

# Comments Submitted in the Comprehensive Plan Questionnaire



## General Comments:

### Featherstone:

I am a supporter of solar energy projects, but I believe these need to be built only on marginal ag lands. We should not be using good productive ag land for this purpose, nor should we be cutting down forest areas.

I believe the county should also look at a policy that would only allow large alternative energy projects to be built near existing power lines. We do not need to create more over power lines. Let's use the current infrastructure and make it work better into the future.

### Zumbrota:

Sometimes this goes overboard...like when someone wants to clean the brush out of the Zumbro to prevent future flooding and to help the flow of water, but they restrict certain things because it might disrupt something else.....but in the overall picture, removing the brush in the river will help erosion and such greatly.

### Red Wing:

No frack sand mining or factory farms!

Housing Density in crowded areas, need to be limited to the designated allowed in A1 + A2 areas.

### Goodhue (city):

I would love to see the multi-purpose trail completed between Zumbrota and Hay Creek.

### Goodhue (twp):

Need to increase amount of building sites for nice new neighborhoods, well-kept with covenants.

### Holden:

Make sure no fast speed train cuts through our county or through farmland.

### Warsaw:

Allow more home building in agriculture rural areas. Too many distances and number of homes per section/quarter in many of the outer zones of the rural home use ring centered around Cannon Falls area. (Warsaw Township) Allow homes in non-cultivated agricultural lands. IE: woodlands, Highly erodible sloped land, hilly pasture/non-cultivated lands instead of taking tillable farm land for a home site. Allow homes to be built closer to each other in these non-tillable areas of a section currently considered Agriculture tillable land.



The vineyard in Sogn has been and is getting way too commercialized. Keep a leash on it please. The residents of this area are here because they wanted to live peacefully away from such things. Grow their grapes and leave it at that. That is agriculture. Weddings are not.

Welch:

Part of what brings tourists to RW is that we are an ag. Community. If we destroy that we are just like every other place. Why come?

Cannon Falls (city):

Cannon Falls needs more building sites for new well-kept neighborhoods. Covenants applied.

Florence:

We need to start protecting the environment and natural resources better, not just in light of climate change, but also in an interest of preserving natural space for generations to come. No frack mining!!!!!!!

And contrary to my representative, Jason Majerus, I don't have a problem with a tax increase if the benefit is worth it.

## **Agriculture Element Comments:**

Belle Creek:

Non-traditional agriculture needs more depth as not all small farms are CSAs, pick-your-own, orchards or vineyards. Some smaller farms can be a primary income source (not 'hobby') by producing high dollar specialty crops and selling directly to consumers (farmer's markets, Christmas trees, etc), restaurants, grocery stores, or other 'Minnesota Grown' producers (cheese, wines, fruit products, etc).

Plant Agriculture Objectives #7 should be expanded to be more inclusive OR Enhance the Emerging Agriculture / Specialty Agriculture section.

A more robust Emerging Agriculture / Specialty Agriculture section could be done by consolidating some of the plant, animal, and farm related businesses already identified and expanding the options a bit. With many of the original farmsteads being broken up over the years and many rural land owners now holding <40 acres, the small farm niche production markets can be a valuable means of fiscal and cultural stability for the county. Smaller farms can be a primary income source (not 'hobby') by producing high dollar specialty and organic crops/animal products and selling directly to consumers (farmer's markets, Christmas trees, etc), restaurants, grocery stores, or other 'Minnesota Grown' producers (cheese, wines, fruit products, etc).

Acreage wise this will be a small percentage of the county's land but by individual land owner, this can positively impact many people and serve as catalysis for young families looking to earn a living from their farms. Studies have shown the age of farmers to be on the increase, and with the high cost of operating a traditional agriculture operation; the average 'young' farmer cannot afford to enter that field. Creating a positive business climate that both encourages and promotes specialty agriculture in prime farm land reaches out to an untapped / under-tapped economic benefit for the county.



