
Appendix D – In-depth Interviews with Municipalities

Amboy Meeting Notes

Eagle Lake Meeting Notes

Good Thunder Meeting Notes

Lake Crystal Meeting Notes

Madison Lake Meeting Notes

Mankato Meeting Notes

Mapleton Meeting Notes

Pemberton Meeting Notes

St. Clair Meeting Notes

Vernon Center Meeting Notes



Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Amboy
Patty Smith – City Administrator
March 15, 2018

****Notes****

- No Comprehensive Plan but do some areas for future annexation added to their current Zoning Map.
- Annexed one property in 2017, first one in many years
- Future annexation would include an area in the southwestern portion of town
 - Addition for Syngenta, a possible truck wash that needs city water
 - Possible annexation for more Residential
- Several conversions from Residential to storage sheds in town
- City has some money coming through donation that may be used for a new Community Center at the site of the old Chinese restaurant.
- Most Commercial uses are along Main Street, have space to accommodate more Commercial in the future
- City is willing to increase their tax base in any way possible
 - Sold the old skating rink, but it was converted to a shed for a semi-truck
 - City is open to annexation, but not actively pursuing it
 - The city has plenty of affordable housing (owner-occupied, and rental)
 - Most houses sell within 6 months
 - Currently 4 houses for sale
 - A few vacant Residential lots in town that are already connected to City services
- Fire and Police would not need to expand for any future growth
 - Growth would equal more money for the City, so they may add another police officer
 - Winnebago for EMS – has worked “pretty good”
- Tru Transit is a benefit to the residents of Amboy
 - Allows older residents to stay in their current homes and still have access to doctors and other needs.
 - Much cheaper than a taxi service

- Wastewater was updated in the early 2000's, currently no scheduled upgrades
- Annexation is done when requested
 - Cost is \$650 to access City Water, and \$350 to access City Sewer
 - Does not include the cost of the pipe, that is paid in addition to the Access Fee
- Residents ask for a Community Center and a small grocery store
- Most commute to and from Mankato, so grocery store is not a big necessity
- Not having a school in-town is a barrier to future growth
- Old school was too expensive to repair and enrollment numbers were too low
- If the new school is built in Mapleton, the old school in Amboy will be torn down and the land sold back to the City at a discounted rate

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Eagle Lake
Jennifer Bromeland – City Administrator
Tim Auringer – Interim Mayor
April 5, 2018

****Notes****

- Eagle Lake is working on its own Comprehensive Plan
 - Information needs to be compiled so it can be presented for adoption
- The city has experienced “tremendous growth” in the past 10-12 years
- Have had annexations along the west side of town in the past 20 years
- Annexation along the Southeast side of town more recently
- The City has an Annexation Agreement using CSAH 86 as a hard boundary between Eagle Lake and Mankato
- There are future plans for a developer to create approximately 130 large-lot Residential Building Sites in the future
 - This would occur along the current west and southwest boundaries of the city, and will be annexed
- Have had some rental properties (apartments, townhomes, multi-family housing) developed recently
- Residential development is the strength of Eagle Lake
 - They identify as a “bedroom community” for the City of Mankato
- Historically the owner to renter ratio has been 90% owner & 10% renter
 - More recently the ratio may be closer to 70% owner & 30% renter
- The City would like to see the northwest portion of Eagle Lake used for Commercial development
- There has been some discussion of creating an Industrial Park to the north but the land will remain Ag for the foreseeable future
- Eagle Lake would like to see CSAH 17 be used as a Commercial Corridor

- Main goal is to maintain their existing neighborhoods and the small-town feel
- The city is discussing adding bus service to and from the City of Mankato
- There are currently no barriers to future expansion
 - Cost of land and cost of development may slow expansion
- Houses do not stay on the market long in Eagle Lake
 - Rental units are full as well
- All planned annexations would be for continued Residential development
- Have had flooding issues along the south side of town recently
- Developer is considering creating a wetland bank just outside of the current western boundary of Eagle Lake
- Wastewater is sent to the City of Mankato
 - No plans to build a stand-alone plant
- Currently an independent supplier of water for the residents
 - The city has enough source and storage for at least the next ten years
- Police and fire could handle the future expansion
- Elementary school may need to expand once all the future residential projects are complete
- All future Residential developments will be required to include park space or other green space as a part of the proposed project
- Willing to annex areas around the fringe if they meet the long-range goals of the City and do not currently require the extension of municipal services
 - If services are required, the City would wait for infill to occur before annexing

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Good Thunder
Heather Lowe – City Clerk
March 26, 2018

****Notes****

- One property has been annexed in the last 20 years
- The city has plenty of land inside of city limits to support and future growth that may occur.
 - There has been conversation about storage units going up in two different locations
- Houses sell extremely fast
- Looking at purchasing ag land that is in city limits to promote housing development
 - City Council views that city as a “Bedroom Community” so why not build more housing.
- The City has plenty of designated space for commercial, industrial and highway business
- The city’s waste water treatment plant has enough storage to support additional development
- One need that community would like to see is a bank
- Barrier that may limit growth is the acquisition of ag land to develop.
- City clerk wants to put together a comprehensive plan for future planning
 - City Council has talked about the addition of bike trails or a swimming pool.

