

IX. IMPLEMENTATION

This plan is not intended to sit on a shelf. A good community plan is a living document. People will pick up these pages and browse. They may study certain sections of interest. They may quickly scan charts and maps and go about their business. In time, students may judge our stewardship of the land by how well this plan comes to life.

A comprehensive plan is intended to be a long-term guide for decision-makers to evaluate and take action that supports new growth and development. This section outlines the community's vision for the plan, and how it will be implemented today and into the future.

A. Goals, Objectives, Policies & Tasks

While much of this plan contains measurable statements of fact, implementation requires more subjective statements to fill out the vision for the future. These goals, objectives, policies and tasks reflect hours of discussion, reflecting a balance between varied interests and community concerns. As the plan is implemented, the community will want to revisit, clarify, even change these statements to reflect changing conditions and concerns over time.

A.1 Goals & Objectives

Goals are broad statements of direction and purpose, reflecting the long-term vision and desires of the County and local citizens. Goals spell out a desired future. Objectives are more precise targets necessary to achieve goals. For example, it may be your goal to build a house, requiring home-building objectives such as completing a site survey and plan, securing permits, excavating the foundation, and enclosing the structure before the snow flies. An objective should be a detailed statement of quantitatively or qualitatively measurable results the plan hopes to achieve.

A.2 Policies

Policies state strategies or techniques to achieve goals and objectives, and ultimately towards achieving the intent of the plan. In terms of planning a home-building project, during site planning you may follow policies such as preserving as many trees as possible and placing windows to take advantage of prevailing wind and solar energy. Policies provide specific guidance for future decisions. Applicants for new development that goes through the development review process, such as subdivisions, conditional use applications, variances, etc, should demonstrate how their projects meet and exceed the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

A.3 Tasks

Tasks detail specific items for action. As tasks can accomplish multiple goals, objectives, and policies, they are outlined at the end of this chapter. To obtain construction bids for your new home site, you would outline specific tasks such as having a survey of your lot, staking out the building site, and drafting a grading plan. Each of these tasks would follow policies to meet objectives necessary to achieve the goal of building your new home.

B. Demographics

Cottonwood County faces demographic challenges typical of rural America in the 21st century, with a sense of civic pride not so common these days in our urbanizing nation. In the future, the County will work to maintain the population base with a balance of residents in different generations and from different places.

B.1 Young people have opportunities to work and live in Cottonwood County.

The County supports retention of a good educational system with opportunities for life-long learning, and opportunities for residents entering the workforce.

- B.1.a Support local and regional economic development programs.
- B.1.b Support school district programs.
- B.1.c Support local provision of courses with state colleges and universities.

B.2 Residents return to rural Minnesota.

In today's economy, youth often are forced to leave home to gain education and job opportunities. The County needs to be open to opportunities for them to come back home again, and to welcome native people of other places who can find opportunity here.

- B.2.a Support local and regional efforts to recruit new residents to the area.
- B.2.b Consider how provision of County services can be more readily available to immigrants and other non-local residents.

B.3 The quality of life is maintained and improved for an increasing aging population.

As the median age of the population grows older, there will be more demand for different types of housing and services, including second homes and accessible facilities.

- B.3.a Applicants for new development (subdivisions, conditional use applications, variances, etc) should explain how they meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- B.3.b Applicants for new development should consider the full range of needs of aging residents.
- B.3.c Consider needs of aging residents for increased transit services.
- B.3.d Consider how provision of County services can be more easily accessible.

C. Infrastructure and Public Facilities

Infrastructure and public facilities are basic tools for the provision of essential services to protect and enhance public health, safety and welfare. Improvements in many areas will continue to be necessary to reflect new or emerging technology, and to support opportunities for economic development. Facilities will need to continue to adapt to the needs of an aging population, while providing education and career opportunities for younger and working-age residents.

C.1 There is an adequate and safe water and wastewater system.

Local water supplies are provided by public and private wells and the Red Rock Rural Water System. Wastewater is treated by Individual Sewage Treatment Systems (ISTS), private treatment facilities, or municipal facilities.

