

# 2008 City of Ortonville Comprehensive Plan

Prepared By:  
**Upper Minnesota Valley  
Regional Development Commission**  
323 West Schlieman Ave  
Appleton, MN 56208  
320.289.1981  
[www.umvrdc.org](http://www.umvrdc.org)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Comprehensive Plan was created with input from various community leaders and residents, Planning Commission, City Council and city staff.

### **Mayor:**

Blair Johnson, Mayor

### **City Council Members:**

Nicholas A. Anderson, Council Seat A

Mike Dorry, Council Seat B

John Cunningham, Council Seat C

Steve Berkner, Council Seat D

Robert Meyers, Council Seat E

Craig Randleman, Council Seat F

### **Planning Commission Members:**

Bob Meyer

John Cunningham (C.C. Rep)

Scott Simonitch

Tom Kindt

Steve Berkner

### **City Staff:**

David Lang, City Administrator

### **Planning Consultant:**

Upper Minnesota Valley  
Regional Development Commission

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# Chapter 1 – Introduction

**“Good plans shape good decisions. That’s why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true”. *Author Unknown***

## PLAN BACKGROUND | one

The City of Ortonville Comprehensive Plan is the principal planning tool intended to guide the *long-range* and *comprehensive* decision-making processes involving primarily physical development and those actions expected to influence development in the long-term. The Comprehensive Plan provides a view of the future (what the city wants to be) and sets forth public statements that provide direction and guidance in the decision making process. It lays out a community vision and action plan for priorities. The Comprehensive Plan is based on local and regional historical facts, trends and planning principles. This document presents the Comprehensive Plan for Ortonville, Minnesota; reflective of the community planning process conducted in 2008. The city’s last Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2002, was the starting point for preparing this Plan. This Plan reaffirms many of the principles articulated in the 2002 document. Many principles and actions associated with those issue areas remain in need of implementation. This plan also re-focuses on the need to make the Plan:

- Reflect a shared vision of the future of the city.
- Establish clear goals and policy directions for the city and work groups to pursue.
- Create a succinct, updated and user-friendly framework that the city can implement.

The City directed the scope of this plan to include a major emphasis on implementation: the specific actions to be taken to turn the visions of this plan into a reality for a sustainable future. Formulation of this text and maps is not the ultimate objective; the use of the plan is what is important, and a Comprehensive Plan is only as good as the measures used to implement the plan. However, no single document can provide solutions to all community needs, and the Comprehensive Plan is a flexible, continuous and changing process that is periodically updated based on changing conditions, the shifting of resources and the alteration of goals. While the Plan is intended to serve as a 25-30 year guide, it should be reviewed periodically (every 5 to 10 years) to adequately address development and changes within the community as they occur.

## PLAN VISION | two

Planning begins with vision. This vision focuses on what a desirable future would include. It depicts, in words and images, what the community seeks to become - how it will look, how it will function, how it might be different or better twenty plus years from now. A comprehensive plan allows a community to develop a vision for the future. Once this vision is developed, the plan outlines courses of action to help a community shape and mold itself. When looking at the development of a community, a desirable future includes the availability of jobs and business opportunities, the quality of natural resources, the availability of affordable housing, the accessibility and adequacy of public utilities, parks and recreation, schools and emergency services, the condition of streets and highways and the character of the community. These are, in summary, some of the basic elements, which contribute to a positive quality of life.

For this 2008 Plan, citizens had the opportunity to express their vision for the future of Ortonville. A summary of all the vision statements is contained with the community meeting results following this Chapter. From these vision statements, the following vision was synthesized and adopted for this Plan. It strives to capture the values and concerns of the community it we looks to the future. It is upon this vision and accompanying ideals, that this Plan is based and to which its goals and policies strive to achieve.



**Vision...**

**a seed is no more than  
a flower in disguise**

**see things as they  
could be – not as they**

**AS WE LOOK INTO THE FUTURE,  
WE SEE THE CITY OF ORTONVILLE**

**AS...** a community with a strong sense of identity and a profound pride in their past, present and future. Ortonville is a vibrant and attractive community set at the forefront the Upper Minnesota Valley and scenic Big Stone Lake with valuable and abundant natural, cultural, social and economic resources. People in Ortonville care about each other and work together to sustain and enhance shared community values, such as strong families,

responsible government, participatory citizenship and small town livability. The City of Ortonville values and preserves the beauty of its natural and architectural resources. Quality of life is supported in a number of ways from accessible health care to lifelong educational opportunities, abundant recreation, and desirable housing and employment. Ortonville is a place that residents, businesses and visitors find unique with welcoming, kind people, offering a high quality of life as a place to live, raise children, retire, shop, work, recreate and socialize.

## SCOPE OF PLAN | three

The City of Ortonville Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) is composed of four Chapters:

### Chapter 1

**Introduction/** This Chapter includes the Plan background, purpose, vision statement, scope of Plan as well as an overview of the plan methodology and citizen participation process.

### Chapter 2

**Community Profile/** This Chapter provides the community framework for the Plan including: location and regional context, history, social profile with historical population trends and future projections. An overview of the area's natural resources are also provided within this Chapter including: vegetation, geology soils, water features and other natural amenities.

### Chapter 3

**Plan Elements & Action Plans/** The City of Ortonville's Comprehensive Plan contains seven specific subjects or "elements", which incorporate the vision of Ortonville and specific issues relevant to future growth and development of the City. For the purposes of this plan, these elements consist of the following: **Land Use, Community Character, Housing & Neighborhoods, Natural Resources, Economic Development, Infrastructure & Transportation and Recreation & Open Space**. Each element begins with a general introduction and establishes goals and policies. The following descriptions are a brief overview of the information provided in each element:

- The **Land Use Element** is the Comprehensive Plan's guiding principle. This Element provides a long-term vision for the City of Ortonville based upon a strong family community with distinct neighborhoods, a diversity of housing types, a mixture of connecting trails and parks, and a thriving downtown.
- The **Community Character Element** addresses the less tangible dimensions of growth and development known as community character. Community character takes land use recommendations and moves beyond the concept of





The Plan is organized into a series of elements that cover community functions such as Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure. Each element describes a set of goals, objectives and policies that are designed to achieve that aspect of the vision statements. Policies and action statements are coordinated and mutually supportive across all plan elements. The vision statements and elements establish the conceptual framework of the Plan. Each element details specific policies, strategies, and actions in support of this framework.

"where" and "how much" and addresses the "quality" of the land use. Community character can be defined as the combined effect of the built, natural, historic, and social features within a neighborhood. It encompasses the physical and social attributes that make the community unique and distinctive.

- The **Housing & Neighborhoods Element** / The goal of the Housing and Neighborhoods Element is to ensure that quality affordable housing and healthy and diverse neighborhoods are available to all residents. Housing policies focus on creating and expanding housing programs and policies that promote homeownership, affordability and a well maintained housing stock.
- The **Natural Resources Element** provides information on the physical aspects of the City such as soils information, topographical elements and physical barriers to development. This element provides guidance for the management of sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, wetlands, flood plains and other significant natural habitats. The enhancement of Big Stone Lake is a central focus of this element.
- The **Economic Development Element** is a blueprint for actions that will stimulate business expansion and job creation opportunities within the city. This Element provides a framework for improving the City's future financial well being.
- The **Infrastructure & Transportation Element** describes the need for improvements to existing facilities and new facilities over the next twenty years. It encourages efficient land use and the use of transit facilities, trails, and sidewalks as alternatives to the automobile. The Infrastructure and Transportation Element requires the majority of the City's future capital facilities expenditures.
- The **Recreation & Open Space Element** contains goals and policies that reflect the community's expectations for levels of service provided by the full range of park sizes, locations and improvements as well as similar standards for trails and recreation services.

**Chapter 4**

**Plan Implementation/** This Chapter describes and summarizes local controls pertaining to land use; the subdivision of land, orderly annexation, Capital Improvement Planning and implementation strategies. The Implementation Chapter as presents the prioritized, master “to do” list for the community to reach its desired future. When done well, the implementation element can ensure that the completed plan is a useful community planning guide. If done poorly, the plan will likely be just another document that sits on the proverbial shelf.

**PLANNING FRAMEWORK | four**

The Ortonville City Council selected the Planning Commission to oversee the Comprehensive Plan update. The five-member Planning Commission is appointed in an advisory capacity to the City Council. Additionally, two citizens from the community were involved in the Plan review and creation. This group reviewed and analyzed the data, identified issues and concerns, assessed community development options and formulated policy recommendations in an effort to anticipate and provide for future growth and development.

It was also understood that active, ongoing and meaningful citizen involvement is essential to the successful development and implementation of a comprehensive planning program. Recognizing this fact, the Ortonville Comprehensive Plan has been developed through a process involving citizen participation. The City recognized that in order to effectively prepare, and more importantly, implement the recommendations of the plan, the public must have the opportunity to be involved in the process. For this purpose a Community Meeting was held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at City Hall. At this meeting participants were able to express their feelings regarding various topics. At the onset of the meeting a presentation was conducted to educate the participants on the framework and the significance of the Comprehensive Plan. Utilizing a game board style questionnaire and round table discussion, all comments, identified by each individual, were recorded. After recording the comments on each topic, the group reporters were asked to summarize each roundtable discussion. The comments from both public participation meetings are located at the end of this Chapter.

Much of the data used throughout the Plan was produced by any number of federal, state, county, and non-governmental agencies. Additionally, technical analysis and GIS technology was employed to guide rational recommendations which relate to community values. Sources of data are cited throughout each Chapter of the Plan.

Through the Planning Commission, the plan was formalized and recommended to the City Council on July 8th, 2008, following a community meeting to review the draft. The Plan was officially adopted on July 21<sup>st</sup>, following a public hearing (see adopting Resolution).



## As we look to the future we see Ortonville as...

- A vibrant, attractive community in which to both retire and to live and work in with a wide variety of "information age" businesses.
- As we look into the future we see the City of Ortonville as a cooperative, vital family that draws on its strengths and assets and has developed a vision for growth.
- A place where there is a city-wide sense of where we are going and some agreement as to how we will collectively get from here to there.
- Evolved into a kinder, more welcoming city with improved infrastructure in the areas of streets, homes, jobs and commerce.
- I see the city of Ortonville as a remarkable asset in need of better management.
- As we look into the future we see the city of Ortonville as a community that provides adequate living standards and opportunities for all generations.
- In future – a historic, aesthetic, industrialized positive city with excellent schools, medical services and parks and open spaces.
- A city with declining population and industry will eventually increase thus increasing population. The medical facility, the nice school and the lake will be a big plus in growth.
- A friendly place for senior citizens to live. New industrial development with jobs for young people. Population that increases – 10,000 people.
- Historic – community with medical hub – senior living campus – improved park connectivity – commuter/internet access jobs expanding (want to live in recreational area – relax and stay connected to larger cities) – increased population.
- As we look into the future we see Ortonville as a historical place for the younger generation to learn about the past generation.
- In need of studio space to display and encourage various types of artistic development.
- A retirement community.
- Ortonville will be a community welcoming new residents, nurturing creative people who have chosen this safe and comfortable community to call home.
- A growing lake community with culture and arts that provide a high quality of life and encouraging educational growth.
- I see Ortonville in the future as a convenient, healthy, beautiful community that is economically sound because of new investments, infrastructure, businesses and amenities.
- As a thriving cultural center – middle to high class majority because of good jobs and retail availability surrounding lake life.
- A scenic rural community with potential to grow.

