-term planning, ensuring that Green Isle grows in a way that is environmentally responsible, economically viable, and supportive of the community's long-term well-being. Regular review and updates of this plan will be crucial to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain its relevance in shaping Green Isle's future.

## CHAPTER 4: HOUSING

Housing plays a crucial role in the vitality of Green Isle, MN, for various reasons. Firstly, it is integral to community growth and stability, ensuring that there are sufficient residences to accommodate both current residents and newcomers. This growth, in turn, contributes to economic development by attracting businesses and fostering investment in the area. Additionally, the availability of suitable housing directly impacts the quality of life for residents, emphasizing the importance of safe and comfortable living spaces. Moreover, a well-planned housing strategy supports workforce attraction and retention, attracting a diverse pool of professionals and enhancing the community's overall skill set. The character of the community is also influenced by housing, with careful planning contributing to a unique and aesthetically pleasing environment. Social equity is another crucial consideration, emphasizing the need for housing options that are accessible to individuals of varying income levels. Furthermore, aligning housing plans with infrastructure and services ensures a comprehensive and well-integrated approach to community development. Lastly, a focus on sustainable housing practices contributes to minimizing the environmental impact, aligning with broader environmental goals for a more resilient and eco-friendly community in Green Isle, MN.

**Table 4.1 Housing**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Green Isle</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>
<i>Median home value</i>	<i>\$165,514</i>	<i>\$285,400</i>
<i>Homeownership rate</i>	<i>70.6%</i>	<i>70.8%</i>
<i>Median rent</i>	<i>\$1,011</i>	<i>\$1,104</i>

<https://www.city-data.com/city/Green-Isle-Minnesota.html#b>

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Development (HUD) considers housing to be affordable when a household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing-related expenses, including rent or mortgage payments, utilities, and insurance

### HOUSING PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. **Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA):** MHFA is a state agency that offers various programs and initiatives to promote affordable housing in Minnesota. They may provide information on statewide programs and resources.
2. **Local Housing Authorities:** Cities and counties in Southern Minnesota may have their own housing authorities or agencies that administer housing programs, rental assistance,

and affordable housing initiatives. Check with the housing departments of specific municipalities.

3. **Community Action Agencies:** Community Action Agencies often work on housing-related issues, providing services such as rental assistance, homebuyer education, and housing counseling. Examples include Three Rivers Community Action and Semcac (Southeast Minnesota Citizens' Action Council).
4. **Nonprofit Organizations:** Look for nonprofit organizations dedicated to housing and community development in Southern Minnesota. These organizations might offer affordable housing programs, advocacy, and support services.
5. **Real Estate and Housing Services:** Local real estate agents, property management companies, and housing service providers may have information on available housing programs and resources in the area.
6. **Local Government Websites:** Explore the official websites of cities and counties in Southern Minnesota. They often provide information on local housing programs, initiatives, and relevant contacts.
7. **HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) Offices:** HUD may have regional offices or partnerships with organizations in Southern Minnesota. They oversee various housing programs at the federal level.

## HOUSING SURVEY

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The City of Green Isle conducted a housing survey as part of their 2050 Comprehensive Plan. The survey was mailed to all households in Green Isle to gather feedback on the housing needs of the city.

Based on the information provided in the image, here is a summary of the housing survey results:

### Rental House Options:

- Importance of rental housing options in Green Isle: 3.5/5 average
- Types of rentals needed:
  - Single Apartments: 17/37
  - Twin: 18/37
  - Quad: 5/37

### Importance of Single-Family (owned):

- Importance rating: 4.5/5

### Types of Housing Needed:

- Entry: 27/37
- Move Up: 16/37
- Empty Nest: 7/37
- Rental: 7/37

Importance of Senior Housing: 4/5

- Importance rating: 15/37

Types of Senior Housing Needed:

- Villas/Twin: 16/37
- 55+: 17/37
- Assisted: 15/37
- Nursing: 3/37

Here is a summary chart of the key findings:

**Table 4.2 Housing Survey Results**

Category	Result
Rental Housing Importance	3.5/5
Single-Family Housing Importance	4.5/5
Senior Housing Importance	4/5
Top Rental Type Needed	Twin (18/37)
Top Housing Type Needed	Entry (27/37)
Top Senior Housing Type Needed	55+ (17/37)

The survey results, which represent the opinions of Green Isle households, indicate that single-family housing growth and senior housing options are considered highly important in the city. Entry-level housing is the most needed type overall, while 55+ communities are the most desired senior housing option. Twin homes are the top rental housing type needed.

## Housing Case Study

Affordable Housing Initiative in Pelican Rapids, MN Pelican Rapids (population ~2,500) partnered with a non-profit developer to create a 20-unit affordable housing complex using a combination of state funding and local tax incentives. This project addressed a critical housing shortage for local workers.

## HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**Goal: Ensure a diverse range of affordable and accessible housing options to meet the needs of all residents in Green Isle.**

Objective 1: Promote the development of a variety of housing types and styles.

- Policy 1.1: Encourage a mix of single-family homes, townhouses, apartments, and senior living facilities to cater to different household sizes, ages, and income levels.
- Policy 1.2: Review and update zoning regulations to allow for diverse housing options, such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and mixed-use developments.

Objective 2: Collaborate with developers and housing organizations to increase the supply of affordable housing.

- Policy 2.1: Provide incentives, such as density bonuses or expedited permitting, for developers who include a percentage of affordable units in their projects.
- Policy 2.2: Partner with local housing authorities and nonprofit organizations to develop and manage affordable housing projects.
- Policy 2.3: Explore the creation of a local housing trust fund to support affordable housing initiatives.

Objective 3: Ensure that housing is accessible and adaptable for residents with diverse needs.

- Policy 3.1: Require a percentage of new housing developments to include accessible units for individuals with disabilities.
- Policy 3.2: Encourage the incorporation of universal design principles in new housing construction and renovations to accommodate aging in place.
- Policy 3.3: Provide education and resources to help residents make accessibility modifications to their homes.

Objective 4: Address housing affordability challenges for low and moderate-income households.

- Policy 4.1: Collaborate with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) to leverage state programs and resources for affordable housing development and preservation.
- Policy 4.2: Explore the implementation of a rental assistance program to help low-income households access and maintain stable housing.
- Policy 4.3: Promote financial literacy and homebuyer education programs to help residents navigate the housing market and access affordable homeownership opportunities.

Objective 5: Monitor and assess housing needs and market trends regularly.

- Policy 5.1: Conduct periodic housing needs assessments to identify gaps in the housing supply and inform future planning efforts.
- Policy 5.2: Collaborate with local real estate professionals and housing organizations to stay informed about housing market trends and emerging needs.
- Policy 5.3: Engage the community in housing discussions through surveys, workshops, and public meetings to gather input and feedback on housing priorities and challenges.

Objective 6: Promote sustainable and energy-efficient housing practices.

- Policy 6.1: Encourage energy-efficient building practices in new construction and renovations, such as improved insulation, energy-efficient windows, and ENERGY STAR appliances.
- Policy 6.2: Provide information and resources to homeowners about energy-efficient upgrades and available rebates or incentives for implementing these improvements.
- Policy 6.3: Explore the possibility of offering incentives, such as expedited permitting or reduced fees, for new housing developments that incorporate sustainable design features or achieve recognized green building certifications.
- Policy 6.4: Promote water conservation in housing through measures such as low-flow fixtures and drought-resistant landscaping.
- Policy 6.5: Encourage the use of durable, locally sourced, and environmentally friendly building materials where feasible.
- Policy 6.6: Consider the long-term resilience of housing developments to potential climate-related risks, such as flooding or severe weather events, in the planning and approval process.

By implementing these objectives and policies, Green Isle can work towards ensuring that all residents have access to affordable, diverse, and suitable housing options that meet their needs and contribute to a vibrant and inclusive community.

## CHAPTER 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development holds significant importance for Green Isle, MN, as it plays a pivotal role in fostering a thriving and sustainable community. A robust economy contributes to the overall well-being of the residents and the local environment in various ways. Firstly, economic development generates employment opportunities, enhancing the livelihoods of the community members. This, in turn, leads to increased household income and improved living standards. A flourishing economy also attracts businesses and investments, stimulating further growth and development. The revenue generated through economic activities can be reinvested into essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, positively impacting the overall quality of life for residents. Moreover, economic development fosters a sense of community pride and engagement, as residents witness the positive transformation of their surroundings. Additionally, a strong local economy provides a solid foundation for social programs, cultural initiatives, and community development projects. Therefore, the importance of economic development in Green Isle, MN, lies in its ability to create a vibrant and resilient community that offers ample opportunities for its residents and contributes to the overall well-being of the region.

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

**Table 5.1 Income and Economy**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Green Isle</i>	<i>Minnesota</i>
<b>Median household income</b>	<b>\$68,137</b>	<b>\$77,720</b>
<b>Unemployment rate (2020)</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
<b>Top industries</b>	<b>Construction, food/agriculture, retail</b>	<b>Healthcare, manufacturing, retail</b>

<https://www.city-data.com/city/Green-Isle-Minnesota.html#b> retrieved 2023

## EDA PROGRAMS

### TAX ABATEMENT

Tax abatement is a financial incentive provided by governments to encourage certain types of development or investment in a particular area. It involves a temporary reduction or elimination of property taxes, often as an inducement for property owners or businesses to undertake projects that contribute to economic development, community revitalization, or other public policy goals. Tax abatement is typically used to attract investments, promote job creation, and stimulate economic growth.

Here are key points about tax abatement:

1. **Temporary Reduction or Exemption:** Tax abatement involves a temporary reduction or exemption from property taxes for a specified period. This period is often negotiated and agreed upon between the property owner and the local government.
2. **Conditions and Criteria:** Governments may impose certain conditions or criteria for tax abatement eligibility. These conditions could include creating jobs, improving infrastructure, or contributing to the overall economic development of the community.
3. **Targeted Development Areas:** Tax abatement is often used in targeted development areas, such as economically distressed neighborhoods or areas in need of revitalization. It serves as an incentive for property owners or businesses to invest in these areas.
4. **Types of Development:** Tax abatement can apply to various types of development, including residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use projects. It is commonly used to attract businesses to set up operations in a particular region.
5. **Negotiation and Agreement:** The terms of tax abatement are typically negotiated through agreements between the property owner or developer and the local government. The agreement outlines the specific conditions, duration, and benefits of the tax abatement.
6. **Community Benefits:** Proponents argue that tax abatement can stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and enhance property values. However, critics often raise concerns about potential revenue loss for local governments and the need to ensure that the community receives tangible benefits in return.

#### *TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)*

TIF stands for Tax Increment Financing, which is a public financing tool used by local governments to fund infrastructure and community improvement projects. The key concept of TIF involves capturing the incremental increase in property tax revenue generated by a development or redevelopment project within a designated district. The additional tax revenue, or "tax increment," is then used to finance the costs of the project. TIF is often employed to encourage economic development, alleviate blight, and stimulate investment in specific areas.

Here are the main features of Tax Increment Financing (TIF):

1. **Incremental Property Tax Revenue:** When a development occurs in a TIF district, the property's assessed value typically increases. The additional property tax revenue generated from this increase is the "tax increment."

