

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

McLeod County is comprised of fourteen townships and nine cities, as shown in Figure 1, encompassing some 473 square miles. The County is immediately west of the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, which exerts an increasing influence on settlement and commuting patterns, particularly along the eastern portions of the County.

The following section describes the extent to which development has occurred, and is expected to occur, in each of the townships and cities in McLeod County.

RURAL TOWNSHIPS

Three of the townships in McLeod County are completely rural in character: Rich Valley in the central portion of the county; and Penn and Round Grove Townships in the southwest corner of McLeod County. These townships have experienced little growth in recent years and the outlook for additional development is extremely limited. Construction in these areas is generally limited to farmsteads and farm buildings. All three townships have a strong agricultural base.

URBAN FRINGE TOWNSHIPS

The remaining townships are adjacent to one or more cities. The development potential of these townships is closely linked to the development potential of the adjoining community, and agriculture remains a strong component in each.

Acoma and Hutchinson Townships

Of the four townships bordering the City of Hutchinson, the two northern townships, Acoma and Hutchinson, are experiencing the greatest levels of growth. The lakes and varied landscape in these townships enhance the opportunities for residential development. A distinguishing feature in both townships is the number of small (80 acres or less) farmsteads. While this size farm is not normally economically feasible, many of those who farm these areas are also employed in the City of Hutchinson.

Lynn and Hassan Valley Townships

Poor road access and the presence of the airport hinder development in Lynn Township, southwest of Hutchinson; and development in Hassan Valley Township, southeast of Hutchinson has been slow. Both Lynn and Hassan Valley, which is also adjacent to the City of Biscay, are expected to grow slowly.

Hale Township

Hale Township, in the north-central portion of the County, includes the City of Silver Lake. What little development has taken place has been concentrated in the vicinity of Swan Lake.

Winsted Township

In Winsted Township, there has been some commercial and industrial development in recent years along Highway 261 south of the City of Winsted. Residential development has been scattered throughout the township and is putting increasing pressure on agricultural resources. These trends are expected to continue into the near future, with additional commercial development westward along 230th Street in the vicinity of the airport.

Bergen Township

Bergen Township, in the east-central portion of the county, experienced a small decline in population during the 1980s. Little change is expected in the township, which adjoins the City of Lester Prairie.

MEEKER

C.O.

WRIGHT

C.O.

McLeod County

-  U.S. HIGHWAY
-  STATE HIGHWAY
-  COUNTY ROAD
-  COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY
-  PAVED ROAD
-  UNPAVED ROAD

McLeod County COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Figure 1

Helen Township

Helen Township, which is east of the City of Glencoe and also adjoins the City of Plato, has seen its residential growth concentrated in three subdivisions east and southeast of the Glencoe city limits. Commercial and industrial development has primarily been annexed into Glencoe to take advantage of public utilities. A large portion (estimated at 50 percent) of the township population commutes to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area for employment.

Glencoe Township

Glencoe Township experienced a decline in population in the 1980s because of smaller households, changes in the agricultural economy and annexation of land by the City of Glencoe. Township officials, concerned over the cost of providing services to residential areas, prefer that the area remain agricultural.

Sumter Township

In the township of Sumter, which adjoins the City of Browntown, there has been little non-farm development in recent years. Agricultural buildings account for most of the building taking place, and that trend is expected to continue.