*"The future is not completely beyond our control. It is the work of our own hands."*

*Robert Kennedy*



# Ortonville 2008 Comprehensive Plan

## CommUNITY Meeting

Summary  
April 22, 2008



### What are the three most positive aspects of Ortonville?

- Group 1: Natural resources – lake, Healthcare system, Infrastructure
- Group 2: Beauty, Terrain/hills/trees/lakes, Historical
- Group 3: People, Location, Environment/Lifestyle

### What are the three major challenges facing Ortonville now?

- Group 1: Living, wage, jobs, head of household  
Maintaining infrastructure, use utilities to fund and provide opportunities
- Group 2: A vision/plan attitude  
Industry (lack)  
Population (decline)  
Location (no interstate, border SD)
- Group 3: Declining population  
Jobs  
Managing future development  
Involvement (knowledgeable)

### What are three major improvements that would make living in Ortonville better?

- Group 1: Cleaner Big Stone Lake  
Community center  
Collaboration
- Group 2: First Impressions (clean up/paint)  
More businesses  
Walkways (connect parks & businesses)
- Group 3: Main street renovation – right mix of retail  
Outreach Center for the arts  
Lake area improvements

### What three words describe Ortonville?

- Group 1: Historic; aesthetic; unique
- Group 2: Unique; historic; small town feel
- Group 3: Aging; comfortable; scenic

### What are the top three housing needs within the community?

- Group 1: Preservation of current stock, Rehab or remove questionable housing,  
Larger houses/newer, modern
- Group 2: Rehab, Landscaping
- Group 3: Desirable, affordable housing, Housing renovation, Congregate housing

### What are the three most important transportation concerns in the community?

- Group 1: Quality of streets, Transit – public transit, Funding
- Group 2: Upgrading streets, Signage, Bike trails
- Group 3: Upkeep of streets

### List three utility concerns or needs within the community.

- Group 1: Modernizing cable, phone, internet, Upgrade/maintain water/sewer/electric, sewer utility
- Group 2: Fiber, Storm sewer
- Group 3: Aging infrastructure, Telecommunications

### Trails & Recreation. What facilities would most add to the quality of life in Ortonville?

- Playground equipment:
  - Group 1: It's coming.
  - Group 2: 0-5 yr old equip, fenced.
  - Group 3: Lakeside Park
- Athletic fields:
  - Group 1: Hockey arena
  - Group 2: Frisbee court
- Other?
  - Group 1: Community center
  - Group 2: Theatre, indoor hockey rink, studio for artists
  - Group 3: Trails

### What specific economic development outcomes should the community focus its energy, talents and dollars on the next 5 years?

- Group 1: Lobbying & recruiting businesses, Modernization - T-1 line, Revolving Loan Fund
- Group 2: Historic preservation, Job creation, Incentives – network, Recycling – plastic
- Group 3: Historic building plans, Downtown businesses, Industrial park development

### Identify 3 retail stores or businesses needed within the community.

- Group 1: Clothing, Variety store, Dentist
- Group 2: Clothing, Variety (household, fabric, toys), Vet – pet supplies

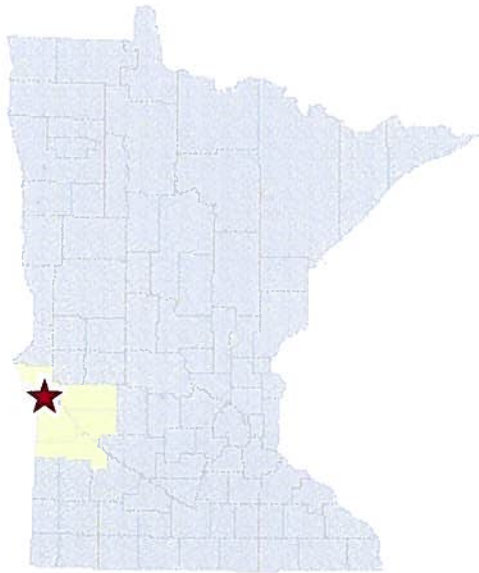
### List the most important environmental resources the city should protect or enhance.

- Group 1: Big Stone Lake, Greenways, Trees
- Group 2: Lake, River, Air

# Chapter 2 – Community Profile

*“When you look at a city, it’s like reading the hopes, aspirations and pride of everyone who built it”. **Hugh Newell Jacobsen***

**Figure 1.1**  
**Ortonville Statewide Setting**



## LOCATION & REGIONAL SETTING | one

Ortonville is located in the southwestern corner of Big Stone County, on the Minnesota – South Dakota boarder. The city rests at the foot of Big Stone Lake which provides many natural and recreational resources for the city and surrounding area. Figure 2.1 on the left shows the location of the City of Ortonville relative to the State of Minnesota.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 3.5 square miles (8.9 km<sup>2</sup>), of which, 3.4 square miles (8.8 km<sup>2</sup>) of it is land and 0.1 square miles (0.1 km<sup>2</sup>) of it (1.45%) is water.

Ortonville lies within the Upper Minnesota Valley Development Region. This is a rural, agriculture region that includes the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine. The city’s political boundaries include U.S. Congressional District 7, House District 20A and Senate District 20. Ortonville connects with the surrounding areas via U.S. Highway 12, U.S. Highway 75, and Minnesota Highway 7 as three of the main routes in the city.

**Figure 2.2**  
**Ortonville Regional Setting**



As the county seat and largest city in Big Stone County, Ortonville provides many services and recreational opportunities to the region. These services include a hospital and clinic, nursing home facilities, a golf course, a museum, the county fair, courthouse and Big Stone Lake.

## ORTONVILLE AND ITS HISTORY | two

The city of Ortonville's history is unique and colorful. The following historical summary was provided by the Big Stone Historical Society.

- 1871 C. K. Orton arrived in Benson by train and then started out on foot. He made his formal claim to 160 acres of pre-empted government land in Litchfield which was the nearest land office.
- 1872 C. K. Orton settled on section nine of Township 121, range 46. C. K. Orton and three brothers built three buildings near the lake and started farming. C. K. Orton also opened a trading post.
- 1874 On September 1st, the first Board of County Commissioners established the first six school districts. A county Superintendent of Schools functioned from July 20, 1874 to July 20, 1878, and from March 19, 1881 to July 1, 1969.
- 1875 The post office was established with C. K. Orton the first postmaster.
- 1876 The first permanent store opened with Schumaker and Woodly as proprietors.
- 1877 Ortonville, School District #1, did not have a school until the summer of 1877. Miss Ida Van Kleek was the first teacher in Ortonville
- 1878 Dr. A. E. Pettingill was the first doctor in Ortonville.
- 1879 On April 20th, a fire swept through the town destroying more than half of the 28 buildings.
- 1879 The first passenger train arrived in Ortonville on November 29, 1879. C. K. Orton had given the right-of-way to the railroad.
- 1879 Navigation on Big Stone Lake was promoted and several companies were formed to transport passengers and freight.
- 1879 C. K. Orton set aside two acres of land to be used as a cemetery. The Mound Cemetery Association of Ortonville has since added more land. The cemetery's earliest birth is 1791 with the earliest death being 1877.



- 1881 **Ortonville was organized as a village** by an act of the state legislature in the spring session. The first village officers were: H. Van Inwegen, president; C. K. Orton, Bernard Dassel, and A. L. Jackson, trustees; F. G. Tuttle, recorder, F. H. Holloway, city justice; and A. E. Randall, treasurer.
  
- 1887 The first class to graduate from Ortonville High School - with the following three graduates: J. William Brown, Miss Franc Murray Potter and William E. Russell.
  
- 1892 Columbian Hotel was built.
  
- 1897 On August 19th, a fire destroyed the entire east side of Second Street between Madison and Monroe, ten buildings in all.
  
- 1898 On February 8, the City of Ortonville opened bids for \$15,000 bonds for its water and light departments. The 1899 Plat Book shows the City Water and Electric Works on the lakeshore.
  
- 1902 The current Big Stone County Courthouse was built.
  
- 1906 On October 30, Dr. Jacob Karn and Dr. Charles Bolsta opened a 17 bed hospital on Washington Avenue between Second and Third streets. Grand View Hospital. Miss Josephine Bolsta, R.N., a sister of Dr. Bolsta, was the first superintendent. In 1919, Dr. Charles Bolsta and Dr. Bert R. Karn transferred title of Grand View to the South Dakota Evangelical Church Society. It was called the Ortonville Evangelical Hospital until 1944, when the church transferred title to the property and the operation of the hospital back to Dr. Charles Bolsta and Dr. B. R. Karn. Drs. Bolsta and Karn, in turn, transferred the hospital to the City of Ortonville. In September 1944, the council passed an ordinance creating a hospital board.
  
- 1913 The first motion picture theatre in Ortonville was built at 240 NW Second Street - later became the Moose Lodge.
  
- 1913 The Library Board asked the City Council to raise \$1,000 by tax levy and to apply to the Carnegie Foundation for funds. The City purchased the site for \$1,800. The plans of F. W. Elerby, architect, for his Venetian Renaissance design were approved by the Carnegie Council and \$10,000 was donated for the building. Carlson-Hasslen bid of \$10,250 was accepted and later adjusted to \$9,335. The library was opened on April 26, 1915.



- 1918-1919 Epidemic of Spanish influenza in Big Stone County
- 1917 On June 30th, street lights "went on" in Ortonville.
- 1924 The armory was built.
- 1930 23 blocks of city pavement were laid in the summer and early fall. A three day pavement celebration and Goodwill Festival began with a dedication ceremony on Friday, noon, October 10.
- 1931 The first Corn Festival, sponsored by the Ortonville Town and Farm Club, was held September 3 & 4, 1931. The Big Stone Caning Company donated the corn for the noon lunch that was served in Central Park.
- 1933 The Carlson and Hasslen Construction Company was awarded the \$37,465 contract for the sewage and disposal plant.
- 1940's Epidemic of poliomyelitis in Big Stone County.
- 1949 Ottertail Power Company built a plant at the foot of the lake.
- 1950 Hasslen Construction Co. of Ortonville was awarded the contract for general construction in the amount of \$191,000 for a 32-bed hospital on the site at 750 Eastvold Avenue. With the completion of the new hospital in 1952, the Grand View Hospital building was converted into Park View Nursing Home until it closed in September 1978.
- 1968 The Housing Redevelopment Authority organized with an application to build the 50-unit Lakeside Apartments, the high-rise housing for the elderly that replaced the Orton Hotel.
- 1975 \$1,800,000 in general obligation bonds for a nursing home was approved by Ortonville voters. The cornerstone of Ortonville's 74-bed nursing home was placed on September 11, 1977. Northridge Residence at 1075 Roy Street held an open house on March 18 and 19, 1978, for the new long-term care facility.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS | three

### Vegetation

According to the Public Land Survey Records as interpreted by Francis J. Marschner\*, the area around Ortonville originally was predominantly tall grass prairie. Areas of wet prairies, marshes and sloughs were scattered throughout the County as well as a couple of sections of oak openings and barrens. Today the landscape is still predominantly that of a prairie; however, a large portion of the area is farmed.

In 1987 the DNR began the Minnesota County Biological Survey as a systematic survey of rare biological features. The goal of the Survey was to identify significant natural areas and to collect and interpret data on the distribution and ecology of rare plants, rare animals and native plant communities. The resulting map of Big Stone County identifies areas of four types of threatened natural communities. These include:

**Mesic Prairie** – prairies on deep, moderately-drained to well-drained loamy soils formed in calcareous glacial till or alluvium. Occurring mostly on the rolling topography of the Big Stone moraine, in abandoned glacial-river channels and on level terraces in the Minnesota River Valley. Cover grasses are mainly big bluestem, Indian grass and little bluestem. Common forbs are heartleaf golden alexanders, purple prairie-clover, white prairie-clover, smooth blue aster, Missouri goldenrod, Flodman's thistle, northern bedstraw, rattlesnake-root, violet wood sorrel, Maximilian's sunflower and lead plant.

**Hill Prairie** – prairies on well-drained, loamy soils formed in calcareous glacial till, often with boulders at the surface. Typically occurring on moderate to steep slopes on the Big Stone moraine and along the bluffs and associated coulees of the Minnesota River Valley. Cover grasses are mostly little bluestem, side-oats grama, prairie dropseed and porcupine grass. Common forbs are pasque flower, purple coneflower, gray goldenrod, rigid sunflower, silky aster, upland white aster, dotted blazing star and lead plant.

**Wet Prairie** – prairies on deep, poorly-drained, silty clay loam to sandy loam soils. Typically occurring in depressions in the Big Stone moraine and within abandoned glacial-river channels in the Minnesota River Valley. Cover grasses are mainly prairie cordgrass, northern reedgrass, big bluestem and sedges. Common forbs are great blazing star, yellow stargrass, New England aster, winged loosestrife, bottle gentian and giant goldenrod.

**Rock Outcrop** – plant communities growing in fissures and shallow depressions on granite outcrops in the Minnesota River Valley. Outcrops are scattered within dry to mesic prairie communities. Characteristic plants of rock outcrops are rock spike-moss, sand dropseed, false

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\* Marschner, F.J. 1974. The original vegetation of Minnesota (map scale 1:500,000). USDA Forest Service, North Central Forest Experiment Station, St. Paul, Minnesota. (redraft of the original 1930 edition)

pennyroyal, prickly pear cactus, ball cactus, slender-leaved bluet, rusty woodsia, fameflower, awned cyperus, aromatic aster and golden aster.