- C.1.a Applicants for new development should document long-term sources of water, and long-term treatment of wastewater.
- C.1.b Applicants for new development should document financial ability to complete extension of infrastructure.
- C.1.c Support development of the Red Rock Rural Water System.
- C.1.d Support policies of adopted Wellhead Protection Plans.
- C.1.e Protect quality of water supply.
- C.1.f Encourage regular screening clinics for testing private wells for nitrates.
- C.1.g Applicants for new development should document quality of water supply and mitigate any potential detrimental impacts.
- C.1.h Discourage development in areas where poor soil characteristics may not support ISTS systems.
- C.1.i Encourage property owners to upgrade septic systems.
- C.1.j Encourage new development located closer to existing utilities to save the cost of extending infrastructure and services.

C.1.k Enforce standards for on-site sewage treatment systems.

C.2 There is a safe and efficient, multi-modal transportation system that meets local and regional needs.

Cottonwood County's transportation system includes state highways, county and township roads, municipal streets, the railroad, airport, and transit.

- C.2.a Applicants for new development should document impact of traffic on transportation systems.
- C.2.b Applicants for new development should work with township, county, and state officials to design access and assure long-term maintenance of roads affected.
- C.2.c Applicants for new development on state trunk highways should follow MN/DOT access management guidelines.
- C.2.d Carefully control highway access near major intersections to protect safety, accessibility and traffic function.
- C.2.e Continue support to complete four-lane sections of State Highway 60.
- C.2.f Undertake coordinated transportation planning considering current and future land use patterns in the region.
- C.2.g Balance safety, accessibility, environmental protection and cost when planning improvements to the transportation system.
- C.2.h Consider the effects on adjacent land use when expanding or reconstructing roads.
- C.2.i Provide for pedestrians and bicycles when expanding or reconstructing roads.
- C.2.j Support improvements to railroad sidings and crossings.
- C.2.k Support public transit systems.
- C.2.l Consider needs of aging residents for increased transit services.
- C.2.m Encourage new development located closer to existing roads to save the cost of extending infrastructure and services.

C.3 The County's public buildings and facilities meet residents' needs.

Cottonwood County owns and/or operates a number of public facilities, including the County Courthouse, Law Enforcement Facility, County Office Building, Highway Office and shops, Family Services Facility, and the County Landfill.

- C.3.a Undertake long-term capital improvement program planning so that public facilities can safely, adequately and efficiently meet future demands.
- C.3.b Locate new public facilities close to users and existing infrastructure.
- C.3.c Avoid locating major public roads and facilities on good agricultural land.
- C.3.d Carefully control solid waste disposal sites to minimize pollution and nuisance problems.
- C.3.e Applicants for new development within 1 mile of the Landfill should address potential concerns of future residents and landowners, such as blowing waste and odors, potential for groundwater contamination, or conflicts with future vertical or horizontal expansion.

C.4 Public education is strong and innovative.

New development can bring in new students and property tax revenues, or place unfunded demands for future educational services. The different public school districts and regional library system providing service to Cottonwood County are important partners for the long-term future of the area.

- C.4.a Applicants for new development should address impacts on school district tax base, enrollment, bus service, and other services.
- C.4.b Support the Plum Creek Library System.
- C.4.c Support school district programs.

- C.4.d Encourage renovation and expansion of school facilities in existing communities, to reduce traffic and contain costs of infrastructure and services.
- C.4.e Encourage new development in all local school districts.

C.5 Public safety services are provided to all residents.

Public safety is a primary responsibility of local government. The many different organizations providing health care, law enforcement, and fire protection services must work together to protect and serve the citizens of Cottonwood County.

- C.5.a Applicants for new development should document projected response time for public safety providers (law enforcement, fire protection, ambulance service).
- C.5.b Undertake hazard mitigation planning.
- C.5.c Support timely access to major medical services.
- C.5.d Support provision of state-of-art technology in local medical facilities.
- C.5.e Support Enhanced 911 system.
- C.5.f Encourage new development located closer to existing public safety facilities to save the cost of extending infrastructure and services.
- C.5.g Control signs and billboards to protect scenic views and reduce distractions to drivers.
- C.5.h Dedicate resources to properly enforce zoning regulations.

C.6 Adequate telecommunications and energy utilities are available to all residents.

Telecommunications and energy services—provided by investor-owned or public utilities—are local residents’ lifeline to the outside world. A well planned and maintained system can hasten the economic development of any area. Quality services can level the playing field and open up a whole new world of opportunities.

