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City of 
RED WING
Comprehensive Plan

April 9, 2007



Hoisington Koegler Group Inc.
Claybaugh Preservation Architecture Inc.
ZHA, Inc.



Forward—Red Wing’s Planning Process

In early 2005, the Mayor’s Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was established to coordinate the process of updating Red Wing’s Comprehensive Plan. That year the Steering Committee began with a focus on the Riverfront element of the Comprehensive Plan and the City Council adopted the Red Wing Riverfront Redevelopment Plan in November 2005, which shall be adopted by reference to this Comprehensive Plan. From March 2005 to April 2006, the Steering Committee worked closely with Red Wing 2020 to establish a forward-thinking Community Vision. With a vision statement and guiding principles, the City initiated a unique process to update the balance of the Red Wing Comprehensive Plan. A team of community planners and designers began a week long process on August 21, 2006 to explore the future of Red Wing. The process began with a public meeting attended by more than 80 members of the Red Wing Community. Initial thoughts were presented by the planning team. Then,

the Community engaged themselves in a productive conversation about its future. On the following Tuesday morning, the planning team assembled and began a journey to explore the ideas and thoughts presented by the community. The intent was to think big and explore the possibilities that might move Red Wing towards achieving its Vision. With a vision and key guiding principles in hand, the planning team spent three solid days articulating big ideas, illustrating possibilities and assessing the practical aspects of redevelopment and new development, all the while maintaining an open dialogue with the community. The week culminated on Thursday evening with a presentation and open house. This transparent process was the beginning of a new and unique Comprehensive Plan for the City of Red Wing. Throughout the remainder of this document, three core principles will be emphasized: 1) the integration of green infrastructure systems 2) focusing development within activity centers and 3) emphasizing a desired design character appropriate to Red Wing.



Members of the planning team discuss concepts and ideas with community members at the Wednesday evening reception during the design forum.



A packed house at the Monday Public Meeting.

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1 Introduction

Red Wing was settled because of the landscape's grace and the river's power. It grew and prospered by the convergence of productivity, transportation and intellect. The challenge of this generation and the goal of this Red Wing Comprehensive Plan is to respect the rich legacy we are blessed with while layering upon it the demands of modern life and our contemporary understandings of sustainability.

Devising the Plan

The Red Wing Comprehensive Plan 2007 has been approached in a way that is unique from many community plans. A typical plan projects and anticipates community growth and then identifies the land uses, infrastructure and public facilities needed to support that growth. In the typical plan, creating open space, protecting the environment and adding other community amenities are addressed in policies and codes that are ultimately applied to each development project and public infrastructure project over the lifespan of the plan. While this is a logical and pragmatic approach and is usually very effective at shaping the built environment, it often

has unintended results that can diminish the inherent qualities of a community.

As an example of the typical approach let's say the need for added retail space is identified in order to serve a growing area of the community. A retail land use area of appropriate size is identified in the comprehensive plan because it has good roadway access, manageable topography and is within range of the growing population. However, the retail land use designation in the comprehensive plan doesn't recognize the woods on the site that is part of a forested corridor linking to the river or the steep bluffs that preclude pedestrian connection between the retail use and adjacent residential areas. So, the plan leads to development of a successful retail center that serves the community (residents like that) but in so doing it has removed a wooded area that was important to scenic beauty, fractured an open space greenway that served wildlife and offered a potential trail corridor, and increased area traffic because it's not quite close enough to walk there (residents don't like this). The result is a heavy payment of existing and potential community amenities in exchange for retail services.



*Historic photo of Main Street in downtown Red Wing.
Source: Goodhue County Historical Society.*

Repeating this isolated example across the community and one day people realize that the reasons they loved their community no longer exist.

An alternative approach used to create this Comprehensive Plan is to first identify and interconnect landscape amenities – the most important aspects of the landscape that should be protected, even when faced with development. The result suggests an interconnected web of waterways, open space and trail corridors, parks and historic/archeological sites. Then, only after the amenity framework is determined, are appropriate land uses layered in. With this approach, as opposed to the typical plan, it will be abundantly clear to developers and Red Wing’s decision-makers when they are working with landscape areas that are part of Red Wing’s amenity framework and, therefore, need special sensitivity.

Using the same example as above, the retail would still be developed but the development would be leveraged to uphold other community values such as saving trees and preserving a greenway corridor, developing a trail and mixing development of retail, jobs and housing so walking and biking can be a legitimate form of transportation for some people thus reducing traffic.

To further the notion of an amenity framework, think of Red Wing as layers of fundamental building blocks consisting of community systems, settlement patterns and design character.

Community Systems are core environmental and infrastructure elements needed for community health such as surface water, ground water, topography, movement corridors, ecological systems, education, emergency services, recreational systems, communication networks, energy, waste management, and social services. These community systems are the foundation layer of a community and set the framework for settlement patterns.

Settlement Patterns represent the location and inter-relationship of places we inhabit. Settlement patterns are represented in the Comprehensive Plan by land uses and their physical manifestation is established through development of neighborhoods, districts, parks and buildings. Settlement patterns can only exist with the support of community systems and their success as well as our appreciation for them is determined by the quality of their design character.

Design Character represents the characteristics of our built environment such as architectural character, building/street relationships and environmental impacts. It meets a functional need and causes a positive or negative set of reactions based on deep human needs and intellect.

The Notion of Livability

Carried throughout the goals of this Plan is the theme of livability. Livability, the presence of amenities that contribute to a high quality of life, has become the driving force behind the growth and success of communities. The measurement of livability continually evolves but the last couple of decades have brought a fundamental shift in our collective view of livability.

Richard Florida's compelling book [The Rise of the Creative Class](#) suggests that the developed world is undergoing an economic and cultural shift away from a basis in manufacturing and toward a basis in human creativity. In other words, great ideas now have more impact on the success of people and place than product manufacturing. The book goes on to suggest that creative people are mobile allowing them choices about where to live and they are highly selective about the places they choose. Ingredients like natural beauty, vibrant neighborhoods, outdoor recreation and adventure, entertainment, architectural and artistic quality, transportation alternatives and pursuit of sustainable practices are top lifestyle demands of the creative set. While some notions in the book are controversial, it is difficult to argue that places like Portland, Bend, Boise and Minneapolis that have robust creative economies are strong and getting stronger while places like Detroit, Hartford and Columbus with a manufacturing focus are struggling.

