

City of Willmar Comprehensive Plan



Prepared by the City of Willmar and the
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission

**City of Willmar, Minnesota
Comprehensive Plan
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City of Willmar, Minnesota¹

Introduction to the Willmar Comprehensive Plan

This document establishes a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Willmar. The primary purpose of the Plan is to provide a guide for growth and development. This Plan accomplishes this in two ways. First, this plan establishes the City's Goals, Objectives and Policy Guidelines. These describe how land use decisions should be made on a day-to-day basis. Second, a future land use map is included in Chapter Six to show what type of land use is desirable both within the City's current corporate boundary and inside the City's urban growth area. The Plan is written using a 20-year time-frame, although the Plan will be implemented until it is either revised or ultimately replaced. The following information is included in this Plan:

Community Profile - Chapter One provides a profile of Willmar, including sections on the City's history, social-demographics and future population estimates.

Natural Resources - Chapter Two introduces the natural resource base of the area. The Chapter includes sections on the area's water resources, soils and wellhead protection.

Current Land Use - Chapter Three examines Willmar's existing land use, including sections on zoning, transportation, housing and public facilities.

Planning Issues - Chapter Four identifies a number of key current and emerging planning issues facing the community.

Goals, Objectives, and Policy Guidelines - Chapter Five establishes the City's Goals, Objectives, and Policy Guidelines, to be used by the City to help guide land use decisions.

Implementation - Chapter Six contains specific implementation tools, including a Future Land Use Map and a temporary work plan.

¹ Photo Credit: www.seeyouinwillmar.com

Section A: Purpose of the Plan

The City of Willmar Comprehensive Plan is presented and adopted in order to provide a 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; and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the people of Willmar and the surrounding area.

Section B: Authority

Authority for the Plan is set forth in Minnesota Statutes and in the Charter of the City of Willmar. The City is governed as to land use planning, zoning and subdivision regulation/platting by the provisions of Chapter 462 of Minnesota Statutes. The relevant sections of said Chapter 462 pertaining to the formulation, presentation, adoption and effectuation of a comprehensive plan are as follows:

- ◆ 462.353 Authority to plan; funds; fees; appeal
- ◆ 462.354 Organization for planning
- ◆ 462.355 Adopt, amend comprehensive plan; interim ordinance
- ◆ 462.356 Procedure to effect plan: generally
- ◆ 462.359 Procedure to effect plan: official maps

The relevant section of said City Charter pertaining to comprehensive planning is:

- ◆ Section 4.02 The Planning Commission

Other relevant sections of State Statute dealing with plan adoption are:

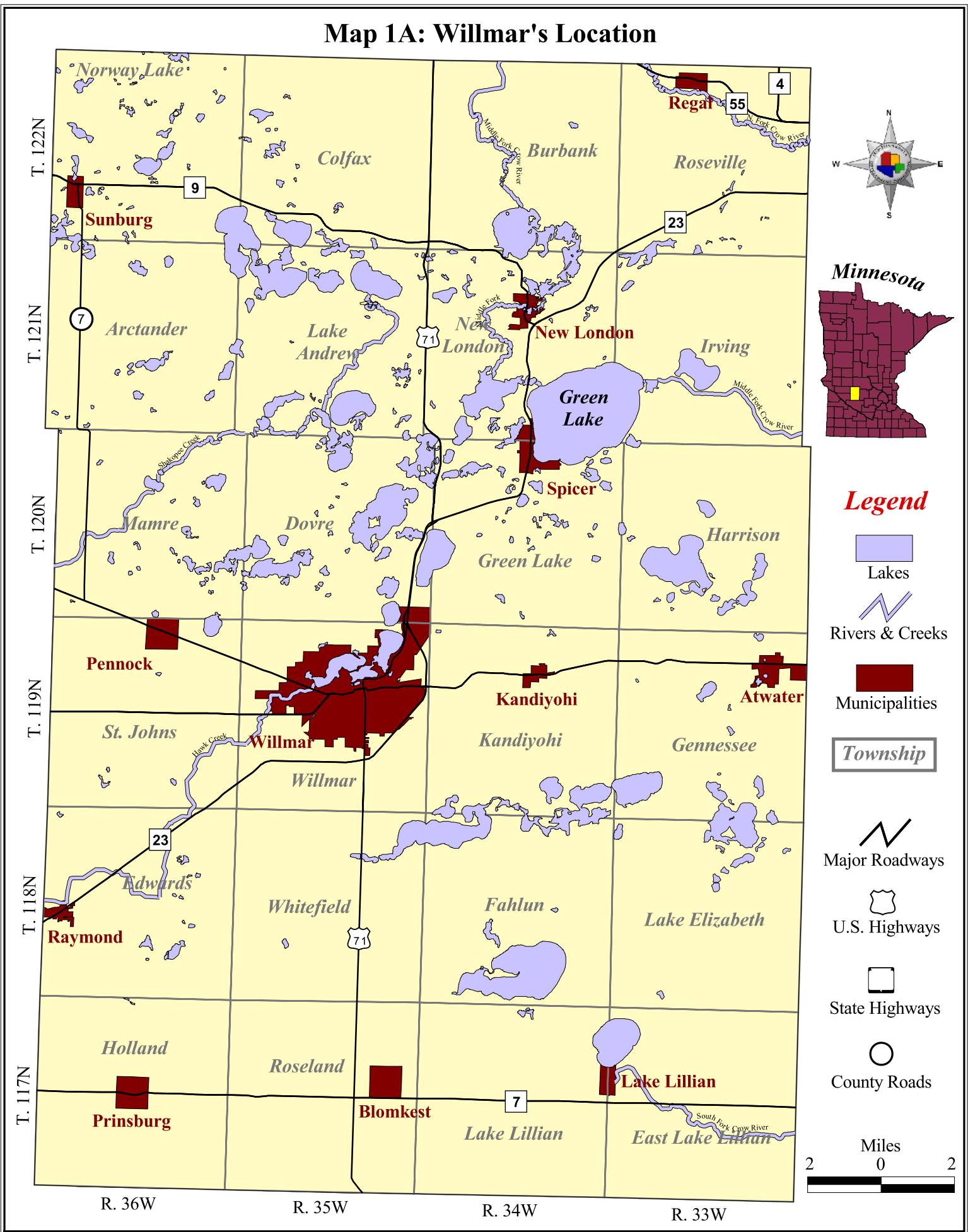
- ◆ 394.23 Comprehensive plan
- ◆ 394.26 Public hearings
- ◆ 375.51 Ordinances; enactment, publication
- ◆ 473.864 Plans and programs; adoption, amendment

Section C: Location of Willmar

The City of Willmar is located in West-Central Minnesota; approximately 90 miles west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area (please refer to Map 1A found on page 3). The City is the County Seat for Kandiyohi County, which neighbors Renville, Chippewa, Swift, Pope, Stearns, and Meeker Counties. The area is well known for its numerous lakes, rolling topography, and strong agricultural base. The City is mostly surrounded by Willmar Township, although it is also adjacent to Dovre, Green Lake, Kandiyohi, and St. Johns Townships. For more information regarding the City of Willmar, visit the City's official website at:

www.ci.willmar.mn.us

Map 1A: Willmar's Location



Section D: Existing Plans & Programs

This document, which is entitled “The City of Willmar Comprehensive Plan,” shall be hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”. 1961 marked the year the City of Willmar adopted its first Comprehensive Guide Plan. Funds from the Section 701 Urban Planning Assistance Program were utilized. A major revision of the Plan was initiated in the mid-70’s and adopted in 1978. The most recent Plan was created in 1989. As a result, this Plan replaces the City’s comprehensive plan that was developed in 1989.

In addition to this Plan, the following official City documents also relate to land use and development within the community.

Planning over time...

The regulation of land use within the City of Willmar dates back to 1934 when the first municipal zoning ordinance was adopted. An organized, cohesive planning effort did not begin until after World War II, resulting from the increasing complexities of urban development. Modern comprehensive planning efforts are reflected not only in this document, but also in the numerous documents which compose the body of the law governing the affairs of the City and its residents.

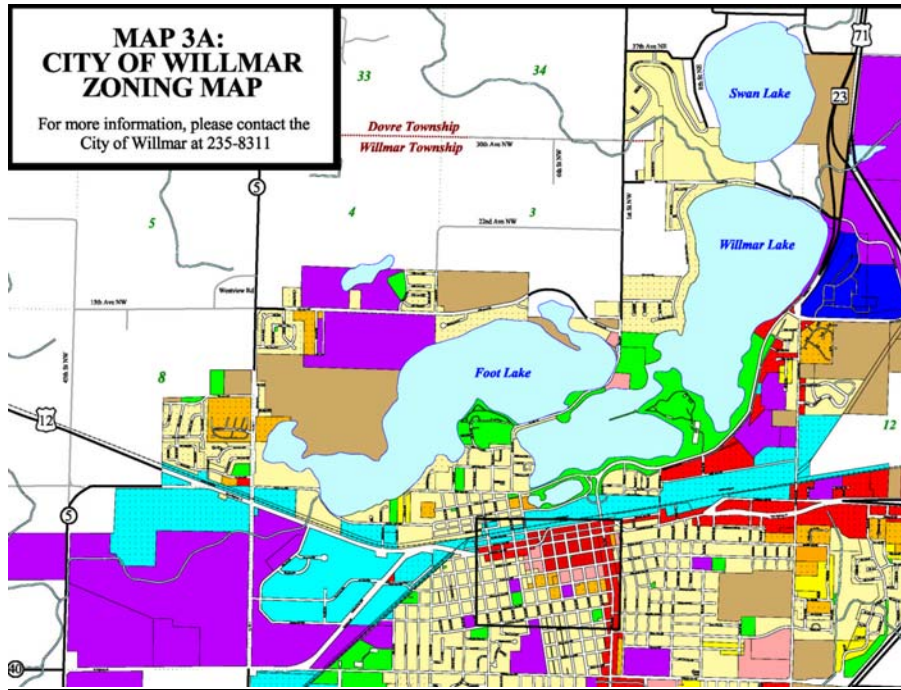
City of Willmar Zoning Ordinance: the City adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1934. Authority for this original ordinance came from the police powers of the City and related charter provisions. The 1934 ordinance served as both a zoning and planning guide. In 1960, a new ordinance was adopted which served as both a plan and zoning ordinance until the Comprehensive Guide Plan was adopted in 1961.

A major overhaul of the local zoning process occurred in 1971 and resulted in the creation of a new, expanded ordinance. All previous zoning regulations were repealed. The office of the Zoning Administrator was created by a 1975 amendment to the 1971 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Willmar.

1980 witnessed the next substantial changes to the zoning ordinance. Subsequent amendments and revisions to this ordinance resulted in the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Willmar. The 1982 ordinance had been amended numerous times. Foremost among these amendments was the adoption of shoreland zoning regulations in 1984 and sign ordinance revisions in 1986.

The most recent Zoning Ordinance, which is currently in use, was adopted in 1994. And with a few text change amendments since that time the most recent Shoreland Management Ordinance, which is still in use, was adopted in 1992. A new GIS created Zoning Map was adopted in 2004 and updated in 2008.

As development needs continue to change, it will be necessary for City government to respond to these changes, thereby creating a demand for future ordinance amendments and revisions. Zoning, like the other forms of land use regulation, is not a static process. Rather, it must evolve in a manner that is responsive to the development requirements of the geographic area being regulated. Chapter Three contains a more detailed description of the City’s Zoning Ordinance.



A copy of Willmar's Zoning Map can be found in Chapter Three

City of Willmar Subdivision Code: an ordinance for the subdivision and platting of land within the City of Willmar was adopted on March 4, 1964. This Ordinance exists today in substantially the same form as when adopted. Although usable in its existing form, statutory changes and changing development methods mandate that the ordinance undergo a complete revision in the near future.

City of Willmar Basic Code: the first regulatory code adopted by the City was the Building Code of 1916. Since that time, numerous codes have been adopted, some by reference to standardized codes and some by ordinances which codify regulations and are contained in the Willmar Municipal Code. Regulatory codes relevant to the Comprehensive Plan, now in effect in the City of Willmar, include:

- ◆ Minnesota State Building Code (2007)
- ◆ International Fire Code (2006)

Section E: The Planning Process

In the Summer of 2006, the City started the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 1989). The City's Planning Commission was primarily used to draft the plan, with a number of public meetings held to gather ideas and generate community-wide ownership. In addition to the numerous Planning Commission meetings, the following public outreach meetings were held:

July 18, 2006 – Willmar Senior Citizens Center

July 24, 2006 – Municipal Utilities Council Chambers

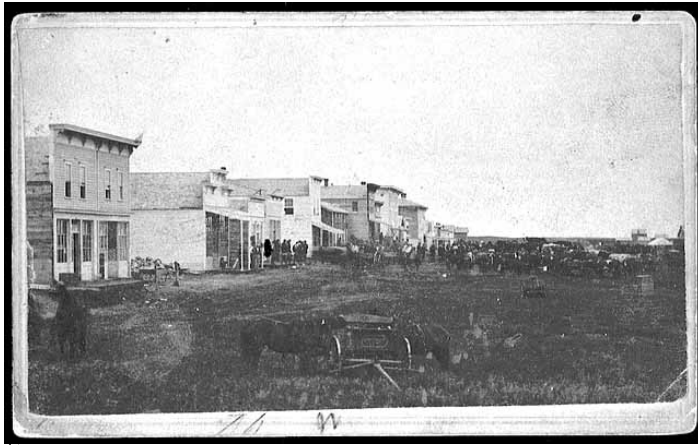
July 26, 2006 – Fire Hall

Public meetings to review the Plan were held in May 2009. The Planning Commission recommended the approval of the Plan on April 22, 2009. A public hearing was held on the draft Plan on June 15, 2009. The Willmar City Council officially adopted the plan on June 15, 2009.

Chapter One: Community Profile & Demographics

Section A: The History of Willmar²

In 1868, surveyors for the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, working just ahead of the track layers, selected a route to the western plains which passed just South of Foot Lake. Although not a soul lived there at the time, a village, called Willmar, was soon platted. By Christmas the next year, the tracks had reached the new community. Within the next year, by the close of 1870, Willmar could boast a grain elevator, hotel, lumberyard, a jewelry store, and more than 20 other businesses. Farmers, most from the former Monongalia County (see the text box on the next page), had just voted to consolidate with the “railroad half”, as they were lining up their grain-filled wagons at the elevator. In those boom town days, the muddy streets of Willmar were filled with conversations in a number of European languages.



Willmar in 1872

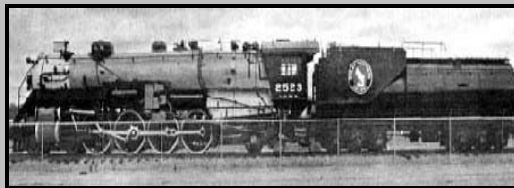


Willmar in 1908

² History Sources: Kandiyohi County Comprehensive Plan (Dr. Roger Strand), the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, and the Minnesota State Historical Society.

Some Key Events in Willmar's History

- 1856 - First European settlers arrive in the land we now know as Kandiyohi County
- 1858 - Minnesota becomes the Country's 32nd State
 - The Northern half of the County was known as Monongalia County
 - The Southern half of the County was known as Kandiyohi County
- 1869 - The City of Willmar is established
 - The Railroad reaches Atwater, Kandiyohi, and Willmar
- 1870 - Leon Willmar from the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, purchased the title to Section 1 of Willmar Township
 - Monongalia and Kandiyohi Counties merge into Kandiyohi County
- 1871 - Willmar became the County Seat
- 1895 - West Central Tribune (formally Willmar Tribune) began service
- 1901 - Willmar incorporated from a village into a City
- 1910 - The City of Willmar is voted dry (would remain so for over 50 years)
- 1927 - The Mid-State Co-Op Egg and Poultry Exchange is started
 - Elmquist Jewelers opens
- 1929 - Willmar Chamber of Commerce was established
- 1934 - The original Willmar Airport is opened
- 1937 - Rice Memorial Hospital is open for business, with 35 beds
- 1942 - Robbins Island Park is established
- 1943 - Rice Hospital expands to 60 beds
- 1948 - Great Northern Train Depot is built
- 1949 - Willmar City Hall is built
- 1950 - Willmar's population reaches 9,410
- 1957 - Rice Hospital expands to 102 beds
- 1958 - Jennie-O Foods is started
- 1961 - The Willmar Community College is opened
- 1964 - The Kandiyohi County Courthouse begins construction
- 1971 - Amtrak brings passenger train service to Willmar
- 1972 - Rice Hospital expands to 159 beds
- 1994 - Construction of County Health and Human Services Building
- 1996 - Willmar Public Library Major Expansion
- 1999 - Construction of new Law Enforcement Center
- 2001 - Rice Hospital begins a \$51 million redevelopment
- 2005 - Willmar is voted an All-American City
- 2006 - New Willmar Municipal Airport is opened
 - Development of MinnWest Technology Campus begins
- 2007 - Willmar's population estimated to be 19,040



Engine No. 2523 at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society

For more information on Willmar's history, visit: www.kandimuseum.com

Section B: Willmar's Demographics

The following sections provide information on Willmar's population. For more information on Willmar's Demographics, see Appendix A or visit the following U.S. Census Website:

www.census.gov

Population Profile

Willmar has grown substantially from a population of 6,173 persons in 1930 to an estimated population of 19,040 persons in 2007, as indicated in Table 1 (also see Figure 1A). Several annexations have contributed to this increase in the population, although Kandiyohi County is one of the few counties in greater Minnesota with a steadily growing population.

**Table 1A:
Willmar's Historic Population Levels
& Percent Growth**

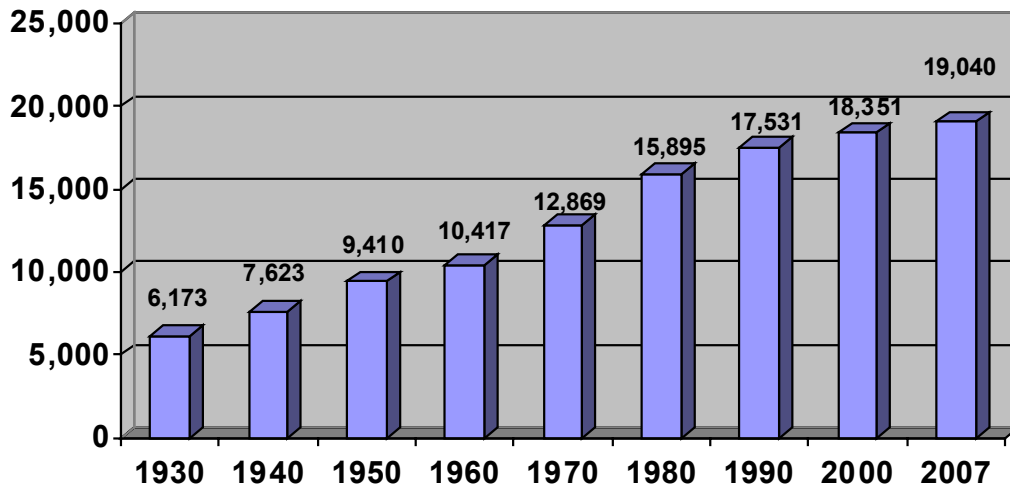
Year	Population	Change	Percent Growth
1930	6,173	N/A	N/A
1940	7,623	1,450	23.5%
1950	9,410	1,787	23.4%
1960	10,417	1,007	10.7%
1970	12,869	2,452	23.5%
1980	15,895	3,026	23.5%
1990	17,531	1,636	10.3%
2000	18,351	820	4.7%
2007*	19,040	689	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census & State Demographer

According to Table 1A, the City has continued to grow every decade since 1930. The highest growth occurred between 1930 and 1950, and again between 1960 and 1980, averaging 23.5 percent growth per decade. Conversely, the City's slowest decade occurred between 1990 and 2000, when the City grew by 4.7 percent. It should be noted, however, that Willmar also has a large segment of mobile population, which does not easily get counted during the Census. As a result, the City of Willmar estimates its current population at nearly 20,000 in 2009.

* As estimated by the State Demographer's Office

**Figure 1A:
Willmar's Historic Population Levels**



One of the best ways to judge the City's rate of population growth is to compare the growth rates experienced by similar communities. Table 1B does this for some of the larger communities in West-Central Minnesota.