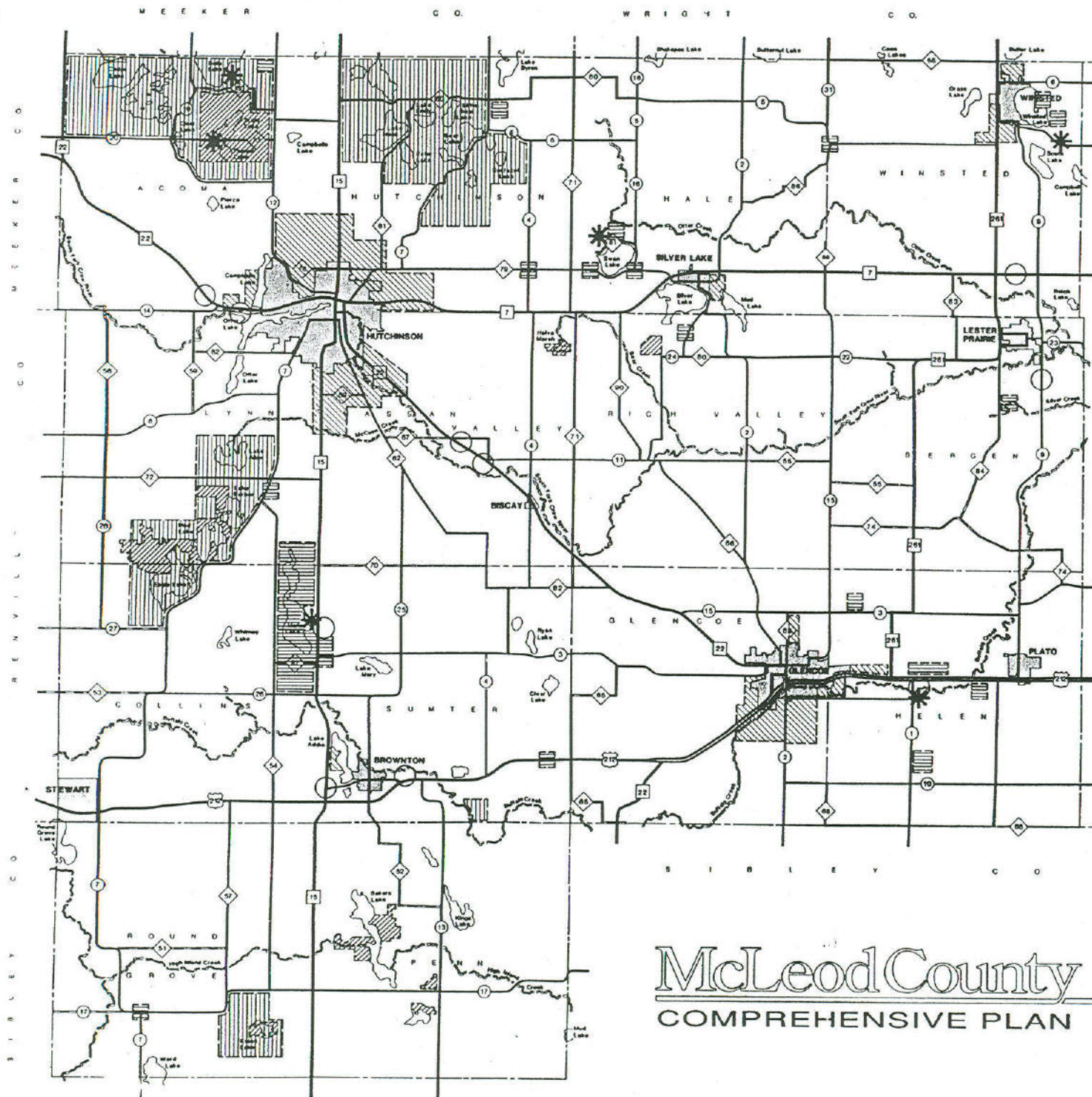
Collins Township

Collins Township, with the City of Stewart to the southwest, has experienced limited residential development along Lake Marion. Little additional development is projected.

CITIES

Local Plans

Cities having local comprehensive land use plans include Hutchinson, Glencoe, Winsted and Lester Prairie. Each of these plans promotes development and growth, indicates locations for future residential, commercial and industrial development serviced by public sewer and water systems, and allows fringe



Existing Land Use, 1990

- U.S. HIGHWAY
 - STATE HIGHWAY
 - COUNTY ROAD
 - COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY
 - PAVED ROAD
 - UNPAVED ROAD
 - CITY
 - CITY FRINGE
 - RURAL HOUSING CONCENTRATION
 - COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL CONCENTRATION
 - PARK
 - CONSERVATION AREA
 - WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
- ALL AREAS NOT HIGHLIGHTED ARE AGRICULTURAL, OPEN SPACE OR OTHER RURAL USES

McLeod County
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Figure 2

growth in a controlled pattern so as to protect nearby farming and limit public construction and maintenance costs.