## Geology and Topography

The Ortonville area was influenced by glaciation. As a result, the area is covered by glacial drifts consisting of glacial till (a mixture of clay, sand and silt along with gravel cobbles and boulders), glacial lake sediments (particle sizes consisting mostly of clay and silt) and glacial outwash (sand and gravel-sized particles).

The topography of the area is closely related to glacial activity, which is responsible for most of the area's natural features. The Ortonville area is characterized by a gently rolling glacial drift plain containing many closed depressions occupied by an abundance of small lakes and wetlands. The majority of the upland prairie is used for agriculture. Tree cover is concentrated on the banks of the Minnesota River and Big Stone Lake.

## Soils

Many of the environmental decisions about using a resource are based on the kind of soil and the ability of the soil to support that resource use. The characteristics of the soils in the Ortonville area are examined in order to make proper decisions on the use of the land and to protect the natural environment. Existing soils in the City have been principally responsible for the area's overall development pattern and may impose limitations or increased sensitivity to future urban development/redevelopment.

According to the Soil Survey of Big Stone County (published in 1995), the soils in Big Stone County are quite varied. They formed in several types of parent material on a variety of landscapes. The parent material in the county includes glacial till, glacial outwash, lacustrine sediments, colluvium, alluvium and alluvium-mantled granite bedrock. Bedrock is exposed in some areas.

## Water Features

The area surrounding Ortonville is rich in lakes, wetlands and sloughs. The areas water features include rivers, lakes, wildlife management areas (WMA) and wetlands.

### Lake Characteristics Big Stone Lake

Lake Area	12,610.00 acres
Littoral Area	12,484.00 acres
Maximum Depth	16.00 feet
Water Clarity	8.63 feet

The most significant water feature for Ortonville is Big Stone Lake. The City is located at the foot of Big Stone Lake making for easy access to the lake for residents and adding beauty to the City. Big Stone Lake is important to Ortonville for both its aesthetic value as well as its recreational and

economic value. The text box to the left gives some basic information on Big Stone Lake. The “littoral area” mentioned in the text box is defined as that portion of the lake that is less than 15 feet in depth. The littoral zone is where the majority of the aquatic plants are found and is a primary area used by young fish. This part of the lake also provides the essential spawning habitat for most warm water fishes (e.g. bass, walleye and pan fish). The water clarity is determined by using a secchi disk. The standard secchi disk is an 8-inch diameter metal plate that is painted with an alternating white and black color pattern. The disk is lowered into the water until it disappears from view. The depth at which the disk can no longer be seen is the secchi depth that is recorded. Secchi disk readings can vary by season with the clearest water generally occurring in the spring, shortly after ice-out. Measurements are usually taken in the summer at the same time the fish sampling is occurring.

Efforts to maintain, control and improve the quality of Big Stone Lake have been ongoing for a number of years. Currently the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Lake Water Quality Database lists Big Stone Lake’s swimming use as “non-supported.” Swimmable use support is routinely assessed for lakes in Minnesota's 305 (b) Report to Congress. Minnesota's phosphorus (P) criteria provide a sound basis for determining a lake's ability to support swimmable uses. A “non-support” label means that severe and frequent algal blooms and low transparency will limit swimming for most of the summer.

### **Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge**

The Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge is located about two miles southeast of Ortonville. The 11,521-acre refuge was established in 1975. It is part of the Big Stone-Whetstone River Project of Minnesota and South Dakota. The Project was authorized under the Flood Control Act of 1965. The Army Corps of Engineers purchased the lands in fee title in 1971, and then built a dam to create a large reservoir. The lands were then transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1975. Through a cooperative agreement, the Corps still maintains the water control facilities, but the Service has management responsibility for all refuge lands.

The main objectives of the refuge are to provide resting, nesting and feeding habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds, provide habitat for resident wildlife, protect endangered and threatened species, provide for biodiversity and provide public opportunities for outdoor recreation and environmental education.

The refuge still contains about 1,700 acres of native or unplowed prairie. This is typical tall grass prairie country, with wide expanses of grassland and only occasional oak trees. Because many exotic grasses, woody shrubs and flowers seed themselves among native prairie species, refuge staff conduct controlled burns to restore and promote vigorous growth of native prairie plants. A multi-agency, cooperative effort to reestablish the prairie chicken in this region was implemented in 1999. Since this effort was initiated, wild prairie chickens have been released at one site on the refuge and at least seven other locations within the direct vicinity. This project is ongoing and the success of this effort is

yet to be determined. However, prairie chickens are being seen and the preliminary results are promising.

A portion of refuge lands is used to grow crops for overwinter wildlife use or to prepare ground for the seeding of native prairie grasses and wildflowers. Some of those areas have been seeded to native grass.

One of the most interesting habitats on the refuge is the 100 acres of granite outcrops. These bare rock areas support unusual species of cactus and other plants. The high outcrops provide some excellent views of the entire refuge and its wildlife residents.

The refuge provides a variety of recreational options to nature lovers. Wildlife viewing opportunities abound at the refuge. A wide variety of birds can be observed at the refuge and a bird list is available at various points on the refuge. In addition to birds, white-tailed deer, muskrats, beaver and even otter can be observed. An approximately six-mile auto-tour route on the refuge is open to the public. The tour includes numbered stops that correspond with numerical locations identified in the auto-tour leaflet describing specific features associated with the area. Bicycling, hiking, canoeing and boating are other recreational options available at the refuge. In addition, during the winter months Big Stone is open to cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Finally, the refuge offers public hunting and fishing opportunities.

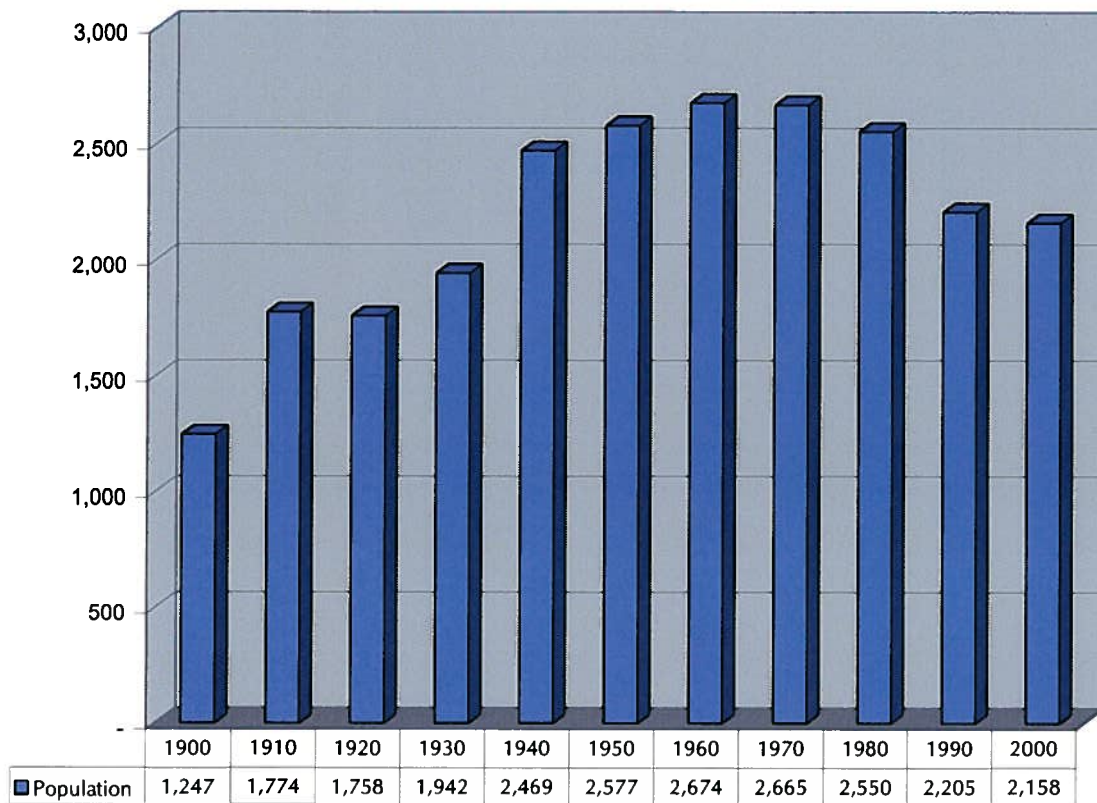
## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS | four

### Population Trends

One of the most important aspects of developing a comprehensive plan is to determine what trends exist among the city's population. This should include information on past, current and projected population data. The United States government conducts a census of the population every ten years and provides a reasonably accurate profile of communities and information on various housing, economic and social statistics for a community.

Like many agricultural communities in the Region, Ortonville experienced significant gains in population during the early 1990's, rising by 1,330 people from 1900 to 1930. The city continued to see gains in population until the mid 1970's when the population began to decrease (see chart 2.1).

### Chart 2.1 Historical Population



The historic trends of the number of households in a community can be equally as important as the actual population numbers. The average size of households has been rapidly shrinking over the last 40 years in Ortonville, just as it has throughout rural Minnesota. As a result, the population of a community could be dropping rather quickly and yet the number of households remains the same. The community is still the same size physically and still requires the same number of housing units and services to accommodate residents. In some cases, the number of households in a city may actually be increasing as the population decreases. As a result, while most people would assume that fewer services are needed to accommodate fewer people, more services are needed for the additional households. While the number of households in Ortonville has gone down in the last two decades, the City has seen an overall increase in the number of households over the last 40 years as shown in Table 2.1.



**Table 2.1 Households - Average Household Size**

	<b>1960</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Population</b>	2,674	2,665	2,550	2,205	2,158	<b>-19%</b>
<b>Households</b>	869	932	1,062	954	923	<b>6%</b>
<b>Average Household Size</b>	3.08	2.86	2.40	2.31	2.34	<b>-24%</b>

The most important information to a city's future is to determine how many residents it could potentially have. To help determine this, historic population trends have been analyzed and projections have been developed to predict what the future may look like for the city.

Projections conducted in this Chapter are based on historic trends, however, a number of factors can impact the rate of growth a community experiences. These factors include the rate of births, deaths, migration, annexed land, housing availability, waste treatment capacity, a city's growth policies, housing costs, schools, ease of commuting to employment, a change in economic situation and many other issues. When analyzing the projections in this Chapter, it is important to consider the factors listed above which could greatly impact Ortonville's future population levels. These projections should also be periodically updated to reflect any factors impacting the population.

The following tables provide data on the forecasted population.

**Table 2.2 Population Projections**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Ortonville</b>	<b>2000-2035 % Change</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% Change</b>
2000	2,158	<b>-16.6%</b>	–	–
2005	1,973		-185	-9.4%
2010	1,954		-19	-1.0%
2015	1,884		-70	-3.7%
2020	1,851		-33	-1.8%
2025	1,839		-12	-0.7%
2030	1,820		-19	-1.0%
2035	1,800		-20	-1.1%

Source: MN State Demographic Office

Continued household decrease within the City is expected over the next two decades. The State Demographer's Office anticipates the number of households within Big Stone County to decrease nearly 200 households between the year 2000 and 2035. A breakdown of projected household growth within Big

Stone County is illustrated in Table 2.3 as follows. Census data indicates the number of households within Ortonville will decrease nearly 12% by the year 2035.

**Table 2.3 Household Projections**

Year	2000	2005	2010	2015	2000- 2015 Change	2020	2025	2030	2035	2000- 2035 Change
					% Change					% Change
Big Stone County Households	2,377*	2,324	2,223	2,181	(154)	2,168	2,168	2,147	2,126	(42)
					-9.3%					-2.0%
Ortonville Households	923*	877	868	837	(86)	823	817	809	800	(23)
					-8.3%					-2.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, MN State Demographic Center, Ortonville Households: Based on MN Demographic estimate and 2.38 and 2.25 persons per household. \*occupied housing units

## Household Type

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies households by type according to the gender of the householder and the presence of relatives. Examples include: married-couple family; male householder, no wife present; female householder, no husband present; spouse (husband/wife); child; and other relatives. Two types of householders are distinguished: a family householder and a nonfamily householder. A family householder is a householder living with one or more people related to him or her by birth, marriage, or adoption. The householder and all people in the household related to him are family members. A nonfamily householder is a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.

