LESUEUR

2040 Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT SEPTEMBER 2016

"Watching T-Ball"
Photo submitted by: Jackie Hammes Fahey

Acknowledgements

City Council

Planning Commission

Members of the Comprehensive Plan Working Group

The working group was formed to serve as the process and content stewards of the comprehensive plan. They represent a broad cross-section of the community and dedicated significant time and energy in helping prepare the plan.

- Amber Seaver - REALTOR
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- Brian Pfarr - Chamber/Business Community
- Cormac Dunning - Resident
- Corrie Eggimann - Minnesota Valley Health Center
- Dave Johnson - City Council
- Dianne Pinney - Library
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Executive Summary

Founded in 1852, Le Sueur is a small, agricultural community located in the middle of the beautiful Minnesota River Valley. With a population of just over 4,000, Le Sueur's community is rich with history and small-town character, which act as the foundation of the City's identity.

The Le Sueur Comprehensive Plan seeks to highlight the community's identity and core values in an effort to shape the decisions and actions that will be taken to preserve and enhance the character of the community. This Executive Summary provides a brief overview of the key components of the Le Sueur 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

What is the Le Sueur 2040 Comprehensive Plan?

The Plan is a Guide and a Tool

It can be utilized for:

- Making land use decisions
- Preparing and implementing ordinances
- Preparing capital improvement programs
- Influencing the rate, timing, and location of future growth

The Plan is a Dynamic Document

It will remain flexible in order to respond to changing needs, conditions, and emerging trends

The Plan is Different than a Zoning Ordinance

Comprehensive Plans are:

- Broad in scope
- Visionary
- Principles and Policy oriented
- Guiding documents
- Conceptual and idealistic
- Focused on neighborhood, community or regional scale
- Flexible in interpretation

Zoning Ordinances are:

- Narrow in scope
- More rigid standards
- It's the law
- Detail oriented, specific
- Focus on the district and site level

Community Context

This process analysed census data, previous planning efforts, and existing conditions to gain an understanding of where Le Sueur is currently at. Some highlights from this part of the process include:

- Le Sueur is situated between several major population centers, with over ten metropolitan areas within 200 miles
- Despite a slight drop in 1990, Le Sueur has experienced steady population growth, a trend that is projected to continue in the future
- While there are over 3,000 people employed in the City of Le Sueur, under 30% of the labor force both live and work in the City
- Much of the undeveloped land in the City is located in the Minnesota River floodplain
- The majority of land in Le Sueur is dedicated to single-family residential use

An in depth version of this information was compiled into a stand-alone document: **The Le Sueur Community Factbook**

To access the factbook please follow this link:

Over the project's two phases of community engagement, **over 800 respondents** provided input on what they desired for the future of Le Sueur through both online and in-person activities

Vision

While rooted in the reality of the community's past and present, the vision is an aspirational, living document that seeks to describe how the community will look, feel, and function in the next 20 years. It is an over-arching framework that permeates the plan and informs supporting policy and strategy decisions. The vision for Le Sueur in 2040 is as follows:

The City of Le Sueur in 2040 will be defined by its convenient location, its rural character, its ample opportunities, and its ability to evolve with this ever-changing world, but Le Sueur's true essence lies in its vibrant community; composed of people who are committed to make their City thrive.

Guiding Principles

Supporting the vision, the guiding principles will help define the character, values, and priorities of the Le Sueur community in 2040 by acting as an ongoing measurement tool for the appropriateness and effectiveness of future initiatives and results.

The icons associated with each guiding principle are graphic representations that can be utilized to visually link goals, policies, project ideas, etc. with their associated vision and guiding principles.