Objective: Create a financially favorable environment for non-traditional agriculture ventures.

Implementation Strategy: Bring County statutes for small farm production in line with State statutes.

Very concerned about extremely large feed lots and the ability to insure the operations do not compromise ground water, rivers and streams. Agriculture is very important part of our economy, farmers who live and farm in our community need to remain in our county to ensure the environment is protected and that money stays here to benefit other businesses. If corporate farming emerges concern for the environment in Goodhue County may be lost and much of the revenue will leave the community

Hay Creek:

Encourage and incentivize no-till agriculture. increase regulations on hog factory farms.

Featherstone:

Goodhue County has a tremendous infrastructure for traditional agriculture which provides employment for hundreds of people besides those actually farming.

Another growing segment of agriculture in the county is organic production. It is not mentioned in the draft.

Feed mills are very important to animal agriculture and the economy of the county. Again they are not mentioned in the draft.

Zumbrota:

I believe Goodhue County is losing sight of the fact we are an ag county.

Stanton:

Well written and multi-faceted. Consistency in enforcement should be encouraged.

Warsaw:

On page 7. Vineyards needs to be spelled correctly and I believe you mean to say 'Cold Hardy Wine' not 'Cold Hardy Wide'.

It is good to see that Goodhue County recognizes the value that alternative types of agriculture, like vineyards/wineries, orchards, CSAs etc. bring to the county. It's vitally important to recognize that agri-tourism is critical to the success of these types of entities. The fabric and makeup of the county is much richer for it, and Goodhue County sits in the bullseye of where these businesses can flourish. Agriculture can be much more than corn and beans.

I have been out of the country and respectfully ask that this submission be allowed.

Welch Twp Planning:

Plant Agriculture: add buffer zones after odor control

Other Submitted Comments:

Must continue Agriculture as the number 1 element + importance

Agriculture is the most important activity in Goodhue County



All 5's Tell it all

Believe orchards + bee colonies are on a rapid decline, perhaps we should take this as a major issue and meet with people involved with these.

## **Natural Resources Element Comments:**

### Red Wing:

Improved water quality and restoration and maintenance of natural communities should receive high emphasis and will embrace all other elements. Invasive species is not mentioned and should be as it is best addressed at the county and township level.

### Hay Creek:

Encourage homeowners to build rain gardens. Promote and incentivize no-till agriculture to farmers.

### Stanton:

Need to enforce buffer zones already in place more strongly.

Current regulations require consistency in enforcement.

### Belle Creek:

It is good the county is monitoring wells and keeping multiyear surveys

### Welch Twp Planning:

Whereas agriculture and natural resources are so closely intertwined, along with statutes and state agencies, the County should also be sure to utilize industry and university experts to most effectively achieve its preservation goals.

Items 8 & 9 pertaining to replacement of ALL destroyed wetlands is neither the best nor most practical approach. Rather, an individual case by case approach would suit the County best.

Change Item 12 to read: Promote maintenance and establishment of native and/or improved vegetation whichever is best suited for blufflands, through education and outreach to property owners.

### Other Submitted Comments:

Natural Resources are important but being the County is Agricultural must be sure there are no out of control changes that would reduce ag.

Protect Natural Resources yes but do not implement rules that would slow or restrict ag.

Wetlands are disappearing – Too much tilling? A strong element is the County working well with Soil + Water conservation district

## **Housing Element Comments:**

### Cannon Falls (Twp):

Our township has strict 1,000 foot setback rules for homes, especially in areas that shouldn't be Ag-1 zoned. When woods are involved, zoning should be changed. When realtors buy up farm land prior to



listing property and quickly build homes (in order to tap out maximum number) for future sales (this has been done in the past). It is unfair to the current land owners who own property near and wish to someday build to stay close to family, I call that an unfair practice. Thank you for considering necessary changes for our future.

Stanton:

I am not in favor of accessory dwellings that are intended for a single generation of use. Then what? Goodhue County should continue to protect prime agricultural land by restricting housing growth in those areas.