**Table 1B: Population Data for Willmar and
Other West-Central Minnesota Communities**
(Source: U.S. Census 1970 – 2000)

Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	30-Year Change	Percent Change
Litchfield (25 miles)	5,262	5,904	6,041	6,562	1,300	25%
Hutchinson (50 miles)	8,031	9,244	11,523	13,080	5,049	63%
Marshall (65 miles)	9,886	11,161	12,023	12,735	2,849	29%
Paynesville (30 miles)	1,920	2,140	2,275	2,267	347	18%
St. Cloud (55 miles)	39,691	42,566	48,812	59,107	19,416	49%
City of Willmar	12,869	15,895	17,531	18,351	5,482	43%
Dovre Township	797	1,450	1,746	1,968	1,171	147%
Willmar Township	1,420	817	689	661	- 759	- 53%
Kandiyohi County	18,387	20,594	20,846	22,644	4,257	23%
State of Minnesota	3.8 Mil	4.1 Mil	4.4 Mil	4.9 Mil	1.1 Mil	29%

Source: U.S. Census

The statistics that appear in Table 1B show that, since 1970, Willmar has grown in population by 43 percent. This rate was above average when compared to Kandiyohi County (23%), the State (29%), and the five other cities profiled (the six communities, including Willmar, averaged a 38% growth rate since 1970). In addition, Dovre Township's population grew by nearly 1½ times over the 30-year period (147%). These statistics help to justify planning for the City to steadily continue to gain population over the next 20 years.

Population by Age Groups

Table 1C compares Willmar, Kandiyohi County, and Minnesota's population by age groups according to the 2000 Census. Notice that Willmar's population has four percent more seniors than the Statewide average. Also Willmar has overall slightly more younger people (ages 24 and under) and slightly fewer people between the ages of 25 and 65 than the Statewide averages. The Minnesota State Demographer's Office projects that the percentage increase in elderly population will continue to grow at a faster rate than that of the total population over the next 30 years, especially in rural Minnesota.

**Table 1C:
City, County, and State
Population by Age Groups in 2000**

Age Group	Willmar		Kandiyohi County	Minnesota	Willmar's Percent Difference*
	Number	Percent			
Under 18	4,811	26%	27%	26%	0%
Ages 18-24	2,203	12%	9%	10%	+ 2%
Ages 25-44	4,848	26%	26%	30%	- 4%
Ages 45-64	3,483	19%	22%	22%	- 3%
Ages 65 & Over	3,006	16%	15%	12%	+ 4%
Totals	18,351	100%	41,203	4.9 Mil	N/A

Source: U.S. Census & State Demographer

Median Age

The City of Willmar's median age is another way to compare the City's population with Kandiyohi County and the rest of the State. Table 1D shows that Willmar's median age was 34.2 in 2000. This was an increase of 5.1 years over the community's median age of 29.1 in 1980. This trend trailed the County's increase in age of 7.1 and the State's average increase of 6.2. This information highlights the well-known fact that people's median age continues to grow as quality-of-life indicators improve.

**Table 1D:
City, County, and State Median Age since 1980**

	1980	1990	2000	Change
Willmar	29.1	28.9	34.2	+ 5.1
Kandiyohi County	29.7	36.5	36.9	+ 7.2
State of Minnesota	29.2	32.5	35.4	+ 6.2

Source: U.S. Census

Household Numbers

An increase in a city's population usually means an increase in the number of households, although smaller household sizes have also led to an increase in housing. Table 1E shows that the City of Willmar has increased by 3,199 households since 1970 (a household is defined as an occupied housing unit...i.e., house or apartment). Knowing the total number of people and households is important because an average household size can be determined (i.e., the average number of people living in each household). Notice that between 1970 and 2000, the average household size in Willmar decreased by 0.6 people per household, going from 3.1 to 2.5 people. This trend is important because it shows that even more housing units will be needed in the future to accommodate

Willmar's growing population. Decreasing household sizes have been fairly common throughout most of the Country over the past few decades. This reflects an aging population and changes in marital status.

**Table 1E: Willmar Population,
Household Numbers, and Household Size since 1970**

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000	+ / -
Population	12,869	15,895	17,531	18,351	+5,482
Households	4,103	5,775	6,717	7,302	+3,199
Household Size	3.1	2.75	2.6	2.5	- 0.6

Source: U.S. Census

Section C: Population and Household Projections

The information presented up to this point in the Chapter helps to establish a reliable range of population and household projections for the City. Table 1F shows 2007 population and household estimates, and 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 projections. The first category is based on the State Demographer’s estimates. This office produces estimates using a number of variables (age-based, growth patterns, etc.). The second set of projections are based on the City’s actual rate of growth since 1970. The third category is based on above average or “fast” annual rates of growth. This growth rate is basically 150% the level of growth the City has experienced since 1970.

**Table 1F:
Population and Household Projections
for the City of Willmar**

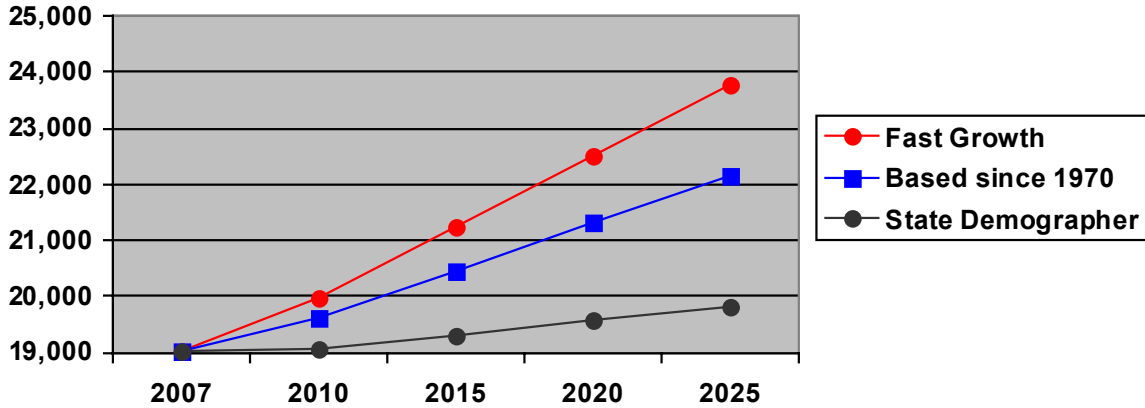
City of Willmar	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007*
Population	12,869	15,895	17,531	18,351	19,040
Households	4,103	5,775	6,717	7,302	7,776
Population Projections	2010	2015	2020	2025	Increase
State Demographer Estimates	19,068	19,311	19,576	19,808	+ 768
Projections Based on since 1970	19,623	20,469	21,314	22,159	+ 3,119
Fast Growth Projections	19,964	21,234	22,504	23,774	+ 4,734
Households Based on 2.5 People	2010	2015	2020	2025	Increase
Based on the State Demographer	7,627	7,724	7,830	7,923	+ 147
Projections Based on since 1970	7,849	8,188	8,526	8,864	+ 1,088
Fast Growth Projections	7,986	8,494	9,002	9,510	+ 1,734

Source: U.S. Census & State Demographer

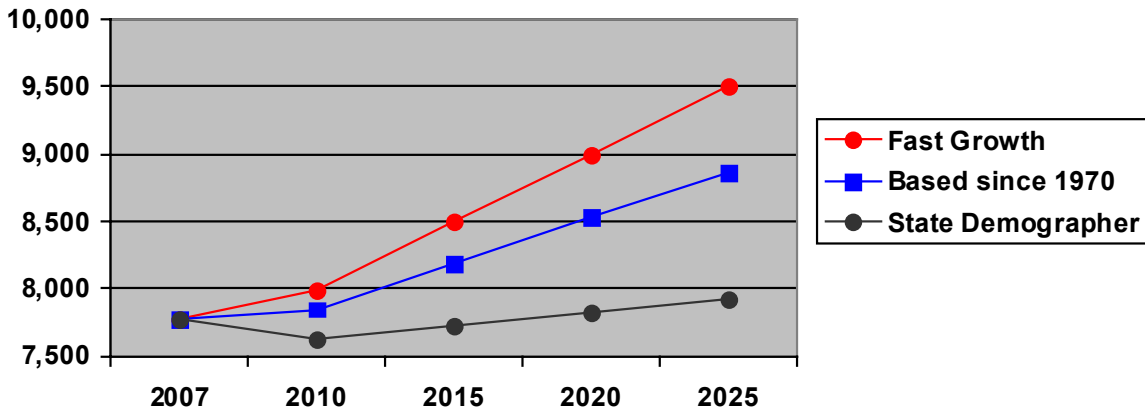
The information presented in Table 1F suggests that Willmar would grow by approximately 3,119 people and 1,088 houses by 2025 if it simply experienced the same percentage of growth as it has since 1970. The State Demographer’s estimates are lower, with 768 new people living in 147 new households. Finally, the fast growth projection suggests that Willmar could grow by as many as 4,734 people and 1,734 new households. These projections take into account that Willmar may start experiencing accelerated growth due to its proximity to some of the State’s fastest growing regional centers, such as St. Cloud and Hutchinson. Figures 1B and 1C display the same information in the form of line charts.

* The 2007 population estimates were provided by the State Demographer’s Office.

**Figure 1B:
Population Projections for the
City of Willmar (2007-2025)**



**Figure 1C:
Households Projections for the
City of Willmar (2007-2025)**



A Note About Population Projections...

A population projection is a well-informed estimate about how many people could potentially live in an area in the future. The difficult part of making population projections is determining whether past trends will continue and, if not, how they will change. The future population of a community derives from its present population, plus births and net migration minus any deaths. Therefore, any factor that influences births, deaths, or migration will alter the projected population. In addition, the community's population can also change simply by altering its boundary through annexation. As a result of the complexity of making population projections, they should only be viewed as *estimates*. To help compensate for their uncertainty, the population projections used in this Comprehensive Plan provide a low, medium and high range of possibilities.

Chapter Two: Natural Resources

Section A: Climate and Precipitation

Because of its location near the center of North America, the City of Willmar is subject to a variety of air masses that affect the amount of precipitation that falls within the area. During the winter months, cold, dry continental polar air dominates the region. Hot, dry continental tropical air masses from the desert southwest, along with warm, moist maritime tropical air masses that originate over the Gulf of Mexico, are common during the summer months. The spring and fall months serve as transition periods with a variety of fluctuations in both temperatures and precipitation.

Table 2A details the monthly and annual precipitation averages for the National Weather Service precipitation gauging station in Willmar.

**Table 2A:
Monthly and Annual Precipitation Averages for
National Weather Service Precipitation Gauging Stations (1971-2000)**

Month	Average Precipitation (inches)
	Willmar RTC (#169)
January	0.82"
February	0.62"
March	1.54"
April	2.13"
May	3.22"
June	5.16"
July	3.76"
August	3.78"
September	2.80"
October	2.17"
November	1.55"
December	0.66"
Annual Average	28.21"

Source: Information was derived from Climatology of the United States No. 81 – a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration publication.

The National Weather Service reports the following normal temperature ranges for the City of Willmar for January, April, July, and October.

**Table 2B:
Average Temperature Ranges
for the City of Willmar**

Month	Temperature Range
January	0 to 19 F
April	34 To 55 F
July	61 to 82 F
October	36 to 58 F

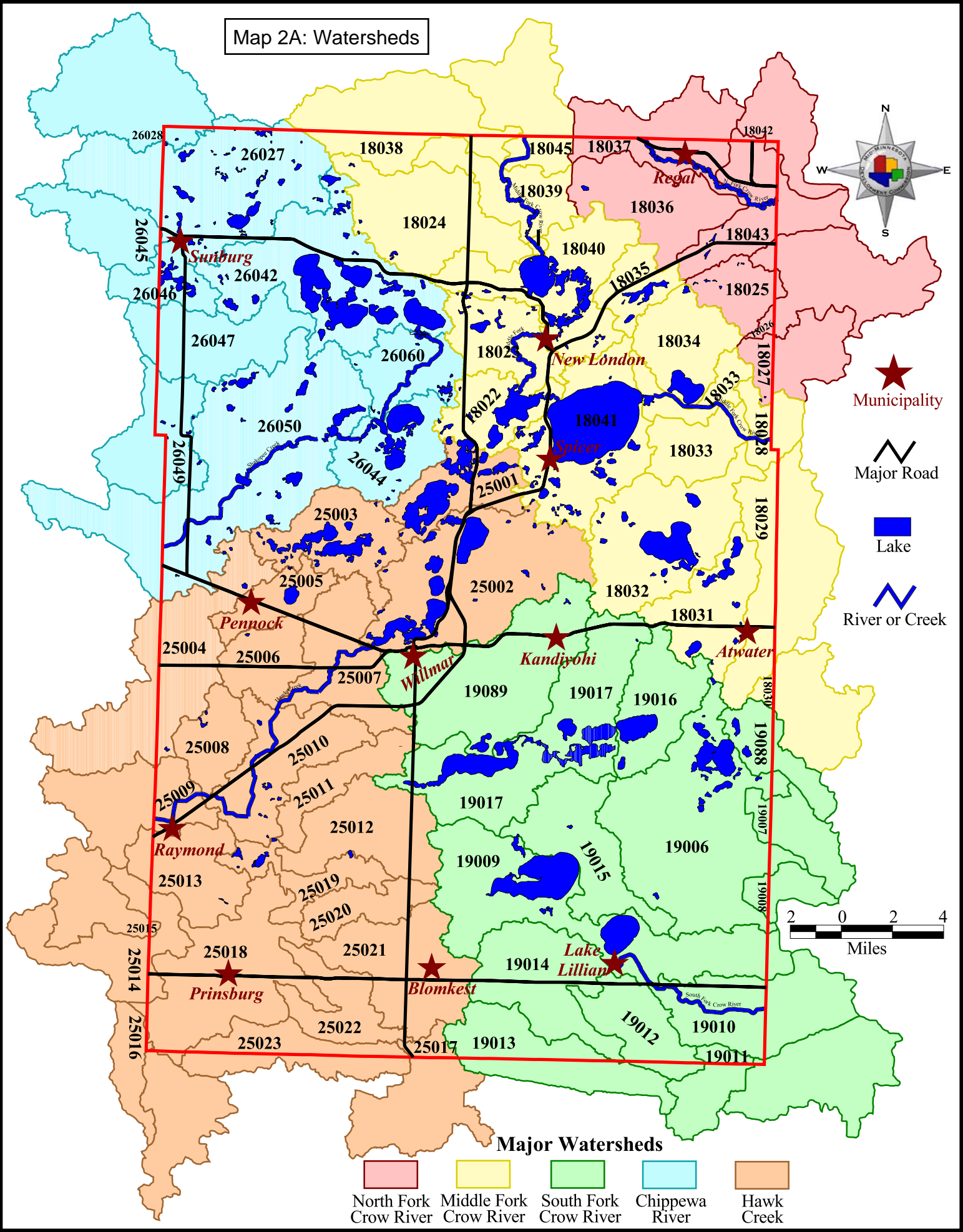
Section B: Watersheds & Topography

Willmar is situated between two major watersheds: the Hawk Creek Watershed to the north and west; and the South Fork Crow River Watershed to the south and east. Map 2A shows the location of Willmar between the two watersheds. Both watersheds are briefly described below:

The Hawk Creek Watershed covers approximately 254.4 square miles of southwestern Kandiyohi County, and is characterized by a gently twisting till plain formed during the advance of the Des Moines Lobe. Groundwater generally flows southwestward. Cretaceous sandstone aquifers are present over most of this area, but yields in many places are minimal. Aquifers are generally less than ten feet thick. The cities of Blomkest, Pennock, Prinsburg, and Raymond are located in this watershed, along with the northern part of the City of Willmar. Elevations are generally flat within the watersheds, but range from 1,070 to 1,130 feet above sea level. The elevation of Willmar is approximately 1,126 feet above sea level (taken at the new Willmar Municipal Airport).

The South Fork Crow River Watershed covers approximately 217.7 square miles of southeastern Kandiyohi County. Groundwater flows generally west to east. The topography of this watershed is characterized by a gently rolling till plain. This plain has a mantle of silty lake deposits. Cretaceous sedimentary rocks are present in the western two-thirds of the watershed, while Cambrian sedimentary rocks underlie the remaining eastern portion. The cities of Kandiyohi and Lake Lillian are located in this watershed, along with the southern portion of the City of Willmar. Similar to the Hawk Creek Watershed, elevations are generally flat within the South Fork Crow River Watershed, but range from 1,070 to 1,130 feet above sea level.

Map 2A: Watersheds



Section C: Area Soils

An analysis of the environmental elements of the Willmar area is necessary to be aware of environmental, sensitive areas and physical assets when considering future development. Certain soils are capable of supporting development while others are not due to the individual chemical and mechanical properties of each soil type. However, it is important to understand that nearly any soil type can support development with proper engineering/design considerations. Also, some soils make prime farmland and should be carefully evaluated prior to development decision-making. The loss of prime farm land to other uses puts more pressure on marginal lands which are erodible and less productive.

The following information is taken from the Comprehensive Plan for the Kandiyohi County Soil and Water Conservation District. Map 2B shows the location of the soils, along with the numbers corresponding with the text.

Wadenill-Sunburg-Delft Soils (#4 on the Soils Map)

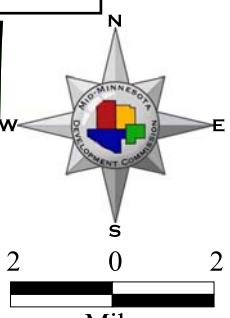
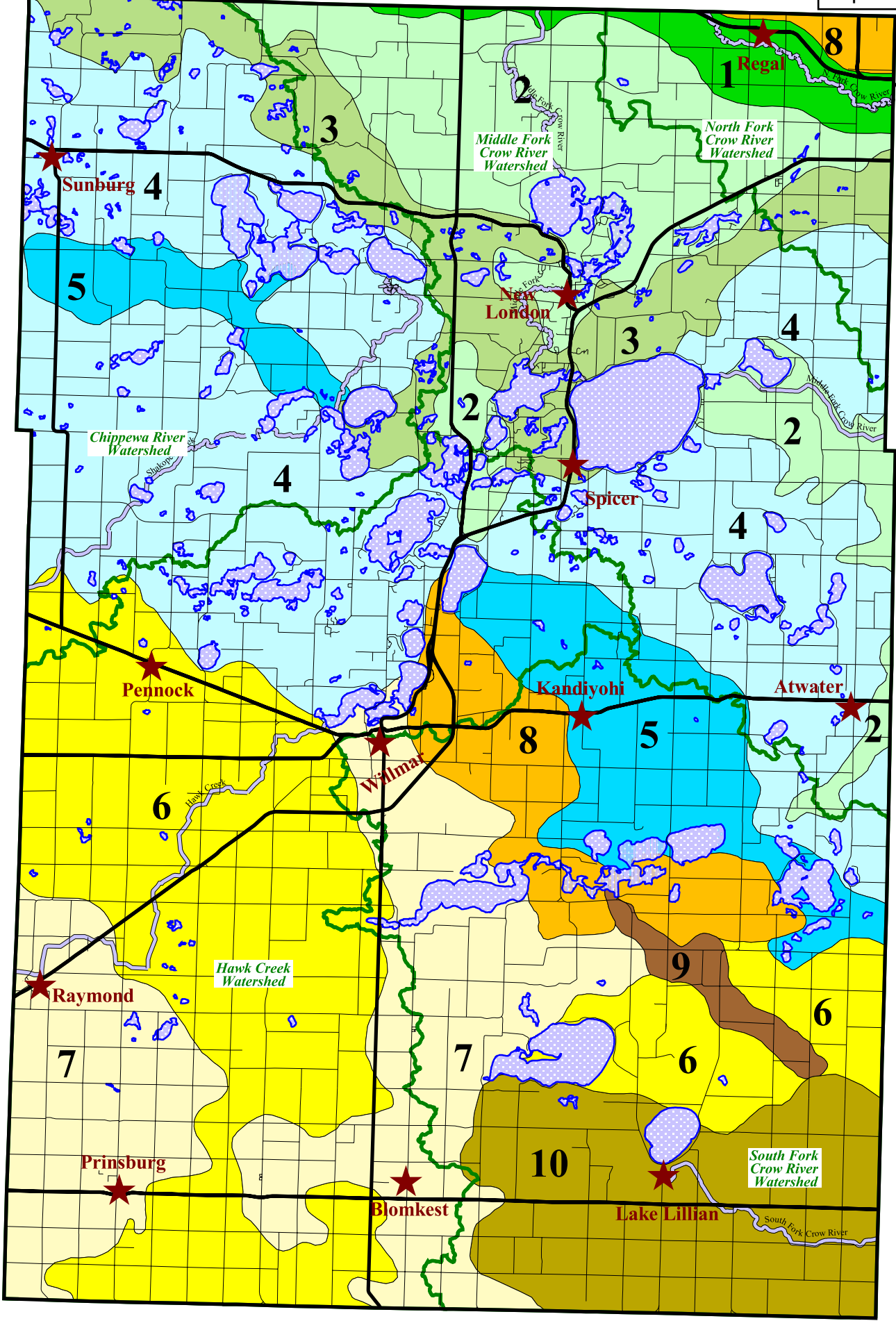
This soil, located northwest of Willmar, has good potential for future development despite threats to water quality. The land is a mixture of erosive and productive soils, with the erosive areas being good candidates for future development.

Soils formed in moderately coarse-textured glacial till dominate the area. The terrain is undulating to very steep and the soils are well to poorly drained. Most of the land is cultivated in corn, hay, small grains and soybeans. Dairying is also common. Some of the very steep or wet areas are in pasture or wildlife land.