2. **Designated TIF District:** Local governments establish TIF districts in areas targeted for redevelopment or economic development. These districts are typically characterized by blight or the need for infrastructure improvements.
3. **Financing Public Projects:** The tax increment collected from the TIF district is used to finance public projects or improvements within that district. This can include infrastructure upgrades, streetscape improvements, utilities, or other community enhancements.
4. **Project Financing Mechanism:** TIF allows municipalities to fund projects without relying on general tax revenues. The funds are generated from the specific development or redevelopment activities occurring within the TIF district.
5. **Limited Duration:** TIF districts have a limited duration, usually ranging from 10 to 30 years. Once the designated period expires or the costs of the project are covered, the increased property tax revenue reverts to the general tax base.
6. **Community Benefits:** TIF is intended to promote economic development, create jobs, and improve the overall quality of life in designated areas. By capturing the tax increment, municipalities can fund projects that might not be feasible through traditional financing methods.
7. **Public-Private Partnerships:** TIF often involves collaboration between the public sector and private developers. Incentives provided through TIF can attract private investment to targeted areas.

#### *REVOLVING LOAN FUND*

A revolving loan fund (RLF) is a financing mechanism commonly used by governments, nonprofits, and community development organizations to provide loans for various projects, particularly those that contribute to economic development, job creation, or community improvement. The distinguishing feature of a revolving loan fund is that, as loans are repaid, the principal and interest are recycled or "revolved" to fund new loans. This creates a sustainable and self-replenishing pool of capital that can be continuously reinvested in the community.

Key characteristics of a revolving loan fund include:

1. **Capital Recycling:** The primary purpose of an RLF is to recycle the funds generated from loan repayments. As borrowers repay their loans, the money is returned to the fund, allowing it to be used for subsequent loans.
2. **Local Economic Development:** RLFs are often established to support local economic development initiatives. This can include providing financing for small businesses, startups, expansions, or community development projects.

3. **Flexible Financing:** RLFs typically offer flexible financing terms, which may include lower interest rates, longer repayment periods, or more lenient eligibility criteria compared to traditional lenders.
4. **Community Impact:** The funds disbursed through RLFs aim to have a positive impact on the community by fostering entrepreneurship, job creation, and infrastructure improvements.
5. **Public and Private Collaboration:** RLFs may involve collaboration between public and private entities, including local government, economic development agencies, and private financial institutions. Public funds may be leveraged to attract private investment.
6. **Targeted Projects:** RLFs often focus on specific types of projects or sectors based on community priorities. For example, an RLF might be dedicated to supporting environmentally sustainable businesses or revitalizing a particular neighborhood.
7. **Risk Mitigation:** Some RLFs incorporate risk mitigation measures, such as loan guarantees or technical assistance, to support borrowers and enhance the likelihood of successful projects.
8. **Local Control:** RLFs are typically managed at the local or regional level, allowing communities to have direct control over the allocation of funds and tailoring financing programs to their specific needs.

Examples of projects that may benefit from revolving loan funds include small business startups, expansions of existing businesses, affordable housing developments, community facilities, and infrastructure improvements.

Revolving loan funds play a crucial role in providing accessible capital to entities that may face challenges securing financing through traditional channels, contributing to local economic growth and community development.

Applications for Tax Abatement, TIF and the Revolving Loan Fund can be found on the city's website.

<i>Table 5.2 Businesses and Employees in Green Isle</i>	
<b>Business/Service</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>
CLUB NEW YORKER	10
GREY FOX	8
BP	3
DAHLHEIMER	70
JIT COMPANIES	9
OEM	7

<i>Table 5.2 Businesses and Employees in Green Isle</i>	
<b>Business/Service</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>
MATHEWS SEWER	2
WENTZLAFF MASONRY CONSTRUCTION	1
STEVE'S	1
R&R REAPER	5
NORTHERN METAL RECYCLING	6
SCRAPYARD	3
CORNERSTONE STATE BANK	3
TIMBERLINE	4
LAWN SERVICE	1
CITY OF GREEN ISLE	25
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH	2
<b>Estimated number of employees in Green Isle</b>	<b>160</b>

## WHY WOULD GREEN ISLE WANT TO WORK TO KEEP THESE BUSINESSES IN TOWN?

### **GREEN ISLE WANTS TO WORK TO KEEP THESE BUSINESSES IN TOWN FOR SEVERAL REASONS:**

1. Employment opportunities: These businesses provide jobs for local residents, which is crucial for the economic well-being of the community. Keeping these businesses in town ensures that there are employment opportunities available for the local workforce.
2. Tax revenue: Businesses contribute to the local tax base through property taxes, sales taxes, and other fees. This revenue helps fund essential services, infrastructure improvements, and community programs.
3. Local economic stability: A diverse mix of businesses helps create a more stable and resilient local economy. If one business or sector experiences a downturn, the presence of other businesses can help cushion the impact on the overall economy.

4. Community vitality: Thriving local businesses contribute to the vitality and character of the community. They provide goods and services that meet the needs of residents, and they often serve as gathering places and support local events and initiatives.

5. Multiplier effect: Local businesses tend to recirculate a larger share of their revenue back into the local economy compared to chain or out-of-town businesses. This means that money spent at local businesses is more likely to be re-spent within the community, creating a multiplier effect that benefits other businesses and residents.

6. Attraction and retention of residents: A strong local business community can help attract new residents and retain existing ones. People are more likely to choose to live in a community that offers a variety of employment opportunities, goods, and services.

7. Community involvement: Local business owners often have a strong stake in the well-being of the community and are more likely to get involved in local initiatives, charities, and events. They can serve as leaders and advocates for the community.

By working to keep these businesses in town, Green Isle can foster a vibrant, sustainable, and prosperous local economy that benefits all residents.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Based on the information provided about the importance of economic development in Green Isle, MN, and the available tools such as tax abatement, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and revolving loan funds, here are a proposed goal, objectives, and policies for the economic development chapter:

**Goal: Foster a thriving and sustainable economy in Green Isle that creates employment opportunities, attracts investments, and enhances the overall quality of life for residents.**

Objective 1: Encourage the growth and expansion of local businesses.

## Economic Development Case Study

Main Street Revitalization in Lanesboro, MN Lanesboro (population ~750) revitalized its downtown through a combination of historic preservation, arts initiatives, and small business support programs. This effort resulted in a thriving tourism economy and a 30% increase in downtown businesses over five years.

Key strategies included:

- Restoring historic storefronts with the help of state grants
- Establishing an arts center and regular events to attract visitors
- Providing low-interest loans to small businesses
- Creating a cohesive marketing strategy for the town

Results:

- 30% increase in downtown businesses over five years
- 50% increase in tourism revenue
- Reduced vacancy rates in commercial properties
- Improved quality of life for residents

Lessons for Green Isle: This case study demonstrates how a small town can leverage its unique assets and create a vibrant downtown through targeted investments and community engagement. Green Isle could adapt similar strategies to support local businesses and attract visitors, tailoring the approach to our community's specific strengths and character.

- Policy 1.1: Provide tax abatement incentives to businesses that create new jobs or invest in facility expansions within Green Isle.
- Policy 1.2: Establish a revolving loan fund to support small business startups and expansions, with a focus on businesses that align with the community's economic development priorities.
- Policy 1.3: Streamline permitting and approval processes to facilitate business growth and development.

Objective 2: Attract new businesses and industries to Green Isle.

- Policy 2.1: Identify and designate targeted development areas for new business and industrial growth.
- Policy 2.2: Utilize Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund infrastructure improvements and incentivize development in designated TIF districts.
- Policy 2.3: Collaborate with regional economic development agencies to market Green Isle's business-friendly environment and available resources to potential investors and companies.

Objective 3: Support workforce development and enhance residents' skills.

- Policy 3.1: Partner with local educational institutions and training providers to offer vocational programs and workforce development initiatives that align with the needs of local industries.
- Policy 3.2: Encourage businesses to participate in internship and apprenticeship programs to provide hands-on learning opportunities for residents.
- Policy 3.3: Collaborate with businesses to identify and address skill gaps in the local workforce.

Objective 4: Foster a vibrant and attractive downtown district.

- Policy 4.1: Implement a façade improvement program to encourage property owners to renovate and enhance the appearance of downtown buildings.
- Policy 4.2: Utilize TIF or other financing mechanisms to fund streetscape improvements, pedestrian amenities, and public spaces in the downtown area.
- Policy 4.3: Promote mixed-use development in the downtown district, combining retail, office, and residential spaces to create a vibrant and walkable environment.

Objective 5: Monitor and assess economic development progress and effectiveness.

- Policy 5.1: Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to track the success of economic development initiatives, such as job creation, business growth, and investment attracted.

- Policy 5.2: Conduct regular surveys and engage with the business community to gather feedback on the effectiveness of economic development programs and identify areas for improvement.
- Policy 5.3: Prepare an annual report on the state of the local economy, highlighting achievements, challenges, and future strategies.

Objective 6: Enhance local resilience and self-reliance through support of local businesses and food systems.

- Policy 6.1: Develop and implement a "Buy Local" campaign to encourage residents and businesses to purchase goods and services from local providers, thereby strengthening the local economy and enhancing community self-reliance.
- Policy 6.2: Establish a mentorship program pairing established local business owners with new entrepreneurs to foster knowledge sharing and support the growth of new local businesses.
- Policy 6.3: Encourage the development of a local farmers' market by:
  - Identifying and providing a suitable location for a regular farmers' market
  - Assisting with the organizational and logistical aspects of establishing a farmers' market
  - Promoting the farmers' market to both potential vendors and customers
- Policy 6.4: Support local food production by:
  - Reviewing and updating zoning regulations to allow for small-scale urban agriculture and community gardens where appropriate
  - Providing educational resources on small-scale farming and gardening techniques suitable for Green Isle's climate and conditions
  - Exploring partnerships with local schools to develop farm-to-school programs
- Policy 6.5: Investigate the feasibility of creating a local food hub to collect, store, process, and distribute locally produced food, enhancing the connection between local producers and consumers.
- Policy 6.6: Promote agritourism initiatives that showcase local farms and food producers, attracting visitors and supporting the local agricultural economy.

## DETAILED STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Green Isle recognizes the importance of having specific, actionable strategies to support our economic development goals. The following strategies will be pursued to enhance our efforts in business attraction, retention, and workforce development:

Business Attraction Strategies:

1. Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote Green Isle's unique assets and business opportunities to potential investors and companies.
2. Create an online portal showcasing available commercial and industrial properties in Green Isle.
3. Establish a "concierge" service to guide potential businesses through the process of establishing operations in Green Isle.
4. Develop targeted incentive packages for industries that align with Green Isle's economic goals and strengths.

#### Business Retention Strategies:

1. Implement an annual business visitation program to understand the needs and challenges of existing businesses.
2. Establish a rapid response team to address urgent issues faced by local businesses.
3. Create a local business recognition program to celebrate the achievements and contributions of long-standing businesses in Green Isle.
4. Develop a resource guide for local businesses, including information on available support services, funding opportunities, and regulatory requirements.

#### Workforce Development Strategies:

1. Conduct regular skills gap analyses in partnership with local businesses to identify workforce needs.
2. Collaborate with nearby educational institutions to develop tailored training programs that meet the specific needs of Green Isle's business community.
3. Establish a youth entrepreneurship program in partnership with the local school to foster business skills and innovation among young residents.
4. Create a job board specific to Green Isle to connect local job seekers with employment opportunities in the community.
5. Develop a remote work support program to attract and retain professionals who can work from anywhere, leveraging Green Isle's quality of life and available high-speed internet.

These strategies provide a roadmap for implementing our economic development objectives and policies. They will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they remain relevant and effective in supporting Green Isle's economic growth and resilience.

By implementing these objectives and policies, Green Isle can work towards creating a robust and sustainable economy that benefits both businesses and residents, while leveraging available tools and resources to drive economic growth and community development.