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Lake Crystal

Taylor Gronau – City Administrator

February 21, 2018

** NOTES **

- Lake Crystal does not have a Comprehensive Plan, but they do have an idea of where they are growing in the future. City Council is not interested in pursuing a true Comp. Plan.
- Future expansion may include some Industrial to the west and northeast (see map).
- Would not annex south until all currently vacant land is developed.
- May annex a new Residential area in the northwest (see map).
- City not interested in aggressively pursuing annexation. Would require in-fill project before considering annexation.
- Annexation has historically been by request, and the property owner making the request bares the costs associated with extending municipal services.
- All Annexations are done by Ordinance, there is not a map that shows all the annexation from the past 20 years.
 - Three annexations since 1999, northwest and northeast corners of the city.
 - Annexation in southwest corner of the city in 2005 for the new school.
- Significant barriers to northern expansion
 - The possible future expansion to the west, east, and northeast all have infrastructure in place to support its connect to city services.
- Growth from 2000's has sustained the City to this point, no strategic planning efforts for future expansion.
- City wastewater system could sustain some additional housing within its current limits.
 - Wastewater treatment facility is scheduled to be upgraded in the next 5 years.
 - A large industrial project would require the treatment facility to be upgraded ahead of schedule.
- Currently plenty of vacant storefronts and undeveloped Parcels in-town that could support any future Commercial needs over the next 20 years.

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Madison Lake

Curt Kephart – Interim City Administrator & the City of Madison Lake Comprehensive Plan (2006)

April 2, 2018

****Notes****

- Mr. Kephart stated the City was putting together a council to review the current Comprehensive Plan for the Madison Lake
- He stated that because he was an Interim Administrator, the council may be able to provide better information
- The next meeting to discuss the City's long-range plans will be the end of April (2018)
- County may need to update its plan later, to reflect any future changes in the City of Madison Lake
- The City is seeking to promote growth internally (2006)
- In 2003, the City approved a Growth Development Plan (GDP)
 - The GDP helps identify areas for additional Residential, Commercial, and Industrial land growth
 - Attempts to keep the demand for property within a contained area to allow for the preservation of ag land and other open spaces
 - City will encourage the areas within the GDP to be developed first
- It is the City's intention to keep Commercial activity in the same general areas they are currently located (2006)
- Madison Lake has a small Industrial area located along Highway 26, future Industrial growth should be encouraged to locate in this area (2006)
- City experienced growth to the north, west, and east of its limits (2006)
- Encourage infill Residential and Commercial to help increase the current tax base (2006)
- Wastewater treatment facility is operating at 82% capacity, room to process an additional 18,000 gallons per day (2006)
- Current plan states a need to preserve right-of-way along both Highway 60 and CSAH 26 as a means of reducing long-term costs associated with future expansion or improvements

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – City of Mankato

Mark Konz – Planning Coordinator

March 23, 2018

****Notes****

- Recently amended their Orderly Annexation Agreement with Mankato Township to stop at 594th Avenue
- City of Mankato will not extend further east than 594th Avenue
- Mankato is forecasting any “major” growth will be east of the city
- The city has plenty of infill opportunities that need to be exhausted before they would consider annexation
- There has been no development to the south in the past 10 years
- The city has no need to expand west unless the existing developments in that area have a need for city sewer and/or water
- Sewer extension to the junction has been discussed and reviewed to allow for future development, but it would be costly
- Development at the junction could be beneficial but there are some environmental concerns associated with developing that area
- Expansion to the north would encroach into the Airport Zone or an area that is extremely rocky which would increase costs to develop
- Lime Township recently voted down an opportunity to increase residential density in their Township
- Mankato has adequate land to accommodate any future proposed use
- City is somewhat short of low-density residential land
 - This use may increase of the next 20 years
- City is exploring ideas for the redevelopment of existing vacant buildings, and mixed-use opportunities
- There is a possibility of expanding the airport to accommodate business traffic (e.g. FedEx, etc.)

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Mapleton
Patty Woodruff – Zoning Administrator
March 9, 2018

****Notes****

- Mapleton does not have a Comprehensive Plan, but they do have some land they would target if they needed to add Industrial or Residential uses.
- Mapleton has an Economic Development Administration that reviews proposed development.
- Have had some interest in adding Commercial to the city's fringe area off Hwy 22. The turn lanes that MNDOT required proved to be too expensive and the developer decided not to move forward.
- Has been some discussion about a possible Industrial Park being added to the east side of the city, but preliminary cost projections appear to be too expensive for the city.
- Annexation in Mapleton is on a case by case basis, the city is not actively seeking annexation opportunities.
- Currently 20+ lots for sale on the south end of town. Once those are all sold, they may annex additional land to the south to accommodate more Residential.
 - Depends on the new school
- Have had no annexations in the past 20 years.
 - Have de-annexed one property.
- If the school referendum passes, they will need to annex a small portion of land to accommodate the placement of the new school.
- Extension of municipal services are paid for by the developer (no idea what the cost is).
- No immediate needs, residents have other options
 - Vending machines for medicine at the clinic
 - Small grocery store
 - Casey's
- Have a street & Utility plan that goes out to 2032