Generally speaking, persons living alone, unmarried couples without children, female heads of household and male or female householders living with non-relatives may be more likely to prefer/demand rental units than homeownership. Conversely, married couples, especially those with children, are much more likely to be homeowners. Table 2.4 illustrates the household makeup in Ortonville. According to the 2000 Census, of the 329 non-family households, 94 (10.2%) of these are householders living alone.

**Table 2.4**  
**Household Types**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Family Households</b>	<b>Non-Family Households</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>City of Ortonville</b>	594	329	923
<b>Big Stone County</b>	1,611	766	2,377

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 Statistics), MN State Demographic Center

As depicted in the following Table, 2000 statistics indicate 498 or 54% of all family households consist of married couple households. Children 18 years and under reside in 38.4% of all family households.

**Table 2.5**  
**Families by Presence of Children and Family Type**

<b>Family Type</b>	<b>Number of Families</b>
Total Family Households	923
Total Family Households with children under 18 years old	268
Married Couple-Family Household With and without children	608
Married Couple-Family Household with children under 18 years old	192
Female householder, no husband present with children under 18 years old	67

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 Statistics)

## Age

Ortonville, like other communities throughout rural Minnesota, is faced with an aging population. There are a number of factors that are contributing to this problem. One of them is the issue of “youth flight.” This refers to young people in rural communities leaving the area to go to college and not returning. Another contributing factor is that one of the largest segments of the population, the “baby boomers,” is growing older. The “boomers” are now starting to near retirement. As this occurs, many services will need to be available to them in larger quantities than has been needed up to this point. Table 2.6 compares Ortonville’s and Minnesota’s 2000 populations by age category. Notice that the percentage of the population age 65 and older is significantly higher in Ortonville than compared to the state as a whole.

**Table 2.6**  
**Population by Age**

Age Group	Ortonville	Percent	Minnesota	Percent
Under 15 years	395	18.4%	1,060,483	21.5%
15 to 24	232	10.8%	696,845	14.2%
25 to 34	154	7.1%	673,138	13.7%
35 to 44	282	13.1%	824,182	16.8%
45 to 54	293	13.6%	665,696	13.5%
55 to 64	238	11.0%	404,869	8.2%
65 to 74	240	11.1%	295,825	6.0%
75 to 84	217	10.1%	212,840	4.3%
85 and over	107	5.0%	85,601	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 statistics)

The city had a median age of 45.4 years, slightly higher than the Big Stone County median age (43.6). The median age in Minnesota was 35.4 years and the U.S. median age in 2000 was 35.3 years. The City has followed the statewide trend of an increase in the median age.

In 2000, the City had its larger percentages of the population in the 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 old age groups. The 35 to 44 year old age group typically is viewed as the new generation of community leaders and business owners and their children are found throughout the school system from Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. These age groups also tend to be active in the community and demand a high quality service and standard of living for their children and families. However, these age groups also tend to be more mobile and may move away from a community to find better opportunities. They tend to be first time homebuyers and are also within the move-up homebuyer market. The 65 to 85 year old age group tend to be empty nesters looking to downsize their housing and maintenance needs. They also may demand more social and medical services.

Table 2.7 indicates that within Big Stone County by the year 2035, the 75 to 84 year old age group is projected to be the largest segment of the population (690) and will have sustained the largest increase (26.5%) from 2005. This growth is consistent with the statewide age group projections. Age Cohort plays an important part in future planning as the various age groups will have an impact on the housing stock, park and recreation, social services, medical services, future enrollments and the location of services.

The projections show the population overall in Minnesota will be older, due largely to continued aging of the baby boom generation. The number of Minnesotans ages 50 to 64 is expected to grow by more than 300,000 between 2005 and 2015. Younger age groups are expected to grow more modestly. The number of children under 15 is projected to grow about 10,000, for instance, while the number of 15 to 24 year olds is expected to rise by about 62,000. The projections are benchmarked to the 2000 Census.

**Table 2.7**  
**Population Projections By Age Group**  
**Big Stone County and Minnesota**

<b>Big Stone County</b>								
<b>Age Group</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2005 - 2035 % Change</b>
Under 5	246	270	260	240	220	210	210	-17.1%
5 - 9	272	290	310	310	290	270	260	-4.6%
10 - 14	360	270	290	310	300	290	270	-33.3%
15 - 19	417	300	220	240	250	250	230	-81.3%
20 - 24	312	280	210	170	180	190	190	-64.2%
25 - 34	423	490	480	430	370	360	360	-17.5%
35 - 44	660	550	540	600	620	570	510	-29.4%
45 - 54	877	880	730	610	600	640	660	-32.9%
55 - 64	651	740	880	890	750	650	640	-1.7%
65 - 74	587	570	640	740	880	890	760	22.8%
75-84	507	440	430	430	490	590	690	26.5%
85 years +	220	210	200	180	190	200	260	15.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,532</b>	<b>5,290</b>	<b>5,190</b>	<b>5,150</b>	<b>5,140</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>5,040</b>	<b>-9.8%</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>								
<b>Age Group</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2005 - 2035 % Change</b>
Under 5	337,900	353,000	369,900	377,800	375,900	372,500	382,410	11.6%
5 - 9	350,700	356,500	370,100	385,500	392,900	391,700	390,690	10.2%
10 - 14	368,900	360,900	365,000	377,300	392,300	400,000	398,030	7.3%
15 - 19	382,100	375,300	364,500	366,700	378,200	393,400	403,150	5.2%
20 - 24	378,300	383,900	376,300	361,300	362,100	373,700	397,010	4.7%



25 - 34	693,400	769,200	819,500	813,500	787,500	770,700	790,810	12.3%
35 - 44	782,600	720,400	727,300	790,900	835,300	832,400	779,400	-0.4%
45 - 54	771,000	819,400	773,700	708,700	711,100	770,000	818,220	5.8%
55 - 64	511,800	633,900	732,000	776,300	732,800	673,200	686,580	25.5%
65 - 74	305,000	354,300	449,900	558,000	646,200	688,700	662,440	54.0%
75-84	219,900	218,900	230,000	272,100	350,500	438,800	515,730	57.4%
85 years +	95,400	106,800	115,400	121,600	134,900	163,300	221,790	57.0%
Total	5,197,000	5,452,500	5,693,600	5,909,700	6,099,700	6,268,400	6,446,260	19.4%

Source: MN State Demographic Center

## Educational Attainment

Table 2.8 below compares educational attainment characteristics of Ortonville with the county and state averages.

**Table 2.8**  
**Educational Attainment Comparison**

Area	With Diploma	Bachelors Degree or Higher
<b>Ortonville</b>	77%	14%
<b>Big Stone County</b>	79%	11%
<b>Minnesota</b>	88%	28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 Statistics)

According to the 2000 Census, there were 1,524 people in Ortonville 25 years of age and older. Of these, 35.8% graduated from high school. Of those not graduating from high school, 12.3% (188) completed less than nine years of education and 9.6% (147) completed between 9 and 12 years of education but did not obtain a diploma. 14.2% of individuals of the population 25 years and over obtained bachelors degrees or higher.

## Employment

Employment statistics from the 2000 Census indicates 1,737 people age 16 and over or 80.4% are in the labor force. The mean time traveled to work was 12 minutes in 2000. Table 2.9 below illustrates the travel time employees reported to get to work.

**Table 2.9**  
**Travel Time to Work**

<b>Total</b>	<b>City of Ortonville</b>
Did not work at home:	863
Less than 10 minutes	551
10 to 14 minutes	130
15 to 19 minutes	52
20 to 24 minutes	27
25 to 29 minutes	17
30 to 44 minutes	43
45 to 59 minutes	0
60 to 89 minutes	13
90 or more minutes	14
Worked at home	33

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 Statistics)

The Minnesota Work Force Center estimates 2,702 people in the labor force in Big Stone County in March 2008, with 2,527 persons employed, resulting in a 6.5% unemployment rate. Minnesota had an unemployment rate of 5.4% and the United States unemployment rate was 5.2%.

## Income

It is noted that household income includes the income of the householder and all other individuals fifteen (15) years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Because many households consist of only one person, average household income is usually less than

average family income. Family income is that the incomes of all members fifteen (15) years old and over related to the householder.

In 2000, the median income for a household in the city was \$30,614, and the median income for a family was \$39,375. Males had a median income of \$30,590 versus \$20,179 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$17,132.

**Table 2.10**  
**Income Comparison**

Area	Per Capita Income	Household Income	Family Income
<b>Ortonville</b>	\$17,132	\$30,614	\$39,375
<b>Big Stone County</b>	\$15,708	\$30,721	\$37,354
<b>Minnesota</b>	\$23,198	\$47,111	\$56,874

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 statistics)

Table 2.11 illustrates recent area wage comparisons.

**Table 2.11**  
**Wage Comparison**

Area	Avg. Weekly Wage	Avg. Hourly Wage
<b>County</b>	\$452	\$11.30
<b>Minnesota</b>	\$822	\$20.55

Source: MN Department of Economic Security 2007, 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr

The 2000 Census indicates that 193 people, or 9.2% of the population in Ortonville, were below the poverty level, including 9.5% of those under age 18 and 10.1% of those age 65 or over. Big Stone County reported 681 people or 12% of the county's population were below the poverty level. Poverty is defined on a sliding scale by size of family and number of related children under the age of 18.

**Race**

2000 Census statistics indicate 2,108 residents (97.7%) of Ortonville residents classify themselves as white or Caucasian. Twelve residents (0.6%) are Hispanic or Latino, .01% of the population (2) are Asian, 0.9% (19) of the population are American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.4% (9) of the population are Black or African American, with two or more races also present (14) 0.6% of the population).

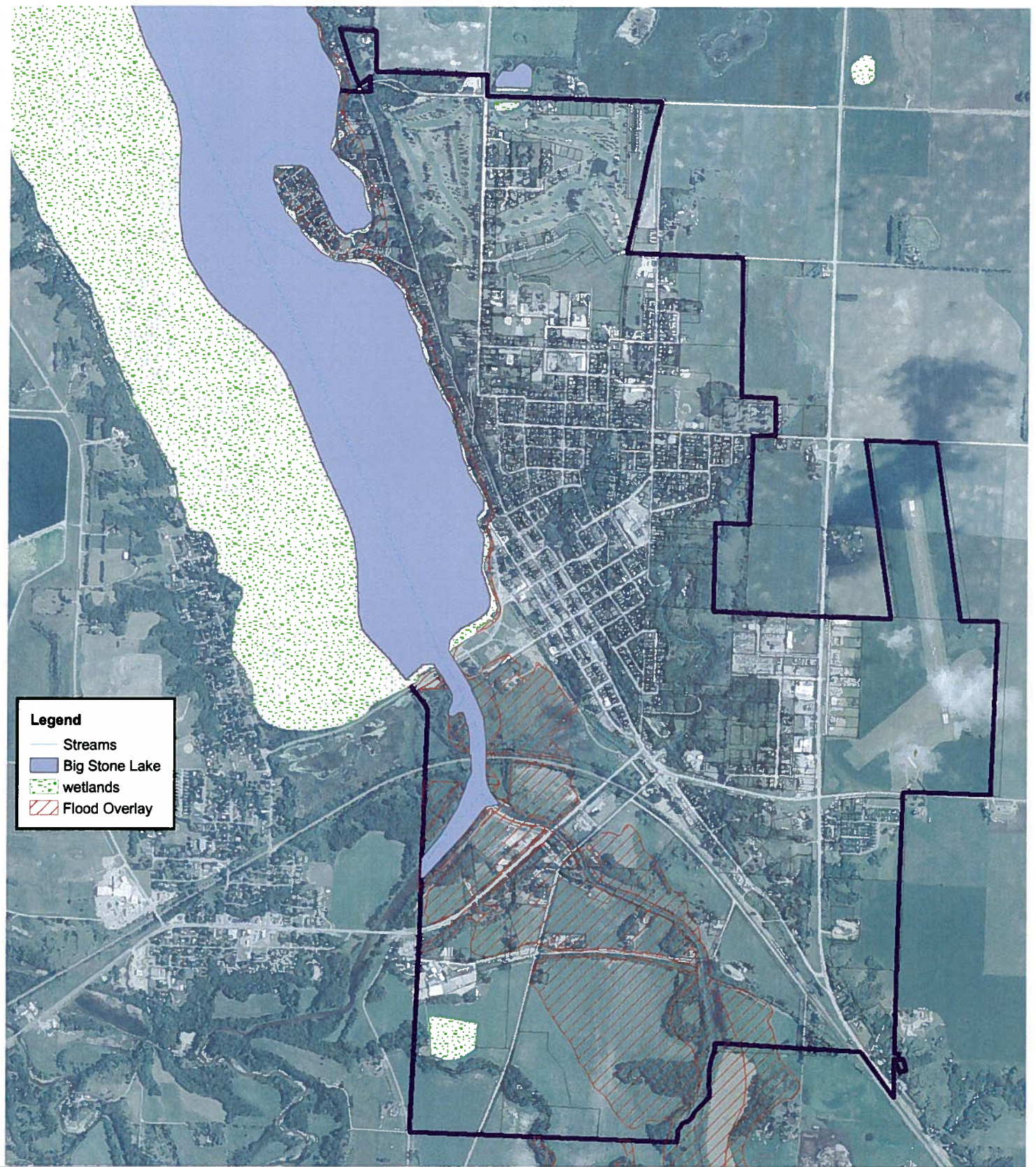
**Gender**

As defined in the latest Census, in 2000 there were more females (54.2% of the population) than males (45.8% of the population) residing in Ortonville. The distribution ratio is similar to that defined in the 1990 Census. The female/male population discrepancy may be attributed to a historically documented longer life expectancy for females as it is most evident in the over 65-age group.