## CHAPTER 6: STREETS AND UTILITIES

The City of Green Isle's streets are fundamental to the community's infrastructure, serving as vital arteries that connect neighborhoods, facilitate commerce, and support daily life. A well-planned and maintained street network is essential for ensuring safe and efficient movement throughout the city while supporting future growth and development.

This section examines Green Isle's existing street system, which consists of local streets. It outlines the city's approach to street maintenance and improvements, addresses current challenges like truck route designation, and establishes a framework for future transportation planning. The goals and policies presented here aim to create a street network that balances the needs of all users - from residents and businesses to pedestrians and commercial vehicles - while maintaining fiscal responsibility and promoting sustainable infrastructure development.

### STREETS

Streets play a crucial role in the infrastructure and development of Green Isle, providing a network for transportation, access, and connectivity within the community. Well-maintained and efficiently designed streets contribute to the safety, mobility, and overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The City of Green Isle is committed to maintaining and improving its street network to meet the current and future needs of the community. This involves regular maintenance, repairs, and upgrades to ensure that streets are safe, accessible, and functional for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

The city's street network consists of a hierarchy of street types, including arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets. Arterial streets, such as Main Street, serve as major thoroughfares, handling higher volumes of traffic and connecting the city to regional transportation networks. Collector streets, like Church Street, gather traffic from local streets and distribute it to arterial streets. Local streets provide access to residential areas and individual properties.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the street network, the City of Green Isle will develop and implement a comprehensive street maintenance plan. This plan will prioritize street improvements based on factors such as pavement condition, traffic volume, safety concerns, and community input. Regular pavement assessments, crack sealing, and surface treatments will be conducted to extend the life of the streets and minimize the need for costly reconstructions.

In addition to maintenance, the city will explore opportunities to enhance the streetscape and promote multi-modal transportation. This may include the incorporation of "complete streets" principles, which aim to accommodate the needs of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists,

and transit riders. Streetscape improvements, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and landscaping, will be considered to create a more vibrant and inviting public realm.

The City of Green Isle will also work to secure funding for street improvements through a combination of local, state, and federal sources. This may include exploring grant opportunities, partnerships with other agencies, and the use of dedicated funding mechanisms, such as special assessments or transportation impact fees.

By prioritizing the maintenance and improvement of its street network, the City of Green Isle aims to enhance the safety, mobility, and overall quality of life for its residents and visitors, while supporting the long-term growth and development of the community.

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FIGURE 5.1 MAP OF GREEN ISLE STREETS

DRAFT



Green Isle City Council has recently held discussions on the need to mark truck routes. Marking truck routes is important for several reasons:

1. **Safety:** Designating specific routes for trucks helps to reduce conflicts between large vehicles and smaller passenger vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. By directing trucks to roads that are designed to accommodate their size and weight, the risk of accidents and injuries can be minimized.
2. **Infrastructure protection:** Heavy trucks can cause significant damage to roads, bridges, and other infrastructure that are not designed to handle their weight. By restricting trucks to

designated routes, the city can ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is used and maintained, prolonging its lifespan and reducing repair costs.

3. Efficient traffic flow: Truck routes are typically designed to provide efficient access to key destinations, such as industrial areas, commercial centers, and highways. By directing trucks to these routes, traffic congestion can be reduced on residential streets and other areas where truck traffic is less appropriate.

4. Noise and pollution reduction: Trucks can generate significant noise and air pollution, which can be a nuisance for residents living along heavily trafficked roads. By establishing truck routes away from residential areas, the impact of noise and pollution on the community can be minimized.

5. Economic development: Well-planned truck routes can support economic development by providing efficient access to businesses and industrial areas. This can help to attract new businesses and retain existing ones, creating jobs and supporting the local economy.

6. Compliance with regulations: Many cities and states have specific regulations regarding truck traffic, such as weight restrictions and emissions standards. By establishing and enforcing truck routes, the City of Green Isle can ensure compliance with these regulations and avoid potential fines or penalties.

Incorporating the designation and marking of truck routes into the City of Green Isle's comprehensive plan can help to address these important issues and support the long-term safety, efficiency, and sustainability of the community's transportation network.

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FIGURE 5.2 MAP GREEN ISLE TRUCK ROUTES



## UTILITIES

Utilities are crucial in rural communities for several reasons, playing a fundamental role in supporting the well-being, development, and sustainability of these areas:

1. **Basic Services:** Utilities, including water and sanitation services, provide rural residents with essential amenities for daily living. Access to clean and safe drinking water, as well as proper sanitation facilities, is vital for public health and hygiene.
2. **Economic Development:** Utilities are critical for attracting and sustaining economic activities in rural areas. Reliable energy sources, water supply, and communication infrastructure support the establishment and growth of businesses, contributing to economic development and job creation.
3. **Quality of Life:** Adequate utilities enhance the overall quality of life in rural communities. Access to electricity, heating, and cooling systems, as well as modern

communication services, improves living conditions and provides residents with opportunities for education, entertainment, and social connectivity.

4. **Education and Healthcare:** Utilities are essential for supporting educational and healthcare facilities in rural areas. Reliable electricity is necessary for powering schools, clinics, and hospitals, while proper water and sanitation services are critical for maintaining hygiene in healthcare settings.
5. **Community Resilience:** Utilities contribute to the resilience of rural communities. Access to reliable power sources, water, and communication services helps communities respond effectively to emergencies, natural disasters, and other challenges.
6. **Technology and Connectivity:** In today's interconnected world, access to modern utilities is vital for rural areas to participate in the digital economy. Reliable internet and communication infrastructure support education, business, and access to information, bridging the urban-rural digital divide.
7. **Attraction of Investment:** Adequate utilities can make rural areas more attractive to investors. Reliable infrastructure, including energy and water supply, can influence businesses to establish operations in rural communities, bringing economic opportunities and contributing to local growth.
8. **Preservation of Rural Lifestyle:** Providing essential utilities helps preserve the rural way of life by enabling residents to meet their basic needs and participate in modern society without sacrificing the unique characteristics and values of rural living.

In summary, utilities are indispensable for rural communities as they support essential services, economic activities, and overall community well-being. Access to reliable and sustainable utilities is key to ensuring that rural areas remain viable, resilient, and attractive places to live and work.

## WATER SYSTEM

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- The city's water supply comes from groundwater.
- There are 2 wells that draw from the Quaternary Water Table aquifer.
- Average daily water production is around 115,000 gallons per day.
- The water system has a 75,000-gallon elevated storage tank.
- The city provides water service to approximately 330 connections.
- Past drinking water violations include an MCL violation for combined radium between 2005-2006 which was resolved.

## SEWER SYSTEM

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- Green Isle has a shared wastewater treatment facility located in Arlington, MN.

- It is a Class A facility with a design flow capacity of 0.115 MGD.
- Treatment process consists of aerated lagoons, stabilization pond, and UV disinfection.
- Biosolids are land applied according to MPCA regulations.
- In 2017, approximately \$223,000 was spent on sewer system operations.
- There are around 270 sewer connections in the city.

## ELECTRIC SERVICES

- The primary electric utility providing service in Green Isle is Xcel Energy. They are an investor-owned utility that serves most of southern and central Minnesota.
- The second electric utility providing service in Green Isle is Minnesota Valley Electric Coop out of Jordan, MN.



- For electricity generation, Xcel Energy operates a mix of coal, natural gas, wind, solar and nuclear plants. Approximately 21% of their electricity supplied comes from renewable sources as of 2021.
- Customers have the option to enroll in Windsorce, Xcel Energy's voluntary green power program. For a premium monthly fee, homeowners can purchase electricity generated exclusively from wind farms.
- Some residents choose to install their own on-site renewable energy like rooftop solar panels. However, there are few incentives for customer-generated power in Minnesota compared to other states.

- Municipal utilities or electric cooperatives that provide more renewable mix options are not available in Green Isle. The city is fully within Xcel Energy's service territory.
- As an alternative, homeowners could choose to install a standby generator that runs on propane, natural gas or diesel as a backup electricity source in case of power outages.
- Energy efficiency programs and rebates are available from Xcel Energy to help residents manage costs and electricity usage in their homes.

## NATURAL GAS

- As of 2018, approximately 85.4% of homes in Green Isle used utility (piped) gas as their primary heating fuel. Only 9.2% used electricity as their main heating fuel. The primary natural gas utility serving Green Isle is Xcel Energy. They provide piped natural gas to much of southern and central Minnesota
- Approximately 85.4% of homes in Green Isle use utility (piped) natural gas as their main heating fuel source.
- Xcel Energy offers various residential natural gas plans and pricing options for heating, water heating, cooking, etc. Rates are regulated by the state public utilities commission.
- For customers looking for an alternative to Xcel, there are no municipal natural gas utilities that service Green Isle.
- Propane can be used instead as a heating/cooking fuel alternative to natural gas. Some homes and businesses in Green Isle have private propane tanks. Several propane suppliers like Ferrellgas serve the area.

The “farm” is where Nathan grew up, a plot of around 200 acres of land near Green Isle, a little less than an hour southwest of the Twin Cities.

He tells us the farm life, along with the values it imparts, is difficult to leave behind. “It’s a beautiful life where you can wake up in the morning and witness all of God’s miracles right before you, a calf being born and taking his first few steps and an egg hatching,” Nathan says.

Nathan moved away from his family’s homestead for about 15 years, but farm life beckoned him back home.

“I guess a day in my life can vary pretty wildly. You know I wake up and I do chores and feed the cows and everything, and then I log on to work and I work my real job which is in IT for Target Corp, and then I go out later in the afternoon and do chores again oftentimes until the sun goes down,” he says.

Nathan farms corn and soybeans on his land with his father and brother, along with raising a small herd of beef cattle. The day-to-day farm work, while fulfilling, isn’t as financially stable as Nathan would like. He says these days farmers typically seek out additional revenue streams to help make up for less-than-profitable commodity prices.

For Nathan, that additional revenue stream presented itself in the form of a community solar garden.

<https://www.cleanenergyeconomymn.org/success-stories/green-isle-community-solar>

- Renewable natural gas (biomethane) is not currently available as an option.
- Energy for Green Isle residents. RNG availability is very limited in Minnesota.
- Homeowners could install an on-site renewable energy system like a geothermal heat pump that doesn't rely on natural gas. However, these systems tend to have high upfront costs.

## SOLAR OPTIONS

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- Solar panels can be installed on rooftops or ground-mounted to generate electricity or heat water. Typical residential systems are 4-8 kW.
- The city gets around 4-4.5 peak sun hours per day, making solar reasonably feasible though not as high potential as further south.
- There are no local/state rebates or tax incentives for installing solar currently available in MN. The 30% federal tax credit is still available through 2032.
- Xcel Energy, the local utility, has a net metering program but no feed-in tariff or PPA options. Net metering allows selling excess power back to the grid.
- Community solar gardens that Green Isle residents can subscribe to are located in the City of Green Isle, or nearby Plato and Glencoe.
- The city has solar permit requirements beyond the county and state building codes.
- Average solar panel installation costs in Minnesota range from \$2.50-\$3.50 per watt. A 5-kW system would be around \$12,500-\$17,500 installed.
- A handful of solar installers operate in the broader region that could serve Green Isle like MN Community Solar, Steele Waseca Cooperative Electric.
- Off-grid solar with battery storage is an option but is more complex and doubles the system costs.



## INTERNET

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- RS Fiber- Offers fiber internet with speeds up to 1 Gbps download/upload as well as bundled TV and phone services. Their fiber network covers most of Green Isle.
- Mediacom - Provides cable internet with speeds up to 1 Gbps. Their service area also includes most of Green Isle.
- HughesNet - A satellite internet provider, speeds up to 25 Mbps down/3 Mbps up. Used in rural areas unreached by other providers. Higher latency.
- Cellular data - Mobile hotspots or dedicated data lines from AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile can provide home internet but with lower data caps and speeds. 5G service not yet available.