The major concerns of this soil association are controlling erosion on sloping land and the improvement of drainage of the wet soils. The complex, irregular topography adds to the problem of erosion control. Contour practices are difficult to use, and straight farming includes much up and down hill driving. Some smaller areas lend themselves to terraces and sediment basins. Grassed waterways generally need tile for the growing of cover to facilitate crossing with farm machinery.

Reduction of sedimentation and preservation of water quality are important to this area's lakes, especially with development around, and recreation on, Swan, Skataas, and East Solomon Lakes. These lakes have all been designated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as protected waters. Drainage threatens the future of the areas' remaining marshes, some providing excellent waterfowl habitat. Runoff from improperly constructed on-site sewer systems is a pollution threat due to the coarse soils and irregular topography of this association. The potential water quality threat in area #4 is the highest in the Willmar vicinity.

Map 2B: Soils



- Municipality
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Watershed Boundary
- Lake
- River or Creek

- Soil Associations**
- 1 Regal-Osakis
 - 2 Estherville-Hawick-Lena
 - 3 Koronis-Hawick-Sunburg
 - 4 Wadenill-Sunburg-Delft
 - 5 Guckeen-Marna
 - 6 Harps-Okoboji-Seaforth
 - 7 Normania-Canisteo-Harps
 - 8 Ves-Normania-Webster
 - 9 Fieldon-Coriff
 - 10 Canisteo-Nicollet

Guckeen-Marna Soils (#5 on the Soils Map)

This area, located northeast of Willmar near Eagle Lake, is also a mix of erosive and productive soils. The land is dominated by soils that formed a loamy or clayey mantle overlying moderately fine-textured glacial till. It is nearly level to hilly with moderately-well to poorly drained, loamy and clayey soils.

Much of the area is cropped to corn, small grain, hay and soybeans. Dairying is also common. Undrained, wet soils are in pasture or wildlife land. Because of the dense, clayey nature of the area, the soil must be managed to maintain tilth. Water erosion is severe because of the slow infiltration rate, resulting in excessive runoff. Soil compaction also can be serious if soils are worked when wet. Tile is often needed to improve the drainage on low-lying crop land. The land has a poor suitability for on-site sanitary facilities due to the high water table and restricted permeability. These facilities, along with area agricultural runoff, are threats to water quality. Building site suitability is generally poor due to a high potential for frost action, shrink-swell and wetness.

Harps-Okoboji-Seaforth Soils (#6 on the Soils Map)

This soil association is located to the west of Willmar. Soil textures for the association include loam and silt loam. Infiltration ranges from good to poor. The common landform setting for soils classified in the Harps-Okoboji-Seaforth Association is moraines and till plains. Slopes generally range from 0 to 18 percent, or from flat to moderately rolling. Farming is the preferred land use, however the soil characteristics also support most building development.

Normania-Canisteo-Harps Soil (#7 on the Soils Map)

These similar areas, surrounding Willmar to the west and south, are dominated by soils formed in medium-textured glacial tills. This land is prime farmland and any future urban development planned for these areas will be carefully scrutinized. Past development has already claimed large portions of this agricultural land. Nearly all of the land is cropped to corn and soybeans. One difference between the areas is the percentage of land in wet soils. Area 4 contains 45 to 50% wet soils; while wet soils in Area 5 make up 35% of the total.

The drainage of these wet soils is the main concern in these areas. Extensive ditching and tiling has made the areas particularly well suited to intensive row crop farming. This drainage and tiling has also tended to eliminate sloughs, trees and fence rows, thus opening the area to a more severe wind erosion hazard. Wind erosion in areas #4 and #5 is the most severe in the Willmar area. Soil blowing can be reduced by conservation tillage which involves rough tilling and crop residues. Use of field windbreaks will also help to control wind erosion. The slopes on the numerous outlet ditches need special treatment including the stabilization of berm areas with seeding and the installation of side inlet pipes where surface water enters the ditch.

Ves-Normania-Webster Soils (#8 on the Soils Map)

Located east of Willmar, this area is also a mix of erosive and productive lands and contains suitable land for future development. This area has a level to rolling terrain and well to poorly drained glacial till soils. However, the wetness problem is not severe, with over 50% of the soil well drained or moderately-well drained. Most of the land is cropped to corn, soybeans, small grain and hay. Some small, undrained areas are used for pasture or wildlife habitat.

The chief concerns in this area are controlling erosion on the steeper slopes and drainage improvement on the wetter soils. Grassed waterways are important in this area and they often need tile in conjunction with the channels. Although slopes tend to be complex, some terracing and contour farming is possible on small areas. The use of terrace blocks or sediment basins can substitute for waterways on some slopes. Reduced tillage and proper residue use is important, especially where it is not possible to farm across the slope.

Section D: Water Resources

The importance of ground and surface waters must also be considered when planning for future development. Recognizing the importance of the water environment includes monitoring its quality and quantity, as well as controlling siltation and erosion. Potential sources of pollution are both urban and rural in nature and affect surface and ground waters alike. Likely sources of pollution include on-site sewer systems, chemicals from highway snow and ice removal, erosion from agricultural and construction sites, herbicides and pesticides, fertilizers and agricultural feedlots.

Lakes

Prior to settlement and development, the status of the water basins in Willmar was much different than it is today. At one time, Upper Foot Lake, Lower Foot Lake, Willmar Lake, and the Ella Avenue slough were all one body of water containing two islands. The need for improved transportation routes resulted in the construction of streets and highways that separated the original basin into the four basins that exist today.

Today, two lakes are mostly within the corporate limits of Willmar, Foot and Willmar Lakes. Also, there are two lakes that are partially within the City limits, Upper/Lower Swan and Oslo Lakes. Both Foot and Willmar Lakes are substantially developed, however, each has limited frontage which will be developed in the future. Municipal sewer and water serve the developed areas on the lakes. Past lakeshore development has maintained the natural aesthetics of shoreland areas to as great an extent possible. Future development will be strictly regulated to insure compatibility with the water resource.

Growth near Willmar is further impacted by several lakes just north (such as Swan and Oslo) of the City which are undergoing residential development. Periodic discussion has taken

place regarding the potential for annexing certain lands around the lakes. Any future annexation in this area will be dependent upon property owner demand and the ability of the City to provide municipal services in a timely and cost effective manner.

Foot Lake is moderately sided at 694 acres. There are two distinct basins (northwest and southeast) bisected by a road, but connected via several culverts. Foot Lake is also connected to Willmar Lake via an upstream shallow channel. Foot Lake has two public access sites with one site on each basin. In addition, Robbins Island Park is located along the east side of the lake. The northwest basin is 6 feet deep maximum with abundant submergent vegetation (coontail, northern milfoil) and moderate water clarity. The southeast basin has a maximum depth of 24 feet with sparse submergent vegetation (sago pondweed) and poor water clarity (secchi disk clarity at 3 feet). The Foot Lake outlet is considered the headwaters of Hawk Creek, although there are several shallow lakes upstream connected via ditches and inlets to Willmar Lake. Foot Lake has been a popular fishing lake for black crappie, walleye, northern pike, bluegill, and largemouth bass in recent years. The lake is aerated in the winter months.

Willmar Lake is moderate sized at 435 acres and has a maximum depth of 14 feet. A large golf course borders the north shore area and Robbins Island Park is located along the south shore. Residential development occurs primarily along the west shore. Willmar Lake is connected to Foot Lake via an outlet channel along the southwest portion adjacent to the city park. Willmar Lake is also connected to several shallow lakes and Eagle Lake via inlets along the north shore. Water clarity is often stained (coffee colored) throughout the summer months. Blue-green algae blooms are common on Willmar Lake. Aquatic vegetation is limited to primarily sago pondweed in the lake proper and cattails along the south portion of the lake. Willmar Lake is managed primarily for walleye, channel catfish, and black crappie. Walleye fry are generally stocked every other year.

Wetlands

A number of smaller wetland areas exist throughout the Willmar area. Map 2C displays information collected from the National Wetlands Inventory, completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. State and Federal law (primarily the Wetlands Conservation Act) provide for mitigative action if wetland basins over a certain size are disturbed or destroyed by development. Aside from the environmental benefits of wetlands, the aesthetic value should also be a consideration when developing land in or near these areas.

Drainage Ditches

The Kandiyohi County ditch system has several ditches which pass through, or originate within, the City. Although the main function of the system is to carry runoff from agricultural lands and to collect water from field tile systems, these ditches also serve to carry urban stormwater runoff and treated effluent from the City's wastewater treatment facility.

Section E: Wellhead Protection

*Submitted by
Richard Soule,
Minnesota Department of Health*

The City of Willmar is currently number 234 on the list for phasing public water supplies into the wellhead protection program. Public water supplies have been phased into the program based on the potential for their source water to become contaminated by surface spills. Willmar is low on this list because there is a thick layer of clayey till that protects the aquifer that the City uses from any surface contamination. One of the indicators of low vulnerability is the concentration of the isotope of hydrogen called tritium in the water. Although tritium is naturally occurring, a large spike in atmospheric tritium resulted from hydrogen bomb testing in the late 50's and early 60's. The low level of tritium detected in one of the City wells is a further indication that the aquifer is well isolated from surface contamination.

A review of the past ten years of water quality monitoring conducted by the City and MDH shows that both the raw water from the wells and the finished (treated) water is of high quality. There has been no detection of contaminants regulated by the EPA. Although well protected aquifers like Willmar's can sometimes be subject to elevated levels of natural contaminants such as arsenic or radium, they do not appear to be a concern for this aquifer.

Chapter Three: Land Use and Economic Profile

Section A: Land Use

Residential Land Use

Residential land use accounts for the largest percentage of developed land in Willmar. One and two-family dwellings dominate residential uses. Residential neighborhoods surround the city core area in all directions except to the north and northeast.

Multiple-family structures occupy a small percentage of developed land. These dwellings are located throughout the City, and a few areas have concentrated nodes. In those areas the groupings of apartments serve as buffers between the one and two-family residences and the commercial areas. This occurs at a conglomeration of apartments on 5th St. SW where they are between the commercial uses on 1st St. S and the single-family residences further to the west. Also, along 24th St. NW, the college housing buffers the residences in College View to the west from the college property. The Housing and Redevelopment Authority also manages multiple-family residential projects including the Lakeview Apartments, Highland Apartments, 29 townhouse units in the Welshire Addition, and others.

Mobile home parks occupy an even smaller percentage of developed land area. Willmar presently has two mobile home parks with a combined total of 231 lots and 186 mobile homes. One park is located in northeast Willmar and the other park is in northwest Willmar.

Commercial Land Use

Commercial land uses are concentrated along major highways and collector roadways as visibility and access are crucial. The main concentrations of commercial uses are in the Central Business District, along Business Highway 71 N. and S., and along Highway 12 W. and E. Professional commercial land use has expanded in the past few years along 19th Ave. SW, catering to medical/professional uses. The intersection of Lakeland Dr. SE and Willmar Ave. SE is poised to be the next area for commercial growth, with completion of the Highway 23 & 71 bypass access ramps. Waterview Business Park, east of S. 1st St., will be another commercial area to develop in the near future.

Industrial Land Use

The majority of industrial development in the city has taken place surrounding the former airport. These industrial areas are located north of the former airport and south of U.S. Highway 12, south of the former airport along Willmar Avenue and 22nd St. SW, and northeast of the airport where the 200 acre Willmar Industrial Park is located. U.S. Highway 12, Minnesota Highway 40, and the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad provide transportation access to this area. The completion of the new airport frees up the old airport for industrial park expansion. Other areas of industrial development are along the railroad line directly west and east of downtown, and west of Lakeland Drive. Scattered industrial uses exist at various locations throughout the city.

Government/Institutional

Governmental/Institutional land uses include educational and governmental facilities and account for a large percentage of developed land in Willmar. This land use includes Willmar Municipal Airport, Ridgewater College, all Willmar Public Schools property, all City owned facilities/land, and all County and State owned buildings/land.

Parks

Park and recreation land uses are abundant and scattered throughout the city. Major park/recreation areas are Robbins Island, Swannson Field, Dorothy Olson Aquatic Center, two golf courses, and other parks/playgrounds.

Undeveloped Land

Scattered parcels of undeveloped land exist within the developed portions of the city, as well as in the fringe areas. Undeveloped lands include those currently vacant or used for agriculture. These areas are zoned for agricultural, industrial, commercial, residential or open space uses.

Zoning

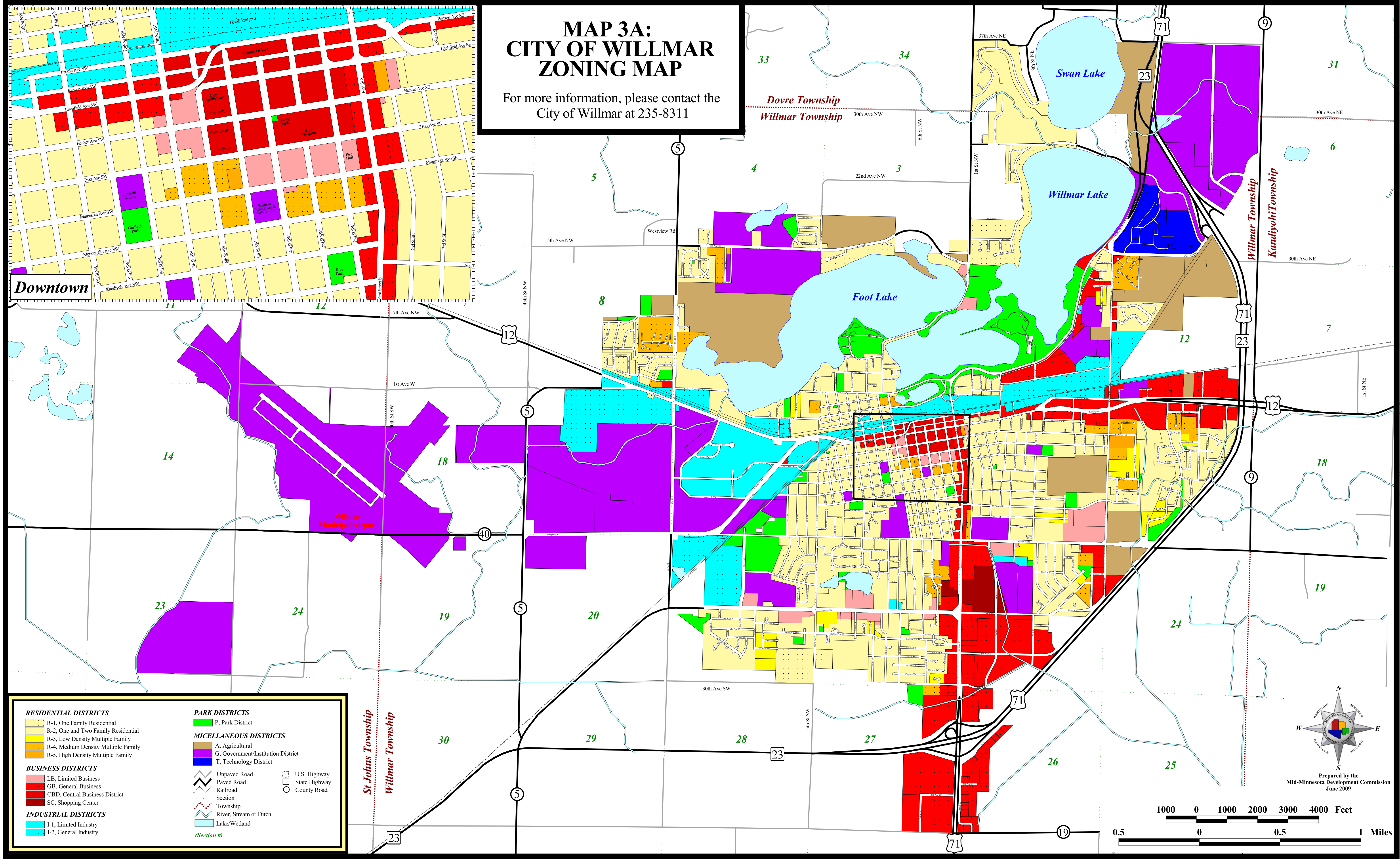
The City of Willmar's Zoning Ordinance divides the community into five residential, four business, and two industrial zoning districts. The City's current zoning map is displayed as Map 3A. Although it is not intended to be a current land use map, the zoning map shows generally where each type of land use is found in the community. Specifically, the following different zoning districts exist in Willmar:

- R-1, One-Family Residential District
- R-2, One- and Two-Family Residential District
- R-3, Low Density Multiple Family Residential District
- R-4, Medium Density Multiple Family Residential District
- R-5, High Density Multiple Family Residential District
- LB, Limited Business District
- GB, General Business District
- CB, Central Business District
- SC, Shopping Center District
- I-1, Limited Industry District
- I-2, General Industry District
- T, Technology District³
- G/I, Government/Institutional
- P, Parks
- A, Agricultural

³ The Technology District is a newly created district strictly for the MinnWest Technology Campus (old Willmar Regional Treatment Center). The campus is both limited and protected by the designation on allowing very specific technology/science oriented uses, while preserving and allowing the campus structure to function.

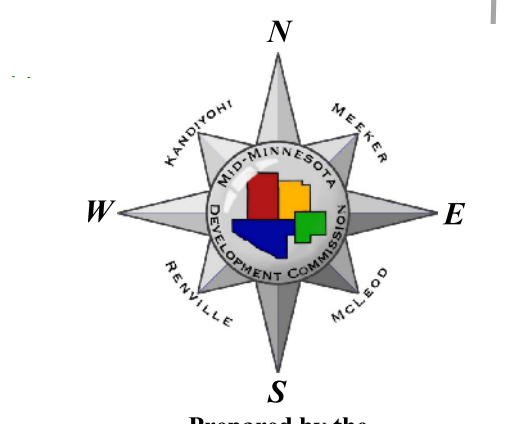
MAP 3A: CITY OF WILLMAR ZONING MAP

For more information, please contact the
City of Willmar at 235-8311

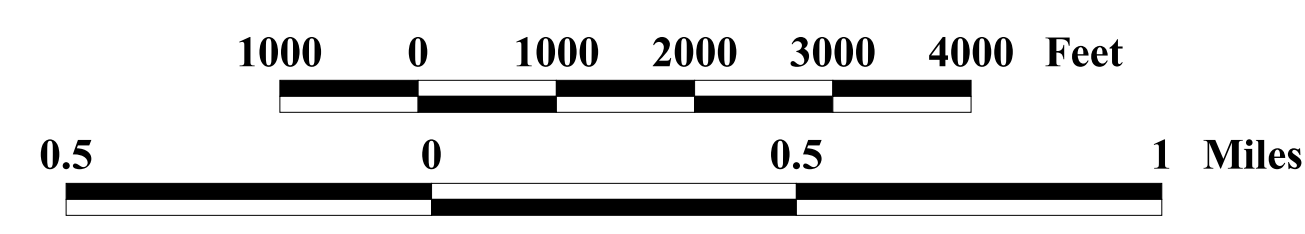


Downtown

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS		PARK DISTRICTS	
R-1, One Family Residential	P, Park District	MICELLANEOUS DISTRICTS	
R-2, One and Two Family Residential	A, Agricultural	G, Government/Institution District	Unpaved Road
R-3, Low Density Multiple Family	T, Technology District	Paved Road	Railroad
R-4, Medium Density Multiple Family		Township	River, Stream or Ditch
R-5, High Density Multiple Family		Lake/Wetland	Township
BUSINESS DISTRICTS		U.S. Highway	State Highway
LB, Limited Business	Section	County Road	
GB, General Business	Township		
CBD, Central Business District	River, Stream or Ditch		
SC, Shopping Center	Lake/Wetland		
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS			
I-1, Limited Industry			
I-2, General Industry			



Prepared by the
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission
June 2009



Section B: Economy and Employment

An important indicator of future growth and development in a community is its economic base. Community population growth patterns are largely determined by the employment opportunities provided in a city.

Economic Background

Although Willmar has a diversified economic base, agricultural production and agri-business are the chief industries of the City and surrounding area. Willmar has also established itself as a regional center for medical/professional/financial services, education, government, transportation, and wholesale and retail trade. Numerous industries occupy a 200-acre Industrial Park. Construction of the new airport frees up the old airport property for industrial park expansion.

Citywide Employment

Willmar’s number of employed persons from 1990 to 2004 is displayed in Table 3A, Willmar’s employment increased by 3,419 persons or 24.6% between 1990 and 2000, therefore averaging approximately 2.46% per year. This amount was nearly five and a half times the .47% annual population growth experienced during the same time.