Importantly, the policy of each City is to annex fringe land only when municipal services are needed or when landowners petition for municipal services and incorporation. Each plan urges cooperation and communication between the City and the adjoining Townships and McLeod County in matters of land development. However, fringe development which would interfere with economic extension of roads and utilities is discouraged through land use planning and/or zoning regulations.

The McLeod County Comprehensive Plan will attempt to be compatible with and supportive of local plans and intentions.

Zoning Ordinances

Each of the nine cities in McLeod County has a zoning ordinance, which serves as a form of land use plan.

Sanitary Sewer Services

Cities having public sanitary sewer service include Hutchinson, Glencoe, Lester Prairie, Winsted, Silver Lake, Brownton and Stewart.

Locations of Expected Urban Growth

The City of Hutchinson is expected to experience the greatest amount of residential, commercial and, particularly, industrial/office growth during the 1990 to 2010 time period. Glencoe would be the second strongest location of development in the county, taking advantage of its good highway access and strong base of non-residential activity. Lesser amounts of growth may be expected in Winsted and Lester Prairie.

The City of Biscay experienced some growth during the period 1980 to 1988, but little development is expected in the coming years. The remaining cities (Brownton, Lester Prairie, Plato, Silver Lake, and

Stewart) lost population in the first eight years of the 1980s and little change in their development potential is anticipated.

POPULATION FORECASTS

Population growth in McLeod County has been very modest in recent years, increasing from 29,659 in 1980 to an estimated 31,368 in 1990, an increase of nearly 6 percent. While this is below the projected statewide growth rate of seven percent during that same time period, the county has avoided the population losses experienced by Sibley and Renville Counties to the south and west. The population is expected to continue to increase.

Household size in McLeod County, as in many other communities, has been declining over the past decades. Therefore, the number of housing units is thus expected to increase at a higher rate than the overall population. It has been estimated that there were 11,837 housing units throughout the county in 1990, and that this number would increase to 12,603 by 2000 and to 13,498 by 2010. This represents a 14 percent growth rate over the twenty-year period.

VEGETATION AND MAJOR WOODED AREAS

The predominate original vegetation of McLeod County was the rich and resilient family of prairie grasses. Although most of the native prairie grasses have been lost to agriculture, a few remnants remain.

Wooded areas are not a major land use planning factor on a County-wide scale. Approximately 1.5 percent (4,580 acres) of the County is now forested. A review of aerial photography and USGS quadrangle maps reveals that the remaining wooded areas of McLeod County are small and widely dispersed, many thousand acres of the original woodlands having been removed over the years for farming and urban development. The typical woodlot in McLeod County is now about five acres in size, although there are larger tracts of woods in a few locations: along the Crow River and in the northern parts of Acoma and Hutchinson Townships. These major wooded locations correspond with areas of soils that are not prime for agriculture.

TABLE 1
McLEOD COUNTY POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS, 1980-1990

Townships and Cities	Population			Households		
	1980	1990	% Change 80-90	1980	1990	% Change 1980-1990
Acoma Township	881	1,040	18	280	330	18
Bergen Township	840	841	-4	254	275	8
Biscay City	114	113	0	39	40	3
Brownston City	697	781	12	277	304	10
Collins Township	518	486	-6	116	173	49
Glencoe City	4,396	4,640	6	1,671	1,808	8
Glencoe Township	661	610	-8	205	206	0
Hale Township	1,004	984	-2	303	322	6
Hassan Valley Township	926	786	-15	272	260	-4
Helen Township	868	884	18	255	279	9
Hutchinson City	9,244	11,441	24	3,496	4,483	28
Hutchinson Township	1,090	1,063	-3	354	356	1
Lester Prairie City	1,229	1,179	-4	422	446	6
Lynn Township	693	740	7	219	248	13
Penn Township	393	389	-1	118	126	7
Plato City	390	NA		128	132	3
Rich Valley Township	817	699	-14	261	247	-5
Round Grove Township	374	348	-7	117	115	-2
Silver Lake City	698	756	8	287	322	12
Stewart City	616	564	-8	242	230	-5
Sumter Township	510	513	6	172	166	-3
Winsted City	1,522	1,563	3	495	585	18
Winsted Township	1,176	1,103	-6	343	362	6
COUNTY TOTALS	29,657	31,876	7	10,376	11,815	14

Source: US Census of Population, 1980, 1990.