- C.6.a Applicants for new development should document provision of basic telephone and energy utilities.
- C.6.b Applicants for industrial or commercial development should address potential impacts on “incumbent local exchange carriers” (ILECs) and the public power grid.
- C.6.c Applicants for new development should document financial ability to complete extension of infrastructure.
- C.6.d Support competitive provision of broadband (wireless and wireline) telecommunications service in all areas of the county.
- C.6.e Revise and update provisions of zoning ordinance for telecommunications towers.
- C.6.f Encourage installation of underground utility lines.
- C.6.g Encourage new development located closer to existing utilities to save the cost of extending infrastructure and services.

D. Cultural and Recreational Resources

Local cultural and historic points of interest are valued by the community and must be carefully managed as sustainable resources. The natural environment requires protection from sources of contamination. Yet complicated (and at times conflicting) regulations pose increasing challenges. Cottonwood County is fortunate to have a variety of parks and recreational areas, with the potential to diversify and expand opportunities for residents to experience their heritage and the great outdoors.

D.1 Community cultural and historic points of interest are carefully managed for future generations.

A lot of history has gone by since Cottonwood County was established in 1857. From the 534 residents in 1870 to the 12,167 residents in 2000, local citizens have a unique and diverse heritage of cultural and

historic sites, festivals and events.

- D.1.a Applicants for new development should mitigate impacts on cultural and historic resources.
- D.1.b Support local community cultural and historic points of interest.
- D.1.c Consult with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office prior to planning changes to the National Register-listed buildings and sites.
- D.1.d Focus on preserving existing facilities to prevent deterioration.

D.2 Peoples of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds are made welcome.

As eastern and immigrant settlers brought new settlements to the Minnesota prairie in the 19th century, new immigrants are a source of ethnic and religious revitalization and change in our communities. As well, Americans of all origins are continually reinventing themselves and their preferences for community and cultural life.

- D.2.a Support continued use and maintenance of rural churches.
- D.2.b Review and revise the County Zoning Ordinance for compliance with the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA).
- D.2.c Review provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for churches and assembly uses, such as non-traditional facilities and retreat centers.

D.3 Natural resources are preserved and protected.

While most of Cottonwood County is dedicated to agriculture, areas of grasslands and rock outcroppings, hardwood forests and wetlands remain of what the original settlers saw years ago. These natural areas are hard at work recharging our aquifers, draining away storm runoff, and providing wildlife habitat.

- D.3.a Applicants for new development should mitigate impacts on natural resources.
- D.3.b Protect major natural resource areas.
- D.3.c Support restoration of appropriate natural landscapes.
- D.3.d Balance conservation of native grasslands and wildlife habitat to minimize conflicts with other land uses.
- D.3.e Work with DNR to identify priority areas for habitat conservation.
- D.3.f Discourage fragmentation of wildlife corridors.
- D.3.g Consider provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for a Conservation Overlay District to reduce conflicts between wildlife and natural areas and residential development.
- D.3.h Provide incentives and technical assistance to landowners for wildlife habitat.
- D.3.i Control signs and billboards to protect scenic views and reduce distractions to drivers.
- D.3.j Encourage development conforming to natural limitations presented by topography and soil to create the least potential for environmental degradation.
- D.3.k Applicants for new development near protected waters and wetlands should address land management practices to prevent water quality degradation.
- D.3.l Encourage farmers to adopt Best Management Practices (BMPs) to optimize farm profits, conserve soil and to protect and enhance ground and surface water quality.
- D.3.m Carefully control the location of feedlots and other animal confinement operations to minimize the potential for pollution.
- D.3.n Encourage property owners to upgrade septic systems.
- D.3.o Periodically review and update the Cottonwood County Comprehensive Water Plan.
- D.3.p Pursue GIS floodplain mapping.
- D.3.q Undertake hazard mitigation planning.

D.4 Development around lakes and streams is compatible with the natural environment.

Many lakes and streams have areas that are unsuitable for development, and require detailed study to

prevent unintended harm.

- D.4.a Applicants for new development in shoreland areas should provide detailed analysis of how the project may affect the watershed and mitigate potential impacts.
- D.4.b Encourage new development around water bodies best suited for more intensive uses; discouraging development around more sensitive areas.
- D.4.c Encourage natural landscaping to enhance wildlife habitat and protect water quality.
- D.4.d Encourage new development around public waters to consider public access to lakes and streams.
- D.4.e Review and revise shoreland regulations in the Zoning Ordinance to create a stand-alone zone district.
- D.4.f Consider implementing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that permits increased housing density in some areas in exchange for development rights in other areas.

