

NEWS RELEASE--PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS
WRIGHT COUNTY NORTHWEST QUADRANT LAND USE PLAN

The Wright County Office of Planning and Zoning will sponsor two public open house meetings to introduce work completed for the Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Land Use Plan for Wright County. This area includes the Townships of Albion, Chatham, Clearwater, Corinna, French Lake, Maple Lake, Silver Creek and Southside, as well as the Cities of Annandale, Clearwater, Maple Lake and South Haven. The County Board adopted the Northeast Quadrant Land Use Plan on July 31, 2007, as phase 1 of a multi-year project to update and renew land use planning efforts for the County. (The northeast quadrant included the Townships of Buffalo, Monticello, and Rockford, and the Cities of Albertville, Buffalo, Hanover, Monticello, Otsego, Rockford and St. Michael.) There were “kickoff” open houses for the NWQ Plan early in 2008, in Annandale, Maple Lake and Silver Creek. People who attended those events found them very informative, and the comments and feedback gained were very helpful to staff in the development of the Plan.

The Wright County Board of Commissioners appointed members to four different citizen committees to work on specific topic areas of the plan for the NWQ. The general topics assigned to the four committees, formed from volunteers representing all areas of the NWQ, were: 1) Water Quality and Natural Resource Issues; 2) Growth of the City of Annandale; 3) Growth of the City of Maple Lake; and, 4) Aggregate Resources and Mining. Open houses have already been held for landowners directly affected by proposals of the Water Quality and Natural Resources group (in Annandale in October 2008) and the Aggregate and Mining Committee (in Southside in January 2009). The work of these committees and public feedback from those open house forums has been incorporated into the plan, as have the results of numerous meetings with Township officials. The County Planning Commission has been updated regularly and has also worked with staff on the formulation of the Draft Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Land Use Plan. Ultimately, the County Planning Commission will have a formal public hearing on the plan and recommend final action to the County Board of Commissioners. Any written comments received at these open houses will be submitted into the record of the Planning Commission for consideration at the official public hearing, and will not have to be repeated. The County Board has the final authority to adopt the proposed Plan.

The primary purpose of the May 2009 open houses will be to review the background data and the process used to arrive at the proposed plan, and to provide an opportunity for the public to review the plan and provide comment. Starting at 7:00 p.m., there will be some time to review maps and data and read a summary of the Plan, followed by a presentation at 7:30 p.m. After the formal presentation there will be further opportunity for anyone to provide written comment or discuss the Plan individually with County Planning Commission and Committee members or County staff. Due to the length of the plan (85 pages with color maps) and expense, full copies will not be distributed, but are available on the website as noted below.

All are welcome to either of these events **FROM 7 P.M. TO 9 P.M.**

MONDAY, MAY 4, 2009 AT THE MAPLE LAKE HIGH SCHOOL COMMONS AREA

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2009 AT THE CLEARWATER TOWN HALL

If you cannot attend any of the open houses, or just want to follow progress on the Plan, you can visit our website at: <http://www.co.wright.mn.us/departments/pandz/lupnwq.asp>. The website includes summaries of the Committee meetings, maps, data and a complete copy of the Proposed Plan. There is also a link to submit comments or questions at the website.