The city has a fiber optic backbone providing high speed infrastructure. Most residents can access cable or fiber connectivity. Satellite, wireless and cellular are alternatives for rural/remote regions near Green Isle. Overall the area is reasonably well-served for a small rural town regarding internet availability.

## TELEPHONE

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- Landline phone service is provided by CenturyLink in the area. They offer traditional wired home phone service, along with bundles including internet and TV.
- VoIP phone services like Vonage, Ooma, and MagicJack allow using an internet connection for home phone service. These can offer lower costs compared to traditional landlines.
- Cell phone service is available from major providers like Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and regional carriers. Coverage varies but is generally good in the Green Isle area. 5G service is not yet available.
- Satellite phone services like Inmarsat can provide coverage in extremely rural areas lacking cellular signals. But they require an unobstructed view of the sky and have higher costs.
- Traditional long-distance calling cards and services are an option for international calling without using a cell phone. Popular options include Googlevoice, Skype, and PennyTalk.
- There are no municipal telephone utilities located in Green Isle. Service is provided by private companies.
- The city retains a prefix code of 507 for all wired and wireless numbers.
- Emergency services can be reached by dialing 911 on any phone in the area.

The committee would like to see more options for refuse service in the City of Green Isle. The committee also highlighted the need to showcase the services available to new residents on the website. Especially the option for fiber to the home for individuals who work from home. Those that work from home who currently live in the Twin Cities could keep their jobs and move to Green Isle.

## STREETS AND UTILITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**Goal: Provide reliable, efficient, and sustainable utility services to support the well-being and growth of the Green Isle community, while ensuring a well-maintained and safe street network.**

Objective 1: Maintain and improve the water system to ensure a safe and reliable water supply.

- Policy 1.1: Regularly monitor and test the water quality to ensure compliance with all state and federal standards.
- Policy 1.2: Develop a long-term plan for the maintenance, upgrade, and expansion of the water infrastructure to meet the community's current and future needs.
- Policy 1.3: Promote water conservation through educational campaigns and incentives for water-efficient appliances and practices.

Objective 2: Enhance the efficiency and sustainability of the sewer system.

- Policy 2.1: Collaborate with the City of Arlington to ensure the shared wastewater treatment facility operates effectively and meets the needs of both communities.
- Policy 2.2: Encourage the use of water-saving fixtures and appliances to reduce the burden on the sewer system.
- Policy 2.3: Explore opportunities for the beneficial reuse of treated wastewater, such as irrigation or industrial processes, to promote sustainability.

Objective 3: Promote the availability and adoption of renewable energy options.

- Policy 3.1: Encourage residents and businesses to participate in Xcel Energy's Windsource program or install on-site renewable energy systems like solar panels.
- Policy 3.2: Provide information and resources to help residents understand the benefits and process of adopting renewable energy options.
- Policy 3.3: Collaborate with Xcel Energy to explore opportunities for community solar gardens or other renewable energy projects in Green Isle.

Objective 4: Expand and promote high-speed internet access to support remote work and enhance quality of life.

- Policy 4.1: Showcase the availability of fiber-to-the-home internet services on the city's website to attract remote workers and new residents.
- Policy 4.2: Partner with internet service providers to ensure that all areas of the city have access to reliable, high-speed internet.

- Policy 4.3: Explore the creation of public Wi-Fi hotspots in key community locations to provide internet access for residents and visitors.

Objective 5: Improve solid waste management and provide more refuse service options.

- Policy 5.1: Collaborate with waste management companies to expand the range of refuse service options available to residents and businesses.
- Policy 5.2: Promote recycling and composting through educational campaigns and by providing accessible recycling and composting facilities.
- Policy 5.3: Encourage the reduction of waste generation through initiatives like "pay-as-you-throw" pricing and promoting the use of reusable products.

Objective 6: Maintain and improve the city's street network for safety and efficiency.

- Policy 6.1: Develop and implement a long-term street maintenance plan to ensure that all streets are kept in good repair and safe condition.
- Policy 6.2: Prioritize Street improvements based on factors such as traffic volume, pavement condition, and safety concerns.
- Policy 6.3: Incorporate "complete streets" principles into street design and improvements, accommodating the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
- Policy 6.4: Explore funding opportunities, such as grants or partnerships, to support the maintenance and improvement of the street network.

By implementing these objectives and policies, Green Isle can work towards providing high-quality, sustainable utility services and a well-maintained street network that supports the community's growth and well-being.

## CHAPTER 7: PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION

Parks and trails hold significant importance for rural communities, offering a multitude of benefits that enhance the overall quality of life for residents. In the realm of recreation and leisure, these green spaces provide residents with opportunities for outdoor activities such as walking, jogging, biking, and picnicking. The availability of such recreational outlets contributes to a healthier lifestyle and serves as a positive factor for the well-being of individuals in rural areas.

Beyond recreation, parks act as central gathering spaces that foster community connections. They become venues for various events, festivals, and celebrations, serving as catalysts for social interactions and the strengthening of local bonds. The cultural and historical significance of certain parks in rural communities adds another layer of importance, connecting residents with their heritage and attracting visitors interested in the unique cultural and historical aspects of the area.

The natural and scenic beauty of rural parks and trails contributes to residents' mental well-being by providing access to green spaces and the tranquility of nature. These areas play a role in environmental conservation, preserving natural habitats, promoting biodiversity, and contributing to the overall ecological balance in rural regions. Trails, in particular, offer opportunities for physical exercise, promoting healthier lifestyles and combating sedentary behaviors.

Parks and trails also have economic implications for rural communities. They can attract tourists from other areas, contributing to local tourism and supporting economic development by boosting local businesses such as restaurants, shops, and accommodations. In addition, these green spaces enhance property values, making the community more appealing and desirable for potential residents.

### PARKS

#### VETERANS PARK

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Veterans Park is a shining example of Green Isle's dedication to creating inclusive and engaging spaces that bring the community together. This well-designed park offers a wide range of amenities that cater to the diverse interests and needs of families, making it a popular destination for residents and visitors alike.

At the heart of Veterans Park lies a modern, accessible playground that captivates the imagination of children of all ages. The playground equipment is carefully selected to provide a safe and exciting environment where kids can explore, climb, swing, and slide, fostering their physical development and encouraging social interaction. The park's commitment to inclusivity is evident in the thoughtful design of the playground, which incorporates features that accommodate children with different abilities, ensuring that everyone can join in the fun.

For those looking to enjoy a leisurely outdoor meal or host a family gathering, Veterans Park offers an inviting collection of picnic tables strategically placed throughout the grounds. These tables provide the perfect setting for birthday parties, family reunions, or simply a relaxing

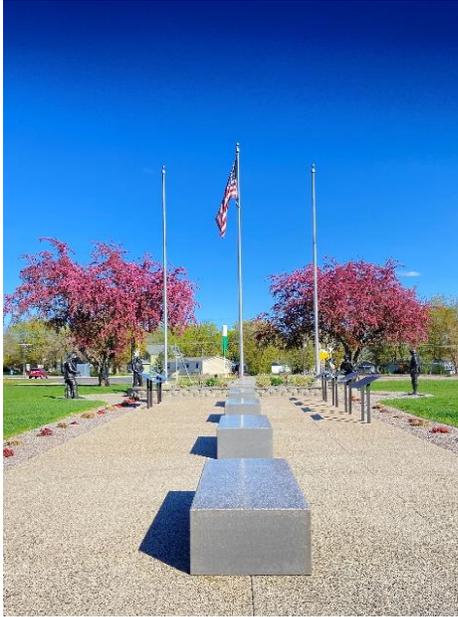
afternoon in the park. The park's well-maintained landscaping and lush green spaces create a serene and picturesque backdrop for any occasion.

One of the unique features of Veterans Park is the presence of permanent cornhole boards, a testament to the park's dedication to providing engaging activities for all ages. These boards have become a popular spot for friendly competitions among friends and family, fostering a sense of camaraderie and community spirit. The inclusion of this classic lawn game demonstrates the park's commitment to offering a variety of recreational options that appeal to a wide range of interests.

At the center of Veterans Park stands a beautiful gazebo, serving as a focal point and gathering place for the community. This elegant structure provides a shaded retreat from the sun, making it an ideal spot for small performances, community events, or simply a place to sit and enjoy the park's tranquil atmosphere. The gazebo's architecture seamlessly blends with the park's overall aesthetic, creating a charming and inviting ambiance.

Perhaps the most poignant and meaningful feature of Veterans Park is the veteran's memorial. This dignified monument stands as a tribute to the brave men and women who have served our country, reminding us of their sacrifices and dedication. The memorial provides a space for quiet reflection and gratitude, where visitors can pay their respects and learn about the history of our nation's heroes. The presence of this memorial underscores the park's role in fostering a strong sense of community pride and patriotism.

Veterans Park is more than just a collection of amenities; it is a vibrant gathering place that brings together people of all ages and backgrounds, strengthening the social fabric of Green Isle. The park's thoughtful design, diverse features, and commitment to inclusivity make it a true gem within the community, providing endless opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and connection. As Green Isle continues to grow and evolve, Veterans Park will undoubtedly remain a cherished destination, symbolizing the city's unwavering commitment to the well-being and happiness of its residents.



## LIONS PARK

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Lions Park, situated in the heart of Green Isle, is a vibrant and versatile community hub that offers an extensive array of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. This centrally located park boasts an impressive collection of amenities designed to cater to a wide range of interests and age groups, making it a popular destination for families, sports enthusiasts, and those seeking a place to gather and enjoy the great outdoors.

One of the main attractions of Lions Park is its well-equipped playground, which provides a safe and exciting environment for children to explore, learn, and play. The playground features a variety of modern, age-appropriate equipment that promotes physical activity, imagination, and social interaction among young park-goers. From swings and slides to climbing structures and interactive play elements, the playground is designed to keep children engaged and entertained for hours on end.

For sports enthusiasts, Lions Park offers a full-size basketball court where players of all skill levels can enjoy friendly games or intense competitions. The well-maintained court is a popular spot for pick-up games, organized tournaments, and individual practice sessions, fostering a sense of camaraderie and sportsmanship within the community. Adjacent to the basketball court, a tetherball pole stands ready for spirited matches, providing an additional opportunity for fun and friendly rivalry.

The park's expansive ball diamond is a hub of activity during the spring and summer months, hosting local baseball and softball games, as well as community events and tournaments. The well-manicured field, complete with a backstop and bleachers, provides an excellent venue for players and spectators alike, creating a lively atmosphere filled with the sounds of cheering fans and the crack of the bat.

For those seeking a unique and challenging recreational experience, Lions Park features an archery range where archery enthusiasts can hone their skills and enjoy the thrill of the sport. The range is designed with safety in mind, offering a controlled environment for both novice and experienced archers to practice and compete. The inclusion of this distinctive amenity demonstrates the park's commitment to providing diverse recreational opportunities that cater to a broad range of interests.

At the heart of Lions Park lies a spacious picnic shelter, perfect for hosting community events, family gatherings, and celebrations. The shelter provides ample seating and shade, creating a comfortable and inviting space for park-goers to relax, socialize, and enjoy a meal together. The shelter's central location within the park makes it easily accessible and convenient for those utilizing the various amenities nearby.