D.5 Parks and recreation areas provide a variety of opportunities for local residents.

County parks and trails, along with municipal parks, provide a number of different opportunities for recreation, primarily serving local residents. Given changing cultural demands and expectations, underutilized recreation areas could be put to more intensive uses.

- D.5.a Applicants for new development should address impacts on parks and recreation areas.
- D.5.b Undertake long-term planning so that parks and recreation facilities can safely, adequately and efficiently meet future demands, given the challenge of spreading costs over a changing population base.
- D.5.c Diversify types of recreational activities available.
- D.5.d Avoid duplicating existing state and federal park lands and facilities.
- D.5.e Work with DNR to identify priority areas for recreation.
- D.5.f Coordinate facilities and services of County Parks and the Municipal Parks.
- D.5.g Increase the number of campsites available during peak demand.
- D.5.h Continue coordinated development of the trails system.
- D.5.i Access funding from MN DNR and other sources to provide new recreational uses.
- D.5.j Discourage incompatible uses adjacent to park and recreation areas.
- D.5.k Encourage the protection of natural resource areas through public acquisition for active and passive recreation.
- D.5.l Examine ways to further promote County parks and recreational resources.

E. Economic Development

Cottonwood County has an agricultural economy based on fertile farmland, with added strength in manufacturing and health services employment. Future regional employment growth is projected in areas such as business services, agricultural services, and residential care. There is a pro-growth local development attitude and an affordable cost of living.

E.1 Agriculture will continue to be a significant economic activity.

The future will see continued growth of large farms, with an increasing number of smaller farms as well. Fewer farms will have animals, but those THAT DO will have more cattle, hogs and sheep. The volume of crops harvested will likely grow with increasing productivity on a stable acreage.

- E.1.a Support the right to farm.
- E.1.b Recognize and support the agricultural character of the county.
- E.1.c Support provision of agricultural services.
- E.1.d Support and encourage legislation that will help retain and promote the agricultural economy.
- E.1.e Support production of alternative crops with the potential for local value-added processing.

- E.1.f Provide for home occupations and limited non-farm businesses in agricultural areas.
- E.1.g Monitor issues with large-scale livestock facilities.

E.2 The local labor force will have the skills and education to compete for 21st century jobs.

Although the local unemployment rate is higher than the regional average, Cottonwood County’s labor force has been growing even as the total population contracts. Local job seekers will need to constantly upgrade and improve skills to take advantage of new opportunities.

- E.2.a Support state workforce development programs.
- E.2.b Support training for small business owners and farm operators.
- E.2.c. Support local provision of courses with state colleges and universities.
- E.2.c. Support local and regional housing programs to reduce commuting out of the county.

E.3 The existing economic base will become more diversified.

The manufacturing and services industries have become even more important to Cottonwood County as more farmers seek off-farm jobs to supplement agricultural income. Future development should seek to take advantage of this cluster of basic-sector economic activity, yet also diversify to decrease vulnerability to the business cycles of large manufacturers.

- E.3.a Support local and regional economic development programs.
- E.3.b Continue support to complete four-lane sections of State Highway 60.
- E.3.c Work with local municipalities to coordinate location of infrastructure to support new development.
- E.3.d Discourage isolated, scattered commercial development in the county.
- E.3.e Encourage commercial and industrial development inside municipal limits.
- E.3.f Encourage “clean” non-polluting light industry.
- E.3.g Explore opportunities for adding value to local agricultural products (value-added manufacturing)
- E.3.h Develop performance standards in the Zoning Ordinance for light industrial facilities.
- E.3.i Support local and regional tourism programs.

E.4 New sources of renewable energy will be developed.

New opportunities are growing for rural communities with alternatives to traditional sources of energy.

- E.4.a Develop performance standards in the Zoning Ordinance for heavy industrial facilities such as ethanol and bio-diesel refineries.
- E.4.b Revise and update provisions of zoning ordinance for wind towers and power generation.

F. Housing

Most of the housing in Cottonwood County is located inside city limits, close to urban services. Local housing is fairly stable and affordable in relation to area pay scales, with relatively low vacancy rates. In addition to farmsteads on active agricultural operations, there is a continued interest in rural home sites with recreational and lifestyle amenities.

F.1 Most housing will continue to be provided within cities where urban services are provided.