This new reality also leads to a shift in the way communities pursue growth and economic vitality. There was a time when attracting economic activity was done by building a ship yard, rail line or freeway. Today, the top priority is attracting creative talent and the best way to do that is to build a livable community. This requires innovative and thoughtful approaches to development that preserve inherent landscape and cultural qualities.

Response to economic and lifestyle trends, especially the essential ingredients for livable communities weigh heavy on the approach and recommendations contained in this Comprehensive Plan. As part of the analysis and research conducted for the Plan, livability factors were measured to the extent possible given available data. However, there are many more livability factors that should be measured.

You will see in the Initiatives section that the Plan recommends the collection and measurement of data on an expanded array of livability factors. As an example, we know through the walkability studies described shortly that Red Wing is becoming a less walkable community as it grows. This is a trend that needs to be reversed if Red Wing wants to be a leading destination. In another example, there aren't clear measurements of how much annual electricity is used in Red Wing, what percentage of it comes from renewable sources and what strategies could be implemented to conserve usage and expand renewable sources.



Red Wing's natural resource base, quality parks and historic downtown contribute to a high quality of life.

In yet another example, Red Wing monitors new housing development in the community. The ability to expand on new housing indicators as a measurement for housing choice provides the community with a rationale for establishing goals and targets. Choice in housing type, style, location and price is a significant indicator of livability. Attention to these issues also impacts Red Wing's standing as a leading destination. This data can be used to prepare regular "Livability Audits" that point to actions that will make Red Wing a more livable community.

2 Vision & Guiding Principles

The Red Wing Comprehensive Plan is intended as a guide for policy makers to use in making decisions about the growth and development of the city over the next twenty years. The first step in creating the plan is to start with a clear community vision for what the citizens of Red Wing want to see their community become. This involves collecting the ideas and dreams of the people who make Red Wing their home.

Red Wing 2020, a leadership organization appointed by the Mayor, agreed to help coordinate the process of updating the Community Vision. This was a perfect fit for the City because Red Wing 2020 represents a diverse group of organizations, agencies, and interest groups with a mission to help develop, promote, support, and communicate a community vision in cooperation with other public and private agencies. Starting early in 2005, a number of community involvement opportunities were provided in order to involve as many citizens as possible in creating this Community Vision. In coordination with the Mayor's Steering Committee three Imagination Inspiration Events were conducted where panel speakers were invited to public forums to discuss

current economic issues, riverfront planning experience, and the keys to success in small towns.

Community Vision and Guiding Principles

Community Vision

One of the keys to big success in small towns listed by Boom Town USA author Jack Schultz was the importance of "Shaping Your Vision". Red Wing has traditionally been known to have an extremely active citizenry devoted to civic progress. This is why the identification of a collective community vision is so important. With a shared vision, a clear plan to bring that vision to fruition can be established. The community vision forms the basis for the more detailed recommendations that follow in the Comprehensive Plan.

Guiding Principles

The following list of guiding principles is intended to support the community vision. The community vision and guiding principles becomes the framework to be used to construct the comprehensive plan. The guiding principles are not listed in any priority order.

Red Wing's Vision Statement

"The Community Vision for the City of Red Wing is to capture the vibrancy of growth while preserving and enhancing the city's unique historic and natural environmental character."

*--adopted
March 27, 2006*



Active citizens participated in efforts to establish a Community Vision for Red Wing, which was adopted in March 2006.

Preserve Community Character: Red Wing should encourage and support locally owned businesses and help strengthen the historic downtown and pottery districts that shape the community's distinctive sense of place.

Great Place to do Business: Red Wing should aggressively establish a community infrastructure that encourages business and industry growth; attracts talent; invests in education and workforce training; and nurtures an entrepreneurial spirit that will result in new tax base and employment opportunities.

Open Government: Red Wing should commit itself to encourage continued involvement by citizens, businesses, and organizations in the public decision making and act to be responsive to public consensus.

Diverse Community: Red Wing is dedicated to creating a welcoming community that thrives on the diversity of its citizens.

Safe and Secure: Red Wing should coordinate and prepare for emergency response and continue to provide for personal and family safety.

Support Partnerships: Red Wing should communicate a clear and unified community vision and support community partnerships that help to achieve that shared vision.

Healthy and Active Community: The Red Wing community should continue to improve and promote healthy living and family wellness for its residents.

Quality Land Development: Red Wing should place a high priority on promoting high quality land development that promotes redevelopment that is compatible with our community character.

Preserve Sensitive Environmental Amenities: The Mississippi River is recognized as a priceless and irreplaceable natural and cultural asset. Red Wing should identify what land areas should be preserved and require protection and implement strategies to preserve these natural resources.

Quality Educational Opportunities: Red Wing promotes exceptional educational opportunities for lifelong learning. We view our educational system as a vital economic, social and community development asset.

Think Regionally: Red Wing should be considered the gateway to the Lake Pepin region, and should build on the cultural, economic, and natural assets.

Support for the Arts: Red Wing should continue to plan for and support the development of a wide range of arts and cultural programs and provide facilities that enhance the quality of life and attract new talent to the community.

Sustainable Community: Red Wing should always consider the long term impact of decision making with an understanding of the interdependence between our community and the natural ecosystem.

Embrace Technology: Red Wing should be a technologically superior community.

Housing Choices: Red Wing should offer housing opportunities for a broad range of incomes, lifestyles, and age groups.

Five Indicators of Community Health

The visioning process gathered more than 25 residents to evaluate previous community visioning documents as a foundation for future planning. The reports were organized around five indicators of community health, which each contributed to establishing the community's new vision.

1. Economic Development

Previous documents established the vision that Red Wing should work to become a regional economic center by growing its retail and tourism sectors and diversifying its manufacturing base. Retail expansion and tourism-based businesses have grown considerably over the past decades, and the development of the River Bluffs Business Park has positioned Red Wing to attract new business. Global trends, poor transportation linkages

and the loss of locally-owned companies have created some challenges to local development.