TABLE 2
McLEOD COUNTY POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS, 1940-2010

Year	Population	% Change from 1980	Households	% Change from 1980	Average Number of Persons per Household
1940	21,380				
1950	22,198				
1960	24,401		7,150		3.41
1970	27,662		8,530		3.24
1980	29,657		10,376		2.86
1988	30,914	4	11,486	11	2.69
1990	31,369	6	11,837	14	2.65
2000	32,768	10	12,603	21	2.6
2010	33,745	14	13,498	30	2.5

Source: US Census of Population, 1980, 1990.

WETLANDS

McLeod County was approximately 50 percent wetland prior to the arrival of the pioneers, according to the Soil Conservation Service. Since then, approximately half of those wetlands have been drained. Most of the remaining wetlands are located in the northern and western parts of the county, Acoma, Hutchinson, Lynn and Collins Townships.

McLeod County regulates the filling or drainage of wetlands by administering the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991. In addition, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also perform similar functions.

SHORELAND REGULATIONS

McLeod County regulates development along its shorelines through Section 19 of its zoning ordinance which follows the Department of Natural Resources model ordinance. The County Shoreland Standards prescribe building setbacks from the normal high water mark, minimum lot area and width, sideyard setbacks, sewage disposal and water supply regulations, erosion control measures, shoreland alteration, grading and filling controls, and subdivision regulations.

Dimensional regulations are based upon the type of lake or river: General Development, Recreational Development, or Natural Environment. Natural Environment Lakes have the most protective dimensional regulations while General Development have the least protective. Most of the lakes are located in Acoma, Hutchinson, Lynn or Collins Townships and are classified as follows:

Natural Environment Lakes	Protected Waters Inventory I.D.#
Grass	43-13
South	43-14
Coon	43-20
Mud	43-33
Rice	43-42*
Unnamed	43-47*

Bakers	43-48
King	43-50
Unnamed (Penn Marsh)	43-53
Mary	43-56
Unnamed	43-57
Ryan	43-58
Unnamed	43-59
Clear	43-60
Little Bear	43-67
Omera	43-68
Longanans	43-70
Todd	43-71
Emily	43-74
Tomlinson	43-75
Bear	43-76
Sustacek	43-77*
Unnamed	43-78
Harrington	43-79
Unnamed	43-80*
Echo	43-81
Ward	43-88
Kujas	43-93
Whitney	43-97
Eagle	43-98
Ellen	43-99
Barber	43-100
Mud	43-101
Dettman's	43-102
Clear	43-103
Unnamed (Popp Slough)	43-105
Unnamed	43-106*
Unnamed	43-107*
Campbells	43-108
French	43-109

Ferrell	43-110
Pierce	43-112
Fernold	43-113
Cedar	43-115
Round Grove	43-116
Unnamed	43-117
Halva Marsh	43-129
Campbell	10-27
Byron	47-04
Unnamed	47-43
Mud	72-57*
Butternut	86-253
Shakopee	86-255

* Classified as a wetland on the 1984 DNR Protected Waters Inventory.

Recreational Development Lakes

Protected Waters Inventory I.D.

Swan	43-40
Addie	43-61
Hook	43-73
Marion	43-84
Stahls	43-104
Belle	47-49

General Development Lakes

Protected Waters Inventory I.D.

Winsted	43-12
Silver	43-34
Otter/Campbell	43-85

Agricultural Rivers

Legal Description

South Fork Crow River

From Section 19, Township 117 Range 30 to
Section 12, Township 116, Range 27

McLeod County revised Section 19 of the McLeod County Zoning Ordinance to bring it into conformance with the recently updated Department of Natural Resources shoreland regulations.