Welch Twp Planning:

Add – work with local, state, and federal bodies to ensure development of tribally acquired land in the county is consistent with county policies (ex: preservation of ag land and protection of natural resources, including water).

What is open space development?

The Land Use Management wants reforestation – where? How?

If the Native Americans build houses and rents them (houses built specifically to rent) is this allowable?

How is the Goodhue County Urban Fringe District Health Impact Assessment going to be implemented?

Does Goodhue County want new surveys for townships to include non-ag but possible building?

(page 58) #13 – Housing choices what does this mean?

(page 59): #5: who will do the monitoring?

(page 59): #1: housing density criteria – what does this mean?

(page 59): #4: County's Economic Development – who is on the committee?

(page 59): #8: Conservation Subdivision criteria – meaning?

What are the plans for A3 and when will we know?

This plan uses a lot of terms with no definitions and who will implement these plans. More specifics needed. Overall pretty general.

Other Submitted Comments:

Additional Housing would be best in cities to protect ag.



## Business and Industry Element Comments:

### Stanton:

The county needs to be more proactive on encouraging light industry and green commerce.

Goodhue County should be pro-actively encouraging and seeking low impact business and industry.

### Other Submitted Comments:

Some ag related business is ok in or near ag but no ag business should be in cities.

Some Tourism and rec business in ag areas should be considered but many should not. Case by case basis with input from residents + townships

### Welch Twp Planning:

Overall balancing of development, growth, stability, rural character, tax base is well described.

- a. No consideration anywhere of crime. Welch's comp plan includes under Development policies: "Discourage development or commercial businesses that may increase crime." This was added to the comp plan in connection with the ordinance additions for Adult Entertainment. The county may wish to consider Impact on public services such as law enforcement as a factor in evaluating development & growth proposals.
- b. Little mention of job quality. All things being equal, skilled, high paying, year round jobs with benefits are preferable to minimum wage seasonal jobs. Sustainable skilled employment opportunities should be a consideration In evaluating Industrial/commercial development proposals

(page 64): last clause beginning with "it demonstrates ...quality of maintaining a unique community character." Delete, as makes no sense. The need for a healthy economy is well explained, and this clause adds nothing.

(page 65): second Key Point "Some areas situated in the county's agricultural zoning districts are less productive for traditional farming practices yet may be optimized for nontraditional farming practices or other types of business." Small businesses like orchards, vineyards, CSAs, etc. may work well where row cropping doesn't.

(page 65): third Challenge. The township agrees that maintaining the rural character of township should be a major consideration in growth and development proposals. This is also reflected in the Welch Comp Plan.

(page 65): 4th Challenge. Not sure what the idea is here-agricultural businesses should not be encouraged to change practices?? If it was once permitted, it should always be permitted?? Rewrite of this Challenge: "Agricultural businesses ~~need~~ may want the ability to continue to engage in their ~~permitted~~ current practices." The township does not want to encourage agricultural or business practices that contribute to drainage and road maintenance issues.

(page 66): Diverse Businesses. Rewrite first sentence to recognize online retail. "With the aid of technology, citizens have more choices of where they work, ~~and~~ how they distribute their products and services, and how they purchase goods and services." One of the township's major businesses, the casino, now has online competition.



(page 69): Implementation Strategies. The township is supportive of these strategies, including expansion of home occupations (#8) and policies and ordinances that encourage flexibility and opportunity(#4).

(page 68): Agricultural Businesses. Last clause of first sentence doesn't make sense. Does it mean that ag land is likely to increase in value? Or that the importance of ag land use will likely increase? Not clear what is intended here.

(page 69): Ag Business Implementation Strategies, #2: Feedlots may be more suitable in some areas of the county than in others. The Township agrees with this and suggests that township considerations of suitability include township policies as reflected in local comprehensive plans. The Welch Comp Plan policy is to "discourage high density feedlots."

