

Summary of Goals and Policies

1988 Wright County Land Use Plan

Goals of the Plan

The overall goals established in the 1988 Wright County Land Use Plan To guide the growth and development of Wright County so as to:

1. Make the most efficient and economical use of public funds and investments.
2. Provide a wide range of opportunity for urban and rural development.
3. Protect agricultural lands from encroachment by incompatible uses and provide assurance that such areas will remain agricultural in nature, and
4. Protect, preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment, and require development to take place in a manner, which makes wise use of Wright County's natural resources without degradation.

Policies

Major Goal # 1: To make the most efficient and economical use of public funds and investments.

Policy Statements:

- An expensive level of urban services will not be provided outside incorporated areas by County or Township governmental units unless absolutely necessary to protect the public health and safety.
- Land uses which require or should be served by a high level of urban services will be encouraged to locate within cities or the Major Growth Areas, and prohibited in Agricultural and rural areas.
- Land subdivisions and other development activities in the Major Growth Areas should be developed in such a way as to provide for future service provision and potential "re-division" in case annexation into the adjoining city takes place in the future.
- "Strip development" and development with multiple access points will not be allowed along major highways. Frontage roads or other measures will be required where development does take place next to major highways. Location next to a major highway shall not be automatic justification for commercial, industrial or high-density residential development.
- All new lots created must have frontage on a public road as determined by the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.
- When new subdivisions (and other activities which requires public services) are proposed, the developer will be required to provide the necessary roads, and may be required to meet other conditions to off set the need for public services.

Major Goal # 2: To provide a wide range of opportunity for urban and rural development.

Policy Statements:

- The County will encourage cities and townships to cooperate on development plans for the Major Growth Areas, and encourage urban and suburban development of these areas.
- Development will only be allowed in accord with the Land Use Plan as outlined in Chapter IV.
- Special consideration will be given to small development proposals, including commercial development without need for major public services, within the small, historically established, unincorporated towns.

Major Goal # 3: To protect Agricultural lands from encroachment by incompatible land uses, and provide assurances that such areas will remain agricultural in nature.

Policy Statements:

- The County will not adopt rules or ordinances which restrict normal farm practices in Agricultural districts unless directly related to public health or safety.
- In Agricultural Districts, existing County policy of maintaining an overall density of one residence per 40 acres will be maintained.
- The County will enact a Farmland Preservation Property Tax Credit program in accord with the Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Policy Act.
- Spot Zoning and scattered residential subdivisions will not be allowed in Agricultural Districts.
- The County will discourage the provision of expensive urban services, and especially those which are financed by special assessments on land, in Agricultural Districts unless essential to the protection of public health and safety.

Major Goal # 4: To protect, preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment, and require development to take place in a manner which makes wise use of Wright County's resources without degradation.

Policy Statements:

- The County will promote the use of soil conservation management principles by all landowners. Farmers who obtain tax benefits under the Farmland Preservation program and all development proposals will be required to abide by sound soil conservation principles.

- Residential development in rural areas will only be allowed where on-site hydrologic and soil tests substantiate the suitability of the land for sewage treatment systems over the long term. Where tests indicate that only mound systems or other nonstandard systems will function properly, larger lot sizes may be required or, in severe cases, proposals may be denied.
- Steep slopes, wetlands, unstable soils and other sensitive environmental features will be protected, as far as is practical, in their natural, stable state. Development on or near such areas may be required to provide larger lot sizes, enhanced setbacks or other conditions to protect the sensitive features.
- Unless otherwise provided in the Land Use Plan (Chapter IV) only one-tier (riparian) of lots will be permitted on lakes suited to residential development.
- Development of lakeshore property shall abide by State Shoreland Management rules to maintain, as far as practical, a natural shoreline and natural views of shoreland areas from the lake's surface.
- The intensity of development in development in rural areas shall be restricted so as not to overload natural surface drainage systems. Where development is proposed which will add significant impervious surface areas or interfere with natural drainage systems, the developer will be required to provide facilities to compensate for any negative impacts.
- Mining and other commercial or industrial endeavors shall be required to shield adjoining property from deleterious effects.
- In accord with County policies and regulations, the use of planned unit development (PUD) and residential PUD concepts will be encouraged where such developments provide enhanced environmental protection, protect natural features and result in a better overall design than would result from standard subdivision practices.
- In general, development activity should take the place in harmony with the existing, stable, natural environment. Development proposals should be adapted to suit the natural landscape, rather than altering the land to suit the development.