Cities are organized to deliver urban services, such as police and fire protection, public water and sewer service, streets and sidewalks, schools and libraries, close to clusters of homes and jobs. Cities are also better able to serve a broad choice of housing types for all income groups.

- F.1.a Work with local cities to coordinate location of infrastructure to support new development.
- F.1.b Encourage infill development in existing developed communities.

- F.1.c Encourage new housing development adjacent to existing communities where urban services can be easily provided.
- F.1.d Encourage cities to identify and modernize regulations that may create barriers to affordable housing.
- F.1.e Encourage renovation and expansion of school facilities in existing communities, to reduce traffic and contain costs of infrastructure and services.
- F.1.f Support local and regional housing programs to provide affordable new housing opportunities.

F.2 Existing homes will be maintained and improved.

Individual homeowners have the primary responsibility for their own homes. However, local regulations can have large (and often unanticipated) effects on currently developed property. Given changing demographics and housing preferences, there may be opportunities to renovate and improve an aging housing stock to meet future demands.

- F.2.a Review use of the Residential zone district for existing homes and unincorporated communities.
- F.2.b Support rehabilitation and re-use of farmsteads no longer used for ag operations.
- F.2.c Support local and regional housing programs to maintain and improve existing housing stock.

F.3 There should be opportunities for limited rural housing where infrastructure is available.

The rural lifestyle—fresh country air, wide open spaces, a horse or rabbits for the kids—is a powerful draw as our nation becomes increasingly urbanized. New housing continues to be built outside of city limits, and Cottonwood County must be prepared to protect the health, safety and welfare of all residents, today and tomorrow.

- F.3.a Applicants for new commercial development should demonstrate compatibility with nearby agricultural uses.
- F.3.b Applicants for new rural development should document access to essential public services.
- F.3.c Applicants for new housing development on state trunk highways should follow MN/DOT access management guidelines.
- F.3.d Discourage new subdivisions sprawling outside of established cities.
- F.3.e Discourage scattered development that “leap frogs” and splinters agricultural areas.
- F.3.f Encourage the use of natural resource information such as soils, topography, solar aspect, surface and groundwater, etc, in residential site selection and design.
- F.3.g Prohibit the location of rural housing with septic systems in areas of high bedrock or water tables.
- F.3.h Consider septic system requirements when setting minimum lot sizes.
- F.3.i Review the Zoning Ordinance density limit on new residential development, and it’s effectiveness in preventing land use conflicts.
- F.3.j Consider adding provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for on-site housing for agricultural employees.
- F.3.k Consider adding provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for accessory dwelling units, such as “granny flats” or guest houses.
- F.3.l Discuss with cities creation of growth management areas in areas with demand for new housing near city limits.

G. Land Use

The vast majority of land in Cottonwood County is used as farms or fields. Development in agricultural and natural areas can lead to sprawl and land use conflicts, such as those between feedlots and residents

too common in rural Minnesota. Overall, development needs to be balanced with environmental concerns. Special areas, such as protected waters and wetlands or aggregate deposits, require special attention as demands for new development grows. While existing land use regulations work well, they can always work better.

G.1 Agriculture is a viable, permanent, productive land use.

There is public support and space for agricultural expansion without crowding in Cottonwood County. As the business of agriculture continues to evolve, farmers need options for innovation, whether by growing smaller and more focused, or larger to realize economies of scale.

- G.1.a Support the right to farm and preserve and protect productive agricultural land.
- G.1.b Applicants for new development should mitigate effects on agriculture.
- G.1.c Applicants for new development should agree to maintain adjacent agricultural fencing, control noxious weeds, and retain excess drainage on site.
- G.1.d Encourage farmers to adopt Best Management Practices (BMPs) to optimize farm profits, conserve soil and to protect and enhance ground and surface water quality.
- G.1.e Work with other units of government and private service providers to avoid locating major public facilities, roads and developments in productive agricultural areas.
- G.1.f Meet with township officials and agricultural groups to discuss how well the development review and approval process is working for agriculture.
- G.1.g Carefully control the location of feedlots and other animal confinement operations to minimize land use conflicts.
- G.1.h Review Zoning density limits on residential development in agricultural zones, and it's effectiveness in preventing conflicts between residents and agricultural uses.
- G.1.i Periodically Review Zoning Ordinance feedlot standards as more scientific research is completed.

G.2 Commercial uses in rural areas are compatible with agricultural neighbors.