The expansive grounds of Lions Park offer ample room for a variety of activities, from impromptu games of frisbee and tag to organized events and festivals. The park's open spaces and lush green lawns create a serene and picturesque setting, encouraging visitors to spread out and enjoy the beauty of nature. Whether hosting a community-wide celebration, a family picnic, or simply enjoying a quiet afternoon outdoors, Lions Park provides the perfect backdrop for creating lasting memories.

As a centrally located and well-maintained community asset, Lions Park plays a crucial role in promoting health, wellness, and social interaction among Green Isle residents. The park's diverse array of amenities and ample space for activities make it a true gem within the city, offering something for everyone to enjoy. As Green Isle continues to grow and evolve, Lions Park will undoubtedly remain a cherished destination, serving as a testament to the city's commitment to providing exceptional recreational opportunities and fostering a strong sense of community.



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## IRISH YARD

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The Irish Yard is a vibrant and lively community park that offers a fantastic array of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages. The centerpiece of this park is its expansive playground, which features multiple state-of-the-art play structures designed to captivate the imagination and encourage active play.

The playground at the Irish Yard is a true wonderland for children, offering a wide variety of equipment that caters to different age groups and abilities. From towering climbing structures and thrilling slides to swings, spinners, and interactive play panels, the playground provides endless opportunities for adventure and exploration. The play structures are carefully designed to promote physical activity,

balance, coordination, and social interaction, ensuring that children can develop essential skills while having a blast.

The playground's safety is a top priority, with soft, shock-absorbing surfaces installed throughout to minimize the risk of injuries. The equipment is regularly inspected and maintained to ensure that it remains in excellent condition, providing a secure and enjoyable environment for children to play.

Beyond the playground, the Irish Yard offers ample space for visitors to walk, jog, or simply enjoy a leisurely stroll. The park features well-maintained walking paths that wind through beautifully landscaped grounds, offering a serene escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Whether seeking a quiet moment of reflection or a refreshing outdoor exercise, the Irish Yard provides the perfect setting.

For sports enthusiasts, the Irish Yard is home to a fantastic baseball field where the local Irish baseball team showcases their skills. Catching an Irish baseball game is a beloved community tradition, drawing fans of all ages to cheer on their favorite players. The well-manicured field, complete with a grandstand and dugouts, creates an authentic baseball experience that captures the spirit of America's favorite pastime.

The baseball field is not only a venue for exciting games but also serves as a gathering place for the community. During the season, the Irish Yard buzzes with energy as families, friends, and neighbors come together to support their team, fostering a strong sense of camaraderie and pride. The park's amenities, including restrooms and concession stands, ensure that spectators can enjoy the games in comfort and convenience.

In addition to its recreational offerings, the Irish Yard is also a popular destination for community events and celebrations. The park's spacious grounds and picturesque setting make it an ideal location for picnics, festivals, and other gatherings that bring the community together. From lively summer concerts to festive holiday celebrations, the Irish Yard serves as a hub of activity and a place where memories are made.

The Irish Yard is more than just a park; it is a testament to Green Isle's commitment to providing exceptional recreational opportunities and fostering a strong sense of community. With its impressive playground, inviting walking paths, and thrilling baseball games, the Irish Yard offers something for everyone to enjoy. As Green Isle continues to grow and thrive, the Irish Yard will undoubtedly remain a cherished destination, serving as a symbol of the city's vibrant spirit and dedication to the well-being of its residents.



## TRAILS

Trails are covered in appendix A. Green Isle City Wide Trails Plan

## RECREATION

At the May 21, 2024 Comprehensive Planning Group meeting, the participants engaged in a thoughtful discussion regarding the need to expand recreational opportunities for youth and young adults in Green Isle. The group recognized that providing a diverse range of activities is essential for promoting active lifestyles, fostering community engagement, and ensuring that the town remains an attractive place for families to live and grow.

One of the key ideas that emerged from the discussion was the potential development of an ice-skating rink in Green Isle. The group noted that an ice-skating rink would provide a valuable winter recreational activity for residents of all ages, but particularly for young people who may have limited options during the colder months. The addition of an ice-skating rink could create a vibrant community gathering space, encouraging social interaction and physical activity during a time when many people tend to remain indoors.

The Comprehensive Planning Group discussed various aspects of developing an ice-skating rink, including potential locations, desired features and amenities, and the need for community input in the planning process. They emphasized the importance of conducting a thorough site analysis to identify suitable locations that offer accessibility, adequate parking, and proximity to other community amenities. The group also highlighted the value of engaging the community through

public meetings, surveys, and outreach efforts to gather feedback on the design and features of the proposed ice-skating rink.

Furthermore, the discussion touched upon the financial considerations associated with constructing and maintaining an ice-skating rink. The group acknowledged the need to develop a comprehensive cost estimate and explore various funding options, such as partnerships with local businesses, sponsorships, and grants. They also recognized the importance of collaborating with local schools, youth organizations, and sports clubs to develop programming and events that would maximize the use of the ice-skating rink and promote youth participation.

Throughout the discussion, the Comprehensive Planning Group emphasized the importance of designing and maintaining the ice-skating rink to meet safety standards and ensure accessibility for users of all ages and abilities. They recognized that creating an inclusive and welcoming environment is crucial for the success of the project and the overall well-being of the community.

The group's discussion on the need for an ice-skating rink in Green Isle reflects a larger commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all residents, particularly young people, by providing diverse recreational opportunities. By exploring the development of an ice-skating rink and other youth-focused amenities, the Comprehensive Planning Group aims to create a vibrant and engaging community that supports the growth and well-being of its youngest members.

## PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**Goal: Provide a diverse range of high-quality parks, trails, and recreational opportunities that promote healthy lifestyles, foster community engagement, and preserve the natural beauty of Green Isle.**

Objective 1: Maintain and enhance existing parks to meet the community's needs and expectations.

- Policy 1.1: Regularly assess the condition of park facilities and equipment, and prioritize necessary improvements and repairs.
- Policy 1.2: Engage the community in the planning and design process for park upgrades and renovations to ensure that parks meet the needs and preferences of residents.
- Policy 1.3: Allocate sufficient funding for park maintenance and improvements through the city's annual budget and explore additional funding sources, such as grants and partnerships.

Objective 2: Expand and improve the city's trail network to provide safe and accessible opportunities for walking, biking, and outdoor recreation.

- Policy 2.1: Develop a comprehensive trail master plan that identifies opportunities for new trail connections and improvements to existing trails.
- Policy 2.2: Prioritize the development of trails that connect parks, neighborhoods, and community destinations, such as schools and shopping areas.
- Policy 2.3: Collaborate with neighboring communities and regional partners to explore opportunities for trail connections beyond the city limits.

- Policy 2.4: Ensure that trails are designed and maintained to be accessible for users of all ages and abilities, following ADA guidelines and best practices.

Objective 3: Provide a diverse range of recreational programs and events that cater to the interests and needs of all community members.

- Policy 3.1: Conduct regular surveys and community outreach to identify the recreational interests and needs of residents.
- Policy 3.2: Develop and implement a variety of recreational programs for different age groups, including youth, adults, and seniors.
- Policy 3.3: Partner with local organizations, schools, and businesses to offer unique and innovative recreational opportunities, such as outdoor fitness classes, nature education programs, and community events.
- Policy 3.4: Ensure that recreational programs are affordable and accessible to all residents, regardless of income or ability.

Objective 4: Preserve and enhance the natural resources and open spaces within the city's parks and trails.

- Policy 4.1: Identify and prioritize the protection of sensitive natural areas, such as wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife habitats, within the city's parks and trails.
- Policy 4.2: Develop and implement natural resource management plans for each park to guide the preservation and enhancement of natural features.
- Policy 4.3: Encourage the use of native plant species in park landscaping and restore degraded natural areas to improve biodiversity and ecological function.
- Policy 4.4: Provide educational opportunities and interpretive signage to help park and trail users understand and appreciate the natural resources within the city.

Objective 5: Foster community engagement and stewardship in the care and improvement of the city's parks and trails.

- Policy 5.1: Establish a "Friends of Green Isle Parks" volunteer program to encourage community members to participate in park maintenance, improvement projects, and events.
- Policy 5.2: Develop partnerships with local schools, scout groups, and community organizations to involve youth in park and trail stewardship activities.
- Policy 5.3: Recognize and celebrate the contributions of volunteers and community partners through annual awards, events, and public acknowledgments.
- Policy 5.4: Provide opportunities for community members to provide input and feedback on park and trail management through regular public meetings, surveys, and online platforms.

Objective 6: Expand recreational opportunities for youth and young adults in Green Isle to promote active lifestyles and community engagement.

- Policy 6.1: Explore the feasibility of developing an ice-skating rink in Green Isle to provide a winter recreational activity for residents of all ages.
  - Conduct a site analysis to identify potential locations for an ice-skating rink, considering factors such as accessibility, parking, and proximity to other community amenities.
  - Engage the community in the planning process through public meetings, surveys, and outreach to gather input on the desired features and amenities for the ice-skating rink.
  - Develop a cost estimate and funding plan for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the ice-skating rink, exploring opportunities for partnerships, sponsorships, and grants.
  - Collaborate with local schools, youth organizations, and sports clubs to develop programming and events that utilize the ice-skating rink and promote youth participation.
  - Ensure that the ice-skating rink is designed and maintained to meet safety standards and is accessible to users of all ages and abilities.

By implementing this policy, Green Isle can address the need for additional recreational activities for young people, as identified by the Comprehensive Planning Group, and create a new community asset that promotes active lifestyles and community engagement.

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## Chapter 8: Implementation

Implementing a comprehensive plan in a city is a multifaceted process that requires collaboration and strategic planning. The first crucial step is to establish priorities from the comprehensive plan. City officials and stakeholders must identify key goals and initiatives based on the plan's recommendations and the needs of the community. Once priorities are established, a detailed implementation strategy should be developed. This involves creating an action plan that outlines specific steps, responsible parties, and timelines for each priority. Engaging stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and organizations, is essential throughout this process to ensure broad community input and support.

Aligning regulations and zoning with the comprehensive plan is another critical aspect of implementation. Reviewing and updating zoning codes, development regulations, and land-use policies helps ensure that new developments align with the city's vision. Infrastructure and capital improvement projects should be identified and prioritized based on the comprehensive plan's goals. This includes upgrading utilities, as well as, enhancing public facilities and parks. Establishing tools for implementation, such as development incentives, public-private partnerships, and financing mechanisms like tax increment financing (TIF), helps facilitate and fund the identified projects.

Collaboration with various partners, including government agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, nonprofits, and private entities, is key to leveraging resources and expertise. Joint efforts enhance the impact of implementation initiatives and contribute to a more comprehensive and integrated approach. Regular monitoring and evaluation of progress are essential to ensure that the implementation efforts are effective and on track. This involves assessing the success of implemented strategies and adjusting as needed to address changing circumstances.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

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Green Isle recognizes the importance of collaborating with neighboring communities and regional entities to address shared challenges and opportunities. This section outlines our strategies for fostering strong intergovernmental relationships to enhance the implementation of our comprehensive plan.

#### Objectives for Intergovernmental Cooperation:

1. Strengthen partnerships with neighboring communities
2. Enhance collaboration with Sibley County
3. Engage with regional planning and development organizations
4. Collaborate on environmental and natural resource management
5. Enhance cooperation in public safety and emergency management
6. Pursue joint grant applications and funding opportunities

#### Strategies for Intergovernmental Cooperation:

1. **Regular Communication:** Establish and maintain regular communication channels with neighboring communities, county officials, and regional organizations.
2. **Shared Services:** Explore opportunities for shared services and resources to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
3. **Joint Planning Initiatives:** Participate in and initiate joint planning efforts for areas of mutual interest, such as transportation corridors or natural resources that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
4. **Regional Participation:** Actively engage in county-wide and regional planning efforts, ensuring Green Isle's interests are represented and aligned with broader regional strategies.
5. **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Work with regional partners to address shared challenges, leveraging collective resources and expertise.
6. **Information Sharing:** Regularly share information about local initiatives, challenges, and opportunities with regional partners to identify areas for collaboration.
7. **Joint Funding Pursuits:** Collaborate on grant applications and explore shared funding opportunities for projects that benefit multiple communities.