2. Learning

Educating residents by providing lifelong learning opportunities has always been a central value to this community. Declining school enrollment and legislative instability have created difficult fiscal constraints for the school district leading to larger class sizes. These challenges have been balanced by several positive trends such as expanded training opportunities at the technical college, the School District moving out of statutory operating debt and many collaborative efforts between the City of Red Wing and educational institutions in providing education and recreational services.

3. Health and Wellness

Red Wing has seen tremendous changes in health and wellness services and facilities offered to the community. In the last five years, the most visible changes include the integrated and expanded services provided by Fairview Red Wing Health Services with a new medical facility and the expansion of the Red Wing YMCA. Issues on the forefront include the need for better access to mental health resources, national trends related to health care costs and the need to build community wellness into the design of existing and new neighborhoods.



Mayor Dummer led a successful visioning campaign to lay the foundation for the Red Wing Comprehensive Plan of 2007.



A Great Place to do Business



Preserve Community Character



Healthy and active community

4. Governance

The way various branches of local government work together and encourage involvement by constituents is a key to building a strong future. The city, county and school district are collaborating on several joint ventures such as the community recreation program and computer mapping technology. There are many opportunities for additional partnering to meet critical needs in such areas as waste management, communications, joint purchasing, equipment sharing and developing web sites.

5. Human Relations

Red Wing's population has grown in diversity and many community leaders recognize a need to reach out and welcome minority populations as partners in progress. Much has been accomplished with the Diversity Festival, the Diversity Council and the efforts of the Human Rights Commission and the United Way.

However, no consistent and cohesive relationship-building efforts have been created. Another barrier is that no single organization has been assigned responsibility to spearhead human relations improvements.

This information along with information about recent community demographic trends was shared with citizens through a special city newsletter edition that was distributed to all of the residents of the city and

special presentations were made to civic clubs and at a public workshop held on January 5, 2006. Citizens had an opportunity to provide their ideas about the future of the community by completing a questionnaire and also by attending the January 5th workshop. Six questions were answered:

1. How are growth and development benefiting Red Wing and how are the cherished aspects of the community being threatened?
2. What role should local government play in growth and development?
3. What positive aspects exist regarding education in Red Wing (K-12, Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical and Community Education) and what should be changed to better prepare students of all ages for the future?
4. What should the City of Red Wing do to help enhance health in the community? And, what elements of the community's health care need to be improved?
5. What about Red Wing's city government works well? What suggestions do you have to further enhance our city government process?

-
6. If you could make one wish for Red Wing, what would it be?

Approximately 110 residents attended the January 5, 2006 Community Visioning Workshop and submitted hundreds of responses to the six questions listed above. In addition, the city received 30 written questionnaire responses along with several letters and web site responses. A committee made up of members of Red Wing 2020 and the Mayor's Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee reviewed all of this information to look for shared ideas and themes. The following Community Vision and Guiding Principles were adopted in March 2006.

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Community Background & Context

Red Wing's Comprehensive Plan is based on a clear understanding of the community's past and reflects the vision that residents have for the community's future. History does not repeat itself, but there is much to learn about the values that Red Wing residents hold dear by looking back at how Red Wing has developed and how citizens have responded in the past to the issues of the time. By understanding the past, Red Wing will be best able to direct a future based upon the values which make Red Wing a special place. This section of the plan provides a brief overview of the history of the City of Red Wing. It is largely taken from the State of The City Report drafted by City Planning Staff in 1993. Further historical context can be gained by reviewing relevant resources listed in Appendix A - Foundation Documents.

Red Wing's Historical Context

Situated alongside the Mississippi River, surrounded by limestone bluffs which rise dramatically above the landscape, the City of Red Wing enjoys an enviable natural environment. This landscape has been inhabited for thousands of years by civilizations who flourished

here long before the first white settlers arrived to the area. The Red Wing area contains one of the densest concentrations of ancient village sites, earthworks and mounds in the Upper Mississippi Valley. The more recent man-made environment is equally impressive because of the many historically and architecturally significant buildings and parks which reflect Red Wing's mid-nineteenth century beginnings as a riverfront trade point, and its continued development throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a community with a diversified and progressive industrial base and a variety of locally supported civic institutions.

When the first missionary families arrived to the area in 1837, Red Wing was the site of a Dakota Sioux farming village. Within the course of a few years Red Wing was transformed from a missionary outpost into a bustling riverfront trade center with a population of 1,251 in 1860. In some respects, Red Wing exhibited some of the qualities of a "planned community" when it was initially platted in 1853. The central blocks of the Historic Mall District were originally set aside as the location for a county courthouse, a school, and a church in order to provide for the institutional needs of the growing



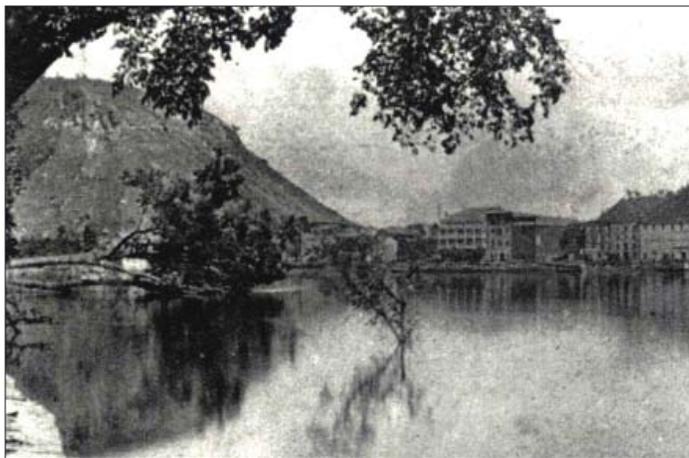
pioneer community. In a sense, this can be considered Red Wing's first comprehensive planning effort.