(page 71): Implementation Strategy # 2. Change "determine if" to "evaluate whether." This better reflects the nature of the work to be done pursuant to this strategy.

## **Recreation and Tourism Element Comments:**

### Red Wing:

Cultural and historic attraction of Red Wing and smaller towns should be included and promoted. Trails, recreation equipment rental and guided tours can increase appreciation, preservation and in maintaining natural communities, tourism and appreciation of the outdoors. Public transportation to and from metro area could enhance the vitality of recreation and tourism.

The scenic river Act on the Cannon River is being taken advantage of by a select few at the expense of many. They now think they are empowered and trying to control the traffic on the Cannon River by any means available. I'm hoping that Goodhue County sees through the friends of the lower Cannon and puts a stop to their interfering with tourism on the Cannon River

### Hay Creek:

Red Wing's bluffs (including the quarry on barn bluff and memorial park) are not mentioned at all.

### Stanton:

County should be investing more actively in parks and trail infrastructure, not just land acquisition. Joint Master Plan with Dakota County on Lake Byllesby Park would be a big step forward. Stop thoughts of camping at Lake Byllesby Park as it is a duplication of Dakota County Park's excellent campground. Look at complementary recreational use that services the bike trail (regional draw) and Cannon Falls residents.

### Belle Creek:

I feel that Goodhue County has a large amount outdoor resources for the number of people utilizing and could be grown to attract tourism dollars

### Warsaw:

Consumers and visitors to vineyards, orchards, etc is part of the agri-tourism experience and is integral to the success and viability of these types of businesses flourishing in Goodhue County. Thank you for recognizing this key element.



Welch Twp Planning:

Support ag tourism, connecting bike trails, keeping trout streams clean, protecting natural resources.

Other Submitted Comments:

Tourism + Rec. must take into consideration compatibility in ag areas.

Most people living in the country want and expect some private country life

Rec + Tourism is important and appropriate for some area which don not affect ag.

## **Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Amenities Element Comments:**

Red Wing:

The Goodhue County Historical Society as well as other local historical societies are mentioned three times in the entire section, which seems to be an odd occurrence based on the subject matter. There should be more intentional language in this section with regards to the role these groups will play in future land use planning. The only heritage preservation commission specifically mentioned is the Florence Township HPC. Goodhue County has a total of 5 HPCs. There should be language in regards to the relationship with how the County plans to interact with these groups in matters regarding cultural and historic resources.

More direct ideas could be looked at as well that may assist the Land Use Office in making informed decisions with regards to land use issues:

- 1) Partner with the County Historical Society on training a staff member(s) in Section 106 regulations. This would assist Land Use staff, when needed, on the potential effects on projects on cultural and historic resources without the need to hire an outside consultant on a regular basis. It would demonstrate that the County understands their responsibility in protecting cultural and historic resources and is continually working to honor their responsibility in regards to historic preservation.
- 2) Establish a County Heritage Preservation Advisory Committee to provide feedback on projects that affect cultural and historic resources in areas where there is no established HPC. This could be a group that provides recommendations to the planning commission regarding projects where cultural and historic resources may be affected in areas (especially rural) where there is no established heritage preservation ordinance. Representatives could include the Goodhue County Historical Society, local historical societies, and citizens from areas where there is no historic preservation ordinance especially those with a high density of cultural and historic resources. This would not establish a formal historic preservation ordinance (although that could be a possibility) to govern the County but still provide some guidance.

I question whether the traditional cultural resources and sacred places of Indigenous people have been fully addressed. I also believe that the natural communities that should be of concern should include woodlands as well as prairies. Although agriculture is has cultural significance the environmental impacts are many and we should not shy away from restoring native habitats and encouraging sustainable and low impact practices when possible.



Stanton:

The Stanton Township Supervisors feel that it is very important to preserve Cultural, Historic and Scenic amenities.

Other Submitted Comments:

Preserve cultural + historic amenities is important.