#### Implementation Actions:

1. Designate a staff member or elected official as the primary liaison for intergovernmental relations.
2. Establish an annual intergovernmental cooperation report to track progress and identify new opportunities.
3. Host or participate in an annual regional summit to discuss shared challenges and opportunities with neighboring communities.
4. Regularly review and update intergovernmental agreements to ensure they remain relevant and beneficial.

By implementing these strategies and actions, Green Isle aims to strengthen its connections with neighboring communities and regional entities, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing shared challenges and opportunities. This cooperative mindset will enhance our ability to implement the comprehensive plan effectively and contribute to the overall prosperity of our region.

Maintaining transparent communication with the public is crucial throughout the implementation process. Regular updates, public outreach efforts, and opportunities for community input help build support for the comprehensive plan's goals. Periodic reviews and updates of the comprehensive plan are necessary to ensure its continued relevance in light of changing community needs, demographics, and economic conditions. Building the capacity of municipal staff, community organizations, and decision-makers through training programs and workshops enhances their ability to contribute effectively to the implementation process. Legal and regulatory compliance is paramount, and the city must ensure that all activities align with local, state, and federal laws.

Celebrating successes and milestones achieved through the implementation of the comprehensive plan is a positive reinforcement strategy that fosters continued community engagement and

support. Acknowledging achievements helps build momentum and enthusiasm for ongoing and future initiatives, contributing to the long-term success of the comprehensive planning process in the city.

### **Short-term Implementation Plan (2025-2026)**

1. Establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee by January 2025 to oversee and coordinate the implementation process.
2. Create and approve a truck routes ordinance in January 2025.
3. Review and update the city's zoning ordinances and land use regulations by March 2025 to align with the goals and objectives outlined in the comprehensive plan.
4. Develop a capital improvement plan (CIP) by March 2025 that prioritizes infrastructure projects based on the comprehensive plan's recommendations.
5. Launch a public outreach campaign by June 2025 to educate residents about the comprehensive plan and gather feedback on implementation priorities.
6. Develop a parks and recreation master plan by September 2025 that identifies improvements and expansions to the city's park system, including the potential development of an ice-skating rink.
7. Establish a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program by December 2025 to support existing businesses and encourage economic growth.
8. Initiate a housing needs assessment by March 2026 to identify gaps in the city's housing stock and develop strategies to address affordability and diversity.

### **Mid-range Implementation Plan (2027-2030)**

1. Implement priority infrastructure projects identified in the CIP, such as road improvements and utility upgrades, beginning in January 2027.
2. Develop a downtown revitalization plan by June 2027 that includes streetscape improvements, facade grants, and mixed-use development incentives.
3. Establish a community land trust by September 2027 to promote affordable housing development and homeownership opportunities.
4. Implement the parks and recreation master plan, including the construction of new trails and the potential development of an ice-skating rink, by December 2028.
5. Launch a workforce development initiative by March 2029 in partnership with local schools and businesses to enhance residents' skills and attract new industries.
6. Develop a sustainability plan by June 2029 that outlines strategies for reducing the city's carbon footprint, promoting renewable energy, and enhancing environmental stewardship.
7. Update the comprehensive plan by December 2030 to reflect changes in community needs, demographics, and economic conditions.

### **Long-range Implementation Plan (2031-2040)**

1. Continue the implementation of the downtown revitalization plan, focusing on attracting new businesses, restaurants, and cultural amenities to the area.

2. Develop a regional trail network by 2035 that connects Green Isle to neighboring communities and natural areas.
3. Establish a community center by 2037 that serves as a hub for recreational, educational, and social activities for residents of all ages.
4. Implement a long-term economic development strategy that focuses on attracting new industries, such as renewable energy and technology, to diversify the city's economic base.
5. Establish a Green Isle Community Foundation by 2040 to support local non-profits, community initiatives, and philanthropic activities.
6. Conduct a comprehensive review of the city's progress in implementing the comprehensive plan by 2040, and develop a new long-range plan for the next 20 years.

### Ongoing Implementation Strategies

- Maintain ongoing public engagement throughout the implementation process to ensure community input and support.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate progress, making necessary adjustments to ensure the successful realization of the comprehensive plan's goals and objectives.
- Collaborate with various partners, including government agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, non-profits, and private entities, to leverage resources and expertise.
- Ensure legal and regulatory compliance with all local, state, and federal laws throughout the implementation process.
- Celebrate successes and milestones achieved through the implementation of the comprehensive plan to foster continued community engagement and support.
- Implementation Matrix for Green Isle Comprehensive Plan

Table 8.1: Implementation Matrix for Green Isle Comprehensive Plan

Action Item	Responsible Party	Timeline	Potential Funding Sources	Priority
Establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee	City Council	By March 2025	City General Fund	High
Review and update zoning ordinances	Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council	By March 2025	City General Fund	High
Develop a capital improvement plan (CIP)	City Clerk, City council	By March 2025	City General Fund	High
Launch public outreach campaign	City Clerk	By June 2025	City General Fund	Medium
Develop parks and recreation master plan	Parks and Recreation Department	By September 2025	City General Fund, DNR Grants	Medium

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Potential Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Establish Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program	Economic Development Authority	By December 2025	EDA Budget, DEED Grants	High
Conduct housing needs assessment	Housing Task Force, External Consultant	By March 2026	City General Fund, MHFA Grants	Medium
Implement priority infrastructure projects	City Council, People Services, ISG	Beginning January 2027	CIP Fund, State/Federal Grants, Bonds	High
Develop downtown revitalization plan	Economic Development Authority, Planning Commission	By June 2027	EDA Budget, Main Street Grants	Medium
Establish community land trust	Housing Task Force, City Council	By September 2027	City General Fund, MHFA Grants	Low
Implement parks and recreation master plan	Parks and Recreation Department	By December 2028	Park Dedication Fees, DNR Grants	Medium
Launch workforce development initiative	Economic Development Authority, Local Schools	By March 2029	EDA Budget, DEED Grants	Medium
Develop sustainability plan	Sustainability Task Force	By June 2029	City General Fund, MPCA Grants	Low
Update comprehensive plan	Planning Commission, City Council	By December 2030	City General Fund	High
Develop regional trail network	Parks and Recreation Department, Neighboring Communities	By 2035	DNR Grants, Federal Transportation Grants	Low
Establish community center	City Council, Community Services Department	By 2037	City General Fund, Bonds, Donations	Low
Develop water management plan	Public Works Department, Watershed District	By 2038	City Utility Fund, BWSR Grants	Medium
Establish Green Isle Community Foundation	City Council, Community Leaders	By 2040	Private Donations, Seed Funding from City	Low

## RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTATION SURVEY

As part of our commitment to community engagement and responsive planning, we conducted a survey to gather feedback on the implementation priorities for Green Isle's Comprehensive Plan.

The survey results provide valuable insights into community preferences and concerns, which will guide our implementation strategies.

## KEY FINDINGS

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### **Familiarity with the Comprehensive Plan**

The survey revealed varying levels of familiarity with the Comprehensive Plan among residents. This indicates a need for ongoing communication and education about the plan and its implementation.

### **Short-term Initiatives (2024-2026)**

Residents were asked to rate the importance of various short-term initiatives. While specific rankings were not provided in the survey results, the inclusion of these items in the short-term plan aligns with our proposed implementation strategy.

### **Mid-range Initiatives (2027-2030)**

Respondents ranked mid-range initiatives, with infrastructure projects, downtown revitalization, and workforce development appearing to be high priorities. This aligns well with our proposed mid-range implementation plan.

### **Long-range Plans (2031-2040)**

For long-term projects, residents expressed particular interest in downtown revitalization, regional trail networks, and long-term economic development strategies. These preferences will be reflected in our long-range implementation efforts.

### **Communication Preferences**

Residents indicated preferences for receiving updates about the Comprehensive Plan implementation through various channels, including the city website, social media, email newsletters, public meetings, and local newspapers. This information will guide our communication strategy.

### **Volunteer Interest**

Some residents expressed interest in volunteering to help with implementation initiatives, indicating potential for community involvement in the process.

### **Confidence in Implementation**

Responses varied regarding confidence in the implementation plans improving quality of life in Green Isle. This suggests a need for clear communication about the expected benefits of the plan.

## COMMUNITY CONCERNS

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Several key concerns emerged from the survey responses:

1. **Financial Impact and Taxes:** Many residents expressed concern about potential increases in taxes and overall cost of living due to plan implementation.
2. **Focus on Housing and Development:** Some respondents worried that the plan might emphasize additional housing at the expense of other community needs.
3. **Lack of Information and Transparency:** Several residents desired more information about the plan and its implementation process.
4. **Community Priorities:** Some responses indicated a preference for focusing on existing infrastructure and business development rather than new initiatives.
5. **General Skepticism:** A few responses reflected a lack of confidence in the plan or its implementation.

## IMPLEMENTATION IMPLICATIONS

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Based on these survey results, we will adjust our implementation approach in the following ways:

1. **Enhance Communication:** We will increase efforts to educate the community about the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation process. This will include more detailed information about financial aspects, potential impacts, and funding sources.
2. **Prioritize Existing Infrastructure:** While maintaining a balance with new initiatives, we will place greater emphasis on improving and maintaining existing infrastructure.
3. **Focus on Economic Development:** Given the strong interest in business growth and job creation, we will prioritize economic development initiatives in our implementation strategy.
4. **Transparent Financial Planning:** We will provide clear, detailed information about the financial implications of plan implementation, including potential impacts on taxes and strategies to mitigate cost increases.
5. **Community Engagement:** We will create more opportunities for community involvement in the implementation process, leveraging the interest in volunteering expressed by some residents.
6. **Balanced Approach to Housing:** While addressing housing needs, we will ensure that our approach balances new development with other community priorities.
7. **Regular Progress Updates:** We will establish a system for regular updates on plan implementation progress, using the communication channels preferred by residents.

By incorporating these survey insights into our implementation strategy, we aim to address community concerns, leverage resident support, and ensure that the Comprehensive Plan's implementation aligns closely with the needs and priorities of Green Isle's residents.

## FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

The implementation of Green Isle's Comprehensive Plan will have significant financial implications for the city over the next two decades. This expanded analysis provides a detailed overview of potential costs, revenue impacts, and funding strategies associated with key recommendations in the plan.