**Table 3A:
Willmar’s Employment**

Year	Employed Persons	Increase	Percentage Growth
1990	12,421	N/A	N/A
1991	12,648	227	1.8%
1992	13,046	398	3.1%
1993	13,458	412	3.2%
1994	14,172	714	5.3%
1995	14,740	568	4.0%
1996	15,155	415	2.8%
1997	15,386	231	1.5%
1998	15,536	150	1%
1999	15,615	79	0.5%
2000	16,143	528	3.3%
2001	15,979	-164	-1.1%
2002	16,077	98	0.6%
2003	16,260	183	1.1%
2004	16,363	103	0.6%
2005	16,769	406	2.5%
2006	17,077	308	1.8%
2007	17,175	98	0.5%
Total	N.A.	4,754	N.A.

Source: DEED QCEQ Program/Willmar Workforce Center

Major Employers

Willmar’s major industrial employers are listed in Table 3B and Willmar’s major non-industrial employers are listed in Table 3C. Many of Willmar’s non industrial employees work in medical services, education and government.

**Table 3B:
Willmar’s Major Industrial Employers**

Company	Product/Service	Employees
Jennie-O Turkey Store	Animal Slaughtering & Processing	5,000 to 9,999
Willmar Poultry Co.	Poultry & Egg Production	50 to 99
Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad	Rail Transportation	100 to 249
Molenaar Inc.	Resin, Synthetic Rubber & Artif.	100 to 249
West Central Steel/Central MN Fabricating	Other Fabricated Metal Product	50 to 99
Gurley Foods	Other Snack Food Mfg.	100 to 249

Source: Willmar Workforce Center

**Table 3C:
Willmar’s Major Non-Industrial Employers**

Employer	Employees
Affiliated Medical Center	500 to 999
Bethesda Homes	100 to 249
Cash Wise Foods	250 to 499
Cub Foods	100 to 249
Divine House Inc.	250 to 499
Heartland Community Action Center	100 to 249
Herberger's	100 to 249
Holiday Inn & Willmar Conference Center	100 to 249
J.C. Penny Company	100 to 249
Kandiyohi County	500 to 999
Minnesota Department of Transportation	100 to 249
REM South Central Service	100 to 249
Rice Memorial Hospital	500 to 999
Ridgewater College	250 to 499
Wal-Mart	100 to 249
Willmar Public Schools	500 to 999
Woodland Centers	100 to 249

Source: Willmar Workforce Center

Manufacturing

Manufacturing sales in Willmar increased substantially from 2000 to 2007, showing an increase of \$43 million (79%) in seven years. The two years reported are categorized differently due to a change in 2003 in the way the Minnesota Department of Revenue Tax Research Division depicts manufacturing sales.

**Table 3D:
Willmar's Manufacturing
2000 - 2007 Gross Sales**

	2000	Number	2007	Number
<i>Manufacturing: Printing, Publishing</i>	\$15.5 Million	6	\$16 Million	7
<i>Manufacturing: Fabricated Metals</i>	\$28 Million	4	\$42 Million	5
<i>Manufacturing: Nonelectric Machinery</i>	\$11 Million	5	N/A	N/A
<i>Manufacturing: Food, Food Products</i>	N/A	N/A	\$22.5 Million	5
<i>Manufacturing: Miscellaneous</i>	\$511,479	7	\$18 Million	4
<i>Totals</i>	\$55 Million	22	\$98.5 Million	21

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue

Wholesale Trade

Willmar is a regional center for the wholesale trade industry in West Central Minnesota. There are two types of wholesale trade, durable and non-durable goods (durable meaning long utility products). Table 3E provides statistics on Willmar’s wholesale trade industry. The gross sales fluctuated from \$180 million in 2000 to \$139 million in 2007.

**Table 3E:
Wholesale Trade in Willmar (Gross Sales)**

	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Wholesale: Durable Goods	\$120 Million	\$91 Million	\$171 Million	\$140 Million	\$153 Million	\$128 Million
Wholesale: Nondurable Goods	\$60 Million	\$37 Million	\$35 Million	\$22 Million	\$10 Million	\$11 Million
Total Establishments	31	22	24	24	22	22
Total Gross Sales	\$180 Million	\$128 Million	\$207 Million	\$162 Million	\$163 Million	\$139 Million

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue

Retail Trade

Tables 3F and 3G displays Willmar’s retail trade statistics as provided by the Minnesota Department of Revenue (two tables are needed due to a change in 2002 in reporting categories).

**Table 3F:
Retail Trade in Willmar (Gross Sales)**

	1998	Number	2000	Number
Retail: Hardware, Building Materials	\$29 Million	18	\$30 Million	19
Retail: General Merchandise	\$68 Million	9	\$72 Million	8
Retail: Food	\$62 Million	16	\$70 Million	17
Retail: Auto Dealers, Stations	\$110 Million	30	\$131 Million	27
Retail: Apparel, Accessories	\$7 Million	18	\$5 Million	14
Retail: Furniture	\$13 Million	32	\$14 Million	31
Retail: Eating, Drinking	\$18 Million	35	\$20 Million	39
Retail: Miscellaneous	\$38 Million	158	\$45 Million	130
Totals	\$344 Million	316	\$388 Million	285

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue

**Table 3G:
Retail Trade in Willmar (Gross Sales)**

	2003	Number	2007	Number
Building Material	\$25 Million	11	\$35 Million	13
General Merchandise	\$84 Million	13	\$92 Million	11
Food & Beverage	\$81 Million	18	\$89 Million	17
Vehicle, Parts	\$93 Million	15	\$100 Million	17
Clothing, Accessory	\$42 Million	22	\$15 Million	26
Furniture Stores	\$10 Million	13	\$9 Million	12
Miscellaneous Retailer	\$14 Million	63	\$21 Million	55
Electronics	\$9 Million	13	\$21 Million	11
Health, Personal	\$20 Million	9	\$26 Million	14
Gasoline Stations	\$36 Million	13	\$36 Million	12
Leisure Goods	\$4 Million	14	\$6 Million	17
Non Store Retailers	\$437,332	4	\$5 Million	9
Totals	\$419 Million	208	\$455 Million	214

Source: Minnesota Department of Revenue

Retail spending in the City increased between 1998 and 2007 by \$111 million. The majority of retail sales had historically been downtown or in the Kandi Mall. However, recent big box growth has occurred in the southern portion of the City between 1st St. S. and the Highway 71/23 bypass.

Recent Economic Trends

Minnesota communities dependent on agriculture are experiencing population and economic declines. In the past, Willmar’s chief industry has been agri-business, however, it has continued to diversify and expand its economic base. Willmar is a micropolitan regional center. The community is no longer simply known as home to Jennie-O Turkey Store, but as a medical, educational, and shopping center. MinnWest Technology Campus houses numerous technology-related businesses, and is slated to be the site of the Mid Central Bio-Sciences Center. Many people leave rural Southwest Minnesota to move to Willmar for its opportunities. As areas to the south and west lose population and young people, Willmar should hold strong and continue to grow.

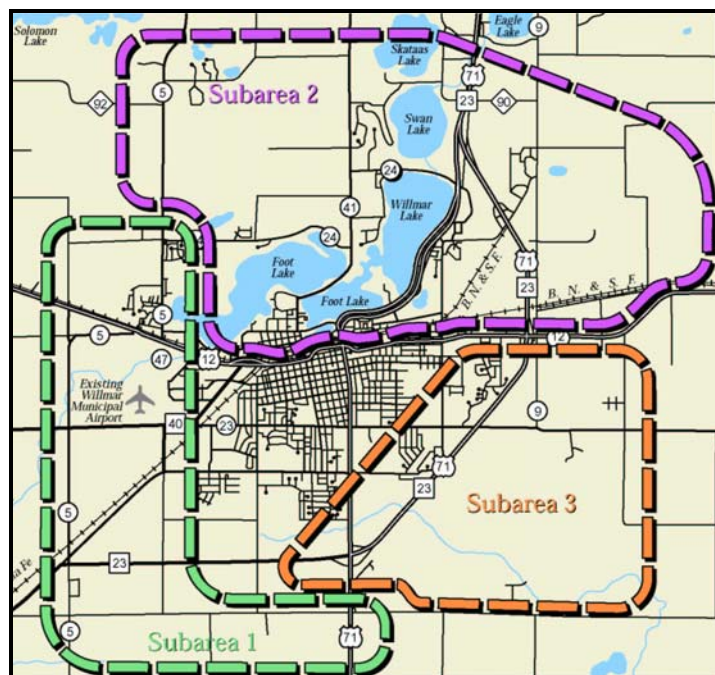
Section C: Transportation

In 2003, the City partnered with Kandiyohi County and Mn/DOT District 8 to conduct a Willmar Area Transportation Study (October 2003). The Study focused on the needs of the area's transportation system through the year 2030. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) developed concise statements of the purpose and need for the study, detailed relevant issues, and sought citizen and stakeholder input. Overall, the main goal of the study was to address the transportation safety and mobility needs for the Willmar area by including the following elements:

- ◆ Address existing deficiencies in the transportation system.
- ◆ Update the 1997 Willmar Area Transportation Study in response to programmed changes in the built environment.
- ◆ The Willmar area is expected to experience continued growth over the next 25 years, including more than 600 acres of commercial development and over 900 acres of new housing. The roadway system needs to be planned to accommodate this growth.
- ◆ Support revenue-generating opportunities for the Willmar economy.
- ◆ Gather public input from a stakeholder workshop and open house meetings to ensure complete understanding of relevant transportation issues.
- ◆ Identify future improvement concepts as a first step toward project development and implementation.

The Study identified three subareas displayed in Figure 3A. The assessment summaries for these subareas follow:

Figure 3A: Willmar Area Transportation Study (2003)



Subarea 1 Assessment Summary

The principal issues the plan discussed were the airport moving to a new location, the old airport becoming available for industrial park expansion, and the airport move allowing for a new segment of road being built north/south through the old airport. It allowed for a new alignment of CSAH 5 running directly south from TH 12 to the TH 23 bypass, where a new interchange will be built. The project combines Mn/DOT's responsibility dealing with a future interchange and the County constructing CSAH 5. The County finished a major part of this plan with the opening of a new segment of CSAH 5 going straight south at the TH12 intersection to CSAH 15 (19th Ave.). Future plans call for taking the road down to TH 23 (the bypass) and creating an interchange. The at-grade railroad crossing of CSAH 5 was also mentioned as a concern for emergencies.

Subarea 2 Assessment Summary

The great influx of new housing in the lake regions north of Willmar will create a burden on CSAH 41. Up to 540 additional households are expected in subarea 2 in the next 25 years (2030). This does not include township development. Roadway access is limited to the rest of Willmar from this area because of the chain of lakes. Due to this situation, this Subarea currently only has access to the rest of Willmar via CSAH 41 and CSAH 24. The County does have a reconstruction project slated for CSAH 41 (north of Foot Lake to CR 25) in 2009. The study also says the County is planning to reconstruct CSAH 24 between CSAH 41 and TH 71, which will bring the road up to current standards, including turn lanes at major intersections. Major expansion of CSAH 24 is hindered because it has the golf course to the North and Willmar Lake to the South. The City has applied for enhancement funding for a trail to be built adjacent to CSAH 41 when it is reconstructed.

There are several issues within this Subarea that have not been addressed. They mostly relate to growth on the north side of Willmar that will impact the transportation system from Subarea 2 into Willmar in general. CSAH 41 and CSAH 24 are major concerns due to the expected increased traffic. Some options will need to be examined to eliminate bottlenecks, including the possibility of creating a Robbins Island Bridge. Safety concerns were also raised about the at-grade intersection of TH 23/71 and CR 90. In addition, the intersection of CSAH 24 and TH 23/71 remains a major safety concern. The offset intersection of CSAH 41 and Ella Avenue has traffic operating deficiencies associated with the high volume of CSAH 41 movements progressing through two closely spaced intersections.

Safety concerns about at-grade railroad crossings used by emergency vehicles and their response times were mentioned as an important issue. Roadway access needs to be addressed for a large potential development area east of Lakeland Drive and north of TH 12. The existing BNSF Railroad storage track east of Lakeland Drive hinders development of roadway access. Completing the trail from downtown to the Glacial Lakes Trail Head north of Civic Center Drive was also discussed as a need. Enhancement funds will be used to improve the trail near the bridge, and crossing Business 71 with the trail at Civic Center Drive is scheduled for 2009. There are also trail crossing concerns at Ella Avenue. Further study is needed in this Subarea to fully understand the environmental implications and to plan for the most affordable solutions to this area's future traffic connection needs.

Subarea 3 Assessment Summary

Most of the work discussed for Subarea 3 has been completed, including the ramp connections onto the TH 23/71 bypass at Willmar Avenue, the new road behind the mall (5th Street S.E.), the improvements to Willmar Avenue and to 19th Avenue. Traffic volume demand continues to grow on South 1st Street between Willmar Avenue and 19th Avenue, and at the intersection of Willmar Avenue and 1st Street. The above mentioned completed projects will all help, but congestion will continue to be an issue as traffic volume increases.

Members of the TAC and stakeholders have witnessed operational confusion for traffic movement from southbound TH 23 to southbound TH 71, using the first southbound interchange off-ramp intended for northbound vehicles and crossing through the TH 71/1st Street median opening. The study suggested short-term guide sign improvements and long-term geometric improvements for the TH23/71/1st Street interchange. This was recently completed by Mn/DOT.

Willmar Area Plan Implementation Summary

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1. New arterial on County Road 5 alignment north of 19th Avenue (this has recently been completed).
2. New north-south arterial on County Road 5 alignment south of 19th Avenue. Trunk Highway 23 interchange. Extension of Trunk Highway 23 bypass west of new interchange (lead agency: Mn/DOT).

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3. Environmental study of roadway capacity improvement concepts through lakes area (lead agencies: Kandiyohi County and the City of Willmar).
4. Operational study of County Road 24/Trunk Highway 294/Trunk Highway 71 intersection (lead agency: Mn/DOT). Interim measures have been completed with an additional study to follow.
5. Monitor operations at the Trunk Highway 23/Trunk Highway 71 intersection (lead agencies: Kandiyohi County and Mn/DOT).

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6. Design development/implementation of Willmar Avenue interchange with Trunk Highway 23 (this has been completed).
7. Operational study of improvements at the Trunk Highway 23/Trunk Highway 71/1st Street interchange (lead agency: Mn/DOT).
8. Expansion of the local street system between 1st Street on the west and the Trunk Highway 23 bypass on the east (lead agency: City of Willmar).

Functional Classification System

The Functional Classification System is a method used to describe the main function each road performs in the highway network. It is essentially a hierarchy of roads using criteria that describes the function that a particular road performs in a highway network (typically access and mobility). Changes in road classification can occur due to increasing development and traffic volumes. There is general agreement among the public that the responsibility for the most important roads should be assigned to the highest level of government. In this fashion, the greatest resources for road maintenance and construction are devoted to the most heavily traveled roads. It follows that less traveled roads become the responsibility of lower levels of government. These roads are defined as:

Principal Arterial - These highways provide an integrated network of routes which carry the highest traffic volumes, serve the longest trip movements, and provide for statewide or interstate travel. They serve all major urbanized areas and population centers. Principal arterial routes provide for through movement with minimum interference.

Minor Arterial - These highways link cities, larger towns, and other major traffic generators, such as major resort areas, to each other and to principal arterial routes. They form an integrated network which provides for movement within the state and between counties.

Major Collectors - These routes provide service to the county seat and larger cities not served by the higher systems. They predominately serve trips within the county and link locally important traffic generators with their service areas and other nearby larger cities with higher order routes.

Minor Collectors - These routes link smaller cities with locally important traffic generators, and provide developed areas reasonable access to a higher functioning roadway.

Local Roads - The rural, local roads primarily service relatively low traffic volumes and short distance trips.

Map 3B displays the functional classification for roads in and surrounding the City of Willmar.

Willmar Airport

For many years, Willmar has been an aviation rich community that has experienced the benefit of aviation in its economy. Beginning in the late 1920's, a group of hobby fliers started an airfield west of the city known as "Ramblewood". These hobby fliers raised enough interest in the city that a vision began to create an airfield that could be open to the public. Work on an airfield started in 1934 as part of President Roosevelt's "New Deal" Program, and served as an emergency landing field for scheduled airline service. Airlines flew a route between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Watertown, South Dakota, then onto the Black Hills (also in South Dakota).

The need for airport management grew as aviation activity increased. In 1945, John and Mary Jane Rice came to Willmar to manage the airport. The legacy of Willmar Air Service began. The airport matured to two runways: one 5,700' x 100' asphalt runway, and one 3500' x 300' turf runway. The airport served a busy industrial park that was adjacent to airport property. Some of the different companies served by the airport include the following:

- ◆ Pioneer Hybrids
- ◆ Hormel Foods (Jennie-O Foods)
- ◆ West Central Tribune
- ◆ West Central Communication
- ◆ Cash Wise Foods
- ◆ Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway
- ◆ Willmar Electric Service
- ◆ Duinink Brothers Construction
- ◆ Dayton Hudson (Target)
- ◆ Wal-Mart stores
- ◆ State of Minnesota
- ◆ U.S. Army

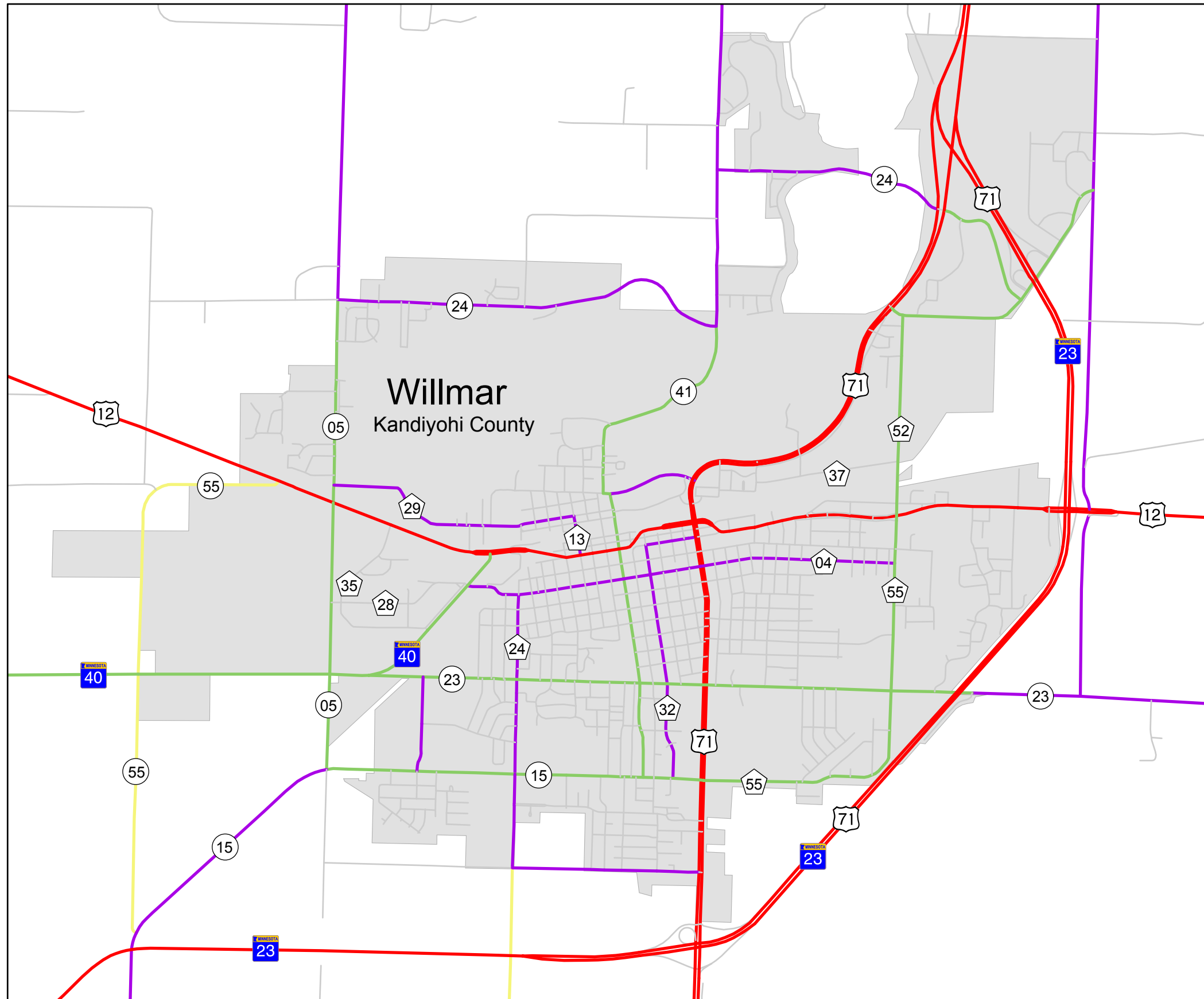


*The new Willmar Municipal Airport
Officially opened September 5, 2006*














In 1995, a joint airport planning group recommended relocating the airport two miles west of the current airport. The decision to construct a new airport came after conducting several studies. The new airport site includes a 5,500-foot runway, with plans to extend the runway to 6,500 feet in the future. A modern terminal area serves as a front door to the community of Willmar, as well as the region.