Despite a temporary slowdown resulting from the Civil War, the 1860's marked a decade of phenomenal growth as the population grew to 4,260 by 1870. Riverfront trade boomed as production of wheat increased on surrounding farms. The population continued to grow dramatically during the first half of the 1870's principally because of the increased wheat trade which at the time made Red Wing "the greatest local wheat market in the world". Unfortunately, the impact of wheat on Red Wing's economy was short lived. During the second half of the 1870's wheat farmers were faced with diminishing yields due to depleted soils, increasing blight and rust, and a series of severe storms. It was Red Wing's response to this decline in the wheat trade which provides a lesson for our comprehensive planning today. Rather than give

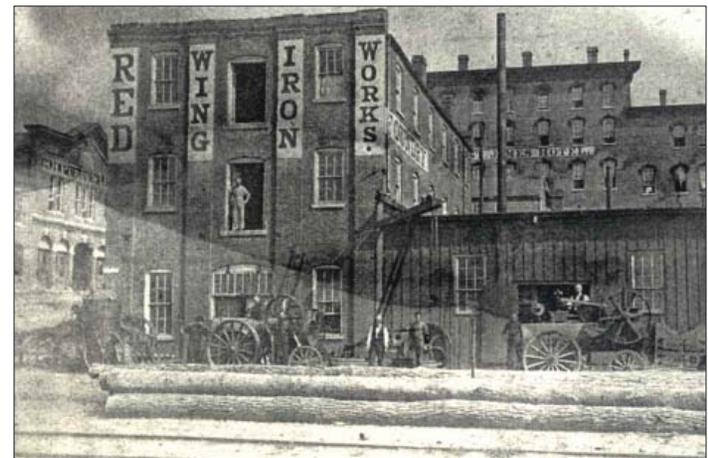
in to total stagnation, local entrepreneurs established a variety of new businesses such as milling of wheat into flour, leather processing, lime quarries, lumber and millwork, furniture construction and local clay-related industries. Red Wing's population continued its rapid increase reaching 7,525 by 1900.

Perhaps, Red Wing's most treasured heritage resulted from the community's response to the "City Beautiful Movement" which was energetically embraced during the years 1900 to about 1910. This movement was spawned by the Chicago Colombian Exposition of 1893 and effected architecture, landscape architecture, and planning for approximately twenty years around the turn of the century. The movement was an attempt by architects and business leaders to create order out of the chaos of late nineteenth century urban areas. The Exposition had a tremendous impact (particularly to

Left: *The growing city of Red Wing is captured in this 1859 photograph*



Right: *Industry grows in Red Wing.*



Source: *Historic Red Wing: Discovering a River Town's Past* by F. Johnson

the relatively new communities in the industrializing Midwest) as over 27 million people flocked to the fair. A number of Red Wing citizens attended the Exposition, and as a result, the Red Wing Civic League was organized in 1903 and was instrumental in stimulating public interest in beautifying the City. Much of Red Wing's major parks and civic and institutional buildings were built during this era including: Levee Park (1904); the original Carnegie-Lawther Library (1903); T.B. Sheldon Theatre (1904); City Hall (1905); the U.S. Post Office (1906); John Rich Park (1907); Colvill Park (1908); the original Y.M.C.A. (1910); and Barn Bluff (1910,1911). Red Wing was transformed during this single decade from a pioneer community with a run down riverfront, dirt streets, and a generally rough appearance, to a much more civilized place. Today's residents benefit greatly from the foresight and commitment of these public spirited community leaders from this by-gone era.

1910 marked the end of Red Wing's dramatic population growth (9,048). When Red Wing's first Comprehensive Plan was prepared in 1962, the community had gone through a long period of relatively little growth in population or economic activity. Red Wing's population grew by only 1400 people between 1910 and 1970. However, during the 1970's several significant events took place which brought substantial change to the community. In 1970, the City initiated the first major annexation in its history. It annexed approximately 358

acres to the south of the former City limits. Also around this time, the Northern States Power Company began constructing the Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant. As a result of this, in 1971 the former City of Red Wing consolidated with Burnside Township increasing the size of the city from 5,428 acres to 24,693 acres, an increase in area of 355 percent. The 1973 Comprehensive Guide Plan focused on the need to prepare a plan to guide development in the newly consolidated area of the City.

A Red Wing Renaissance

The dictionary defines renaissance as a "rebirth" or "revival" and the decade of the 1980's proved to be Red Wing's Renaissance period. Not only did the City see considerable population growth (10 percent growth rate between 1980 and 1990) but Red Wing's economy was restructured as a result of a number of major developments. The catalyst project for this renaissance was the restoration of the St. James Hotel in 1978 which involved an approximately \$8 million investment. This project encouraged a number of adaptive re-use projects which involved building on tourism related business development and finding new uses for Red Wing's historic buildings, including such projects as: the Red Wing Pottery Place (1983); the Red Wing Armory (1984); the T. B. Sheldon Theatre Renovation (1987); Riverfront Centre Development (1988); and the Red Wing Depot Renovation (1990). Red Wing leaders learned that the

re-use of historic property could be done economically and in the process create a unique and distinctive niche in the market place. Much like the “City Beautiful” era before, the City benefited greatly from local ownership with a strong commitment to making Red Wing a better place.

In addition to the historic preservation projects, a number of other substantial developments occurred during this decade. The Red Wing garbage incinerator constructed in 1982 and several other public works projects in the downtown (two parking facilities and downtown streetscape improvements) were notable because they involved public and private partnerships benefiting the entire community. Other projects were geared entirely at improving the quality of life of the area, such as: establishment and improvement of the Cannon Valley Trail (1985); the completion of the Mississippi National Golf Links (1986); and the Downtown Flower Basket program (1991).

The development of Treasure Island Casino in the early 1990’s had a tremendous impact on Red Wing’s economy. Treasure Island Casino owned and operated by the Prairie Island Tribal Council, is the largest employer in Goodhue County reaching 1,300 employees by 1993 and over 1,500 today. The Casino development has also allowed the Tribal Council to develop needed community facilities such as the Community Center and the Tribal Council has made several million dollars of donations

to community programs and projects such as the new Prairie Island Ice Arena constructed near the Red Wing High School.