## Transportation Element Comments:

Red Wing:

I would like to see some progress Hwy 50 expansion at least to a super highway with turn lanes and wide shoulders

Promote trail access and networks. Two way toll access to and from metro area should be a goal and would offer jobs, tourism and other amenities.

Featherstone:

I would like to see the zip rail, with stops along the way ,using a train straight true ,followed by one that would stop along the way .Allowing for safer and faster transportation. Also supporting rail Red Wing to St Paul.

Zumbrota:

More attention should be placed on repair and upkeep of our current roads and bridges before any money is spent on new trails.

Stanton:

Encourage high speed rail in the existing rail corridor along Hwy 61. Allow new corridors through Goodhue County only if they service (take on passengers) within the county and are economically self-supporting.

Invest more actively in our bike trail network. Goodhue already has a destination trail in the Cannon Valley Trail and adding to this network and encouraging accommodations, restaurants and other services along a trail network is a huge opportunity for the County.

Goodhue County should greater emphasize cost vs. benefit of any proposed transportation system and their respective impacts on county residents. High speed rail is opposed, and the dangers of crude oil rail transportation need to be further addressed.

Warsaw:

Spend transportation money on roads and bridges because this benefits the most people. Very few people benefit from the multimodal transportation of bicycle paths and trails. Bicycle lanes along our County roads is very dangerous and accident prone. I would never permit a bicycle path through my farm! Every 3 weeks we fill 4 grocery bags of cans, plastic bottles, dirty diapers, misc. paper and etc. along County road 24. We don't want to clean up more trash along any trail!

We do not want our County divided by Zip Rail or any other high speed rail project between Rochester



and the Twin cities. Any high speed rail should only be along the Mississippi river corridor. Money other than for roads and bridges should be used for freight rail and freight traffic on river barges.

Belle Creek:

The general road plowing during winter months is poor, traveling to adjacent county is an example how poor it is and needs to be addressed.

Other Submitted Comments:

Need to work hard to ensure we have good roads + bridges

No ZIP Rail Period

I think we have a good transportation system

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Element Comments:**

Red Wing:

Working with MNDot and Dakota county, would like to see Hwy 50 improved with turn lanes and wider shoulders

I notice that the County Fair Boards are called out specifically as partners but not the County Historical Society. The Goodhue County Historical Society should be included as a partner to the County as they helped with supplying information regarding GIS mapping and would be helpful with regards to understanding land issues and their effects on historic and cultural resources.

Goodhue (Twp):

Maybe highlight the strong/long working relationship between the SWCD and the County Board.

Stanton:

The lack of communication between Goodhue and the State on the Zip Rail issue indicates how poorly the state views our County. We must be more proactive, and not simply reactive, on these significant issues.

The County works well with the Townships in a mature sharing of responsibilities on infrastructure and zoning.

Brad Anderson has dramatically enhanced communication with Stanton Township officials. The Stanton Township Supervisors support master planning for parks jointly, Dakota County with Goodhue County.

Welch Twp Planning:

There still needs to be more interaction with local boards, the County, the tribal community, and the legislators.

Other Submitted Comments:

Zoning regs are different between townships + county. County should respect township regs and wishes as much as possible.



More communication between townships and county on issues especially controversial issues. Listen to township wishes and take their thinking into decision making.

## **Public Utilities Element Comments:**

### Red Wing:

I would like to see stronger language in regards to Goodhue County being an active leader in 100% access to broadband for its residents. In order for the County to grow in the future, this must be a top priority. A word of caution on the biofuel industry: ethanol plants in general have been a cycle of boom and bust. A few counties in Minnesota have witnessed the over-building of these plants that in some cases never open. Permitting should be cautionary to ensure we do not overbuild in this area.

### Stanton:

The county should encourage large and small scale solar, small scale geothermal and small scale wind energy projects. Biofuels do not look cost effective and our support should be reduced.