**Ancestry**

2000 Census statistics indicate approximately 48.5% of Ortonville residents classify themselves as from German decent (1,051). Other prominent ancestries include: Norwegian (26.6%); Swedish (11.5%) and Irish (11.0%). Most (97.6%) speak one language (English) in the home.

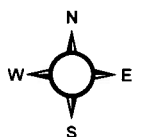




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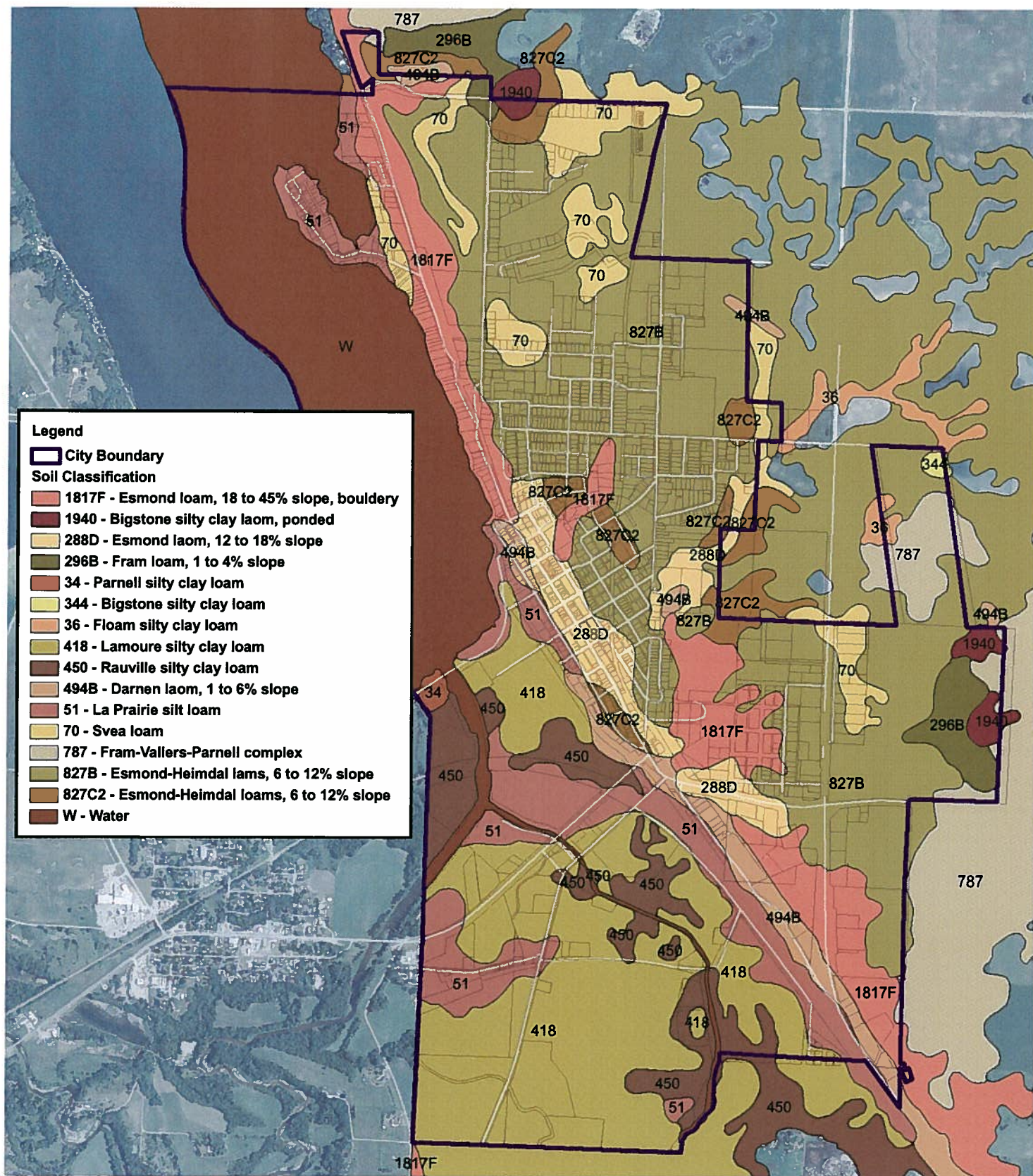
# Ortonville Water Features Map



Map Date: 5/13/08

*\* This map is subject to the Map/Data Disclaimer on the Title Page of the 2008 Ortonville Comprehensive Plan.*

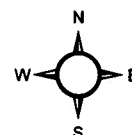




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MINNESOTA  
VALLEY  
REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION

# Ortonville Soils Map



Map Date: 5/13/08

\* This map is subject to the Map/Data Disclaimer on the Title Page of the 2008 Ortonville Comprehensive Plan.



## Chapter 3 – Plan Elements & Action Plans

**“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision is just passing time. Vision with action can change the world”. *Joel Barker***

### LAND USE | one

The Land Use Plan translates the community vision for the future into a recommended physical pattern of neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas, roads and public facilities. Land use policies seek to influence the location, type, amount, and timing of future growth through private real estate development, public investment in infrastructure and community facilities, and conservation of natural areas. In addition, the policies are intended to ensure that the environment and other long-term public interests are given adequate consideration, and to prevent or mitigate the negative effects of incremental and ad hoc decisions. This section includes both a map of the preferred land use pattern (page 5), and the set of related objectives and policies aimed to achieve the desirable long-term future for the community.

The city of Ortonville’s land use patterns are generally typical of a city its size and vintage. The city core is a traditional downtown with multi-story buildings including retail, restaurants and civic/cultural amenities such as the historic Columbian Theatre. Currently, the downtown has very little housing.

### CURRENT ZONING

The Ortonville Zoning Map located at the end of this Chapter, shows Ortonville’s current zoning as of June 2008. As can be seen, the residential areas are concentrated in the northern portion of the city and along the lakeshore. New housing development around the golf course in the northeastern portion of town has occurred in the past few years and is expected to continue. Ortonville’s industrial zones are concentrated in the southern most part of the city. Commercial/retail zones are located along the major roads in Ortonville including U.S Highway 75/State Highway 7 and U.S. Highway 12 and along the city’s downtown business district. The Zoning Ordinance for the city of Ortonville divides the city into ten different zoning districts. The districts and their intended purpose are as follows:

**A-O Agriculture - Open Space District** - is intended to provide a district which will allow suitable areas of the city to be retained and utilized in open space and/or agricultural uses, prevent scattered non-farm uses from developing improperly, promote orderly development and secure economy in government expenditures for public utilities and service.

**R-1 Low Density Residential District** - is intended to establish an area of low density residential uses consisting of one and two-family dwellings and directly related complimentary uses.

**R-2 Medium Density Dwelling District** - is intended to establish an area of medium-density residential uses consisting of one and two family dwellings and multiple-unit dwellings.

**R-3 Manufactured Home Park District** - is to provide for manufactured home uses in an appropriate, safe, sanitary and attractive environment.

**B-1 Central Business District** - is designed and intended as a specialized district directed to serve the pedestrian in a compact central area of the city. The "B-1" district will provide for a high-density shopping and business environment, especially stressing the pedestrian function and interaction of people and businesses, rather than being heavily oriented toward the use of automobiles.

**B-2 General Business District** - is designed and intended to promote the development of uses, which require large concentrations of automobile traffic. The district is also designed to accommodate those commercial activities which may be incompatible with the uses permitted in the "B-1" district, and whose service is not confined to any one neighborhood or community.

**B-3 Highway Business District** - is to provide for accommodations and services to the traveling public and related retail service activities.

**I-1 Limited Industrial District** - is established to provide exemplary standards of development for certain industrial uses that prefer to be located in choice or strategic sites. The Limited Industrial District is intended for administrative, wholesaling, manufacturing and related uses which can maintain high standards of appearance, including open spaces and landscaping; limit external effects such as noise, odors, smoke and vibration; and not require a high level of public services, including sewer and water services. With proper control, these areas should become compatible with commercial or residential areas.

**I-2 General Industrial District** - is established to provide exemplary standards of development for certain industrial uses that prefer to be located in choice or strategic sites. These general industrial uses are less compatible with commercial and residential areas and, therefore, are not appropriate in the "I-1" district.

**PUD Planned Unit Development District** - is established to allow development guided by a total design plan in which one or more of the zoning or subdivision regulations, other than use regulations, may be waived or varied to allow flexibility and creativity in site and building design and location, in accordance with general guidelines.

**Historic Overlay District** - will be established in 2008 to allow development/re-development with design standards for new and remodeled buildings within the designated downtown core to ensure the building mass, scale and facades are compatible with existing buildings, keeping the historic significance a precedence.

## FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map presents a geographic representation of the city's preferred future land use scenario. The map summarizes the community's discussion of how development and public investment should play out over the next twenty plus years. Being able to see a picture of the end result is helpful in directing the myriad large and small decisions and investments over this timeframe. The future land use map is intended to be used in conjunction with the written content of the Plan. The map shows the geographic layout of Ortonville's preferred land uses, but does not capture the full detail of Comprehensive Plan policies, nor does it identify the full range of recommended strategies, or any staging of development priorities. The recommendations and policies provide additional direction on staging of growth, on priorities within land use categories, and on implementation preferences.

The land use plan is generally consistent with existing development. Dramatic changes in existing land uses are not proposed, as the land use pattern is generally one that the city wishes to see continued. Also, there is no public interest served in making large groups of houses and businesses non-conforming under zoning. Thus, the future land use map reflects that of the 2002 Plan in that areas which are stable or not undergoing change are preserved.