## 1. Land Use and Development

### Costs:

- Infrastructure expansion for new development areas: \$1-5 million over 10 years
  - Roads and utilities: \$800,000 - \$4 million
  - Stormwater management: \$200,000 - \$1 million
- Updating zoning ordinances and maps: \$10,000-\$15,000
  - Consultant fees: \$8,000 - \$12,000
  - Public outreach and hearings: \$2,000 - \$3,000

### Revenue Impacts:

- Increased property tax revenue from new development: Estimated 5-10% increase over 10 years
  - Year 1-3: 1-2% annual increase
  - Year 4-7: 2-3% annual increase
  - Year 8-10: 3-5% annual increase
- Potential for increased sales tax revenue from commercial development
  - Estimated at 2-4% increase annually after year 5

## 2. Housing

### Costs:

- Incentives for affordable housing development: \$50,000-\$100,000 annually
  - Tax abatements: \$30,000 - \$60,000
  - Direct subsidies: \$20,000 - \$40,000
- Housing rehabilitation program: \$25,000-\$50,000 annually
  - Grants to homeowners: \$20,000 - \$40,000
  - Program administration: \$5,000 - \$10,000

### Revenue Impacts:

- Increased property tax base from new and improved housing
  - Estimated 3-5% increase in residential property values over 5 years

## 3. Economic Development

### Costs:

- Business attraction and retention programs: \$20,000-\$30,000 annually
  - Marketing and outreach: \$10,000 - \$15,000
  - Incentives and support programs: \$10,000 - \$15,000
- Downtown revitalization efforts: \$100,000-\$200,000 over 5 years
  - Streetscape improvements: \$50,000 - \$100,000
  - Facade improvement grants: \$30,000 - \$60,000
  - Public space enhancements: \$20,000 - \$40,000

Revenue Impacts:

- Increased business tax revenue
  - Projected 2-3% annual increase in commercial property tax revenue
- Potential for job creation and increased resident spending
  - Estimated 1-2% increase in local sales tax revenue

4. Infrastructure and Utilities

Costs:

- Road maintenance and improvements: \$1 million over 10 years
  - Annual maintenance: \$50,000
  - Major improvements: \$500,000 (years 3, 6, and 9)
- Water and sewer system upgrades: \$1 million over 10 years
  - Water treatment plant upgrades: \$400,000
  - Sewer line replacements: \$600,000

Revenue Impacts:

- Potential for increased utility fees to cover infrastructure improvements
  - Phased increases of 2-3% annually for water and sewer rates

5. Parks and Recreation

Costs:

- Park improvements and trail development: \$100,000-\$500,000 over 10 years
  - New playground equipment: \$50,000 - \$100,000
  - Trail development: \$50,000 - \$300,000
  - Park amenities (benches, landscaping, etc.): \$50,000 - \$100,000
- Maintenance of new facilities: \$20,000-\$30,000 annually
  - Labor: \$15,000 - \$20,000
  - Materials and equipment: \$5,000 - \$10,000

Revenue Impacts:

- Potential for increased property values near improved parks and trails

- Estimated 2-4% increase in adjacent property values

## 6. Implementation and Administration

### Costs:

- Staff time for plan implementation: Equivalent to 0.5 FTE, approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 annually
- Regular plan updates and revisions: \$10,000-\$15,000 every 5 years

### Funding Strategies:

1. General Fund Allocations:
  - Dedicate 1-2% of annual budget to plan implementation
2. Grants:
  - Actively pursue state and federal grants for specific projects
  - Target \$100,000 - \$500,000 in grant funding annually
3. Bond Issuances:
  - Consider general obligation bonds for major capital projects
  - Potential for \$1-3 million bond issuance in year 5 for infrastructure
4. Special Assessments:
  - Implement for specific neighborhood improvements
  - Estimate \$50,000 - \$100,000 annually from special assessments
5. User Fees:
  - Adjust fees for parks and recreation programs to cover 50-75% of costs
  - Implement stormwater utility fee to fund stormwater management projects

### Financial Management Strategies:

1. Phased Implementation: Prioritize projects and spread costs over multiple years to manage financial impact.
2. Cost-Benefit Analysis: Conduct detailed analysis for each major project to ensure positive return on investment.
3. Public-Private Partnerships: Explore opportunities to leverage private investment, especially for economic development initiatives.
4. Reserve Fund: Establish a dedicated reserve fund for plan implementation, targeting 10% of estimated total costs.
5. Annual Review: Conduct yearly financial reviews to adjust projections and strategies based on actual revenues and expenditures.
6. Long-term Financial Forecasting: Develop and maintain a 10-year financial forecast to anticipate and plan for future costs and revenues.

## PERFORMANCE METRICS

To ensure effective implementation of the comprehensive plan, Green Isle will establish and monitor specific, measurable indicators of progress. These performance metrics will help city officials, staff, and residents track the plan's success and identify areas that may need additional attention or resources.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The following KPIs will be used to measure progress across various aspects of the comprehensive plan:

1. Land Use and Development
  - Number of new housing units developed annually
  - Percentage of infill development vs. greenfield development
  - Acres of agricultural land preserved
2. Housing
  - Percentage of affordable housing units
  - Housing vacancy rate
  - Number of housing units renovated or improved
3. Economic Development
  - Number of new businesses established
  - Job growth rate
  - Commercial property vacancy rate
  - Median household income
4. Infrastructure and Utilities
  - Miles of roads improved or maintained
  - Percentage of households with access to high-speed internet
  - Water usage per capita
5. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
  - Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents
  - Miles of trails developed or maintained
  - Number of participants in recreation programs

### MONITORING AND REPORTING

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- The city will establish a system for regular data collection to track these KPIs.
- An annual progress report will be prepared summarizing the status of each KPI and overall progress on plan implementation.
- The city will develop and maintain a publicly accessible online dashboard that displays current KPI data and trends over time.
- Based on the performance metrics, the city will conduct a bi-annual review of the comprehensive plan implementation strategies.
- The city will solicit feedback from residents on the progress of plan implementation, using the KPIs as a basis for discussion.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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The set of KPIs will be reviewed and refined periodically to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with the city's evolving needs and priorities. New metrics may be added, and others may be modified or removed as necessary.

By implementing this performance measurement system, Green Isle will be able to objectively assess the progress of the comprehensive plan implementation, make data-driven decisions, and demonstrate accountability to the community.

By following this comprehensive implementation plan, the City of Green Isle will be well-equipped to turn the vision and goals outlined in the comprehensive plan into tangible actions and results. The short-term, mid-range, and long-range plans provide a clear roadmap for the city to follow, ensuring that the community's needs and aspirations are met in a strategic and sustainable manner. The ongoing implementation strategies emphasize the importance of public engagement, collaboration, and adaptability throughout the process, enabling the city to respond effectively to changing circumstances and opportunities.

As the City of Green Isle embarks on this implementation journey, it is essential to maintain a strong commitment to the comprehensive plan's vision and goals, while fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. By doing so, the city will be well-positioned to create a vibrant, prosperous, and sustainable community that enhances the quality of life for all its residents, both now and in the future.

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## INTRODUCTION

The community and leadership of City of Green Isle have expressed a strong desire for expanded trail options to enhance both recreational opportunities and transportation alternatives to key destinations within the city. Trails and bicycle infrastructure offer numerous benefits, including improved public health through increased physical activity, reduced traffic congestion and air pollution, and enhanced quality of life for residents. Additionally, well-designed trail networks can boost property values, attract tourism, and provide safe routes for children to walk or bike to parks.

This comprehensive Citywide Trails Plan is crucial for establishing a solid foundation to secure both internal and external funding sources. As financial opportunities arise, the plan's prioritized project list will serve as a ready reference, allowing for strategic selection of initiatives that align with the city's goals and available resources. The existence of this plan significantly enhances the competitiveness of grant applications, as many funding bodies prioritize projects that demonstrate a thorough prior planning process. The plan also facilitates more effective budgeting through internal funding mechanisms, enabling the city to allocate resources efficiently and plan for long-term trail development. Additionally, as new housing developments emerge, this plan will guide the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure through the parkland dedication fee, ensuring that growth contributes to an interconnected and accessible trail network. By providing a clear vision and roadmap for trail development, this plan not only streamlines decision-making processes but also positions the city to capitalize on diverse funding opportunities, ultimately accelerating the realization of a comprehensive trail system for the community.

### Plan Overview

The Green Isle Citywide Trails Plan aims to address these community needs and capitalize on the potential benefits of a comprehensive trail system. The plan will begin by assessing the existing trail infrastructure and identifying gaps in connectivity. It will then outline proposed trail expansions and improvements based on priorities established by the trails committee.

### Key Components

**Existing Conditions and Goals:** The plan will document the current state of the trail infrastructure, including existing trails, their conditions, and how they connect to key destinations within the community. This assessment will provide a foundation for understanding the necessary improvements and expansions.

**Prioritized Project List and Cost Estimates:** The plan will feature a prioritized list of trail projects that align with community needs and committee recommendations. This list will help guide future investments and ensure that the most impactful projects are implemented first. To aid in implementation, the plan will include detailed cost estimates for proposed projects, allowing for informed decision-making and budgeting.

**Funding Options:** This section will explore potential funding sources, including grants, partnerships, and local funding mechanisms, to help turn the trail vision into reality.

**Maintenance and Policy:** The final sections will focus on the importance of ongoing maintenance and regular policy reviews to ensure safety and usability, including addressing conflicts such as those between new bike lanes and on-street parking.

By addressing these key elements, the Green Isle Citywide Trails Plan will serve as a comprehensive guide for developing a connected, accessible, and enjoyable trail network that meets the community's needs for years to come.

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# EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND KEY DESTINATIONS MAP



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing conditions in the city present both challenges and opportunities for developing a trails plan. Two state highways intersect through the city, creating barriers for pedestrians and cyclists due to unsafe crossing conditions. However, the local roads are wide, providing space that could be used for bike lanes and pedestrian infrastructure. Natural buffers between different sections of the city offer locations for potential off-road trail development, which could serve as connective pathways. The city has several attractions, including parks, restaurants, and community events, that could benefit from improved accessibility. Currently, residents and visitors have limited options to walk or bike to these destinations because of inadequate infrastructure. A well-designed trails plan could address these issues, enhancing safety and connectivity while promoting active transportation throughout the city.

## GOALS DEVELOPED FROM MAJOR THEMES

1. Safety Enhancement:  
**Goal:** Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety at the intersection of MN Highway 5 and MN Highway 25 through targeted infrastructure improvements and traffic calming measures.
2. Natural Area Trail Development:  
**Goal:** Create a network of off-road trails in natural buffers, around water features, and in parks to enhance recreational opportunities and preserve green spaces.
3. Developer Collaboration:  
**Goal:** Expand the off-road trail network by leveraging parkland dedication fees and continue collaborating with housing developers.
4. Road Space Reallocation:  
**Goal:** Optimize existing wide roads to create dedicated bike and pedestrian infrastructure by strategically adjusting curb positions.
5. Integrated Infrastructure Development:  
**Goal:** Combine planned road resurfacing projects with the implementation of on-road bike and pedestrian infrastructure to maximize cost-efficiency.
6. Infrastructure Maintenance:  
**Goal:** Develop a comprehensive maintenance plan for existing and future sidewalks and trails, clearly defining responsibilities and ensuring long-term sustainability.
7. Citywide Connectivity:  
**Goal:** Implement dedicated east-west and north-south on-road bike and pedestrian infrastructure on both sides of MN Highway 5 to improve overall connectivity and safety.
8. Multi-Jurisdictional Coordination:  
**Goal:** Establish effective communication channels and collaborative relationships with relevant agencies and jurisdictions to facilitate seamless trail development across various boundaries.
9. Policy Review and Update:  
**Goal:** Conduct a thorough review and update of relevant policies to ensure consistent and effective management of the entire trail system, including maintenance, snow removal, and infrastructure allowances.