The new Willmar Municipal Airport officially opened on September 5, 2006. The new airport serves the needs of the aviation community by allowing for improved instrument approaches, as well as larger hangar areas. Currently, there are 64 based aircraft that range in size and speed. Spring of 2007 saw the region's first F-14 "Tomcat" make its way to Willmar where it is on display permanently, thanks to the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola, Florida.

Map 3B: City of Willmar Functional Classification



Legend

-  Municipality
-  Principal Arterial, Interstate
-  Principal Arterial, Other Freeway/Expressway
-  Principal Arterial, Other
-  Minor Arterial
-  Rural Major and Urban Collector
-  Rural Minor Collector
-  Local
-  County State Aid Highway
-  Municipal State Aid System
-  State Trunk Highway
-  U.S. Trunk Highway
-  Interstate Freeway



Prepared by
Mid-Minnesota
Development Commission
2006

Data Provided by: Minnesota Department of Transportation
and Kandiyohi County

Section D: Public Facilities

Electric Power Supply

The electrical requirements for the City of Willmar are met from two sources, generation and purchased power. Generation accounts for approximately 16% of the total requirements, while purchased power accounts for 84%.

The Willmar Municipal Utilities Power Plant has a nameplate rating of 29.35 megawatts, and is comprised of three units rated 4 MW, 7.5 MW and 17.85 MW. #3 Boiler is a coal-fired unit using gas as a secondary fuel source. # 2 Boiler is a gas-only unit. The coal consumed by the Power Plant is mined in Montana and shipped by rail.

Power purchased by the Municipal Utilities is transmitted to Willmar from a joint transmission system, covering a large area from Minnesota to the East coast. About 10% of the purchased power comes from the Western Area Power Administration, a hydroelectric system in South Dakota. Other sources of purchased power include Great River Energy and The Day 2 MISO Market.

Electrical Transmission System

The electricity purchased by the Municipal Utilities is transmitted on several high voltage lines from various sources. These lines enter a substation located near Willmar, which is jointly owned by the Municipal Utilities and Great River Energy.

A 230,000 volt line capable of handling 400 megawatts enters the substation from Granite Falls. The Municipal Utilities owns and maintains 13 miles of this line, with rights to 200 megawatts of the line's capacity. Presently, the substation transformer is rated for 84 megawatts, half of which is the Municipal Utilities' share. This substation has recently undergone an upgrading project that facilitated a 115,000 volt interconnection. A total of 25 miles of 69 KV line serves four distribution substations throughout the city.

At each substation, the 69,000 volts is reduced to 12,470 volts and distributed to the neighborhoods and businesses. Total substation transformer distribution capacity is 117 megawatts.

Electrical Distribution System

Electricity for local use is distributed from four locations, the Power Plant Substation, the South Substation, the East Substation, and the Southwest Substation. The Power Plant Substation feeds six circuits, the South Substation feeds four circuits, the East Substation is currently feeding two circuits with the capability of four circuits, and the Southwest Substation is currently feeding three circuits with the capability of four circuits. The Power Plant circuits are capable of

handling five megawatts of load each, the remaining circuits are capable of handling six megawatts of load each. The distribution system totals 214 miles of line, with 174 miles of the system or 82% underground. The Municipal Utilities has an ongoing plan to replace overhead residential lines with new underground lines. All new developments and new or updated services are required to be placed underground.

District Heating System

Willmar Municipal Utilities has provided district heating service to the community since 1913. A major system renovation in 1982 converted all but 18 customers from steam to hot water. The remaining steam customers were converted to hot water during the 1982-1992 period. The district heating system consists of hot water distribution serving 258 customers.

Heat is produced in the coal-fired, electric/steam cogeneration plant and distributed to residential, commercial, industrial and institutional customers through a network of hot water pipes. This piping system measures over 100,000 feet in length and the pipe ranges in size from 12 inches for the largest main to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch for the smallest hot water line.

District heating customers reap the benefits of this modern, low cost, low maintenance system of heating. Utility-owned equipment (consisting of heat exchangers, control valve systems and energy meters) is installed and maintained at no cost to the customer. This modern hot water system has received nationwide recognition as the first municipal system of its kind in the United States.

Water Supply System

The existing water supply system in Willmar is dependent on 16 wells found in two separate well fields. Ten wells are at the Southwest Well Field and six wells are at the Northeast Well Field.

Each well field is served by a water treatment plant that provides iron/manganese removal, pH adjustment and corrosion control. Chlorine is added for disinfection. Fluoride is added for dental hygiene. The total pumping capacity of all existing wells in the city is 6,500 gallons per minute. The storage capacity is 4.25 million gallons.

Water Distribution

The water distribution system has two distinct pressure zones known as the Downtown Zone and the College Zone. The Downtown Pressure Zone consists of numerous 8, 10, 12, and 16 inch transmission mains, a network of smaller 4 and 6 inch distribution mains, the booster pump station and 3.0 million gallon ground storage tank in the Southwest Well Field. Also included in this system are the Northeast Well Field, a .75 million gallon storage tank adjacent to the Northeast Treatment Plant, and a .3 million gallon elevated storage tank on Willmar Avenue next to the Willmar High School athletic field.

The College Pressure Zone is served by two transmission main connections, each with a booster pumping station, and consists of a local water distribution piping system and a .2 million gallon elevated storage tank. These two systems provide water for Willmar's 6,300 residential, commercial and industrial customers.

Storm Water Drainage System

The City of Willmar has a separate storm sewer system consisting of over 3,450 storm sewer structures which include both catch basin inlets and storm sewer manholes. As of 2004, the system consisted of over 56 miles of pipe. The land area of Willmar is approximately 15.78 square miles and drains about 60 percent Southwest towards Hawk Creek, with the remaining land area draining Southeast towards Lake Wagonga.

Storm water management has changed dramatically over the past several years to protect downstream water resources. The current federally mandated storm water regulations for the City of Willmar include preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the following activities:

- Land Disturbances > 1 acre Industrial Activity Permit
- Wastewater Treatment Plants
- Public Works Garages
- Public Works Compost Sites
- Municipal Airport⁴ Discretionary (designated) MS4 City Permit⁵

Each Plan must include six minimum control measures: 1) Public education and outreach; 2) Public participation/involvement; 3) Illicit discharge, detection and elimination; 4) Construction site runoff control; 5) Post-construction site runoff control; and 6) Pollution prevention/good housekeeping. It also must identify best management practices (BMPs) and measurable goals associated with each minimum control measure. An annual report on the implementation of these practices must be submitted each year.

⁴Municipal Airport was considered an industrial storm water facility under the 1992 Phase 1 NPDES regulations. ⁵MS4 – Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, federally mandated rules required the States to write rules to include discretionary population centers > 10,000 people or those discharging to Special or Impaired Waters.

Sanitary Sewer System

In 1982, a new waste treatment facility featuring primary and secondary treatment was constructed by the City of Willmar. Major improvements were made to the facility in 1988 and 1996. The trunk and lateral sanitary sewer system consists of 8, 10 and 12 inch pipes totaling over 82 miles of sanitary sewer lines in the Willmar area (including Eagle Lake). Twenty-five major lift stations are included within the system. The interceptor sewer system consists of pipe from 15 to 36 inch diameter which accepts water from the trunk lines and carries it to the treatment facility.

The wastewater treatment facility handles an average of 4.32 million gallons of flow per day, with a maximum capacity of 5.04 million gallons per day. Effluent is discharged into County Ditch #46 which flows into Hawk Creek. The design year for the plan is 2010, and the design population is 23,000. A new wastewater treatment facility is currently being constructed west of town and is scheduled to be online in late 2010.

New Wastewater Treatment Plant

In September 2004, the Willmar City Council passed a resolution to relocate its wastewater treatment plant and improve its conveyance system. The new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and improved conveyance system will replace the City's existing and outdated wastewater treatment process with emerging treatment technology to protect the Minnesota River, increase capacity, and meet new and expanding state and federal requirements. This Project involves a complete WWTP relocation and the construction of associated wastewater conveyance system facilities because of the following:

1. Inability of the existing treatment process to meet the City's regulatory requirements.
2. Continued aging of the outdated (failed) treatment technology.
3. Continued City growth resulting in increased flows and loadings.
4. Upcoming regulatory changes in water quality associated with the Minnesota River and Lake Pepin.

The ultimate purpose of the Project is to provide sound, proven treatment infrastructure for continued community growth, establishing environmental protection as the "first line of defense" for the City and all users of their wastewater treatment systems.

Section E: Parks and Trails

The following is an inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities in the Willmar area. Please refer to Map 3C and Table 3H.

Regional Park Areas

Robbins Island is located between Foot and Willmar Lakes in northeast Willmar and is comprised of approximately 55 acres of hilly, wooded terrain. Recreational facilities include a public swimming beach, fishing, hiking and nature trails, picnic shelters, soccer fields, a softball area, a nine-hole disc golf course and a playground.

Memorial Parkway, located on North Business Highway 71/23 adjacent to Foot and Willmar Lakes, covers 28.8 acres and includes picnic areas, a bike path, and a memorial to United States Veterans.

Major Recreational Facilities

North Swansson Field at Willmar Avenue and 18th Street SW covers 30.6 acres and includes one lighted baseball diamond, three lighted softball diamonds, one unlighted baseball diamond and a shelter.

South Swansson Field is located south of and across Willmar Avenue from North Swansson Field. The facility is 30 acres in size and includes a new lighted baseball complex, two soccer fields, playground equipment, bmx track, two tennis courts, and a bike/exercise path.

The City Auditorium, located downtown at 311 6th St. SW, includes a gymnasium, a Universal Gym, a rifle and pistol range, and an indoor playground and craft rooms.

Civic Center Arena, located in northeast Willmar (on Civic Center Drive), is an indoor ice-skating arena with a perimeter seating capacity of 1,800 persons. The facility includes two sheets of ice, locker rooms, and meeting rooms. The total dry floor area is 27,000 square feet, with a floor seating capacity of 3,200 persons.

Olson Aquatic Center is located on the corner of 15th Ave. SW and 22nd St. SW. The Aquatic Center has a six-lane pool with two 1-meter diving boards, two water slides, and a zero-depth wading pool with kiddie water slide, as well as restrooms, an enclosed shelter, and picnicking area.

Neighborhood Park Playgrounds

Sperry Park was established in 1909 and is the oldest city park in Willmar. It covers 7 acres and is located between Homewood Avenue NE and North Highway 71 in northeast Willmar. Park facilities include a playground, a softball area, tennis courts, a shelter and a basketball court.

Rice Park is a 2.24-acre park at the intersection of Kandiyohi Avenue and 2nd St. SW and contains two lighted tennis courts, a shelter, playground equipment, a basketball court, sand volleyball court, and horseshoe pits. The park has a wading pool is being considered for re-use or closure.

Jaycees Park is a small neighborhood park at the corner of NW 7th Street and Ella Avenue NW, and includes playground equipment and a basketball area.

Northside Park is located directly north of Lafayette School, on the corner of Ella Avenue NW and 12th St. NW. The 4-acre park includes a playground, a ball diamond, basketball court, shelter, and an ice skating/hockey area.

Bjorsell Park is 1.5 acres in area and is located in southeast Willmar at the intersection of Johanna Avenue SE and 4th St. SE. The park includes playground equipment, a bocce ball court, and a basketball area.

Lincoln/Eastside Park is located on Trott Avenue SE adjacent to Lincoln Elementary School. This 5-acre park includes a shelter, skating and hockey rinks, playground equipment, a lighted ball diamond and a basketball court.

Miller Park is located at the intersection of Kandiyohi Avenue SW and 11th St. SW and is adjacent to Jefferson Elementary School. This 3.2-acre park consists of a playground, shelter, basketball area, ball diamond and two lighted tennis courts.

Hilltop Park is a 3-acre park located on 8th St. SW between Parkview Road and Richland Ave. SW. There is a shelter, one tennis court, skating area, playground equipment, basketball area, and horseshoe pits located in the park.

Minnegasco Park located at Trott Avenue and 16th St. SW is 2.6 acres in size and has playground equipment.

Pleasant View Park features a playground, a covered shelter, two tennis courts, and basketball courts. This 3-acre park is located in Pleasant View Addition in southeast Willmar at 14th Ave. SE and 9th St. SE

Vos Park covers 4.29 acres and is located in Vos Park Addition in northwest Willmar at the corner of 1st Ave. NW and Co. Rd. 5 (30th St. NW). Facilities include playground equipment, a basketball court, and shelter.

Welshire Park is located in Welshire Addition in southeast Willmar at 19th St. SE and 7th Ave. SE. The park is 1.21 acres in size and has playground equipment.

Gesch Park is a 6.7-acre park in southeast Willmar on 12th St. SE and Olena Ave. SE, and includes playground equipment, a basketball court and a ball diamond.

Cardinal Park facilities include play equipment and a basketball area. This 2-acre park is located in Ortenblad Addition at 20th Ave. SW and 25th St. SW in extreme southwest Willmar.

Southfield Park is located in southwest Willmar on 28th Avenue SW and covers 5 acres. The park features a playground, shelter, softball area, and basketball court.

Valley Side Park is 6.6 acres in size and is located at the entrance to Valleybrook Estates Addition on 7th Ave. NW in northwest Willmar. This park includes a shelter, playground equipment, basketball court, and backstop.

Ramblewood Park is comprised of 34 acres in southwest Willmar and includes a basketball court, playground and a crushed-granite trail around a wetland area.

Hanson Park is a 6.6-acre park located directly north of Ridgewater College on 17th St. NW. The park has a playground, open shelter and nature area.

Sunrise Park is an 11.64-acre park in Pheasant Run Addition at Willmar Ave. SE and 23rd St. SE. The park has play equipment, a bike path, ball field, basketball court, and horseshoe pit.

Lions Park is 5.6 acres in size and is located next to South Swansson Field. The park includes a picnic shelter.

Hedin Park is located on the west side of Willmar Lake and is accessible from Robbins Island Park via a footbridge as well as from Country Club Dr. NE. This park has play equipment and walking paths.

East Willmar Park is a 4.2-acre park on 13th St. SE and Pleasant View Dr. SE. The park has playground equipment.

Thompson Park is located on Ella Ave. NW adjacent to Foot Lake and includes a picnic area.

Mini-Parks

Willmar has several mini-parks, each designed as tot-lot areas and serving a specific neighborhood.

Canigo Park is 0.2 acres in size and is located near Lafayette School in North Willmar at the corner of 12th St. NW and Lake Ave. NW. Its name is derived from the frequently spoken phrase of a toddler- “Can I go to the park”.

Rainbow Park is located in Pheasant Run Addition at the corner of 24th St. SE and 5th Ave. SE. It is 0.36 acres and has a playground area.

Collegeview Park is 0.2 acres in Collegeview Addition at the corner of 13th Ave. NW and 28th St. NW. There is a playground, shelter, and basketball court as well.

Richland Park is a 1.09-acre park at Richland Ave. SW and Richland Dr. SW and has tot play equipment.

Wellin Park is a 0.34-acre park on 14th St. SW and has tot play equipment.

School-Neighborhood Playgrounds

Garfield School is located at Monongalia Ave. SW and 8th St. SW, and includes a lighted hockey and skating rink, shelter/warming house, and playground equipment.

Washington School is located on Willmar Ave. SW and includes a playground, ball field, basketball court, and skateboarding area.

Roosevelt School on 19th Ave. SW includes a baseball diamond, soccer field, and playing field.

School-Recreation Facilities

Ridgewater College has four tennis courts, a practice athletic field and three ball diamonds.

Kennedy Elementary School has four tennis courts, a practice athletic field and a football stadium/all-weather track.

Willmar Junior High School has four tennis courts, a softball area, a practice athletic field and an indoor swimming pool available for community use.

Willmar Senior High School has tennis courts, softball diamonds, practice athletic fields, and an indoor swimming pool available for community use.

Other Recreation/Park Facilities

Flags of Honor Park is located on North Business Highway 71/23 adjacent to Willmar Lake. This memorial park includes picnic and sheltered areas, as well as the Angel of Hope, walking path, and a tribute to the Civilian Conservation Corp.

Bike paths are located throughout the City. They will soon all be connected, allowing one to bike from one end of town to the other on designated bike paths.

Bergquist Nature Area is located on Gorton Ave. in northwest Willmar (near 19th St. NW intersection). The area is 5.6 acres and includes a nature trail.

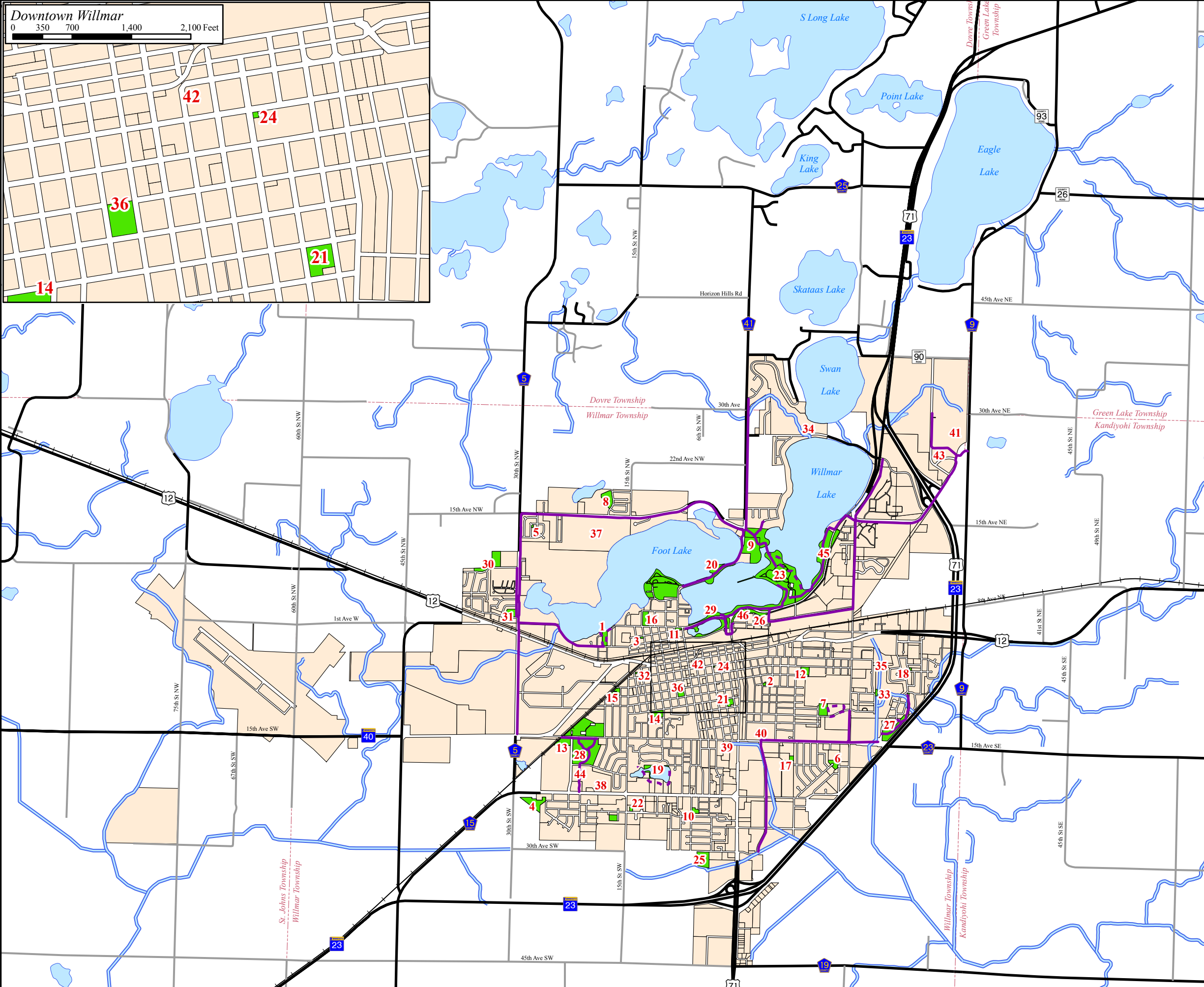
Rau Park is 2 acres in size and features scouting, fishing and picnic areas. It is located on 7th St. NW overlooking Foot Lake.

Selvig International Park is a 0.7-acre park with a flagpole, benches, and fountain in Downtown Willmar at the corner of 4th St. SW and Becker Avenue Southwest

Valley Golf Course is a public, nine-hole golf course in Southeast Willmar.

Eagle Creek Golf Club is a semi-private, eighteen-hole golf course situated in the Northeast part of the City overlooking Willmar and Swan Lakes.