Certain commercial uses are best located away from population centers, while other non-agricultural uses encroaching on rural lands set the state for conflict.

- G.2.a Applicants for new commercial development should demonstrate compatibility with nearby agricultural uses.
- G.2.b Applicants for new development on state trunk highways should follow MN/DOT access management guidelines.
- G.2.c Locate commercial and industrial uses in areas with existing infrastructure, such as water, sewer, roads and railways.
- G.2.d Encourage buffers with natural landscaping to reduce conflicts between commercial and agricultural uses.
- G.2.e Review Zoning Ordinance standards for home occupations.
- G.2.f Review Zoning Ordinance standards for non-agricultural commercial uses in the Agriculture zone district.
- G.2.g Consider creation of a dedicated Agricultural zone district, excluding commercial and industrial uses, for property owners who desire more protection of production agriculture.

G.3 Residential uses in rural areas are compatible with agricultural neighbors.

Housing should be available to local residents in both town and country. It can be difficult to fit rural residences into agricultural areas without destroying the qualities that attracted homeowners in the first place. It is important to prevent sprawl if the County hopes to contain the cost of providing public services and prevent future land use conflicts.

- G.3.a Applicants for new residential development should demonstrate compatibility with nearby agricultural uses.
- G.3.b Applicants for new rural development should document access to essential public services.
- G.3.c Limit rural housing development in prime agricultural areas.
- G.3.d Locate urban-density development in and near cities where urban services can be provided.
- G.3.e Discourage scattered development that “leap frogs” and splinters agricultural areas.
- G.3.f Encourage new development to make efforts to fit in, locating in clusters around existing farmsteads, on non-productive land, and closer to urban services.
- G.3.g Encourage buffers with natural landscaping to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses.
- G.3.h Develop a notice to new residents in residential areas, similar to the Code of the West brochure.

G.4 Residential uses in rural areas are compatible with protected natural areas.

Development in and near environmentally sensitive areas poses unique and increasing challenges. It can be difficult to fit residences into natural areas without destroying the qualities that attracted homeowners in the first place.

- G.4.a Applicants for new residential development should demonstrate compatibility with nearby natural areas.
- G.4.b Balance development with environmental impacts.
- G.4.c Encourage new development to cluster building sites in conservation developments, leaving larger natural and/or agricultural parcels.
- G.4.d Only permit multi-family residential development in areas with community water and sewer service.
- G.4.e Review and revise shoreland regulations in the Zoning Ordinance to create a stand-alone zone district.
- G.4.f Review provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for resorts and retreat centers.

G.5 Mining operations balance extraction with impacts to residential, agricultural and natural areas.

Areas of Cottonwood County have mineral deposits which may be commercially viable for mining.

- G.5.a Applicants for new and expanded commercial mining development should demonstrate compatibility with other nearby uses.
- G.5.b Work with commercial mine operators to minimize impact on adjacent land owners and the natural environment.
- G.5.c Review Zoning Ordinance provisions for mining and consider classifying mining as a conditional use, for some or all zone districts.
- G.5.d Require mining reclamation when active operations end or are suspended for a period of time.
- G.5.e Work with Minnesota DNR’s Division of Land & Minerals to map aggregate resources.

G.6 Land Use Regulations are sensible, clear and easily available.

The County Comprehensive Plan, when adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, becomes the basis upon which “official controls” such as zoning and subdivision regulations must be based.

- G.6.a Review and revise the Zoning Ordinance to ensure regulations meet the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- G.6.b Review and revise the Zoning Ordinance for compliance with the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA).
- G.6.c Shoreland regulations may be more clearly understood, and more easily administered, if converted to a dedicated, stand-alone zoning district.

- G.6.d Consider standards in the Zoning Ordinance for mining as a conditional use.
- G.6.e Expand the use of GIS to create maps and visually analyze land use trends and proposals.
- G.6.f Provide digital copies of zoning maps and zoning text online for easy public access.
- G.6.g Dedicate resources to properly enforce zoning regulations.

G.7 The Development Review Process is fair, efficient and effective.

Development review is the process to ensure building and development is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, including setback and use permits, conditional use permits, requests for variance, and divisions of land.