Healthy

A community that promotes active living, environmental sustainability, financial health, and a quality built environment

Friendly

A community that is friendly and welcoming and enhances the City's historic, small-town image

Responsive

A City that is open, collaborative, effective, and accountable

Dynamic

A community that is well-connected and diverse

Beautiful

An environment that is naturally, culturally, and physically beautiful

Vibrant

A perfect mix of housing, retail, industry, culture, and infrastructure to make the community thrive

Master Plan

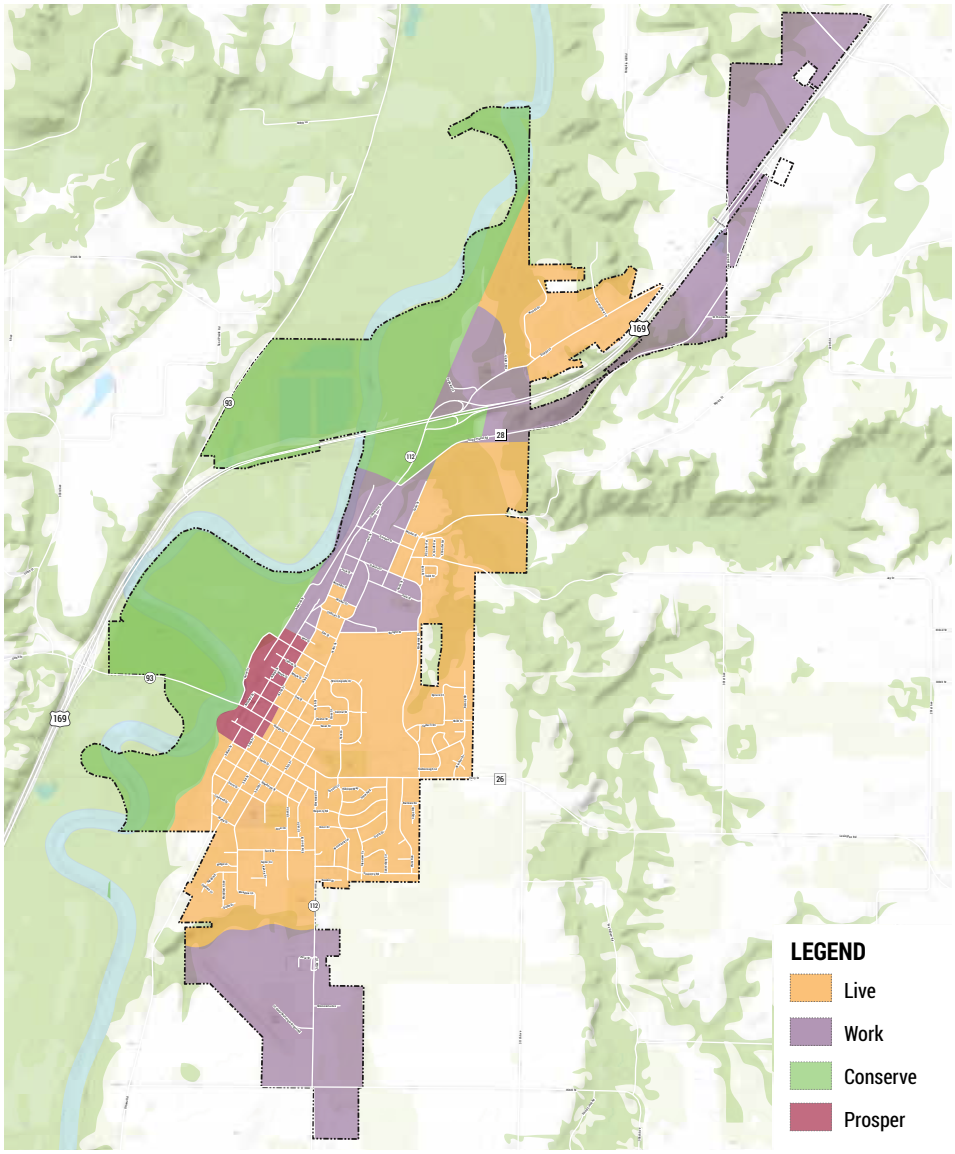
The Master Plan describes a framework for the **future land use**, **infrastructure systems**, **transportation network**, and **parks and recreation** for Le Sueur through:

- Goal and policy statements that serve as a guide for future decision making;
- A future land use map; and,
- Development form and character descriptions for each land use pattern.