Downtown Willmar
 0 350 700 1,400 2,100 Feet



Map 3C: City of Willmar Parks, Trails and other Recreation Facilities

Legend

- Parks
- Willmar Municipality
- Unpaved Road
- Townships
- Paved Road
- River, Stream or Ditch
- Railroad
- Paved Trail
- Unpaved Trail

Willmar Trails

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bergquist Nature Area 2. Bjorsell Park 3. Canigo Park 4. Cardinal Park 5. Collegeview Park 6. East Willmar Park 7. Gesch Park 8. Hanson Park 9. Hedin Park 10. Hilltop Park 11. Jaycee Park 12. Lincoln School and Eastside Park 13. Lions Park 14. Miller Park 15. Minnegasco Park 16. Northside Park 17. Pleasant View Park 18. Rainbow Park 19. Ramblewood Park 20. Rau Park 21. Rice Park 22. Richland Park 23. Robbins Island Regional Park 24. Selvig International Park 25. Southfield Park 26. Sperry Park 27. Sunrise Park 28. Swansson Field Recreational Complex 29. Thompson Park 30. Valley Side Park 31. Vos Park 32. Wellin Park 33. Welshire Park | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 34. Eagle Creek Golf Course 35. Valley Golf Course 36. Garfield School and Park 37. Ridgewater College 38. Roosevelt School 39. Washington Learning Center 40. Willmar Junior High 41. Willmar Senior High 42. City Auditorium 43. Civic Center and Ice Arena 44. Dorothy Olson Aquatic Center 45. Flags of Honor 46. Memorial Parkway |
|--|--|



Prepared by Mid-Minnesota
 Development Commission
 February 2009



Table 3H: Willmar's Parks & Recreation Facilities

	Playground	Picnicking	Shelter	Restrooms	Ball Diamonds	Softball Area	Tennis Court	Ice Skating	Hockey Rinks	Basketball	Field	Swimming	Hiking/ Trails	Fishing	Grilling Area	Horseshoes
Regional Parks																
Robbins Island Park	X	X	X	X		X						X	X	X	X	X
Memorial Parkway		X											X		X	
Major Recreational Facilities																
North Swansson Field	X		X		X*	X*										
South Swansson Field	X			X	X		X				X		X			
Neighborhood Parks																
Sperry Park	X	X	X	X		X	X*			X					X	
Rice Park	X	X	X	X			X			X		X***			X	X
Jaycees Park	X									X						
Northside Park	X	X	X	X	X		X*	X		X						
Bjorsell Park	X									X						
Lincoln/Eastside Park	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Miller Park	X	X	X	X	X*	X	X*			X					X	
Hilltop Park	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X						X
Minnegasco Park	X														X	
Pleasant View Park	X	X	X				X			X						
Vos Park	X		X		X					X					X	
Welshire Park	X															
Gesch Park	X		X		X	X				X						
Valley Side Park	X		X		X					X						
Ramblewood Park	X		X							X			X			
Cardinal Park	X															
East Willmar Park	X															
Hanson Park	X	X	X										X		X	
Hedin Park	X		X					X					X			
Lions Park		X	X												X	
Southfield Park	X		X		X	X				X					X	
Sunrise Park	X		X		X	X				X			X			X
Thompson Park		X											X		X	
Ortenblad Park**																
West Wind Estates**																

* Lighted Facility ** Parks not yet developed ***Wading Pool

Source: City of Willmar Public Works Department

Table 3H: Willmar’s Parks & Recreation Facilities (continued...)

	Playground	Picnicking	Shelter	Restrooms	Ball Diamonds	Softball Area	Tennis Court	Ice Skating	Hockey Rinks	Basketball	Field	Swimming	Hiking/ Trails	Fishing	Grilling Area	Horseshoes
Mini Parks																
Canigo Park	X															
Wellin Park	X															
Rainbow Park	X															
Richland Park	X															
Collegeview Park	X		X							X						
School Neighborhood Parks																
Garfield	X		X		X	X		X	X	X						
Washington	X					X				X						
Roosevelt					X											
C.O.B. Park	X															
School Recreation Facilities																
Ridgewater Community College					X		X				X					
Willmar Senior High School						X	X				X	X				
Willmar Junior High School						X	X				X	X				
City Auditorium	X			X						X						
Other Park & Recreation Facilities																
Bergquist Nature Area													X			
Selvig International Park		X														
Rau Park		X	X										X	X	X	

* Lighted Facility

Source: City of Willmar Public Works Department

Chapter Four: Current and Emerging Issues

Chapter Four presents the nature and extent of current and emerging issues facing Willmar. This inventory of issues, however, is not intended to remain constant over the next 20 years. Some of these issues may become lower in priority as measures are taken by the City to address them. Additional issues will also arise that should be added to the list as they emerge.

A key element to a Comprehensive Plan is being able to address the current and emerging issues of the City. The issues facing Willmar now, and in the future, will largely dictate the development that will occur and the planning that will need to take place. Although many of the following issues were identified throughout the comprehensive planning process, several public meetings were held in an effort to specifically gather a list of issues and concerns from local officials and citizens. The issues identified in the goal areas are used as a framework for the objectives and policy guidelines found in Chapter Five. The objectives and policy guidelines, in turn, provide specific information on the issues that are important in Willmar and clearly define how decisions should be made by the City on a day-to-day basis.

Identifying Issues with a Topic Area

Several of the issues identified in this Chapter could be placed in more than one topic area. For the purposes of minimizing the repetitiveness of issues, each issue is presented once in the goal area that best characterizes the issue.

Economic Growth

- **Economic development that follows current and future infrastructure** - Commercial and industrial development should be encouraged to be located in areas that are currently (or soon will be) serviced by water, sewer, and streets in order to make the development more cost effective.
- **Location of industry** - New industrial development should first be directed towards currently developed industrial lands, with measures taken to buffer industrial uses from other types of development.
- **Preferred businesses** - When attempting to attract new business to the City, the size, type, wages, jobs, and utility demand of the prospective companies should be taken into consideration. It is important that new businesses be compatible with current and future land use plans and that they create a positive impact on the local economy. It was brought up several times during the Plan's public meetings that the City is a regional center for medical and retail services. This niche should be emphasized and strengthened.

- **Downtown Marketing & Renewal** – The Willmar Design Center has been working on bringing to fruition the Willmar Downtown Visioneer with four strategic actions. These efforts will hopefully restore and improve the Central Business District of the City.
- **Promote innovative marketing strategies** - To strengthen the local economy, the City should develop innovative marketing strategies designed to attract new businesses.
- **Tourism** - The City’s location near many lakes, wooded areas, trails, parks, and hunting and fishing resources provides a wide variety of tourism opportunities. Tourism is an important part of the economy, as it produces jobs and results in additional money being spent in the community. One way to accomplish this, as suggested at the Plan’s public meetings, is through more attractive entrances that help make Willmar more welcoming.

Public Utilities

- **Costs of new development and tax implications** - Prior to providing infrastructure to newly developed areas or to land that is anticipated to experience growth, the costs that will be incurred to provide water, sewer, streets, and other services to these areas should be determined. In some cases, the costs to provide services and infrastructure to new development may exceed the taxes that will be generated. Also, new development can increase the property value of neighboring land, which results in these landowners paying higher taxes. Developers should pay 100 percent of infrastructure costs. Infill development was suggested at the Plan’s public meetings to help utilize existing infrastructure investments.
- Renewable energy options are available for public utilities. Future energy needs can be accommodated in a number of ways that are environmentally sensitive.
- With rapid changes occurring in the field of telecommunications and the provision of Broad Band internet service, new development will have to make accommodations for the latest technology.

Parks and Open Space

- **Parks and recreation** - As Willmar grows, the City will need to identify new areas for parks and recreation. Some communities are now requiring each new development to dedicate a certain percentage of the development for open space or recreational purposes (i.e., 10%). This could include something as simple as a picnic area or as detailed as a new park. Parks were one of the Community’s major assets identified frequently during the Plan’s public meetings. A payment in lieu of land dedication may be an acceptable alternative.

- **Sidewalks, trails, bike, and pedestrian connections** – These are not only becoming more crucial for recreation, but also for citywide transportation. All City paths/trails should be interconnected.
- **Value of open/“green” space** - Open spaces, or natural areas, provide recreational, ecological, and aesthetic value to the City.

Natural Resources & Environmental Quality

- **Protecting natural resources** - The Willmar area has a diverse natural resource base that provides economic, recreation, and aesthetic benefits to both residents and visitors. The City should support policies designed to protect these natural resources.
- **Protect, improve, and promote area lakes** – Foot, Willmar, and Swan Lakes provide recreational and economic benefits to the City of Willmar and surrounding area. Improving water quality and enhancing associated recreational opportunities are important to the tourism, property values, and aesthetic appeal of the community. Water monitoring and shoreline preservation were suggested at the Plans’ public meetings.
- **Protect wetlands** - Wetlands provide numerous benefits, including improved water quality, flood water retention, and wildlife habitat. Land use decisions need to consider the importance of wetlands and recognize them as a benefit in future land use designs/development.
- **Consult local agencies** - Coordinated planning activities between the City and affected agencies (i.e., DNR, MPCA, Mn/DOT, etc.) could help to ensure that efficient growth occurs with minimal adverse environmental impacts.

Residential & Social Development

- **Sustainable Housing** - The use of innovative housing subdivision design can create higher density of housing, minimize land consumption, and preserve open space for all to enjoy.
- **Subdivision Development Policies** - Subdivision development policies and regulations should be established in a way that gives developers an incentive to make the most efficient use of a piece of property, while protecting unique natural features.
- **Pedestrian Friendly** - New developments should include design concepts that accommodate people with a wide variety of pedestrian needs, including youth, handicapped, and seniors.

- **Equal Housing Opportunities** – Good housing should be available to all citizens, regardless of race, income, religion, etc. Mixes of twin homes, single-family homes, HRA housing, apartments, and the rehabilitation of existing housing was all suggested during the Plan’s public meetings.

Transportation

- **Future streets need to follow infrastructure** - The City needs to systematically plan for the expansion and new construction of streets as the community grows. This especially means connecting new roadways logically to existing roadways.
- **Street maintenance** - The maintenance of streets is an expensive, but necessary, component of the City’s transportation system. Capital improvements planning for roadway maintenance should account for anticipated increases in traffic and the demand for additional roads.
- **Pedestrian safety** - Pedestrian concerns should be at the forefront of all planning and development activities. Trails, paths, and bike lanes emphasizing connectivity were identified by the public during the Plan’s various meetings.
- **Safety concerns** - Growth will result in increased traffic. Proper traffic controls such as signing, traffic lights, and access management regulations can help create safer roadways for the public.
- **Public transit** - Providing public transportation opportunities for local residents can provide mobility for an aging population and people with disabilities. The KAT (Kandiyohi Area Transit) bus system helps to fill this need.
- **Railroad concerns** - The railroad, which runs through the City parallel to U.S. Highway 12, presents a number of key planning issues. New railroad crossing points are extremely difficult to accomplish (because of safety and liability concerns expressed by the railroad companies). This creates traffic flow and access issues for future development.
- **Right-of-way widths** – There is a trend toward reducing right-of-way widths in residential developments to decrease infrastructure costs and increase housing affordability.

Land Use Planning

- **Urban growth boundaries** – The land surrounding Willmar where growth is anticipated to occur is called the City’s “urban growth boundary”. Continuously working with surrounding townships to identify urban growth boundaries and determine the need for annexation agreements will be important as the City experiences growth.

- **Land use coordination** - Coordination and consistency between City and County zoning and subdivision regulations can help create orderly growth patterns for new development.
- **Location of future annexation** - The location of future annexations should occur within the identified urban growth boundary. Factors to take into consideration in determining the feasibility of annexation include whether the annexation promotes the health, safety, and welfare of the public; the impact to residents and landowners in the proposed annexed area; costs incurred by the City to annex the property; the future tax implications of the annexation; and the future development opportunities in the area to be annexed.
- **Promote orderly annexation** - Orderly annexation promotes intergovernmental cooperation between the City and townships in determining the need for annexation and carrying out the process.
- **Current land use patterns** - Current land use patterns are important as they indicate existing growth policies, and can set the stage for what future development policies need to be implemented.
- **Minimize urban sprawl** - Development in existing urban areas should occur before new land is annexed (when feasible) to help minimize urban sprawl and to reduce the costs of providing additional public infrastructure.
- **Examine current zoning policies** - The City will need to update its Zoning Ordinance in the future in order to ensure it is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Preservation of historical places** - The City has some important historical buildings and places listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The City should explore all opportunities to preserve these areas, including the adoption of a preservation ordinance.
- **Shoreland management** - The City has adopted a Shoreland Management Ordinance that needs to be periodically reviewed and updated. In addition, the City's residents need to become better aware of the Ordinance and the rationale behind it.
- **Downtown Willmar** - The Willmar Design Center has four strategic action strategies resulting from community visioning meetings facilitated by the Minnesota Design Team. These strategies are intended to reconnect the community with the downtown and help to revitalize the area.

Citizen Participation and Intergovernmental Cooperation

- **Involve Kandiyohi County and surrounding Townships in the planning process** - The planning activities of the City, surrounding townships, and Kandiyohi County are all impacted by each other. The City should seek input from these local units of government prior to making important land use decisions, and County zoning in Willmar’s urban growth areas should be coordinated with the City’s intended land use for that area.
- **City and Township cooperation** - Cooperation between the City and surrounding townships is needed to effectively address new development in potential urban growth areas. The underlying philosophy is that the City and townships form one “community,” and future land use decisions should be based on what is best for both local units of government.
- **Establish a collective vision for the Willmar community** - A collective vision for Willmar is being established by the Comprehensive Plan and should be implemented accordingly. It was suggested at one of the Plan’s public meetings that there should be a 20+ year plan for growth.
- **Promote more local control on State and Federal projects** - Input from local residents and the City on State and Federal projects can help keep activities in conformance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and relevant to community needs.

Chapter Five: Goals, Objectives, and Policies

This section of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the City of Willmar's goals, objectives and policy guidelines. They will be used to help make land use and planning decisions by those responsible for Willmar's future. The goals have been organized into eight topic areas. The goals are used as a framework for the objectives and policy guidelines. The policies, in turn, provide specific information on what values and issues are important to Willmar residents. More importantly, the objectives and policies clearly identify how decisions should be made by City officials on a day-to-day basis.

After discussion of issues and alternative overall growth policies, the following goals and policies are suggested for future growth and development for the City of Willmar. It is important to note that a goal is a long-range objective, whereas a policy is an action statement intended to implement the goal. These goals and policies are important because they constitute the land use plan and serve as the basis for the ordinances used to implement the plan. The courts have increasingly held that the goals and policies of a comprehensive plan are important determinants in interpreting different provisions of a zoning ordinance.

The community's nine goal areas are listed below:

- A. Economic Growth**
- B. Public Utilities**
- C. Transportation**
- D. Natural Resources & Environmental Quality**
- E. Parks & Open Space**
- F. Residential & Social Development**
- G. Historic Preservation & Aesthetics**
- H. Downtown**
- I. Citizen Participation & Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan, goals, objectives, and policies are defined in the following way:

Goals: Idealistic statements intended to be attained at some undetermined future date. Goals are purposefully general in nature.

Objectives: Statements designed to achieve a goal. Objectives always begin with an action verb (i.e., promote, expand, design, etc.) and can be measurable if a date, dollar amount, or similar value is identified.

Policies: Statements which support the action of the objective. Policies are more specific recommendations and can be converted into action work plans.

Section A: Economic Growth

1. GOAL: To have an economically sustainable community offering a diverse set of services, goods, and employment opportunities.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Promote economic development which will be beneficial to the community, including tax base enhancement, increased aesthetics, and expanded employment opportunities.
- b. Promote the existing economic base and the expansion of existing businesses.
- c. Work with the Economic Development Commission on a variety of business retention and expansion activities.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Encourage programs that promote diversified commercial growth to meet the needs of West-Central Minnesota.
- b. Strengthen the business districts through various development and redevelopment programs.
- c. Encourage full development of existing industrial and commercial land within the City.
- d. Encourage the expansion of existing, and development of new, businesses at suitable locations.
- e. Encourage commercial property owners to maintain and upgrade their existing buildings and land through reasonable design standards and maintenance ordinances.
- f. Vacant properties should meet property maintenance standards.
- g. Provide reasonable and safe access to all retail and industrial uses.
- h. Provide adequate parking for all business and community needs, when feasible.
- i. The impact on parking should be examined prior to making land use decisions.
- j. Industrial and commercial land uses shall be located in areas where the adverse impact on surrounding land uses is minimized.

- k. Commercial and industrial uses should be located on soil types that are most able to accommodate such development.
- l. Industrial sites should have good access to utilities and transportation routes.
- m. Air, water and noise pollution from industry should be monitored and regulated in accordance with the MPCA (and MS4 requirements).
- n. Industrial and commercial sites should be preserved for future growth and not utilized for further residential development.
- o. Development should occur only in areas where utilities can be provided with optimal efficiency and cost.
- p. Provide for the orderly expansion of commercial, industrial, and residential areas.
- q. Encourage development through government participation in public finance programs such as JOBZ, tax increment financing, Economic Development Commission programs, etc.
- r. Promote green space and outdoor amenities by incorporating them into commercial and industrial development plans.
- s. Cultivate positive aesthetics and image of commercial, industrial, and residential areas, encouraging continual renewal and improvement.
- t. Encourage the expansion of medical services in the community, recognizing these services as a major industry bringing jobs and visitors to the City.
- u. Facilitate housing and community services as demographics change, in preparation for the baby boomers as seniors, when reviewing development plans.
- v. Promote activities of the Economic Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce, and other community organizations for both business retention and expansion.
- w. Promote Willmar as a great location to host conferences and other special events.
- x. Recognize the importance of Ridgewater College in contributing to the city's economy, diversity, identity, activity, arts, entertainment, opportunity, and social fabric.
- y. Continue to maintain, expand, and develop important public/semi-public community facilities, such as the Civic Center, Library, Aquatic Center, parks, and other key activity venues.
- z. Promote the use of the Willmar Municipal Airport as an economic development tool.

- aa. Expand and promote tourism opportunities throughout the greater Willmar area, including the use of our extensive trails, lakes, and parks.

Section B: Public Utilities

- 1. **GOAL:** To efficiently make available a full range of public utilities throughout the community.

- 2. **OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Make public utilities affordable to both residents and business owners.
- b. Provide public utilities in a manner that reinforces the City's staged growth and redevelopment policies.

- 3. **POLICIES:**

- a. Control City expansion by creating an urban growth boundary map based on public utility extension plans and forecasts.
- b. Encourage new development in areas contiguous to existing development in the City to bring about orderly expansion of public utilities, thus supporting smart-growth land use practices while at the same time preserving parkland and green space.
- c. Encourage dense development in areas where the soils, water table, and geological features support the efficient extension of public utilities.
- d. Require a full complement of public utilities such as sewer, water, gas, electricity, telecommunications, broadband, storm sewer/retention ponds, etc.
- e. In the upgrading of public utilities in redevelopment areas, refine the assessment policies to encourage the continued use and/or redevelopment of these areas.
- f. Develop and update a public utilities plan and growth boundary map.
- g. Affirm the City's desire to serve all residents and business with municipal power, etc., and to work with other public and private utility entities in regional service matters.
- h. Endorse technology advancement in industry and technology growth and awareness throughout the community, especially in new development.
- i. Promote the expansion and use of the district hot water heating system.

Section C: Transportation

1. **GOAL:** To have a comprehensive and functional public transportation system that serves the entire community.

2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Provide a transportation system (street, rail, air, pedestrian & bike trails) which complements land use development and reinforces a staged growth approach to future development.
 - b. Encourage street and trail systems which maximize accessibility to places of employment, recreation, shopping, entertainment, and all developed portions of the City
 - c. Cultivate a healthy City that is walkable and bikeable.

3. **POLICIES:**
 - a. Integrate land use planning with transportation planning to minimize the adverse effects of transportation systems (i.e., noise and air pollution) on adjacent development.
 - b. Avoid developing transportation facilities that will adversely affect natural resources or encourage leap-frog development.
 - c. Develop a transportation system that properly balances considerations of safety, cost, accessibility and environmental protection.
 - d. Control land use development at major intersections and interchanges to avoid compromising the safety, accessibility and function of the streets involved.
 - e. Develop a transportation system that stimulates economic development and provides for the efficient, non-disruptive flow of goods, especially from rural to urban markets.
 - f. Develop a transportation system that properly integrates all modes of transportation.
 - g. Develop and participate in programs to ensure adequate parking in the downtown area.
 - h. Utilize existing right-of-way for the expansion of transportation systems to reduce the amount of agricultural land taken out of production, when feasible.
 - i. Develop additional minor arterials and collectors as the City grows.

- j. Encourage the beautification of principal arterial entrances into Willmar.
- k. Encourage expansion of the airport to accommodate larger aircraft and commercial development.
- l. Encourage connectivity of neighborhoods, including through cul-de-sacs via easements along property lines.
- m. Encourage the study and planning of a second crossing over the railroad tracks that is not at grade.
- n. Provide for efficient movement of traffic from residential areas in the north to commercial areas in the south (i.e., 1st St. N to 1st St. S. and 7th St. NW).
- o. Include aesthetic, as well as functional, considerations for all transportation plans.
- p. Encourage residential street design that allows for ancillary sidewalks and bike lanes, and storm water impacts, as well as to reduce residential development costs.
- q. Identify existing streets for designated bike lanes on the master transportation plan.
- r. Develop a bike trail system that encompasses existing and new developments.
- s. Access should be controlled consistent with the functional classification of roadways.