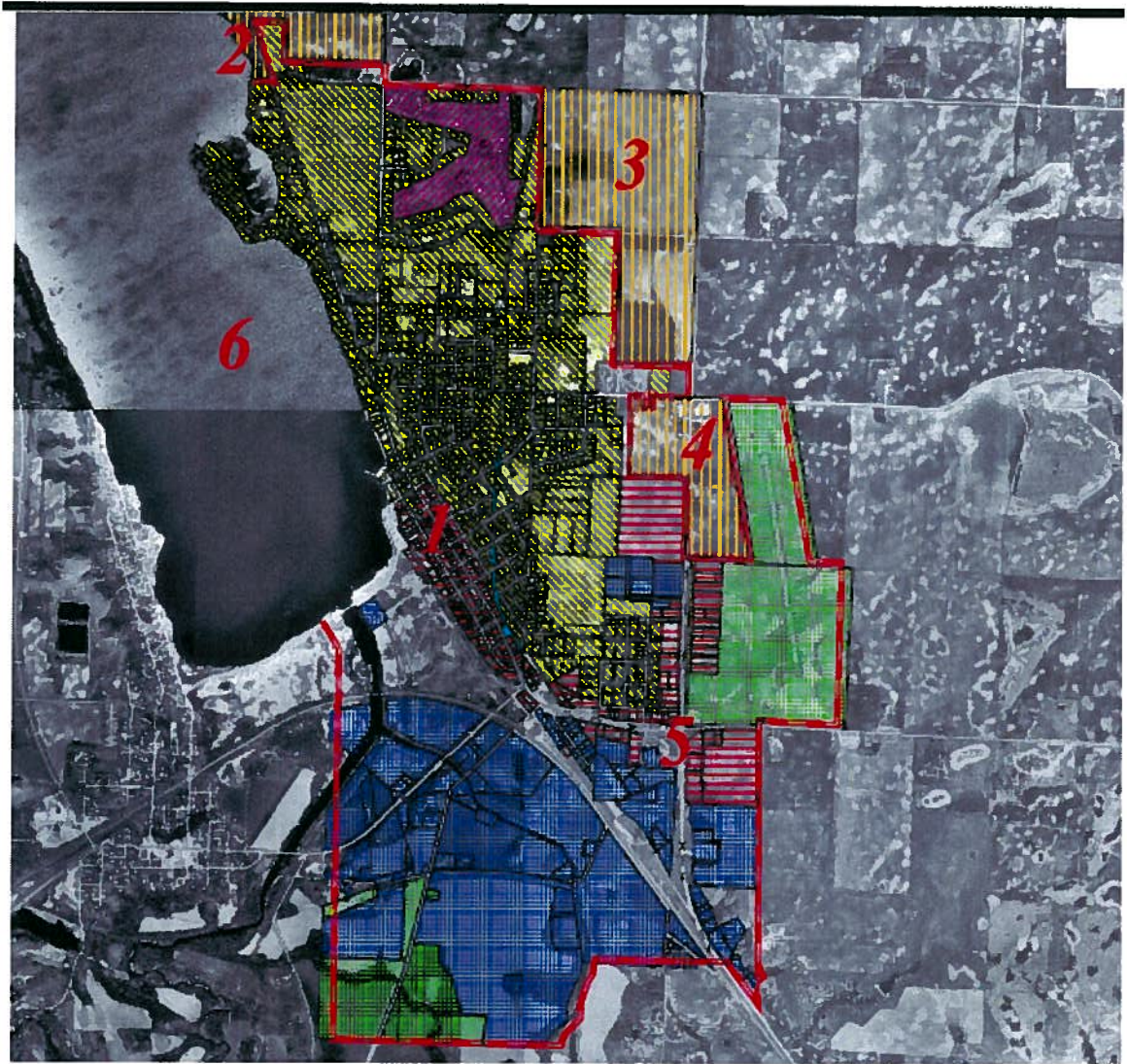
The urban growth boundaries are areas where growth is most likely to occur in Ortonville and where possible annexation would be most needed. The urban growth boundaries developed are concentrated on the northern and northeastern edge of town.

There are six key planning areas represented on the Future Land Use Map (Figure 3.1 - Pg. 5):

**Area 1** - The downtown business district serves as the center of the community. Future development in the district will serve to enhance the community. In

addition, future development and other projects in Ortonville will need to be evaluated to determine what effect, if any, it will have on the downtown business district and attempt to eliminate or limit any possible negative effects.

- Area 2 -** Area 2, located just north of Ortonville city limits on the shore of Big Stone Lake, is a potential urban growth boundary. Additional residential development along the shore of Big Stone Lake is likely given the scenic and recreational qualities of the lake, among other assets. The possibility of annexing this land to provide city services to these residents may need to be addressed in the future.
- Area 3 -** Area 3 includes the golf course and the surrounding area. There has been considerable residential development around the golf course already. Future development is likely in this area, if Ortonville were to experience an increase in population. If additional development occurs in this area, annexation of additional land should be considered to provide these residents with city services.
- Area 4 -** The area of land just west of the Ortonville Airport is also included in an urban growth boundary. This land could be annexed and zoned for mixed use. Additional residential land on the northwestern edge would be made available as well as some additional land zoned for commercial and retail use along U.S. Highway 75.
- Area 5 -** The intersection of U.S. Highway 75/State Highway 7 and U.S. Highway 12 is a high traffic area where continued efforts to enhance and expand current commercial/retail use and possibly industrial use may be important now and into the future.
- Area 6 -** Area 6 represents Big Stone Lake. The lake is identified here because it has such a large impact on life in Ortonville. For example, the lake plays a large part in any environmental, recreational or economic issue the city addresses. The aesthetic value of the lake, as well as many of its other qualities, also has a significant impact on Ortonville.

**Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Map**

Ortonville is a rural center with a distinctive downtown, a stable number of residents and employment base and assorted park/recreational opportunities. Participants in the comprehensive planning process have expressed a desire to retain the “small town” atmosphere. The following guiding objective and strategies have been prepared according to type of use.

**Objective :** Establish a development pattern that is true to the vision of Ortonville by supporting and preserving the character of the well-established neighborhoods, enhancing the attractiveness and vitality of the downtown core and preserving the city's small town character.

#### DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL STRATEGIES

1. **Vibrant Downtown.** Allow for a mix of residential, office and commercial uses within Ortonville's downtown area to create a vibrant city center that, reduces reliance on the automobile, and provides appropriate housing opportunities. Continue to promote downtown Ortonville as an important retail center.
2. **Downtown Rehab.** Encourage private sector rehabilitation and renovation of existing buildings in the downtown.
3. **Rehab. Plan.** Develop a downtown redevelopment plan and coordinate potential funding sources to encourage participation such as a Small Cities Development Grant, low interest loan program and tax incentives.
4. **Upper Levels.** Encourage the use of upper levels of commercial buildings for office and residential uses.
5. **Events.** Continue, through the Chamber of Commerce and business organizations, to promote unified commercial and service promotional events to attract customers to the downtown.
6. **Traffic Design.** Monitor traffic and provide safe and convenient access to businesses for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
7. **Design Standards.** Require and enforce design standards for new and remodeled buildings to ensure the building mass, scale and facades are compatible with existing buildings, keeping the historic significance in mind.
8. **On-street Parking.** Continue to offer on-street parking for business patrons as well as municipal parking lots to accommodate overflow and employee parking.
9. **Landscape Plan.** Develop a landscape plan to make the parking lots in the downtown commercial district more aesthetically pleasing while allowing it to remain user friendly and provide an efficient flow of traffic.



10. **Synergy.** Promote land uses that will reinforce business synergy.

#### GENERAL/HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL STRATEGIES

1. **Vehicle Oriented.** Provide commercial areas for businesses which are more vehicle oriented, versus pedestrian traffic oriented, and which require larger sites.
2. **Linkages.** Provide linkages between highway commercial areas and the downtown or general business district. Encourage pedestrian connections between commercial areas to allow customers to walk between business areas.
3. **Design Connections.** Connect the existing downtown or general commercial district with new expansions of these districts with unique design features including ornamental streetlights, pavers, signage and similar design patterns.
4. **Frontage Roads.** Plan future commercial areas with frontage or backage roads that allow access to future areas.

#### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

1. **Business Retention & Expansion.** Continue, through the city, EDA and Chamber of Commerce, to take a proactive approach to business retention and expansion.
2. **Environmentally Compatible.** Promote quality industrial development that is compatible with the environment and which do not negatively impact the city's infrastructure system such as wastewater treatment ponds. Design new industrial areas to minimize impact on environmental features such as wetlands and creeks.
3. **Industrial Design.** Design new industrial areas to discourage industrial traffic from traversing through residential neighborhoods. Minimize the impact of industrial properties on adjacent land uses by requiring additional setbacks, screening and/or fencing and landscaping.

4. **Livable Wage.** Promote industrial development that pays employees a livable wage.
5. **Incentives.** Consider economic incentives for industries that will contribute substantially to the city's tax and employment bases without substantial negative impacts on the city's infrastructure system.
6. **Landscaping.** Requiring landscaping within industrial areas/parks, as a part of the Zoning Ordinance, to improve the aesthetic appeal of the district.

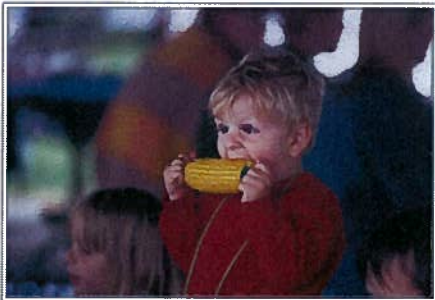
#### EXISTING AND NEW RESIDENTIAL STRATEGIES

1. **Thru Traffic.** Discourage through traffic on local residential streets while preserving emergency access by following a transportation plan, which includes a recommended collector street system.
2. **Buffering.** Prohibit non-residential land use intrusions into residential neighborhoods and require appropriate buffering and/or screening between non-compatible land uses.
3. **Infill.** Require infill residential units to be compatible in use and scale with the surrounding neighborhood.
4. **Infrastructure.** Continue to upgrade infrastructure such as streets, water and sewer in existing neighborhoods as needed.
5. **Home Occupations.** Restrict home occupations to businesses customarily found in homes which employ only household residents and that do not sell products or services to customers at the premises.
6. **Natural Features.** Incorporate natural features into new residential neighborhoods while protecting the features through ordinances.
7. **Access Points.** Limit access points directly onto arterial streets or collector streets by requiring driveway accesses and lots to front streets within the subdivision. Explore traffic calming techniques in areas where safety and mobility should be enhanced.
8. **Parks.** Require the development of parks, trails and/or sidewalks along collector streets to service neighborhoods and provide access to other community



amenities such as places of commerce, educational facilities and larger community parks.

9. **Transportation Plan.** Plan residential subdivisions while following a comprehensive transportation plan which includes a recommended collector street system to encourage connection of neighborhoods to commercial areas and arterial streets.
10. **Changing Needs.** Consider the changing housing needs of the growing community and review residential housing land areas to accommodate the changing needs and demands.
11. **High Density Location.** Specific sites for high density residential uses have not been specified on the future land use map. Additionally, high-density residential uses should be developed as a part of a master planning process within mixed-use proposals. The Planning Commission and Council should consider high density residential land uses in areas designated for medium density residential if they are adjacent to major collector streets, arterials or major arterials, are near community services and/or provide tiered land uses (higher intensity to lower intensity). The city should avoid locating all multiple-family housing in one concentrated area.



## SENSE OF COMMUNITY | two

A sense of community is an elusive yet vital component of a healthy community. It encompasses elements such as image, spirit, heritage, character and pride, along with processes such as communication, inter-group relations, and networking. Many times a sense of community has deep historical roots. It is centered around a place, building, or event such as a festival, church or 4th of July parade which has been in the community for generations. However, communities can also come together around a crisis or an opportunity, and find that a shared purpose, intent, or vision – protecting children, preventing crime, helping the disadvantaged. Like many of the communities in rural Minnesota, Ortonville celebrates with an annual summer festival. The first Corn Festival was held September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 1931. Today, Cornfest is held on the third weekend in August. This and other events, such as fishing tournaments on

Big Stone Lake, make Ortonville not only an exciting place to visit but also connect community members. A sense of community can also come from a collective vision, where community members are asked to participate in creating the vision versus being told what their vision is.

Ease of mobility and increased ability to communicate mean that today many people have decreasing loyalty to their community of place. Many regularly uproot to follow economic opportunity. However, for an increasing number, quality of life is an important factor in their decision to relocate. As well as good schools, affordable housing, economic opportunities, clean air and water and low crime, a sense of community is increasingly a key factor. And for those people, communities that welcome newcomers, invite their participation, and value their residents, will surely attract those willing and active individuals, adding to the strength of the community. Building a sense of community requires fostering a sense of connection among citizens and developing a sense of civic pride.

Open communication and networking are key ingredients in fostering a sense of community. It also takes involved citizens. A sense of community involves joining together to work on community issues, celebrate, listen, vision, plan, problem solve and make decisions. Cities with a sense of community include those where members:

- Contribute to and hold a common vision for the future
- Respect and celebrate their heritage, diversity, and resources
- Share information
- Have a strong, positive identity,
- Uphold a shared set of values, rights and responsibilities
- Foster an atmosphere of civility, trust, and respect

Healthy, sustainable and safe communities do not just happen - they are the product of people working together and investing time, energy and commitment. Children and youth are critical to the future of the city and region. The entire community should share in supporting their growth and development. City government has an important role to play, but institutions alone cannot create or sustain community. By their involvement in civic and neighborhood activities, people see the impact of their own actions, recognize the difference they make, and can become acquainted with the people around them. This reinforces the understanding that personal responsibility is crucial to the development of a vibrant, growing community. Government can support efforts by encouraging participation from all sectors of the community. The following objective and strategies have been established to foster 'sense of community' within the city:

**Objective :** Make Ortonville a place where people are involved in community and neighborhood life; where they help each other and contribute to the vitality of the city. Create a caring community that nurtures and supports children and families. Work toward achieving a sense of belonging among all residents.