10. Funding Acquisition:

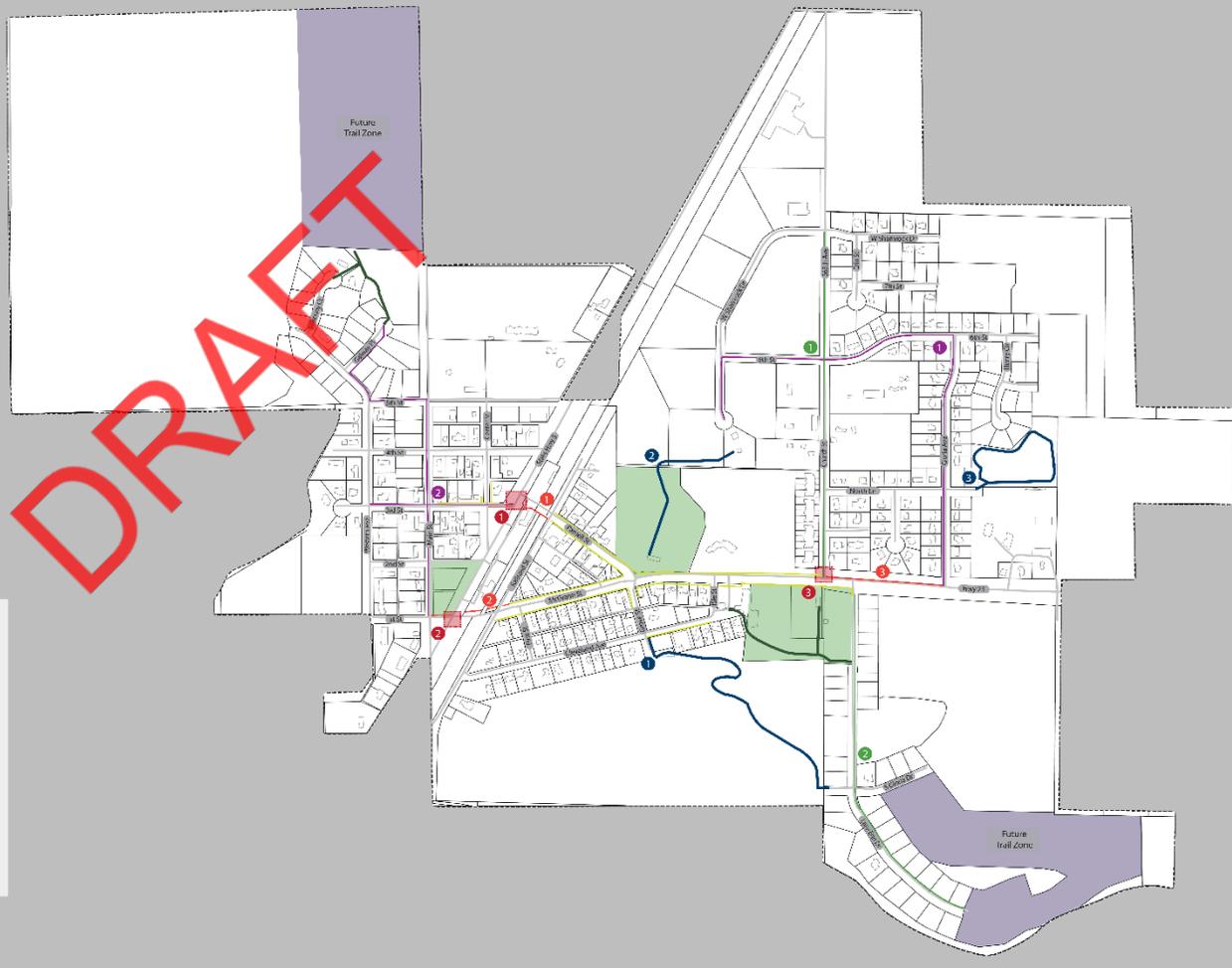
**Goal:** Actively pursue and secure grant funding to support the implementation of trail development and enhancement projects throughout the city.

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**LEGEND**

- City Boundary
- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Existing Off-Road Trail
- Proposed Off-Road Trail
- Proposed Protected Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Sharrow
- Parks
- Proposed Intersection Improvement
- Future Trail Zone



Architecture – Engineering + Environmental + Planning

**PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE MAP**  
Green Isle, MN - 3/15/20 - 8/20/2024

ISGinc.com

Disclaimer: The Planning Level Opinion of Probable Cost illustrates the estimated costs to construct for project planning purposes and represents the consultant's best judgment as a design professional as of this time, is non-binding and is intended for informational purposes only. The Consultant does not have control over the cost of labor and materials, or bidding. The Opinion of Probable Cost is based on recent experience and recent bidding data and assumes work to be completed by private contractors and specialists. The unit prices assume 2025 construction and the quantities are estimates only made during the master plan design phase. Consultant recommends adding an appropriate inflation factor to the total Project Cost to account for inflation each year from date of this estimate. Quantities may vary from actual conditions as survey and 3d scanning data was not available at the time this plan was developed.

## PRECEDENT IMAGES

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Crossing Improvement #2	Intersection of MN Highway 5 and McGrann Street	This project is within MnDOT right-of-way, so discussions will be necessary. Rapid Flashing Beacon is included in the cost estimate	High (1 to 5 years)	City, MnDOT	\$460,000-\$510,000 (Grouped with Sidewalk #2)
Crossing Improvement #3	Intersection of Church Avenue and MN Highway 25	This project is within MnDOT right-of-way, so discussions will be necessary. Rapid Flashing Beacon is included in the cost estimate	Medium (6 to 8 years)	City, MnDOT	\$130,000-\$160,000 (Grouped with Sidewalk #3)
Sidewalk #1	South side of Parnell Street from Railroad Street to MN Highway 5	This project is within MnDOT and TCWR right-of-way, so discussions will be necessary	High (1 to 5 years)	City, MnDOT, TCWR	(Grouped with Crossing Improvement #1)
Sidewalk #2	North side of McGrann Street from existing sidewalk to MN Highway 5	This project is within MnDOT and TCWR right-of-way, so discussions will be necessary	Medium (6 to 8 years)	City, MnDOT, TCWR	(Grouped with Crossing Improvement #2)
Sidewalk #3	Along north side of MN Highway 25 from Church Avenue to Gloria Avenue	This project is within MnDOT right-of-way, so discussions will be necessary	Medium (6 to 8 years)	City, MnDOT	(Grouped with Crossing Improvement #3)
Bike Lane #1	Along Church Avenue from West Shamrock Drive to MN Highway 25	Policy of on-street infrastructure will have to be developed	High (1 to 5 years)	City	\$15,500-\$20,000 (2,271 Feet)
Bike Lane #2	Along Lake Erin Drive from MN Highway 25 to South Gloria Drive	Policy of on-street infrastructure will have to be developed	Medium (6 to 8 years)	City	\$17,000-\$22,000 (2,474 Feet)
Bike Sharrow #1	Along Gloria Avenue from MN Highway 25 to 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, along 6 <sup>th</sup> Street from Gloria Avenue to West Shamrock Drive, along West Shamrock Drive from 6 <sup>th</sup> Street to end of cul-de-sac	Policy of on-street infrastructure will have to be developed	High (1 to 5 years)	City	\$8,500-\$10,000 (3,482 Feet)
Bike Sharrow #2	Along Main Street from 5 <sup>th</sup> Street to 1 <sup>st</sup> Street and along 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street from Western Avenue to MN Highway 5	Policy of on-street infrastructure will have to be developed	High (1 to 5 years)	City	\$8,500-\$10,000 (3,309 Feet)

## PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

Pictured above is the proposed project map with its corresponding cost estimate table below. The proposed infrastructure projects were determined by the trails committee during the community tour and trails charette. These projects address the safety concerns with crossing MN Highway 5 and 25. Trails were identified in natural buffers between city sections and form loops for recreation. Bike lanes and sharrows were identified to give each side of the city a north-south route and east-west route to navigate to the community's key destinations. The proposed network aims to improve connectivity, enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and provide accessible routes to local amenities.

## FUNDING OPTIONS

### **MnDOT Transportation Alternatives Grant**

This competitive grant program funds projects for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic preservation, Safe Routes to School, and other transportation-related initiatives. It's available to local communities and regional agencies across Minnesota, with approximately \$12.5 million in funding distributed annually. The program requires a 20% local match and is administered through regional Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs). It is recommended that the City applies for this program annually. Letter of intent is typically opened in October and if recommended, application period opens in November with a due date in December.

### **MnDOT Active Transportation Program Grant**

This program provides funding for communities to increase walking and bicycling opportunities, making non-motorized transportation more accessible, convenient, and safer. It covers various project types, including planning assistance, engineering studies, infrastructure development, demonstration projects, and non-infrastructure programming. It is recommended that the City applies for this program annually. Letter of intent is typically opened in October and if recommended, application period opens in November with a due date in December. There is typically no required local match for this program.

### **MN DNR Local Trail Connection Program**

Provides funding to support the development of short trail connections that link residential areas, schools, businesses, and parks. This program is designed to enhance accessibility and promote non-motorized transportation by creating vital linkages to existing trail systems. Eligible applicants include cities, counties, and townships, with grants covering up to 75% of total eligible project costs, up to a maximum of \$250,000. The program requires that trails be open to the public for non-motorized use and that projects result in immediate public access. Applications are typically accepted once per year, with a deadline in late February, making it an excellent opportunity for communities to improve their local trail networks and foster greater connectivity.

### **Parks and Trails Legacy Grant Program**

Provides funding for parks and trails of regional significance outside the seven-county metropolitan area in Minnesota. This program is administered through a collaborative process involving the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC), the state legislature, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Eligible applicants submit their proposals directly to the GMRPTC, which

then recommends funding allocations to the legislature. Once approved, the DNR awards and administers the grants. The program aims to enhance and develop regional parks and trails throughout Greater Minnesota, supporting outdoor recreation opportunities and preserving natural resources. Funding is provided through the Parks and Trails Fund, established by the Minnesota Legacy Amendment.

### **Parkland Dedication Fee**

The City has implemented a parkland dedication fee as part of its development process. Under this policy, developers have the option to either dedicate land for parks or trails or provide a fee in lieu of dedication equal to 10% of the developed property's value. Recognizing that the city's existing parks are sufficient, city leadership has agreed that these funds should be primarily directed towards trail development. To ensure proper management and allocation of these resources, it is recommended that the city establish a separate account specifically for parkland dedication fees. This dedicated account would help prevent the funds from being inadvertently used for other city projects and maintain transparency in their use for trail development initiatives.

### **Bonds**

Bonding is an effective strategy for municipalities to finance infrastructure improvements, including streetscape enhancements and utility upgrades. By issuing bonds, cities can obtain significant capital upfront to support major projects that may be difficult to fund within a single budget cycle. This method allows for the simultaneous implementation of streetscape improvements—such as wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian lighting—alongside essential utility work, like upgrading water and sewer systems. The integration of these projects can lead to cost efficiencies and reduce disruptions for residents and businesses.

## **MAINTENANCE**

Ongoing maintenance of bike and pedestrian infrastructure is essential for ensuring safety and usability. Well-maintained paths, lanes, and crossings enhance the experience for users and encourage more residents to choose walking and biking as transportation options. To sustain these benefits, it is important for the city to allocate an annual budget specifically for maintenance work. Additionally, establishing an annual meeting to discuss and prioritize maintenance projects will help ensure that resources are directed toward the most pressing needs.

## **POLICY**

Reviewing and updating bike and pedestrian ordinances and policies is important for supporting active transportation in the city. Existing policies may unintentionally hinder walking and biking efforts and should be examined for potential conflicts. For example, the introduction of new bike lanes may require policy changes to address conflicts with on-street parking. The city should conduct a comprehensive review of current ordinances and policies, identifying areas that need modification to align with walking and biking goals. This process should involve input from various departments, including city council, parks board, and public works, to ensure a cohesive approach. By aligning policies with the city's active transportation objectives, the government can create a more supportive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.