There have been a number of other significant community developments since the City’s Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 1994. The Red Wing School District completed the construction of the Red Wing High School at a new site on the south end of Red Wing. The state-of-the-art building and classrooms also includes a large auditorium, gymnasium, and other outdoor athletic facilities. Following the relocation of the High School, Goodhue County completed the construction of three new buildings including a jail, joint law enforcement center with Red Wing, and judicial building on the site of the former school. In 2001, the Fairview Red Wing Medical Center opened for business and became the first tenant of the River Bluffs Business Park between Bench Street and Tyler Road. This development opened the way for substantial new retail commercial construction focused at the Tyler Road intersection of Highway 61. There have also been significant park and recreational improvements during this period including the Prairie Island Ice Arena; Expansion of the Red Wing YMCA; and new aquatic facility at Colvill Park. These community facility improvements have all been completed during a difficult fiscal time for the city caused by State legislative changes that have had the impact of reducing Red Wing’s

tax base by nearly one half. The City has relied heavily on private investment and public/private partnerships.

Public involvement and leadership is a cornerstone to Red Wing's successes as an historic river town. Two common themes that have been consistently echoed by the community and its leadership are that Red Wing should experience slow, steady growth and should be the regional center for economic, social, and cultural activities in southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. These themes first established in the 1980's still hold true in many respects today.

Socio-Economics of Red Wing

(demographics and economics)

Demographic growth in Red Wing has proceeded at modest but steady rates over the last decade. Current short term forecasts provided by national database organizations such as Applied Geographic Solutions (AGS) anticipate continued stability in Red Wing, with a slowing rate of growth over the next five years. Regional and national demographic trends reveal an aging population and a trend of young families having fewer children. This results in a demand for more attached housing product and a trend that will show flattening population growth and a bit higher household growth trends.

Another factor that contributes to household growth is the availability of raw land that can be serviced with City Sewer and Water. While there are a number of topographical constraints to the expansion of urban growth at Red Wing's fringe, there is sufficient capacity in the local infrastructure system to accommodate growth well above what is projected by the national demographers such as AGS.

The biggest factor contributing to population, household and economic growth is a community's quality of life or the "livability" factor previously discussed. Quality of life depends on a number of measurements including schools, parks, trails and sidewalks, open space, natural resources, quality and diverse housing, sound infrastructure systems, safe and friendly neighborhoods, and abundant commercial services to name a few.

Regional and national economic trends also contribute to socio-economic growth. These larger forces make projecting population, household and employment much more challenging. This plan focuses on the quality of life components more so than regional or national economic trends and population forecasts. A full update of Red Wing's 2000 Census data is included as Appendix C. A recent memorandum outlining Market Factors and Outlooks affecting Red Wing is included as Appendix D and provides a more current picture of some of the demographic and socio-economic trends affecting Red

Wing and the region and is summarized later in this section.

The most recent population estimates from the State Demographer are from 2005 stating Red Wing has a population of 16,358 and total households of 6,767. That represents a 1.5% rate of growth over the last 5 year period. These number are slightly higher than those projected by national data clearinghouses. If the state demographer's rate continues over next 5 years we would see a population of 16,600. Household growth over the past 5 years is 3.1% and if continued at a similar pace to 2010 Red Wing would have a household count of about 6,978. Growth rates could certainly increase in years beyond 2010 as the Twin Cities metro continues to expand southward.

Over the course of the next 20 years, it is reasonably safe to assume based on past trends and future growth expectations that Red Wing's population growth will approach the 20,000 figure.

This plan will be based on that assumption.

Economic Framework

A "Market Forces and Outlooks" memorandum was completed by ZHA Inc. as part of the planning process and is included as Appendix D. This section provides a brief summary of the key findings of this report.

Red Wing is situated in a uniquely challenging place from an economic market perspective. A core economic strength is that it is located within reasonably close proximity to both the Twin Cities and the Rochester Area. Similarly, this location is a weakness in that the region will tend to go north to Hastings or south towards Rochester for major shopping needs and employment opportunities where greater access to regional roads and labor markets are available.

However, Red Wing has a strong asset in its historic downtown, its location along the river and its identity as the home to Red Wing Shoes among other notable manufacturing, industrial, cultural and shopping/entertainment venues. Red Wing has the ability to offer a unique downtown oriented business environment or an edge commercial environment more in line with suburban commercial patterns. Agribusiness is still an important part of Red Wing's local economy, as are manufacturing, arts and cultural entertainment venues.

Regional and local growth trends do not offer a compelling story to entrepreneurs, business and industry. A key direction provided through this report's perspective is that in order to strengthen Red Wing's role in the local and regional market, it must focus first on making Red Wing a high quality of life place to live. Once again the emphasis on the notion of livability as being key to a strong local economic environment.

Emerging trends in the residential development sector are not too different than what the region has experienced over the last decade. As Red Wing ages there is a greater demand for attached housing products such as townhome, condos and flats. Also of interest is the group of metro buyers looking to leave the metro as a place to live but continue working there. This demand for housing supports the unique living environment of a small town community such as Red Wing.

From a commercial standpoint, Red Wing faces regional competition from the growing suburban communities in Dakota County as well as the Rochester area. None the less, the major chain “big box” stores have found their way to Red Wing and have opened up a new dynamic of a more suburban form of commercial development. The competition to downtown relates to a number of key factors including: visibility to high traffic volumes at the fringe; free, convenient and abundant parking; and extended and consistent hours of operations.

The downtown market has the advantage of character and cultural experience however that will continue to make it a competitive place for business. The downtown and the City will need to continue exploring ways to make both places work for Red Wing. One area that Red Wing seems to be lagging behind other similar communities is in the “eating and drinking establishments” category. Many factors can contribute to this but it is an area that the downtown may look into as it begins to implement

the Comprehensive Plan. A potential niche for downtown Red Wing focuses on unique, independent businesses offering leisure-oriented goods and services. Downtown can fill a niche as a location for business entrepreneurs with visions, ideas and energies involving restaurants, art galleries, stores selling unique gifts or craft items, antiques, coffee/baked goods, and other such items.

Based on Red Wing’s position in the region, it is assumed that current industrial land use patterns are likely to continue and that Red Wing is not likely to attract large-scale industrial developments that more than likely will prefer a location closer to the metro or closer to regional transportation infrastructure. Given the addition of a new business park along Highway 61, the supply of industrially zoned land is sufficient for a medium-range time frame.