**Strategies:**

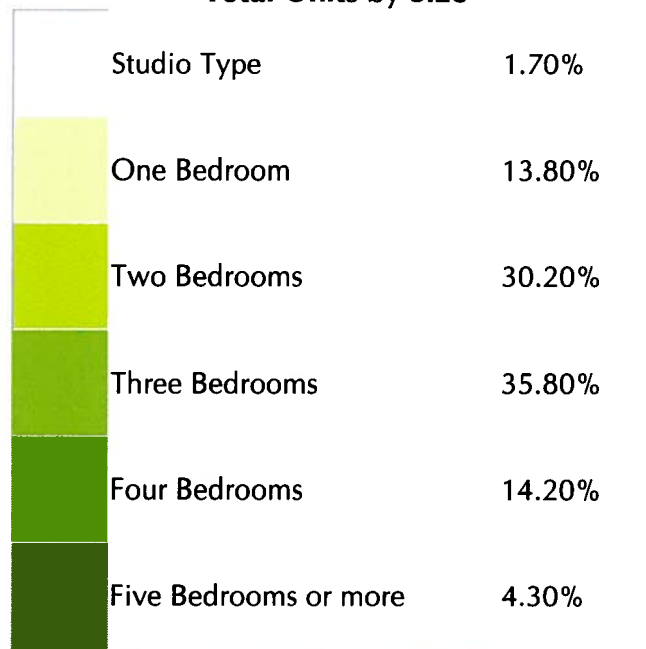
1. **Connections.** Promote opportunities that bring people together to help them build connections to each other, their peers, their neighbors and the greater community.
2. **Intergeneration.** Enhance opportunities for intergenerational activities (wheel and walk, etc.)
3. **Broad participation.** Strive to reach people in new ways to encourage broad participation in neighborhood and community activities and events.
4. **Volunteerism.** Promote volunteerism and community service and enhance people's access to information about opportunities to contribute their time, energy or resources.
5. **Community service projects.** Encourage people of all ages to be involved in creating and participating in community service projects.
6. **Involvement.** Strengthen efforts to involve people in the planning and decision-making that affect their lives.
7. **Organizational involvement.** Encourage other governments, schools, institutions and community-based organizations to provide opportunities for people's participation in discussions that shape decisions about their neighborhoods and communities.
8. **Informed citizenry.** Keep citizens informed and involved, so they can make educated choices about their lives and assist in finding community solutions to issues and problems and responses to opportunities.
9. **Responsible youth.** Promote activities that help teach children and youth to act responsibly, and acknowledge young people's accomplishments.
10. **Retirement Community.** Improve our efforts at marketing the area as a place to not only raise a family but to retire and grow old.

## HOUSING | three

Suitable housing is a basic need and a key to quality of life. A wide choice of housing styles and price ranges is a major community asset. Ortonville has a variety of housing choices for its residents, but among most neighborhoods – historic and newer – single-family housing is the most prevalent housing choice.

According to the 2000 Census, Ortonville had a total of 1,125 dwelling units housing approximately 2,073 people. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units increased by 2.3 percent, compared to a population decrease of 2.1 percent. This indicates that housing may be keeping up with population, but the types of housing that are being built may not be what residents need. The majority of housing units are three bedroom units as shown in the charts below.

**Chart 3.1**  
**Total Units by Size**

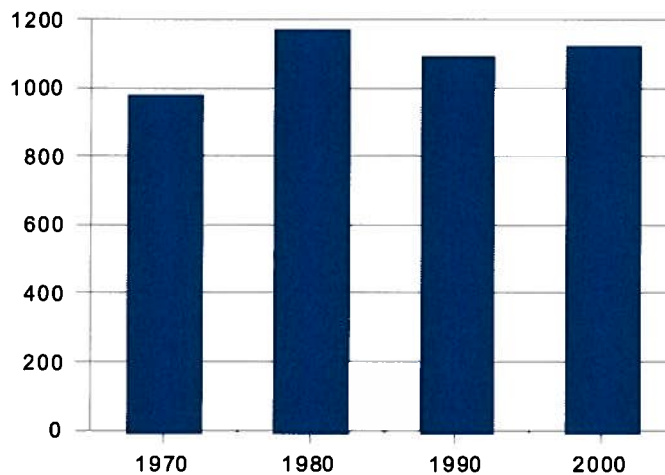


**As % of Housing Units**



Chart 3.2 gives a comparison of the total number of housing units in Ortonville each decade since 1970. This chart illustrates that while there has been some fluctuation in the total number of housing units in Ortonville over the last 30 years, the general trend has been one of slow growth.

**Chart 3.2**  
**Total Housing Units**



A growing concern for Ortonville residents is the affordability of housing as measured against local wages, which are the lowest in the region. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development indicates that expenditures of more than 30 percent of a family's income to shelter means they are cost-burdened by such expenses, and have reduced ability to afford other necessities.

A Housing Study is being undertaken as of the time of this Plan update. The results of this study will provide the city an opportunity to monitor changes in the community and to evaluate the need for new or revised housing strategies. Additionally, the city was included as one of three focus areas in the State to receive technical assistance from the Minnesota Housing Partnership. The grant will result in \$15,000/year to provide affordable housing assistance for the next three years, (an average of two days per month). Through this specialized assistance the city will be able to further document current housing trends, prioritize housing goals and policies and work towards a Housing Strategy Plan which will outline implementation strategies. The following provides objectives and strategies to promote a healthy residential infrastructure and furthering a variety of life-cycle housing options.

**Objective:** Establish and ensure an adequate and affordable housing supply that provides a convenient, safe and aesthetically appealing living environment for all Ortonville's residents.

**Strategies:**

1. **Adequate & Affordable Supply.** An adequate supply of housing in a wide range of prices, types and locations should be encouraged. Provide a variety of life-cycle housing for the diverse needs of the community.
2. **Housing Study Findings.** Develop a housing strategy plan following the results of the 2008 housing study. Continue to conduct periodic studies that analyze the city's housing supply and future needs.
3. **Neighborhood Character.** The character of residential neighborhoods should be preserved.
4. **Inventory of Lots.** The City should develop and maintain a list of available lots for housing so that developers and potential home builders can easily learn what is available.
5. **Compatible Zoning.** Housing developments should be constructed so they are compatible with existing land use.
6. **Updated Regulations.** Zoning and subdivision ordinances and building code regulations should be consistently enforced and updated as needed.
7. **Manufactured Housing.** The City should update and enforce its manufactured/mobile home ordinance to help ensure higher quality housing conditions. This includes developing a definition of the term manufactured home and determination of how that applies to the Ortonville Zoning Ordinance.
8. **Abate Nuisances.** Nuisances on residential property should be abated.
9. **Dilapidated Housing.** The City should work to create a more time and cost efficient process for removing dilapidated houses. This process can be improved through continued work with the EDA and HRA.
10. **Environmental Protection.** Housing developments should take into account the protection of environmentally sensitive areas.
11. **Infill Development.** Residential growth should occur in vacant areas that are or soon will be supplied with municipal services. Develop land use policies that promote infill development, while maintaining community character, on existing infrastructure.

12. **Map Redevelopment Sites.** Conduct an inventory and map potential redevelopment sites. This information can be used to assess available land for redevelopment and shape policy promoting redevelopment on these sites.
13. **Maintain Quality Existing Stock.** Monitor the quality of housing stock and enforce codes and ordinances relating to outdoor storage, etc. as well as research the desirability of applying for Small Cities Development funds for housing rehabilitation as a means of encouraging on-going maintenance of older housing stock.
14. **Map Housing Resources.** Inventory resources available to the city to promote housing development and use this to identify strategies and priorities for housing efforts.
15. **Collaboration.** Utilize the Big Stone County HRA housing plan and work with local, state and federal agencies to address housing needs for the City of Ortonville. Involve residents, service providers, developers and funders in developing and implementing housing strategies.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH | four

The natural and physical features/attributes of Ortonville are simultaneously a bountiful resource and a factor limiting development/redevelopment. Natural Resources in and around Ortonville provide the foundation for maintaining a healthy environment, high quality of life and growing sustainably. Sustainable development can be seen as *"development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."* (Minnesota Legislature, 1996.) The perspective of sustainability calls upon us to invest our time and energy in efforts which simultaneously strengthen the environmental, economic and social dimensions of any issue.

The preservation, enhancement, and restoration of important environmental resources was reinforced through the community meeting as an essential community issue. Ortonville's natural resources are one of its greatest assets. Preserving and improving on natural resources



will not only continue to provide a base for recreation, but will also help to support the local economy by providing high quality resources from which to draw.

This section provides objectives and strategies for the enhancement and management of environmental resources such as the lake, steep slopes, wetlands, flood plains and other significant natural habitats. The enhancement of waterways is a central focus of the Plan, since the city is adjacent to Big Stone Lake. At the close of this chapter are maps that include the general locations of some of the major resources to be protected, such as the lake, flood plains, wetlands and soil types with steep slopes.

**Objective:** To the extent possible establish a balance between promoting, protecting, enhancing and preserving natural and physical features (including, but not limited to, woodlands, wetlands, soils, steep slopes, surface waters, groundwater) while managing requests for development and redevelopment.

**Strategies:**

1. **Native Species.** Encourage efforts to preserve wildlife species including preservation of natural habitat areas and pre-settlement (native) vegetative communities where feasible.
2. **Use of Natural Resource Data/Studies.** Encourage the use of natural resource data/studies for planning and review of development and redevelopment such as soils, topography, groundwater etc.
3. **Grading Policy.** Develop a policy ensuring compliance with approved subdivision grading/drainage plans are maintained. Compliance checks/certifications upon grading completion, at the time of building permit issuance and immediately prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy should be considered.
4. **Appropriate Regulation.** Carefully regulate development in areas adjacent to shorelands, wetlands and floodprone areas to preserve these as attractive amenities.
5. **Natural Limitations.** Encourage development to conform to the natural limitations presented by topography, soils or other natural conditions.
6. **Identity & Protection.** Identify and protect significant scenic areas, open spaces, historic or archaeological sites. Emphasize proper management of open space areas in order to preserve trees, wildlife, pre-settlement (native) landscape

communities, floodplain, water quality and similar environmentally sensitive features.

**Objective:** Protect the quality and use of surface water through support and coordination with the, Upper Minnesota Valley Watershed District (UMVWD), County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Local Associations and state and federal agencies.

**Strategies:**

1. **Erosion Controls.** Develop an enforcement program that properly enforces the city's regulations including stormwater violations. Require appropriate erosion controls during construction and enforce through a developer's agreement and onsite inspections.
2. **Stormwater Infrastructure Inventory.** Complete a detailed inventory of stormwater infrastructure along with other information to develop a hydrologic flow model for management purposes.
3. **Surface Water Management Plan.** Evaluate the impact of stormwater runoff on surface water in the city and respective growth areas and develop a Citywide Surface Water Management Plan or proactive implementation of watershed management tools developed by the watershed, as amended or updated.
4. **Enforcement.** Enforce existing regulations and develop programs and new regulations where necessary to protect surface water.
5. **Support and Coordinate.** Support the coordination of planning and implementation efforts between the Lake Associations, UMVWD, SWCD and Land & Resource Management Offices as well as state and federal agencies.

**Objective:** Protect and preserve groundwater supply and quality through support and coordination with UMVWD, SWCD, Lake Associations, South Dakota Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources and state and federal agencies.

**Strategies:**

1. **Wellhead Protection Plan.** Protect ground resource from contamination through the continued development and implementation of a Wellhead Protection Plan and other programs.
2. **Identification.** Identify geologically sensitive areas in the city and define the limits and recharge areas of aquifers.

3. **Tanks.** Map areas of Leaking Underground Tanks.

**Objective:** Preserve the environment as a sustainable resource to insure both present and future generations a good quality of life.

**Strategies:**

1. **Coordinate.** Coordinate plans and work with all agencies responsible for the protection and restoration of our environment.
2. **Environmental Review.** Administer and support the state environmental review program (EAW, AUAR).
3. **Tree Preservation.** Encourage tree planting on private property within the city and investigate the adoption of a tree preservation and replacement ordinance as a part of the Zoning Ordinance to protect valuable trees in areas which will be developed in the future.
4. **Update Subdivision Ordinance.** Examine specific requirements for environmental protection that may be incorporated into the city's Subdivision regulations such as identification of subdivision landscaping standards and identification of existing trees of a substantial size as part of the preliminary plat required data.