Our broadband within the rural areas of the county are a joke. Please encourage a massive buildup of infrastructure in broadband to support our future, to encourage small business and education growth in our rural areas.

Goodhue County needs stronger voice regarding the placement of large scale electric transmission systems to protect the interests of Goodhue County residents.

Goodhue County needs to promote and encourage improvements to the broad band networks in rural Goodhue County.

### Belle Creek:

It was good the county added an ordinance limiting wind energy and impacts on non-participating land owners

### Welch Twp Planning:

(page 44, Item 12): "Promote maintenance and establishment of native and or improved vegetation whichever is best suited for blufflands through education and outreach to property owners."

(page 129): para 2 of Key Points add "and wireless delivery of broadband alternatives such as fixed wireless and line of sight."

(page 129): Challenges, add fourth Challenge: "Wired broadband deployment may not be economical in rural areas of the county, especially where topography complicates trenching."

(page 130): add at end of first sentence: "compatible with surrounding land uses."

(page 130): Rural Broadband. "Goodhue County is further ahead of the state with 93.54% of its households accessing these broadband speeds." The 2015 Task Force on Broadband report, page 22, seems less rosy: 69.48% of households in the county meet the state objective of 10 mb up, 5 mb down. The later and more realistic stat should be used in the draft.



(page 131):revise #4 under both Utility Objectives and Utilities Implementation Strategies: 4. Support and promote wired and wireless broadband activities."

(page 132): Solar. The draft should recognize that prime ag land is also the prime utility-scale solar site, setting up a potential conflict between preservation of ag land and promotion of utility scale solar. Welch's Comprehensive Plan and Ordinance specifically does NOT permit utility scale solar.

(page 133): Biofuel. Add the underlined clause after "One product, Ethanol, can be created from agricultural sources such as corn, soybeans, and sugar beets, thereby increasing market demand for much of the county's agricultural production."

(page 133): Biofuel. Delete "use" so sentence reads in part: "There is some controversy around using biofuels as an energy source ..."

(page 134): Energy Objectives, add at end of paragraph 2: "and with county and township land use policies"

(page 134): Energy Implementation Strategies: add paragraph: "5. Encourage county facilities to consider opportunities to use alternative energies such as solar, wind, and ethanol."

Element 9 is incorrectly labeled Element 6 on Page 4 of Index to Comp Plan Draft.

General comment re draft's use of "wireless" and "broadband": confusing. The legislature has described broadband in terms of speed (10 mb down, 5 mb up), not in terms of a particular delivery technology such as cellular or wired broadband. The draft seems to use "wireless" to mean cellular technology and "broadband" to mean internet access delivered via high speed wired technology. Clarify that "wireless communication facility" means cellular and that high speed access may be delivered via cellular. Clarify that broadband means high speed access delivered either by wire or wireless , presumably including cellular and satellite.

Other Submitted Comments:

Work to supply broadband to all rural residents.





June 1, 2016

Mr. Michael Wozniak, AICP  
Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Goodhue County  
509 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Red Wing, MN 55066

Dear Michael:

On May 16, 2016 I had the opportunity to share some feedback with the Goodhue County Planning Commission on the draft Goodhue County Comprehensive Plan. At that time, those were my thoughts and ideas expressed as the Red Wing Planning Director. Since May 16<sup>th</sup>, I had the chance to further discuss the draft plan with the Red Wing Advisory Planning Commission on May 17, 2016 and with the Red Wing City Council on May 23, 2016. The Advisory Planning Commission concluded that there was a consensus that my written comments be forwarded on to the Goodhue County Planning Commission and the City Council adopted a motion authorize submittal of my written comments as formal comments from the City of Red Wing (please see comments below).

### **Introduction**

There is really nothing more important that the Goodhue County Planning Commission is asked to do than to establish and update the county's Comprehensive Plan. It is a great tool to help guide land use, capital, budget, and various other policy decisions of the county. It is also extremely useful to the cities of the county to understand the regional context for our communities and can provide a launching pad for tackling regional issues and addressing regional opportunities. Red Wing commends the Planning Commission for taking on this effort.