Market Directives

The following market directives were offered within the Market Forces and Outlook Memorandum:

Future growth initiatives should focus on quality (of development, of business) rather than quantity.

Site Creation: The City should seek to maximize access to its unique riverfront and downtown assets. Reconfigurations that can provide convenient and suitable sites for commercial as well as residential development near these assets will compete successfully with other development opportunities throughout

the broad region around the Twin Cities. Such sites can attract creative developers, capital, residents and businesses from Twin Cities and beyond.

Downtown Niches: In seeking to preserve and capitalize on the historic character of downtown Red Wing, new active uses must emerge. The strongest opportunity for downtown targets a tenant profile easily distinguished from the typical Highway 61 tenant such as independent restaurants and other eating/drinking establishments or unique, leisure-oriented businesses.

In seeking to attract entrepreneurs to generate a new supply and critical mass of such businesses, the City should promote other complementary businesses and organizations engaging in visual arts (galleries), music/entertainment, artisan-related uses, recreation, and others such themes. This emphasis on arts-related themes would provide a competitive distinction vis-à-vis not just the Highway 61 Corridor, but also other small communities outside the Twin Cities. At the same time, this theme builds on local as well as regional assets (Anderson Center, Red Wing Arts Association Fall Festival, various music-related businesses and organizations, Artreach, general arts orientation in the Hiawatha Valley region).

Overall, various steps that promote such uses (coordination among entities, regional alliances, funding, marketing activities, arts-related development

incentives, etc.) that promote such uses can help attract these as well as complementary uses, thereby generating new synergies and revitalization activity in downtown Red Wing.

Red Wing's Landform

Red Wing is situated along the Mississippi River, surrounded by limestone bluffs which rise dramatically above the landscape. The City is characterized by dramatic valleys/ravines that reach down from the bluff tops to the river valley. The change in grade from the river's edge to the high point of Red Wing spans more than 400 feet of elevation.

Maps and Graphics tell a great story about Red Wing's geographic features and unique topography. Through mapping conducted as part of the planning process, a strong understanding of Red Wing's natural and man made character has been established. These features form the framework by which Red Wing's community systems, settlement patterns and design character have evolved.

A series of maps developed through the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) is included as Appendix B to this document. Some of these maps appear as small thumbnail graphics providing illustrative support to the ideas and policies identified in this plan. Larger scale maps can be viewed in the appendix.

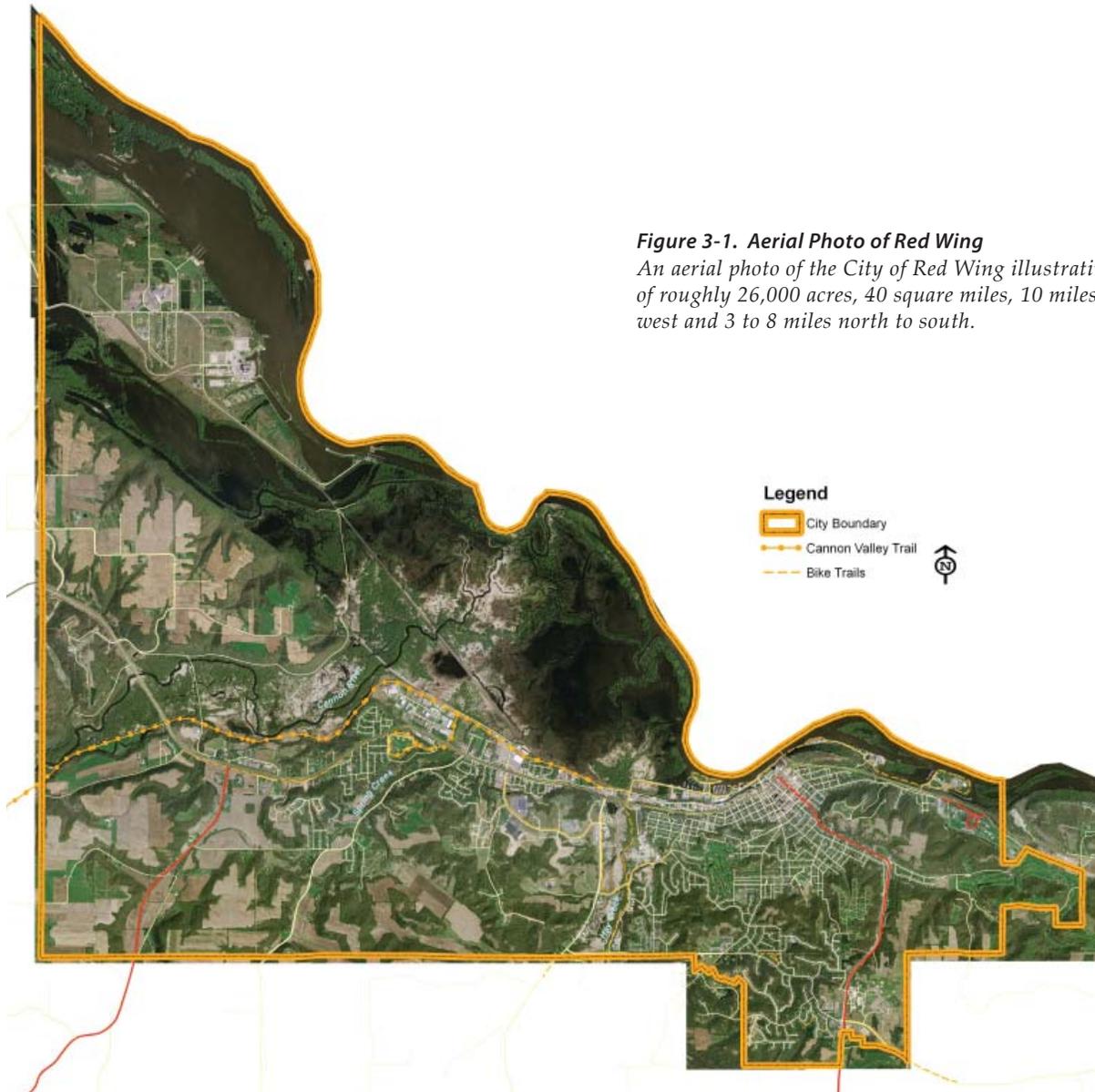


Figure 3-1. Aerial Photo of Red Wing
An aerial photo of the City of Red Wing illustrating a community of roughly 26,000 acres, 40 square miles, 10 miles across east to west and 3 to 8 miles north to south.