Section D: Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

1. **GOALS:** To protect and enhance the air, water, and land resources in the City as a vital ingredient of the human living environment.
2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Protect and enhance the existing lakes and wildlife habitat as vital natural resources to the City.
 - b. Promote standards for energy efficient buildings.
 - c. Promote programs to minimize energy consumption.
 - d. Promote recycling and programs to encourage the re-use of solid waste.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Promote land use management policies and programs that will protect the natural resources of the City.
- b. Utilize appropriate state and federal standards related to air, water, and noise pollution.
- c. Use natural resource information, including soils data, as one basis for determining the direction of future expansion of the City and for public open space acquisition programs.
- d. Require the use of natural resource information in subdivision development and project design.
- e. Regulate development in the areas of the City where soil suitability and high water table require such regulation.
- f. Encourage and promote reforestation and tree planting programs within the community as part of the development/redevelopment process.
- g. Participate in tree disease control programs on public and private property.
- h. Regulate development in such a manner as to preserve natural drainage in the community, when possible.
- i. Enact ordinances to control soil erosion and siltation.
- j. Enact standards and ordinances to regulate the removal of natural vegetation.
- k. Require the staging of urban development projects so that the smallest practical area of land is exposed at any one period of time in order to minimize soil erosion.
- l. Encourage the owners of major tracts of undeveloped land to construct and maintain shelter-belts and implement other soil erosion control programs such as contour plowing, strip-cropping, etc.
- m. Preserve prime agricultural land from non-agricultural development to the greatest extent possible without impeding orderly urban and economic expansion.
- n. Promote water management policies/programs to conserve the quantity and maintain the quality of all water resources in the community and its environs.
- o. Encourage the use of energy conservation technology and techniques, such as solar, wind, geo thermal etc.
- p. Protect marshes/wildlife habitat in future development areas.

- q. Encourage programs to retrofit existing buildings to make them more energy efficient.
- r. Promote recycling and the reuse of solid waste products.
- s. Encourage the use of refuse-derived fuels and alternative energies when proven to be safe and efficient.
- t. Promote the use of pedestrian and bike access to public waters , parks, and other public amenities via trails.
- u. Support brownfield redevelopment projects, when feasible.

Section E: Parks and Open Space

1. GOAL: To increase and enhance park and open space recreation opportunities by promoting maximum multi-use of park and recreation resources.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Manage the community’s natural resources to provide appropriate park and open space recreation opportunities.
- b. Provide for new park and open space recreation areas as a part of the residential development process.
- c. Plan street, pedestrian, and trail systems that provide access to all developed portions of the City, connecting parks and open spaces.

3. POLICIES:

- a. As residential and commercial/industrial areas expand, park and recreational facilities designed to serve the developing area should be provided. This should be done either by a dedication of land to the public, or by a payment in lieu of dedication.
- b. Include dedicated areas for parks and open space in new subdivisions, when feasible.
- c. When feasible, all parks and open spaces shall be linked via trails.
- d. Encourage preservation and management of existing parks and open space areas.
- e. A system of tree plantings and landscaping, as well as reforestation, should be enacted to enhance the beauty of each area to the extent its primary use will permit.

- f. Parking areas that are provided in parks should be properly landscaped and surfaced.
- g. Where industrial or commercial uses border or are located adjacent to a park, they should be screened by appropriate plantings.
- h. Where recreation areas are located in residential neighborhoods, appropriate plantings and screenings should be provided to protect the neighborhood from noise.
- i. Abandoned railroad areas should be developed as public trails or recreational areas when the future rail use of the site is not foreseeable.
- j. Areas best suited for future parks, open space, and trails should be identified and preserved.

Section F: Residential and Social Development

1. GOAL: To preserve and develop a mixture of different housing types, densities, and cost ranges that will meet the needs of all citizens.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Establish and maintain safe, healthful, and blight-free residences and neighborhoods.
- b. Locate housing to provide convenient access to public and private facilities and activities.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Monitor the existing and future housing needs for the various income and age groups.
- b. Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing structures in the community.
- c. Encourage the development of neighborhoods that include a variety of housing types and cost ranges.
- d. Encourage public and private participation in local, state and federal programs for the provision of low and moderate income housing units.
- e. Promote the location of higher-density housing units near commercial, medical and employment concentrations.

- f. Encourage design standards in subdivisions and higher-density housing that take into consideration the social and psychological well-being of their residents.
- g. Encourage innovative site and housing unit design for energy conservation, aesthetics, open space preservation, bike and pedestrian access etc.
- h. Regulate home occupations carefully to avoid or minimize traffic problems and incompatible land uses in residential districts.
- i. Regulate industrial or commercial land uses to control truck traffic and to reduce land use conflicts with residential properties.
- j. Encourage the location of residential subdivisions where City services are readily available and in areas which have direct access to existing transportation routes.
- k. Promote the orderly growth of residential developments with logical expansion of municipal services and utilities.
- l. Encourage transition zones between low and high density residential developments.
- m. Restrict the location of mobile homes to mobile home parks where adequate services can be provided.
- n. Promote the use of rain gardens and infiltration basins to reduce storm water impacts.

Section G: Historic Preservation and Aesthetics

- 1. GOAL:** To protect, preserve and enhance valuable historic and aesthetic sites throughout the community.

- 2. OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Protect, preserve, and restore key historic buildings and sites throughout the community.
 - b. Create, maintain, and enhance visually pleasing areas and neighborhoods throughout the community.

- 3. POLICIES:**
 - a. Maintain a historic-design inventory of the community with special emphasis on the Central Business District.

- b. Enforce design, screening and landscape standards in the construction of all public facilities, utilities and buildings, when needed.
- c. Incorporate design and landscaping standards in all private development, including residential, commercial and industrial projects.
- d. Require all land uses which are either a potential source of nuisance or of questionable visual value such as junk yards, gravel and coal storage areas, etc. to be landscaped and screened from adjacent areas.
- e. Regulate the size, placement and visual appearance of all signs, whether private or public.
- f. Cooperate with local historic preservation groups for enhanced urban design throughout the community

Section H: Downtown

Willmar Downtown Planning

The Willmar Design Center and the citizens of Willmar have initiated downtown planning and have outlined a number of strategic actions to enhance the Downtown. The four main recommendations include 1) restoring Litchfield Avenue, 2) establishing a downtown commons area, 3) urbanizing First Street, and 4) developing a connection to the lakes. The Willmar Downtown Visioneer was created to summarize these initiatives. For more information, please contact the Willmar Design Center.

1. **GOAL:** To maintain and enhance the downtown area as a great place to live, work, shop, dine, and entertain.
2. **OBJECTIVES:**
 - a. Revitalize the downtown area for both business and residential uses.
 - b. Encourage a quality urban residential and commercial connection to the lakes.
 - c. Facilitate high pedestrian use and green space amenities.
 - d. Maintain and/or increase employment opportunities,

3. POLICIES:

- a. Encourage the restoration of Litchfield Ave. SW and SE by facilitating direct access to the bypass.
- b. Allow development with higher density and relaxed parking requirements beyond the existing Central Business District to facilitate redevelopment.
- c. Encourage development of the downtown commons area/parking.
- d. Support groups such as the Design Center that focus on downtown improvements.

Section I: Citizen Participation and Intergovernmental Cooperation

1. GOAL: To involve citizens, agencies, and organizations in the City's key decisions.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- a. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues between different levels of government.
- b. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues between the various community agencies and organizations.
- c. Maintain open and regular communication relating to planning and development issues with the public.

3. POLICIES:

- a. Encourage open communication relating to all planning and development issues between the different levels of government, including the townships, city, county, school district, regional development commission, and state agencies.
- b. Seek comment from adjacent governmental units on proposed new growth and development policies, comprehensive plans and development ordinances which are likely to have an area-wide effect.
- c. Integrate planning and development by involving the various City departments and appointed commissions in planning and development issues.
- d. Inform and educate the public, encouraging the widest possible citizen participation in the planning and development process.

Chapter Six: Implementation

This Chapter describes the key components needed to properly implement the Willmar Comprehensive Plan. The primary feature is Map 6A, which establishes a land use plan for Willmar's future growth and development. In addition to the Map, Chapter Six outlines what other implementation steps will be followed in order to accomplish the goals and policies in Chapter Five.

Willmar Land Use Plan

The City of Willmar Land Use Plan consists of Map 6A and its corresponding text. Map 6A presents Willmar's Urban Growth Area represented by the yellow and black lines. The current corporate boundary is shown on the Map with the various colors representing how the land is currently zoned. The Urban Growth Areas represent where Willmar will most likely grow over the next 20 years. Exactly when any future development will occur, however, is nearly impossible to predict. For this reason, the Urban Growth Boundary is not a definite future corporate boundary, but rather it depicts where Willmar could logically grow in the future.

Some of the factors that will influence the City of Willmar's future growth include:

1. The City of Willmar serves as a regional center for West-Central Minnesota. This has resulted in significant development over the last decades. As these and others expand in the Willmar area, employees will increasingly need residential housing.
2. Increasing transportation costs will result in a higher demand for housing in the City.
3. Transportation improvements along State Highway 23, U.S. Highway 71, and U.S. Highway 12 have made travel to and from Willmar both quicker and safer. Traditionally, these types of infrastructure improvements are followed by an increase in all types of land use development (i.e., residential, commercial, industrial, etc.).

Realizing that predicting the timing of future land use development is difficult, the City decided not to identify specific periods of time that additional land would need to be incorporated. Instead, the primary purpose of the Urban Growth Plan Map is to establish a communication process between Willmar, the surrounding townships, and Kandiyohi County.

























Urban Growth Area Descriptions

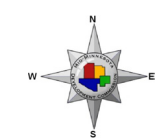
Map 6A shows the location of each Urban Growth Area described below. It is the City's desire to preserve agricultural land for as long as is feasible and to deter sprawl and/or leap-frog development.

- A** **AREAS A** The two Urban Growth Areas surrounding the airport should be reserved for airport related business and industry. The land should remain in agricultural use pending the logical expansion of industrial use through annexation, as the City expands to the West and municipal services become available. Areas A contain approximately 1,327 acres of land all impacted by Airport Zoning. It may also be the site of a future railroad bypass.
- B** **AREA B** Low density residential development with scattered nodes of neighborhood commercial development, including limited retail and service businesses, as municipal services are made available (approximately 3,307 acres).
- C** **AREA C** Future interchange with expanded highway commercial development when municipal services become available. There will also be some mixed density residential development (approximately 362 acres)
- D** **AREA D** Area D, containing approximately 3,147 acres, will have low density residential development with scattered nodes of neighborhood commercial development, including limited retail and service businesses.
- E** **AREA E** This area will continue with agricultural uses until access and services become available. Future conversion of the existing railroad spur line to a trail as a link in the current trail system is anticipated. Development will transition from industrial in the south (where it currently exists) to residential in the north. Area E contains approximately 198 acres.
- F** **AREA F** Limited commercial development when municipal services become available (approximately 178 acres).
- G** **AREA G** Residential development when municipal services become available (approximately 529 acres).
- H** **AREAS H** Agricultural until annexed. Commercial development when municipal services become available (approximately 63 acres).
- I** **AREA I** Mixed commercial and light industrial development transitioning to mixed residential development as municipal services become available (approximately 883 acres).
- J** **AREA J** There will be residential development with limited commercial development adjacent to the interchange planned at CSAH 15 (approximately 983 acres).
- K** **AREA K** Agricultural uses changing to industrial as municipal services become available (approximately 559 acres).

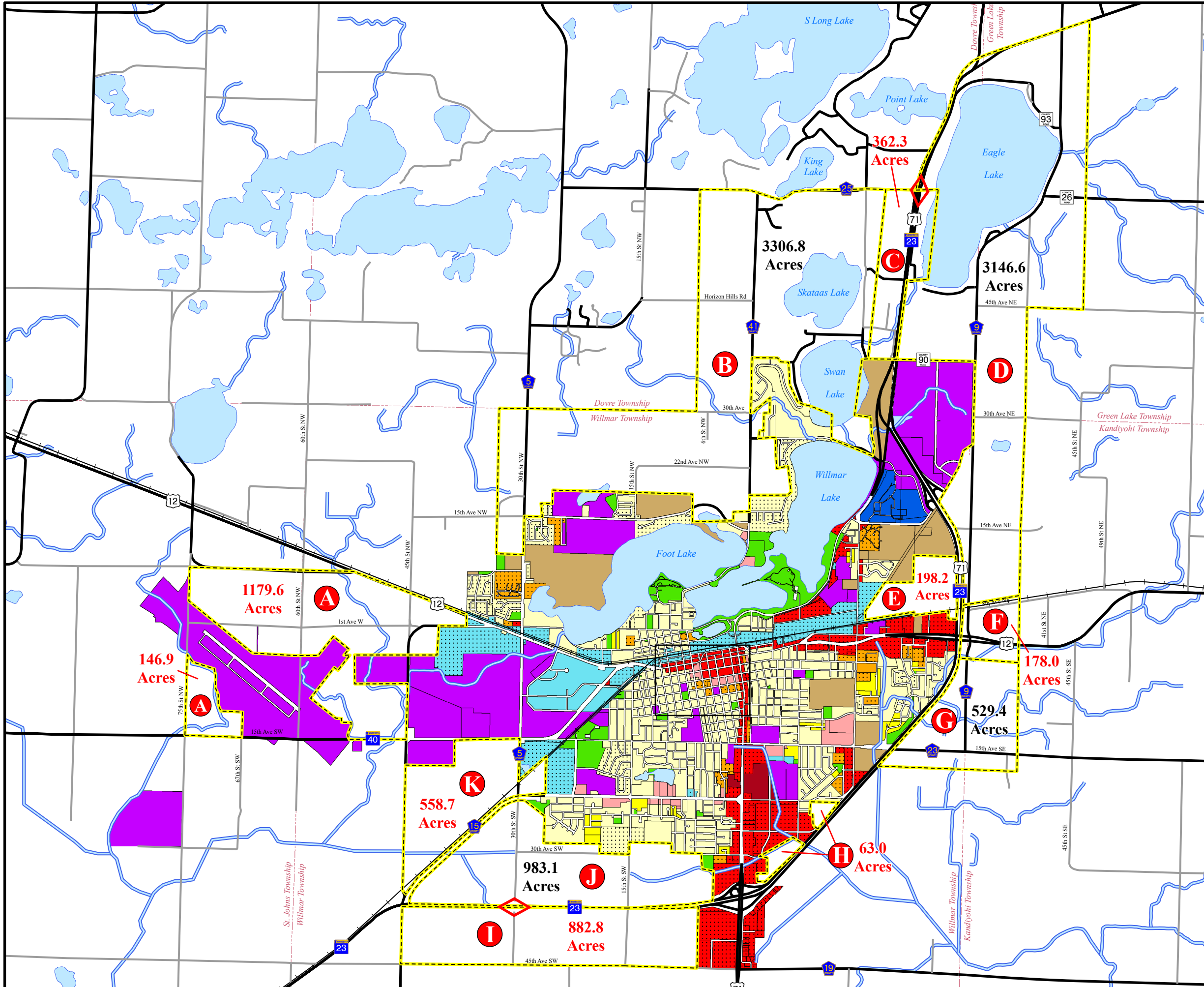
Map 6A: City of Willmar: Future Land Use

Legend

-  Urban Growth Boundary
-  Unpaved Road
-  Paved Road
-  Railroad
-  River, Stream or Ditch
-  R-1, One Family Residential
-  R-2, One and Two Family Res
-  R-3, Low Density Multi Family
-  R-4, Medium Density Multi Fam
-  R-5, High Density Multi Family
-  LB, Limited Business
-  GB, General Business
-  CBD, Central Business District
-  SC, Shopping Center
-  I-1, Limited Industry
-  I-2, General Industry
-  P, Park District
-  A, Agriculture
-  G, Government/Institution Dist
-  T, Technology District
-  Lakes
-  Townships
-  A - K Future Land Use
(See text in Comprehensive Plan)
-  Future Interchange



Prepared by Mid-Minnesota
Development Commission
February 2009



Using the Future Land Use Map

Simply having an Urban Growth Area Map does not guarantee that Willmar will exclusively grow in the areas identified in the City's Urban Growth Boundary over the next 20 years. In addition, the Land Use Plan does not guarantee that Willmar will only follow the prescribed type of land use for each area. The Planning Commission and City Council will need to evaluate each future land use opportunity on a case-by-case basis. The primary reason for this is because opportunities and circumstances change from day-to-day, and what is considered to be the best decision for Willmar today may not be the same belief in the future. In short, the future land use maps are intended to establish a helpful plan to guide future land use decisions, but are not intended to ruin opportunities that are perceived to be compatible with existing land use.

The City can, however, use the future land use maps as tools to protect against future development that is seen as not being good for the community. For example, if a developer wants to build a small industrial park in Area D, the City can objectively identify that residential land use has been identified for that area in this Comprehensive Plan.

Short-Term Implementation Steps

The following implementation steps have been identified by the City:

- Project A:** Update/amend the Subdivision Ordinance. The current Subdivision Ordinance dates from 1964. Updating the requirements and procedures for lot splits, street/path r-o-w widths, and park/parkland dedication is needed. Include a method for parkland dedication in new developments, or a payment in lieu of dedication. Collaboration between the Planning and Development Services, Assessing, Municipal Utilities, Engineering, and Fire Departments is crucial to ensure all new requirements/regulations are addressed. An electronic copy of the document will be available online, detailing the entire platting process for developers.
- Project B:** Update/amend the Zoning Ordinance. The current Zoning Ordinance dates from 1994. The Ordinance is in need of updating terms, procedures, and standards. It is necessary that all past amendments be compiled into a uniform document. An electronic copy of the Ordinance and zoning map will be available online, allowing the public full access to all the requirements.
- Project C:** Obtain software and staff training for a GIS interactive Zoning Map. The program would allow for data input for every parcel in the City limits including size, services, easements, zoning, setbacks, structures, etc. It would be a tool to aid in planning and land use decisions for the Assessing, Planning and Development Services, Public Works, Police, and Fire Departments, as well as realtors and the general public.

- Project D:** Determine the feasibility of combining Subdivision, Zoning, and Shoreland Ordinances into one uniform development code.
- Project E:** Work with Public Works, Willmar Community Education and Recreation, and interested local groups to plan for and expand the local trails system.
- Project F:** Plan for and execute future phases of redevelopment of the former airport.
- Project G:** Continue to support and develop 5-Year Capital Improvement Plans for all City Departments, focusing on the construction and maintenance of development-related, infrastructure and public buildings/facilities.