FLOODPLAIN REGULATIONS

McLeod County regulates development within floodplains for the protection of property and life through Section 6 of its zoning ordinance which follows the Federal Emergency Management Agency model ordinance. Section 6 establishes three subdistricts for the floodplains: Floodway, Flood Fringe, and General Floodplain. Permitted and conditional uses are prescribed for each of these subdistricts along with standards and regulations for development. Other controls are also included for subdivisions, public utilities, railroads, roads and bridges. There is a provision for variances from the ordinance. As of early 1993, the County Zoning Map did not yet illustrate the locations of the Floodplain District as the Flood Insurance Rate Maps were completed in August 1992.

Flooding is not currently a widespread serious problem in McLeod County despite the filling of many wetlands which serve to control water runoff. This may be a result of the very low density development and certain flood control improvements that have been made along the rivers and creeks, especially in the cities.

COUNTY PARKS

There are six parks owned and managed by McLeod County, the location of each being shown by Figure 3, Environmental Considerations.

1. Buffalo Creek Park (located east of Glencoe near Highway 212)
2. Swan Lake Park (located northwest of the City of Silver Lake)

3. William May Park (located southeast of the City of Winsted)
4. Stahls Lake Park (located in Acoma Township near County Road 73)
5. Lake Marion Park (located in Collins Township near Highway 15)
6. Piepenburg Park (located in Acoma Township adjacent to Belle Lake)

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

There are ten wildlife management areas in the County administered by either the State of Minnesota or private groups. These are located in Acoma, Lynn, Collins, Round Grove, Hassan Valley and Rich Valley and Sumter Townships, as illustrated by Figure 3, Environmental Considerations. In addition, the Wildlife Habitat Conservation Society of McLeod County (Pheasants Forever) has land in Hutchinson, Hassan Valley, Collins and Penn Townships.

AGRICULTURAL REAL ESTATE MARKET VALUES

The market value of farmland and buildings is one indicator of the importance of agriculture to a county and the importance of farming in one township relative to another. Table 2 indicates that the highest total market values by Township tend to be among the eastern townships of the County, Helen, Winsted, Bergen, Rich Valley and Hale.

POPULATION DENSITY

An indicator of a community's character is its population density, which is defined as the number of people per unit of area (in this case, the square mile is used). Table 4, which presents population and households density for each township, indicates that population density is low across the County as should be expected of an area with a strong agricultural economy. It also shows that the lowest density townships tend to be in the southwestern part of McLeod County, although the higher density townships are split between the northwestern "lakes area" of Acoma or Hutchinson Townships versus the eastern townships having good highway access from the Twin Cities such as Winsted, Hale or Helen. Glencoe Township, surprisingly, had a relatively low density of population and households.

TABLE 3
MARKET VALUES OF FARMLAND AND BUILDINGS, 1989

Township	Market Value of Land (000s)	Market Value of Buildings (000s)	Total per Square Mile (000s)
Helen	\$15,108	\$5,798	\$580
Winsted	14,378	6,422	577
Round Grove	17,404	3,179	571
Bergen	14,516	5,863	566
Rich Valley	14,798	5,333	559
Hale	13,639	6,485	599
Hutchinson	13,257	5,999	555
Hassan Valley	14,351	4,740	555
Lynn	13,866	5,292	548
Penn	15,418	3,390	522
Sumter	14,667	3,632	508
Collins	14,571	3,628	505
Acoma	12,315	5,215	500
Glencoe	14,306	4,177	498

Source: McLeod County Assessor, 1990.

TABLE 4
POPULATION DENSITY BY TOWNSHIP

Township	People Per Square Mile	Households Per Square Mile
Hutchinson	38.10	13.75
Winsted	29.27	9.02
Acoma	28.88	9.45
Hale	28.36	8.83
Hassan Valley	26.95	8.15
Helen	23.86	7.16
Rich Valley	23.16	7.66
Bergen	22.55	6.97
Lynn	21.85	6.87
Sumter	17.27	5.69
Collins	16.36	4.5
Glencoe	15.67	4.97
Penn	11.19	3.41
Round Grove	9.91	3.56

Source: BRW, Inc., 1990.

SUMMARY OF LAND USE

The Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture will soon be able to report the total number of acres of land in agricultural use by township along with figures for acreage devoted to cultivated crops, pasture, forest, wetland and other categories. When these data are made available, they will be appended to this plan to give a further indication of the pattern of land use in the County.