Foundation Documents

Red Wing has a strong history of planning as evident by the volume of plans researched for this project. These plans have helped the community advance to where it is today. Some plans have obvious tangible results, while others have simply helped tell the story of how Red Wing has grown and evolved.

The City of Red Wing has completed a range of planning documents that have influenced the outcome of this plan and continue to influence the future direction of the City. The following is a list of the types of planning documents Red Wing continues to utilize in planning efforts. Brief summaries of specific documents within these are included in Volume 1, Appendix A.

Types of planning documents:

1. Comprehensive Plans
2. Downtown Plans
3. Facility Plans
4. Other City-wide Plans and Studies
5. Historic Preservation Plans and Studies
6. Cultural Resources Plans and Studies
7. City Transportation Plans and Studies

8. Park and Trail Plans
9. Natural Resources Studies (regional)
10. County Plans

Walkability

Walkability, in other words, the presence of walkways and reasonable distances that make walking a legitimate way to get somewhere can be a bell-weather for community livability. There was a time when walkability was inherent to community design. Just look at any town built before the advent of the car and you'll see compact development, sidewalks, and corner shops – all due to the need to walk as a key form of transportation. Red Wing's historic areas are a prime example with 380 foot block patterns and a unique mix of uses.

Through the last half-century, most new development has ignored walkability and, instead, focused on auto access. Land uses have been isolated from one another. Development has spread out to allow for easy and convenient parking. Sidewalks are often absent from the menu of public facilities or sporadic at best. As a result, it is often challenging if not impossible to walk in many environments even if one wants to. Some more recently developed areas of Red Wing can attest to this phenomenon.

Walkability is again being demanded by a growing segment of the population. Numerous studies now link

the absence of walkability with negative physical health, social and environmental effects. The popularity of “new urbanist” neighborhoods is demonstrating a walkable alternative to traditional suburban development. And maybe most importantly, people are recognizing living in a walkable neighborhood as critical to their quality of life.

For the Red Wing Comprehensive Plan, walkability was measured in various ways to illuminate the level of walkability and the trend toward or away from it. It was a telling exercise and plays an important role in many of the recommendations contained in the Plan. For example, the location of future senior housing is more appropriately sited within walkable districts that contain retail goods, social services and recreation.

Walkability was measured between households and schools; between households and neighborhood parks; and between households and city attractions or intensity zones. (Intensity zones were defined as areas of commercial use and higher density housing.) Each of the analyses shown in Figures 3-2 through 3-4 highlight the percent of households considered to be walkable to the identified destinations. The conclusions that can be drawn from the exercise are:

1. Old portions of Red Wing have a strong walking infrastructure but many of the historic

connections that traversed the bluffs have not been maintained.

2. New neighborhoods have good internal sidewalks but they do not connect well to a broader system beyond the neighborhood edges.
3. A very low percentage of the population has pedestrian or trail access to schools.
4. The pattern of spreading development and isolating land uses makes walkability infeasible for the vast majority of the population.
5. Walkability is decreasing, not increasing as the community grows.

Households Walkable to Schools

Approximately 21 percent of existing Red Wing households are identified as being walkable to city schools. This includes schools at all grade levels, but not post-secondary educational institutions. These households, considered walkable, are all located within a half-mile walking distance to a school. Most—but not all—are continuously connected by sidewalks.

Households Walkable to Neighborhood Parks

An estimated 45 percent of Red Wing households can walk to a public neighborhood park. These households are all within a quarter-mile distance to a neighborhood park,



Physical barriers such as Highway 61 pose a significant challenge to maximizing livability within Red Wing.

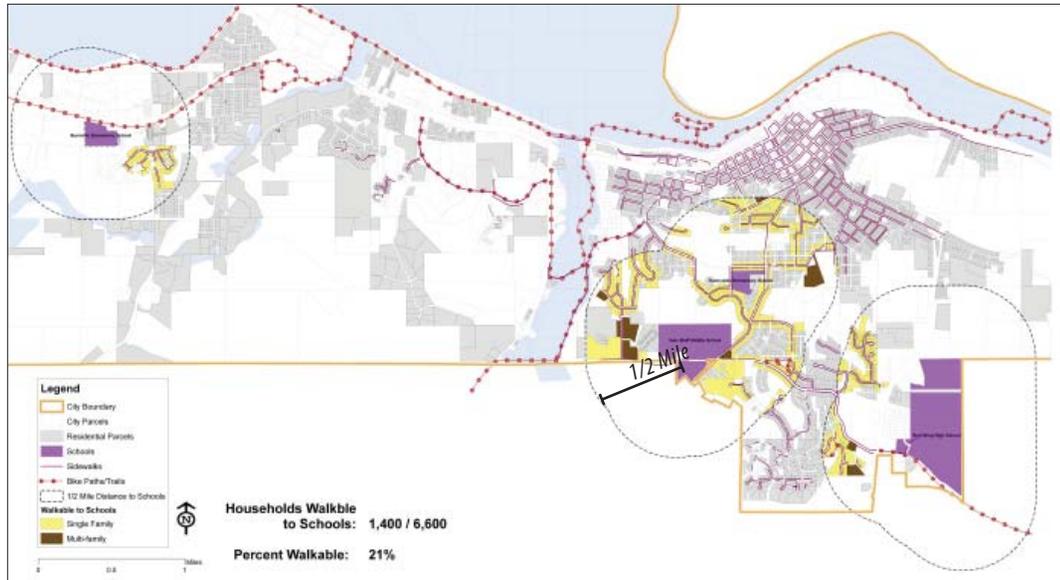


Figure 3-2.
Households Walkable to Schools
An estimated 1,400 out of 6,000 households are within a convenient walking distance to schools; however, not all areas are well connected by pedestrian friendly walking systems.