The framework was developed with guidance from the public engagement process, past planning efforts, and community planning principles. The goals, policies, and land use categories link back to the community vision and guiding principles outlined in chapter 3. There are **26 goals**; each accompanied by their own series of policies as well as icons representing their associated guiding principles.

In addition to providing goals, policies, and development form and character descriptions, the land use section contains **focus areas**, which identify and describe some of the community's unique areas at a finer grain.

Case studies are integrated throughout the plan to help bring some of the Plan's ideas to life by demonstrating how they have been successfully implemented elsewhere.



Four major land use categories were created to represent the future land use character of Le Sueur: Live, Work, Conserve, and Prosper. Each category contains land use form and character directions that are directly related to the overarching goals and policies.

Live is where Le Sueur's residents call home. In addition to an array of diverse housing options, live contains supportive amenities like churches, schools, and parks.

Work contains Le Sueur's commercial and employment opportunities. From industrial businesses to retail shops, work provides areas for entrepreneurship, innovation, and commerce.

Conserve is defined by Le Sueur's natural amenities. While the goal of conserve is to protect areas of environmental significance, recreational and educational opportunities should be incorporated to promote healthy, active lifestyles.

Prosper is found at the center of commerce, housing, and entertainment; where activity is present at all hours of the day and where Le Sueur's identity is strongest.

Precedent imagery for the proposed land use categories

Implementation

This Plan is a **guide for decision making**, a **marketing tool**, and a **"To Do List."**

Implementation Strategies and associated action steps were developed in order to carry out ideas or policies identified though the planning process and memorialized in the adoption of the plan. Much like the goals and policies, the **strategies** and action steps directly correlate to the vision and guiding principles. The strategies are as follows:

1. Volunteerism and Philanthropy help build ownership of community, strengthens civic engagement, builds relationships and ultimately, contributes to the vibrancy and resilience of the community
2. Partnerships between the public and private sectors helps build new neighborhoods and grow local businesses
3. Official Controls generally refer to the ordinances and regulations that control the physical development of a City (i.e. zoning & subdivision ordinances, building codes, etc.)
4. Capital Improvement Plans manage the capital improvement expenditures critical to maintaining the community's core infrastructure systems
5. A Downtown Master Plan would help guide investment and development in the downtown area by building off past planning efforts
6. Spurring economic development by expanding the commercial and industrial base of the City, as well as offering a diverse range of housing options
7. Providing outdoor recreation to meet the needs of residents and visitors to encourage active living and to create a sense of place and identify for Le Sueur
8. Establish a "Future of the City Forum" to review and update the plan on an annual basis based on changing community needs and desires

With the help of the community, a series of **Project Ideas** have been generated to support implementation of select strategies and action steps in the comprehensive plan. Project Ideas focus on strategies and action steps that: (1) are high-priority actions, (2) may require additional explanation and planning, and (3) may be implemented by groups other than City agencies (community groups, civic organizations, individuals, etc.)

The following presents the project ideas in the **order of priority** based on all of the public input received to date:

- Open Main Street & Redevelop Mall Site
- Downtown Master Plan
- School & Business Partnerships
- Develop Local Trails
- Become a Hub for Regional Trails
- Truck Traffic Planning
- Park at Yard Waste Site
- Become a Leader in Sustainability and Resilience
- Wayfinding Plan & Package
- Branded Technology & Innovation District
- Mayo Park Master Plan

The document can be accessed online by following this link:

http://www.cityoflesueur.com/296/Comprehensive-Plan-Update

If you would like a printed copy, please contact the City at:

612-555-5555 | jenelle@cityoflesueur.com

While intended to guide change, this plan must also remain flexible to respond to changing needs, conditions, and emerging trends.

To remain relevant, key goals and policies should be reviewed regularly. Future community forums are encouraged to ensure the Plan continues to adequately represent the residents of Le Sueur.