- G.7.a Applicants for Development Review should clearly explain in their written application how their proposals meet the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other applicable regulations and standards.
- G.7.b Applicants for Development Review should provide clear and concise maps and illustrations so that decision makers and the public can fairly, efficiently and effectively evaluate their proposals.
- G.7.c Findings of Fact in granting CUPs, Variances and Subdivisions should specifically include conformance with this Comprehensive Plan.
- G.7.d Variances to the Zoning Ordinance should be rarely granted, and then with specific findings of how the individual property meets the tests for unique hardship.
- G.7.e Consider creation of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone district, which would permit clustered lots and/or non-traditional housing with heightened public review similar to a conditional use permit.
- G.7.f Work with cities and townships to coordinate development in areas with demands for new growth.
- G.7.g Discuss with cities creation of growth management areas in areas with demand for new growth near city limits.
- G.7.h Provide regular training for board and commission members in different aspects of the development review process.
- G.7.i Consider creating special area or corridor plans to more closely plan for neighborhoods and communities in the county.
- G.7.j Regularly review and update the Comprehensive Plan.

H. Implementation Tasks

Implementation tasks are specific work items to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan. Timing indicates whether the task should occur in the near term (within 2 years of adoption), short term (2-3 years), long term (3-5 years), or is ongoing.

The figure below highlights tasks for which the Cottonwood County Planning Commission is or could be the lead agency. While the Cottonwood County Comprehensive Plan is adopted by the Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners, coordination and cooperation of many different local units of government, interest groups, and private citizens is required for successful implementation. Only by working together can we see these goals and policies come to life.

Figure 9-1: Cottonwood County Comprehensive Plan Implementation Tasks

Task	Related Goals / Policies	Timing	Lead Agency	Other Public Partners
H.1 Review and update Zoning Ordinance				
a Assure consistency with Plan's Goals and Policies	All	Near Term	Planning Commission	
b Convert Shoreland provisions to a stand-alone zone district	D.4.e, G.4.e, G.6.c	Near Term	Planning Commission	DNR
c Develop Conditional Use requirements for mining	C.1.e, G.5.c, G.6.d	Near Term	Planning Commission	Red Rock RWS, DNR MNDOT
d Update tower regulations	E.4.b	Near Term	Planning Commission	
e Digitize GIS zoning maps	G.6.e	Near Term	Environmental Office	
f Monitor livestock provisions and standards	D.3.m, E.1.g, G.1.g G.1.j	Ongoing	Environmental Office	MPCA, Dept. of Ag
g Review residential density limits in the Ag zone	F.3.i, G.1.h, G.3.c	Short Term	Planning Commission	
h Review purpose and extent of the Residential District	F.2.a	Short Term	Planning Commission	
i Develop Planned Unit Development (PUD) standards	G.7.e	Short Term	Planning Commission	
j Develop standards for light industry	E.3.h	Short Term	Planning Commission	
k Develop standards for heavy industry (e.g. ethanol & biodiesel)	E.4.a	Short Term	Planning Commission	
l Develop home occupation standards	E.1.f, G.2.e	Long Term	Planning Commission	
m Review non-ag uses in ag district	G.2.f	Long Term	Planning Commission	
n Review retreat, resort provisions	D.2.c, G.4.f	Long Term	Planning Commission	
o Digitize GIS FEMA floodplain maps	D.3.p, G.6.e	Long Term	Environmental Office	FEMA
p Map aggregate resource areas	G.5.e	Long Term	Environmental Office	DNR
H.2 Improve public access to information				
a Develop a "Code of the West" brochure	G.3.h	Short Term	Environmental Office	
b Post Zoning Ordinance text, maps and application forms online	G.6.f	Short Term	Environmental Office	
H.3 Complete an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan	C.5.b, D.3.q	Short Term	Emergency Management	Planning Commission
H.4 Discuss Development Issues				
a Meet with cities on growth management	F.3.j, G.7.f	Short Term	Planning Commission	Cities, Townships
b Meet with townships and ag groups	G.1.f	Short Term	Planning Commission	Townships, Dept. of Ag
c Work with DNR to ID priority areas	D.3.e, D.5.e	Long Term	Planning Commission	DNR
H.5 Continue land use training for staff and decisionmakers	G.7.g	Ongoing	Environmental Office	Planning Commission Board of Adjustment County Commissioners
H.6 Complete a Parks and Rec Plan	D.5.b	Long Term	Planning Commission	Cities, DNR
H.7 Review and update County Water Plan	D.3.o	Short Term	Water Plan Task Force	Planning Commission
H.8 Review and update Comprehensive Plan	G.7.j	Long Term	Planning Commission	