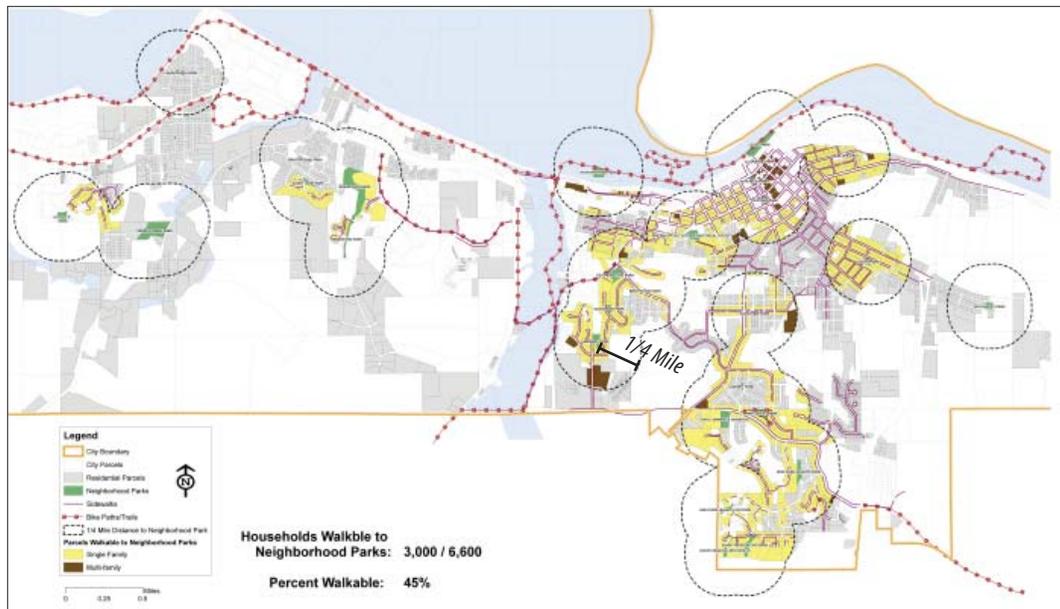


Figure 3-3.
Households Walkable to Neighborhood Parks
Proximity to neighborhood parks and other key cultural and social attractions are keys to enhancing the quality of life in a community and thus the "livability". 45 to 50% of Red Wing is estimated to be within walkable distances to these resources.

and most are connected by sidewalks. It is important to note the locations of parks with no households within that are considered walkable due to lack of off-street trails or sidewalks. Limited walkability to parks also limits the community interaction and livability.

Households Walkable to Intensity Zones & Attractions

Existing intensity zones – defined generally as areas of concentrated commercial use – are considered attractive destinations for residents of Red Wing. Other attractions, such as public libraries, museums, and even Treasure Island Casino are also included as important destinations to consider when assessing walkability. Approximately 50 percent of the city’s households are considered walkable to at least one intensity zone or attraction, being located within a half-mile distance and connected by sidewalks.

A key objective of Red Wing’s Comprehensive Plan will be to strive to make existing areas of the community more walkable and ensure that future development occurring on the edge places walkability at the forefront of the design process rather than relegating it to simply something that must be taken into consideration.

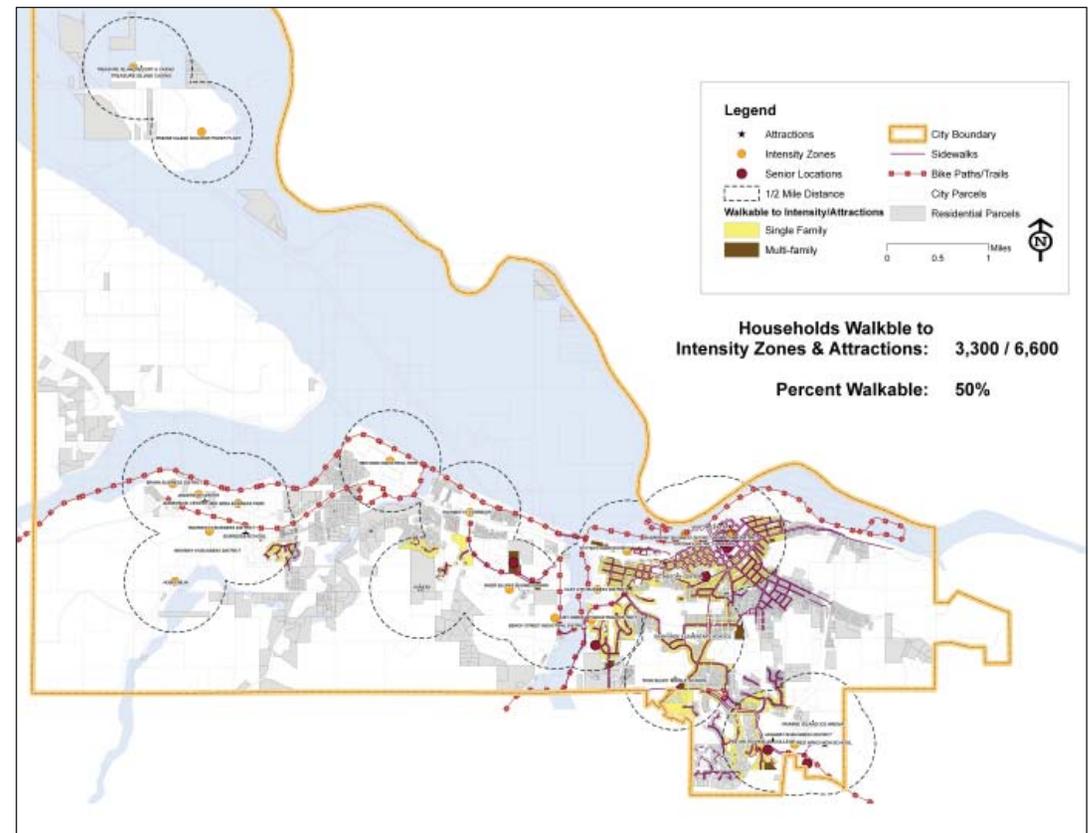


Figure 3-4. Households Walkable to Intensity Zones and Attractions

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