The Cities in Goodhue County all stand to benefit greatly from cooperation by developing policies and strategies that will help to build a stronger and more resilient county. In other words, what is good for Goodhue County is also good for the County's municipalities. There is great power in a regional approach to working toward a shared vision and goals. Goodhue County's strong commitment to the protection and enhancement of resources, a strong agricultural economy, and orderly development can best be achieved by policies and initiatives

sponsored by the county that preserve these resources but also in combination with City policies and initiatives that are focused on targeting new development in urban areas that are able to provide the needed services. One of the key barriers to orderly development occurs when rural development is allowed in areas that cities can feasibly provide urban services to in the future. Premature development is a major impediment to urban development. In this context, we have reviewed the draft plan from the point of view of how we can best synchronize policies so that they work together. We have also given some thought to how additions to the document might help Red Wing and the other cities in the county work more closely together.

The draft document provides a great deal of information and establishes dozens and dozens of policy statements that support the various elements of the plan. Rather than getting in the weeds of each policy statement, below are some general comments that we think would help to strengthen the plan and provide a better basis for regional cooperation between the county, townships, and municipalities.

Demographic and Trend Analysis: All of the governmental units within the county would greatly benefit from a more detailed summary of demographic and trend analysis for the county. To have longer term trend analysis of population, population characteristics, economics, housing, and land use information for the county that shows how all of the governmental units fit in that data landscape could really help us all have a better understanding of the issues and challenges facing all of us. In addition to basic demographic information and population forecasts, the plan elements could really be strengthened by having more of a sense of what the trends have been. Examples: Page 9 Goodhue County Land Cover, 2011 provides a great snap shot of land use in 2011; it would be much more valuable if we could understand how land use in the county has changed over the past few decades. Page 32 Wetlands Inventory – are we losing wetlands? How many housing units have been built in Goodhue County over the past 20 or 30 years and where? How many housing permits issued in rural vs. urban areas? Page 56 Location Quotient Analysis is great information for understanding county economic assets. This information becomes even more powerful when you can examine the LQ trends over a longer time period to understand what is growing and what is not growing. A more robust Appendix of demographic and trend analysis for the county would be a great benefit to the municipalities in the county. It would be beneficial if the county would invite the municipalities to review this material together.

Strategic Vision: As the plan is currently drafted, the nine plan elements each stand alone. County staff have also drafted an Executive Summary that summarizes some basic trends and the nine elements. The plan could be more effectively communicated with the inclusion of strategic vision and principle statements to help tie in some of overall themes of the vision for the plan; high level trends affecting Goodhue County; and highlight the policy statements. In addition, one of the most successful things that we did with the 2007 Red Wing Comprehensive Plan update was the inclusion of a section of the plan that we

called "Community Initiatives". The county staff are working on a draft of an element involving implementation tools and strategies. This section could be more fully developed to establish priority initiatives with clear steps for implementation.

Future Land Use Map: The plan currently does not have a current and future land use map. Comprehensive plans that rely entirely on a list of policy statements but do not provide "on the ground" map direction for future land use often end up providing less guidance and direction for land use decisions. The process involved in taking those policies and developing a Future Land Use Map helps the Planning Commission and the County Board look at some of these difficult decisions prior to actual land use applications. It also helps when there is a need to balance competing policy statements.

Urban Service Areas: Regarding issues related to county zoning in the fringe area outside of the municipalities. Could Goodhue County look at the concept of Urban Services Areas? Olmsted County has established a Future Land Use Map that includes designated Urban Service Areas. The general concept is to look at those areas outside of municipal boundaries and establish future growth areas for each municipality based on growth projections and where services can feasibly be extended. Development in these areas could then be restrained so that urban development can occur in the future.