Appendix A:

**2000 Census
Profile for the
City of Willmar**

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Willmar city, Minnesota

Appendix A:
Census Data

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	18,351	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population	18,351	100.0
Male.....	8,742	47.6	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	2,911	15.9
Female.....	9,609	52.4	Mexican.....	1,806	9.8
Under 5 years.....	1,311	7.1	Puerto Rican.....	29	0.2
5 to 9 years.....	1,335	7.3	Cuban.....	18	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	1,333	7.3	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	1,058	5.8
15 to 19 years.....	1,607	8.8	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	15,440	84.1
20 to 24 years.....	1,428	7.8	White alone.....	14,990	81.7
25 to 34 years.....	2,355	12.8	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	2,493	13.6	Total population	18,351	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	2,174	11.8	In households.....	17,802	97.0
55 to 59 years.....	695	3.8	Householder.....	7,302	39.8
60 to 64 years.....	614	3.3	Spouse.....	3,454	18.8
65 to 74 years.....	1,258	6.9	Child.....	5,278	28.8
75 to 84 years.....	1,154	6.3	Own child under 18 years.....	4,514	24.6
85 years and over.....	594	3.2	Other relatives.....	564	3.1
Median age (years).....	34.2	(X)	Under 18 years.....	199	1.1
18 years and over.....	13,540	73.8	Nonrelatives.....	1,204	6.6
Male.....	6,284	34.2	Unmarried partner.....	397	2.2
Female.....	7,256	39.5	In group quarters.....	549	3.0
21 years and over.....	12,370	67.4	Institutionalized population.....	436	2.4
62 years and over.....	3,395	18.5	Noninstitutionalized population.....	113	0.6
65 years and over.....	3,006	16.4	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	1,157	6.3	Total households	7,302	100.0
Female.....	1,849	10.1	Family households (families).....	4,462	61.1
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	2,285	31.3
One race.....	18,101	98.6	Married-couple family.....	3,454	47.3
White.....	16,171	88.1	With own children under 18 years.....	1,579	21.6
Black or African American.....	165	0.9	Female householder, no husband present.....	731	10.0
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	84	0.5	With own children under 18 years.....	543	7.4
Asian.....	98	0.5	Nonfamily households.....	2,840	38.9
Asian Indian.....	8	-	Householder living alone.....	2,276	31.2
Chinese.....	19	0.1	Householder 65 years and over.....	930	12.7
Filipino.....	15	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	2,386	32.7
Japanese.....	2	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	1,917	26.3
Korean.....	14	0.1	Average household size.....	2.44	(X)
Vietnamese.....	10	0.1	Average family size.....	3.08	(X)
Other Asian ¹	30	0.2	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	20	0.1	Total housing units	7,789	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	1	-	Occupied housing units.....	7,302	93.7
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	1	-	Vacant housing units.....	487	6.3
Samoan.....	16	0.1	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	2	-	occasional use.....	21	0.3
Some other race.....	1,563	8.5	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	1.8	(X)
Two or more races.....	250	1.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	9.0	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units	7,302	100.0
White.....	16,350	89.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	4,598	63.0
Black or African American.....	244	1.3	Renter-occupied housing units.....	2,704	37.0
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	119	0.6	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.65	(X)
Asian.....	132	0.7	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.08	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	23	0.1			
Some other race.....	1,736	9.5			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Table DP-2. Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Willmar city, Minnesota

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT			NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH		
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school			Total population	18,395	100.0
Nursery school, preschool.....	4,769	100.0	Native.....	17,104	93.0
Kindergarten.....	229	4.8	Born in United States.....	16,984	92.3
Elementary school (grades 1-8).....	248	5.2	State of residence.....	12,943	70.4
High school (grades 9-12).....	2,249	47.2	Different state.....	4,041	22.0
College or graduate school.....	1,131	23.7	Born outside United States.....	120	0.7
	912	19.1	Foreign born.....	1,291	7.0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			Entered 1990 to March 2000.....	725	3.9
Population 25 years and over			Naturalized citizen.....	365	2.0
Less than 9th grade.....	11,453	100.0	Not a citizen.....	926	5.0
9th to 12th grade, no diploma.....	1,434	12.5	REGION OF BIRTH OF FOREIGN BORN		
High school graduate (includes equivalency).....	944	8.2	Total (excluding born at sea)		
Some college, no degree.....	3,403	29.7	Europe.....	34	2.6
Associate degree.....	2,637	23.0	Asia.....	62	4.8
Bachelor's degree.....	1,003	8.8	Africa.....	132	10.2
Graduate or professional degree.....	1,428	12.5	Oceania.....	-	-
Percent high school graduate or higher.....	604	5.3	Latin America.....	1,025	79.4
Percent bachelor's degree or higher.....	79.2	(X)	Northern America.....	38	2.9
	17.7	(X)	LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME		
MARITAL STATUS			Population 5 years and over		
Population 15 years and over			English only.....	17,053	100.0
Never married.....	14,369	100.0	Language other than English.....	14,142	82.9
Now married, except separated.....	4,125	28.7	Speak English less than "very well".....	2,911	17.1
Separated.....	7,443	51.8	Spanish.....	1,130	6.6
Widowed.....	214	1.5	Speak English less than "very well".....	2,312	13.6
Female.....	1,250	8.7	Other Indo-European languages.....	982	5.8
Divorced.....	1,073	7.5	Speak English less than "very well".....	433	2.5
Female.....	1,337	9.3	Asian and Pacific Island languages.....	58	0.3
	755	5.3	Speak English less than "very well".....	28	0.2
				9	0.1
GRANDPARENTS AS CAREGIVERS			ANCESTRY (single or multiple)		
Grandparent living in household with one or more own grandchildren under 18 years			Total population		
Grandparent responsible for grandchildren.....	207	100.0	<i>Total ancestries reported</i>	18,395	100.0
	134	64.7	Arab.....	22,515	122.4
VETERAN STATUS			Czech ¹	2	-
Civilian population 18 years and over			Danish.....	313	1.7
Civilian veterans.....	13,554	100.0	Dutch.....	396	2.2
	1,436	10.6	English.....	1,072	5.8
DISABILITY STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION			French (except Basque) ¹	525	2.9
Population 5 to 20 years			French Canadian ¹	492	2.7
With a disability.....	4,560	100.0	German.....	99	0.5
	487	10.7	Greek.....	6,256	34.0
Population 21 to 64 years			Hungarian.....	5	-
With a disability.....	9,399	100.0	Irish ¹	4	-
Percent employed.....	2,031	21.6	Italian.....	1,173	6.4
No disability.....	68.0	(X)	Lithuanian.....	108	0.6
Percent employed.....	7,368	78.4	Norwegian.....	-	-
	84.7	(X)	Polish.....	4,631	25.2
Population 65 years and over			Portuguese.....	488	2.7
With a disability.....	2,649	100.0	Russian.....	11	0.1
	1,050	39.6	Scotch-Irish.....	16	0.1
			Scottish.....	85	0.5
			Slovak.....	147	0.8
			Slovenian.....	-	-
			Subsaharan African.....	133	0.7
			Swedish.....	2,487	13.5
			Swiss.....	59	0.3
			Ukrainian.....	20	0.1
			United States or American.....	527	2.9
			Welsh.....	21	0.1
			West Indian (excluding Hispanic groups).....	-	-
			Other ancestries.....	3,445	18.7

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹The data represent a combination of two ancestries shown separately in Summary File 3. Czech includes Czechoslovakian. French includes Alsatian. French Canadian includes Acadian/Cajun. Irish includes Celtic.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

Table DP-4. Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Willmar city, Minnesota

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

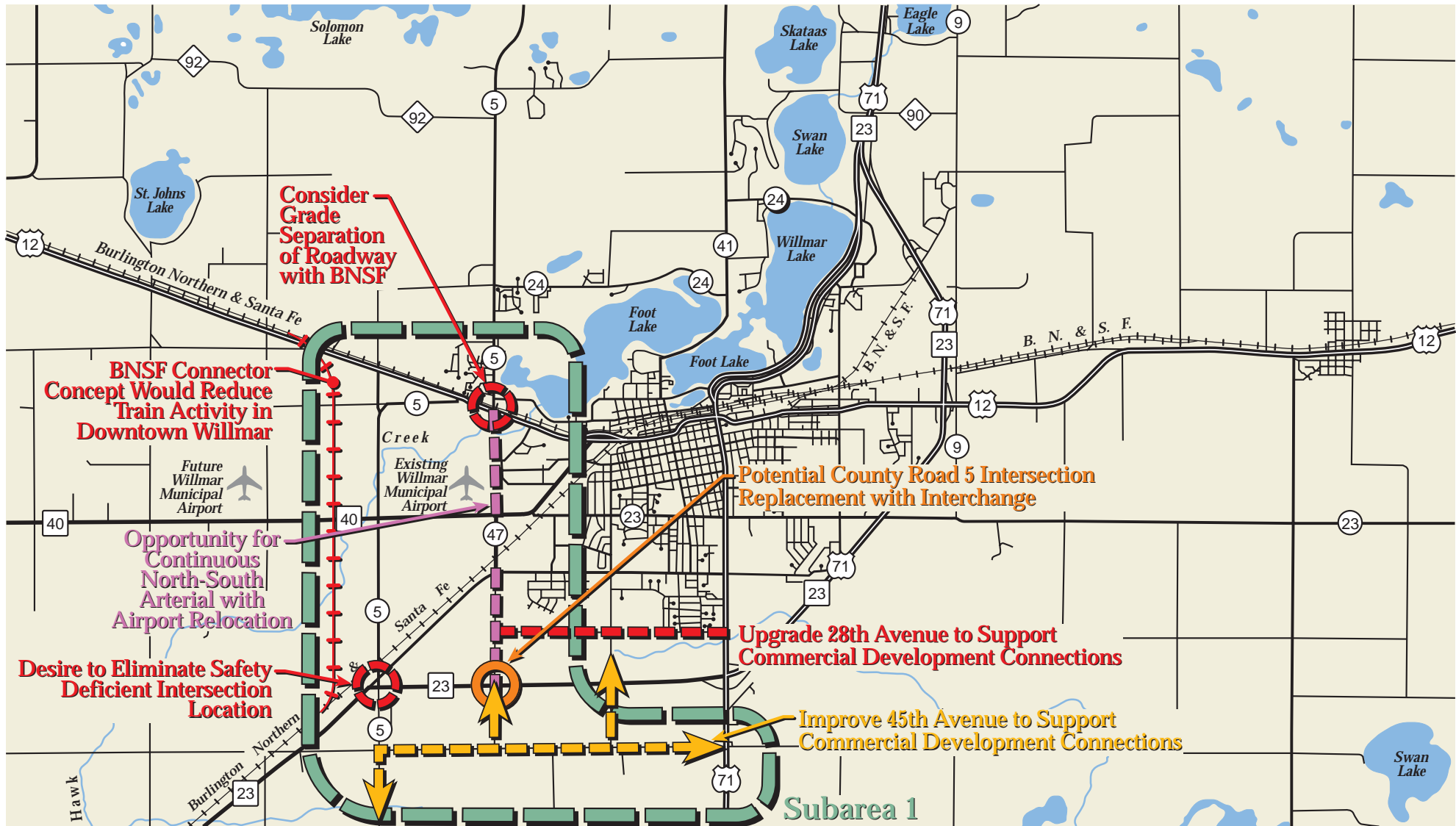
Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total housing units	7,788	100.0	OCCUPANTS PER ROOM		
UNITS IN STRUCTURE			Occupied housing units	7,303	100.0
1-unit, detached	4,493	57.7	1.00 or less	6,949	95.2
1-unit, attached	298	3.8	1.01 to 1.50	208	2.8
2 units	591	7.6	1.51 or more	146	2.0
3 or 4 units	386	5.0			
5 to 9 units	315	4.0	Specified owner-occupied units	3,983	100.0
10 to 19 units	521	6.7	VALUE		
20 or more units	925	11.9	Less than \$50,000	242	6.1
Mobile home	259	3.3	\$50,000 to \$99,999	2,505	62.9
Boat, RV, van, etc	-	-	\$100,000 to \$149,999	772	19.4
			\$150,000 to \$199,999	254	6.4
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT			\$200,000 to \$299,999	162	4.1
1999 to March 2000	82	1.1	\$300,000 to \$499,999	44	1.1
1995 to 1998	432	5.5	\$500,000 to \$999,999	4	0.1
1990 to 1994	633	8.1	\$1,000,000 or more	-	-
1980 to 1989	1,141	14.7	Median (dollars)	83,700	(X)
1970 to 1979	1,667	21.4			
1960 to 1969	832	10.7	MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED		
1940 to 1959	1,639	21.0	MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
1939 or earlier	1,362	17.5	With a mortgage	2,720	68.3
ROOMS			Less than \$300	6	0.2
1 room	118	1.5	\$300 to \$499	230	5.8
2 rooms	442	5.7	\$500 to \$699	777	19.5
3 rooms	973	12.5	\$700 to \$999	857	21.5
4 rooms	1,400	18.0	\$1,000 to \$1,499	621	15.6
5 rooms	1,184	15.2	\$1,500 to \$1,999	146	3.7
6 rooms	1,296	16.6	\$2,000 or more	83	2.1
7 rooms	816	10.5	Median (dollars)	810	(X)
8 rooms	612	7.9	Not mortgaged	1,263	31.7
9 or more rooms	947	12.2	Median (dollars)	235	(X)
Median (rooms)	5.3	(X)	SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
Occupied housing units	7,303	100.0	AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD		
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT			INCOME IN 1999		
1999 to March 2000	1,696	23.2	Less than 15.0 percent	1,610	40.4
1995 to 1998	2,181	29.9	15.0 to 19.9 percent	772	19.4
1990 to 1994	1,131	15.5	20.0 to 24.9 percent	668	16.8
1980 to 1989	1,108	15.2	25.0 to 29.9 percent	352	8.8
1970 to 1979	559	7.7	30.0 to 34.9 percent	228	5.7
1969 or earlier	628	8.6	35.0 percent or more	333	8.4
			Not computed	20	0.5
VEHICLES AVAILABLE			Specified renter-occupied units	2,709	100.0
None	783	10.7	GROSS RENT		
1	2,778	38.0	Less than \$200	256	9.4
2	2,879	39.4	\$200 to \$299	271	10.0
3 or more	863	11.8	\$300 to \$499	1,291	47.7
			\$500 to \$749	662	24.4
HOUSE HEATING FUEL			\$750 to \$999	89	3.3
Utility gas	5,451	74.6	\$1,000 to \$1,499	52	1.9
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	131	1.8	\$1,500 or more	23	0.8
Electricity	1,083	14.8	No cash rent	65	2.4
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	120	1.6	Median (dollars)	433	(X)
Coal or coke	12	0.2			
Wood	14	0.2	GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF		
Solar energy	-	-	HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Other fuel	272	3.7	Less than 15.0 percent	503	18.6
No fuel used	220	3.0	15.0 to 19.9 percent	451	16.6
			20.0 to 24.9 percent	319	11.8
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS			25.0 to 29.9 percent	331	12.2
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	27	0.4	30.0 to 34.9 percent	226	8.3
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	35	0.5	35.0 percent or more	736	27.2
No telephone service	181	2.5	Not computed	143	5.3

-Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

Appendix B:

Transportation Study Maps (2004)



Willmar Transportation Plan
Willmar, Minnesota

Figure 1
Subarea 1 - Issues/Needs Map



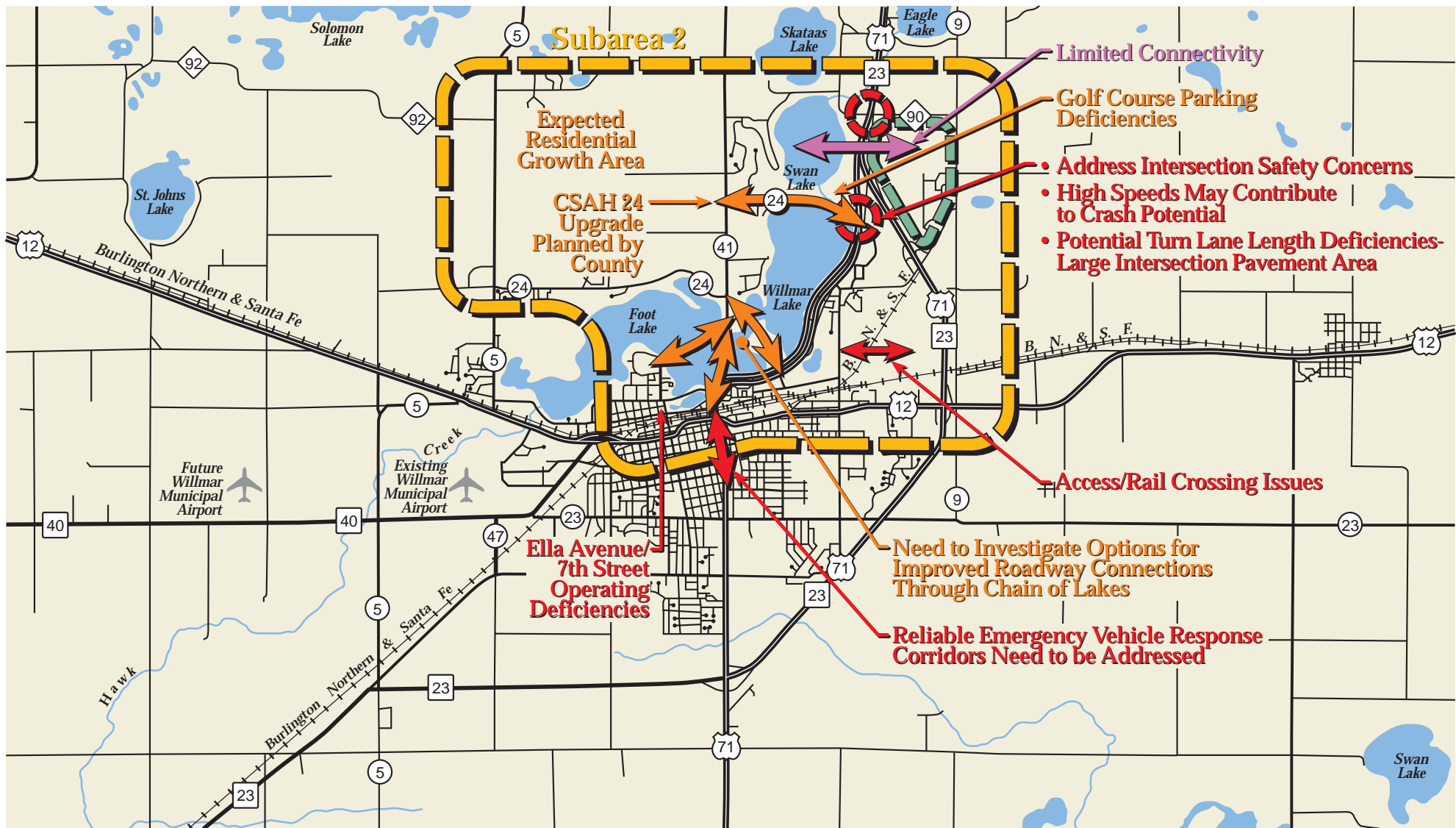
Safety Concern
Location



North



August 2003



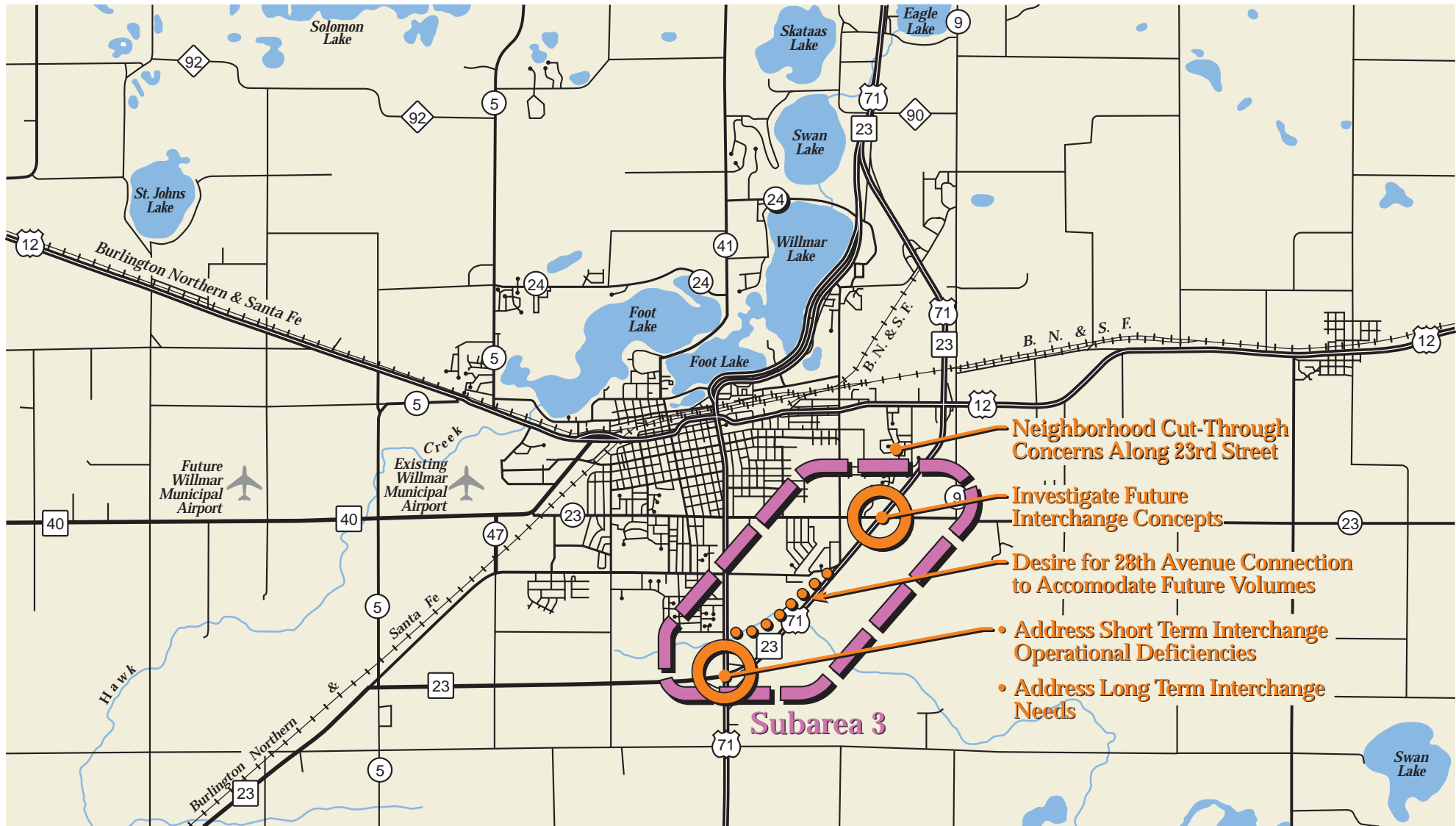


Figure 8
Subarea 3 - Issues/Needs Map