- Infrastructure is in good shape – no need to upgrade services for Residential or the new school.
- Water tower is 25 years old and in good shape.
- Any large-scale uses might require the fire department to purchase an additional truck.
- Currently have a small Community Center, a larger one may replace the existing school.
- Could also be a Commercial use if not used for a new Community Center.
- 24-hour coverage of police, fire, and EMS
 - Police & Fire are all local, not divided coverage from other cities
- No real barriers to expansion
 - Have wastewater capacity for any future proposed developments
- Biggest issue is keeping Main Street occupied with storefronts
 - Some buildings have structural needs, and could be updated
 - Seeking grants to help with cosmetic needs

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Pemberton
Darla Ward – City Clerk
March 14, 2018

****Notes****

- “Not enough going on to warrant a sit-down meeting” ...
- Pemberton does not have an EDA or a Comprehensive Plan
- They have available land that could accommodate any proposed use (Industrial, Commercial, Residential)
- Currently no talk of expansion, “just trying to keep up with the basics”
- Wastewater plant is in good shape, and has capacity to accommodate any future proposals
- Biggest challenge right now is cleaning up Main Street
 - Have spent three years working with property owners, and attorneys
 - Are no closer to getting it cleaned up today than when they started
 - Lawyers’ fees are starting to really add up
- Town is at a “standstill” until this project is complete
 - Unattractive for new businesses or potential residents

Comprehensive Plan Meeting – Saint Clair
Catherine Seys – City Clerk
April 11, 2018

****Notes****

- City has a comprehensive plan that was completed in 2001
- St. Clair is a bedroom community of the City of Mankato
- The city has a K-12 school that is thriving
 - There are a lot of open enrollments from outside residents
 - School population is not a concern right now
- The city is mostly Residential uses
 - Several amenities that are attractive for residents
 - No new homes have been built in city limits since 2000
- There is a small Commercial area, and no Industrial uses
- Biggest raised by the public during the creation of the plan was connectivity
 - Residents were not interested in growth but rather having better sidewalks to increase connectivity throughout the city
 - School was awarded a grant through the “Safe Routes to School” program in 2012
- St. Clair is bounded by the river and the highway
 - This makes extension of municipal services expensive and expansion in some directions cost prohibitive
- Available land for annexation is the only barrier to future expansion
 - No vacant land in town
 - Houses do not stay on the market for long
- There has been some discussion about future expansion to the southeast but no plan to achieve it in place
 - The last annexation was in the 1990’s, created 60 residential lots
 - The city would actively seek expansion if land became available

- St. Clair experienced floods in 1965, 2010, 2014, and 2016
 - 2016 floods caused \$500k worth of damages to city infrastructure
 - Currently accepting bids for a mitigation project to avoid damages like those from 2016
 - Risk of flooding needs to be considered before the annexation of any land in the future

- Not a lot of rental options in the city
 - Five houses for rent, two apartment buildings (all currently occupied)

- St. Clair has a stand-alone water treatment facility
 - New water tower in 2009

- 26-member Fire Dept. that could easily handle any future expansions

- The city has contracted with Blue Earth County for coverage by the Sheriff's Dept. since 1970

****Notes****

- There has been no annexation in the past 20 years
- Any future growth would be within the current city limits
- There are several vacant Residential lots in-town
 - When they come up for sale, people are buying them to create space between them and the nearest neighbor.
 - No intention of ever developing them
- V.C. Mayor has stated that V.C. is a “bedroom community”
 - No need for Industrial development
 - Not looking for additional property for Commercial uses
- Annexation is approved when requested
 - Fee for connection to City services is \$500 for sewer & \$500 for water
 - In addition to the Connection Fee, the developer is required to pay for the cost of pipe
- Rezoning’s go to the Zoning Board, and then the Town Council for a final decision
- City is surrounded by vacant Ag land that is available to be rezoned for any proposed use
- The City does not own any land that they are holding onto for future Industrial or Commercial development
- The City does own some land for future Residential, it is currently being used as a park
- Housing a “fairly reasonable” in price
- No available rentals
- 2 houses for sale currently, have sold several in the past 18 months
- Residents say they would like a Convenience store, but most go into Lake Crystal, Mapleton, or Mankato for other services
- One of their barriers for future growth is the cost of City Services
 - Sewer, water, and garbage collection costs are high compared to other cities

- Even if the city were built-out to its current boundaries, Police and Fire would not need to be increased
- No open store fronts for Commercial
- No vacant Commercial land right now
- Any newly proposed business would have to locate on the north side of town
- The City is “getting younger”
 - In the past couple of years, young families with young children have been moving in
- Currently adding more streets, and water & sewer upgrades during the County project