Housing Element: The need for a variety of housing types is one of Red Wing's most crucial problems. Red Wing employers are constantly complaining about labor force shortages and employees complain about the lack of good housing options in the area. Housing issues are regional in nature and need to be addressed on a regional basis. The Red Wing Housing and Redevelopment Authority completed the last Red Wing Housing Study in 2014. Goodhue County's involvement in Red Wing's future Housing Summit is vitally needed and it would be very helpful to see more dialogue between the municipalities and Goodhue County leaders as we work on housing related matters.

Some of the suggestions in the Housing Element may have adverse impacts on cities. The discussion about Hamlets and Open Space Subdivisions may open the door for scattered site, on-site septic and well, subdivisions and this may be an outcome that goes against policy statements related to the encouragement of development into cities. In addition, scattered developments may have the impact of increasing the cost of other governmental services such as public safety services and school busing. The county is encouraged to minimize rural developments of this type.

Business and Industry: Approximately 60 percent of Goodhue County's jobs are located in the City of Red Wing. Policies related to business growth and development are extremely important to all of the units of government. In general, there is a need to build a stronger partnership between the cities and the county in developing initiatives and strategies that will help the municipalities

build on their strong economic base and encourage new and expanded business development. The City of Red Wing encourages Goodhue County leaders to become more involved in bringing the communities together to work on regional approaches to economic development.

Transportation: The City sees the draft Transportation Element as a good summary of the existing system and general policies but is of the opinion that there is a need for a much deeper dive into understanding future transportation needs and specific projects. Red Wing hopes to update its Transportation Plan in the next few years and looks forward to working cooperatively with Goodhue County on this effort. In addition, we are currently working on two future intersection improvements that involve county ROW and it would be good to put these projects down on paper and to consider other future collaborative projects.

Recreation and Tourism: Recreation and tourism in Goodhue County is supported by a whole host of assets and facilities, many of which are located within the municipalities of the county. This element of the draft plan tends to focus on the facilities owned and operated by Goodhue County or facilities that are located outside of the cities. This section of the plan would benefit by looking a little more comprehensively at all of the assets of the county and looking more deeply at recreational needs and how those needs can be met through collaboration among the units of government.

Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Amenities: Goodhue County has several pivotal historic properties and newer facilities located within one of the most unique National Register Historic Districts in the State of Minnesota: Red Wing's Civic Mall District. The County has done an admirable job in maintaining and restoring the historic courthouse building (Government Center) and Citizen's Building and the renovation of the 1916 Central High School Building certainly is considered a positive attribute of the historic district. This element of the plan should be expanded to include a section related to these important historic assets and the desire to maintain the historic fabric to the greatest extent possible. It could also refer to the fact that substantial state grant assistance is potentially available for restoration of government owned property located within the National Register District.

Health In All Policies: Red Wing is in a position to receive substantial financial support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Center for Prevention to assist the City with incorporating policies that support healthy communities into its Comprehensive Plan beginning with a Community Report Card in 2016/2017. The City encourages Goodhue County to participate in the City's future work to update its Comprehensive Plan and to help the City with regional context. The Goodhue County Health Department is very involved in Red Wing's planning process and could provide helpful input into the County plans.

Conclusion: The City hopes that these comments are useful. Red Wing stands ready to work more closely with the Goodhue Planning Commission and highly

recommends that the County Planning Commission invite the municipal planning commissions to work sessions geared at fine tuning the county comprehensive plan so that it provides a well-balanced and regional approach that is highlighted in the various policies. The focus of these sessions could be developed around first understanding the issues and trends and then in developing priority initiatives that would help to implement the various policy statements. These initiatives could be limited to ten to fifteen so that there is a clear priority for action to implement the plan. Lastly, we hope that Goodhue County will participate in the City of Red Wing's efforts to update its Comprehensive Plan. This process will begin later this summer with the development of a Community Report Card and we would greatly benefit from county involvement in this early stage of our plan update.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Peterson".

Brian C. Peterson AICP  
Planning Director.