**Objective:** Educate the community about its natural resource assets and encourage them to think about their use and impact on the natural resources of the community and greater areas.

**Strategies:**

1. **Environmental Agency List.** Maintain a current list of persons to contact at various local, state and federal agencies which are responsible for protecting the environment.
2. **New Officials.** Distribute new information relating to environmental regulations to all policy makers and elected officials as it becomes available.
3. **RRR.** Promote environmental stewardship including reducing, recovering and recycling waste materials.

4. **Annual Meetings.** Attend annual meetings of lake associations and watershed district to share information on surface water issues and to gain better insights on surface water issues.
5. **Update Processes.** Update and/or develop streamlined City permitting procedures including but not limited applications, checklists, fees, and inspections.
6. **Education.** Seek opportunities, such as conferences and publications to learn about emerging issues regarding the environment and provide training for elected and appointed officials to assist them in dealing with the complexities of environmental issues.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | five

Economic development seeks to strengthen a community through the expansion of its tax and employment base. A strong tax and employment base allows the community to support a higher quality of life for its residents by improving public services (parks, schools, libraries, sewer and water services, police, fire and emergency response, refuse collection and other governmental services). Ideally, economic development should balance economic vitality with stability, environmental protection, and preservation of Ortonville's small town character.

The need to plan for future economic development was noted early in the planning process at the community meeting. Residents identified the following concerns relating to the economic viability of the community:

- The need to provide livable wage jobs for current and future residents.
- The importance of the retirement and health care industries as economic development opportunities for the region.
- The need to encourage the development of long-term employment opportunities for community residents so that young people can remain in the community.
- The importance of tourism to the sustainability of the regional economy.
- The importance of "downtown" Ortonville as a commercial center.
- The potential impacts and opportunities to economic growth associated with the proposed Big Stone II.

Ortonville has a strong economic advantage as the Big Stone County seat and one of the largest communities in the area. The City also has been very active in various programs to enhance economic development in Ortonville. This section will give strategies and efforts to improve economic development conditions.

**Strategies:**

1. **Inventory of Businesses.** An inventory of existing businesses should be created and periodically updated.
2. **Work Cooperatively.** The city should work cooperatively with local businesses to identify current and future needs.
3. **Environmentally Sound.** Encourage business expansions and developments that do not create an adverse impact on the environment.
4. **Downtown.** Promote the growth and development of the downtown area as the city's retail and service center.
5. **Provide Assistance.** Businesses should be given assistance to expand or improve their operations.
6. **Market Strategies.** Marketing strategies should be used to promote the use of goods and services currently produced or provided in the city.
7. **Balance Development.** Redevelopment and renovation of existing commercial and industrial developments and the downtown area should be balanced with the creation of new developments.
8. **Agri-business.** Agricultural activities in the area should be considered an existing industry that is important to the city and efforts should be made to promote and maintain agri-businesses and agricultural product processing facilities in Ortonville.
9. **Renewable Energy.** Support the development of low cost, alternative or renewable energy and power generation including the distribution of the same to all areas of the region.
10. **Broadband.** Continue to support efforts to extend broadband access throughout the county and educate businesses in its use.
11. **CIP.** Implement a Capital Improvement Planning program to assist with assessing the long-term capital project requirements and to establish funding of high-priority projects in a timely and cost-effective fashion.

12. **Diversified Tax Base.** A diversified tax base offering a large number and wide variety of employment opportunities at different education and skill levels should be promoted.
13. **Complimentary Business.** Attempts should be made to attract business and industry that would complement the services and products produced by existing businesses. Actively seek new retail businesses, entertainment facilities and restaurants to strengthen the retail area and to improve the marketing ability of the city.
14. **Business Recruitment.** Recruitment of new business and industry should take into consideration the size, type, wage, jobs, utility demand and compatibility with existing land use and natural resources.
15. **Livable Wage.** Efforts should be made to attract new industrial and commercial businesses that pay a liveable wage.
16. **Youth Flight.** Efforts should be made to promote the post-college return of area youth.
17. **Work Local.** Employment opportunities should be created that promote the city's residents to work locally rather than commute.
18. **Coordinate Efforts.** The city should continue to coordinate efforts with the Ortonville Economic Development Authority (EDA) in supporting economic growth in the community.
19. **Market to the Metro.** The city should pursue relationships with Minneapolis/St. Paul and other metro business communities in an effort to obtain and increase small business interests in Ortonville.
20. **Financing Tools.** Financing tools such as tax increment financing, tax abatement, revolving loan funds, State and Federal programs, and other financing tools should be offered to businesses.
21. **Website.** The city and the Ortonville EDA should continue to maintain and improve its Internet web site as a marketing tool to promote economic development.
22. **Community Profile and Marketing.** The city, along with the EDA, should continue to maintain an updated community profile and promotional brochure which can be used to encourage new growth and development.

23. **Industrial Park.** A new industrial park with planned infrastructure should be explored for industry.

## PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE | six

Ortonville's physical infrastructure presents an important challenge as well as a great resource as the city plans for its future. It is a resource in that it represents an extraordinary investment in economically useful capital. It is a challenge because it is aging and while the financial resources needed to manage and maintain it are greater than before there is limited revenue from a modestly growing population.

The infrastructure of the city includes public roads, sanitary and storm sewers, water supply, and city-owned buildings, which the city must operate and maintain, plus other roads and highways, public transit, railroads, electric and gas utilities, and telecommunications networks, which may be separately managed.

The services a community provides are often an important factor in attracting new residents as well as in keeping current residents. The following section lists and briefly describes some of the municipal services available to Ortonville residents.

### ***Ortonville Public Schools***

The Ortonville Public School District #62 serves students in K-12 from Ortonville, Bellingham, Odessa, Correll, Big Stone City, SD and the surrounding area. In 1996 the Ortonville community passed a bond issue to build a new high school, library/media center and to renovate much of the entire building. The new high school was completed for the 1999-2000 school year and an open house and dedication was held on April 9, 2000.

### ***Ortonville Area Health Services***

The Ortonville Area Health Services are municipally owned and include a hospital, clinic and nursing home.

#### *Hospital/clinic*

Drs. Bolsta and Karn opened the 17-bed Grand View Hospital in 1906. In 1919, the title of Grand View was transferred to the South Dakota Evangelical Church Society. It was called the Ortonville Evangelical Hospital until 1944, when the church transferred title to the property and the operation of the hospital back to Drs. Bolsta and Karn. The doctors, in turn, transferred the hospital to the City of Ortonville. In September 1944, the council passed an ordinance creating a hospital board.



In 1952, a 32-bed hospital was completed at the current site. Remodeling of the facilities has included an addition in 1970, a major renovation in 1983 and renovation of the clinic in 1990. At the time of this plan, the hospital was working on a \$5 million expansion that was hoped to be done by the end of 2002.

The Ortonville Hospital offers 24-hour emergency care, medical specialty clinics by appointment, a full range of diagnostic services, respite care and hospice, diabetes and Parkinson's support groups, and respiratory, physical, occupational and speech therapy.

#### *Nursing Home*

Northridge Residence is a 74-bed long-term care facility. The building was finished in 1978. Northridge Residence provides a "homelike" environment for its residents. The home is Medicare and Medicaid approved and provides intermediate and skilled care, as well as physical, occupational and speech therapy.

#### ***Library***

In 1913 the Library Board asked the City Council to raise \$1,000 by tax levy and to apply to the Carnegie Foundation for funds for a new library. A site was purchased and a design approved and on April 26, 1915 the new library was opened. The building underwent major renovations in 2000. The library is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Carnegie Library.

The Ortonville Public Library provides a number of services to the community. These include: public internet access, word processing programs, copy machine, fax machine, a meeting room, interlibrary loan options, year-round children's programs and reference materials.

#### ***Ortonville Volunteer Fire Department***

There are 35 volunteer firefighters with the Ortonville Department. These volunteers respond to fire calls in the Ortonville area as well as providing rescue services. The fire hall is more than 50 years old. No extensive remodeling has been done on the building; however, the city is looking into expanding the hall to make room for an additional vehicle.

#### ***Electric Utility***

The City has owned the electric utility in Ortonville for over 100 years. This has allowed Ortonville to provide its residents with low rates on electricity. Approximately 95 percent of the distribution system is underground, a feature that aids the aesthetic value of Ortonville.

### ***Water Utility***

Ortonville's water tower was built in 1998. The water plant, which went on-line in June 1997, has a 1million gallon/day capacity. At the time this plan was written the plant had no softening capabilities, but the City was performing a study to consider adding a softening plant in the existing water plant. The age of the water pipes throughout the City varies greatly, but many new water and sewer pipes have been installed over the past five years.

### ***Sewer Utility***

Ortonville uses lagoons with discharge into the Minnesota River for its sewage treatment. The system was originally designed to irrigate surrounding land, but was never able to do this. The City applied for and received a permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to discharge into the river. Five miles of pipe were installed underground for that outflow line. The sewer pipes are in much the same shape as the water pipes. The age varies considerably, but much of it has been replaced in the last five years. The capacity of the system is enough that there is more capacity than current water plant production. This means growth will not immediately overtax the system; however, the type of growth seen will have a great effect on how quickly capacity is reached.

### ***Transportation***

Ortonville lies at the junction of U.S. Highways 12 and 75 and Minnesota Highway 7. Minnesota Highway 28 is approximately 19 miles north of Ortonville, providing another major east/west transportation route to residents. I-29 is located approximately 30 miles west of Ortonville, giving residents easy access to a major north/south transportation route.

A rail line owned by the Twin Cities & Western Railroad Company runs just south of Ortonville along State Highway 7. This line is a class three line. A class three designation means that freight trains can go up to 40 mph and passenger trains can go up to 60 mph. The efficiency of a railroad is affected by the physical condition of the railroad lines. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) track classification is based upon the physical characteristics of the roadbed, track geometry and track structure. There are four different track classifications with maximum freight and passenger speeds used in Minnesota. Characteristics related to the roadbed include drainage and vegetation. Track geometry includes guage, alignment, elevation and surface. Track structure involves ballast, ties, rail, spikes, joints and switches. These characteristics determine the allowable operating speeds on a rail line.

Prairie Five Rides, based in Ortonville, provides the county's only public transit. Prairie Five started serving the public with buses in July of 1995, but a volunteer driver system was available as early as 1991. Prairie Five started with five buses in 1995. The buses run from approximately 6:00 a.m. until dark, Monday through Friday. The transit program continues to grow with expected ridership in 2001 of more than 75,000 passenger trips. In 2000, Prairie Five's total operating budget was \$493,419 with \$443,419 coming from Mn/DOT and the

remaining \$50,000 covered by Prairie Five with fares and contracts. It had 66,978 passenger trips that covered approximately 461,114 miles (the cost per passenger was \$6.63 and per passenger mile was 97 cents).

The Ortonville airport is the only airport in Big Stone County. It is classified by the Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics as an Intermediate System, having a paved and lighted runway less than 5,000 feet capable of accommodating all single-engine and most twin-engine aircraft, as well as some light jet aircraft.

The following objectives and strategies have been provided for public infrastructure in Ortonville.

**Objective:** Provide basic infrastructure and services to as many of the residents of the city as possible without creating substantial economic problems or undue environmental problems.

**Strategies:**

1. **Condition analysis.** The condition and capacity of the sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water supply, water treatment facilities, telecommunication services and local roads and streets should be analyzed on a regular basis to determine need for replacement, repairs, new services, etc. in an effort to allocate funds to projects where the funding is needed most.
2. **Service growth areas.** Those areas of the city exhibiting the greatest potential for growth and economic development should be the first to be serviced with new sewer and water systems.
3. **Telecommunication.** The city should continue to support upgrading and extending telecommunication services throughout the city in order to enhance its competitive stance for social and economic development.
4. **CIP Budgeting.** Conduct capital improvements programming and budgeting to achieve desired types and levels of public facilities and services.
5. **Coordination.** Plans for proposed new, upgraded or expanded services and facilities should be coordinated with applicable units of government and agencies.

**Objective:** Encourage the construction and maintenance of a transportation system capable of providing for the safe, convenient and economical movement of people and commodities.

**Strategies:**

1. **Meet economic & social needs.** The planning and implementation of the transportation system should meet the city's economic and social needs.
2. **Improve accessibility.** Accessibility should be improved through the construction or improvement of key links in the roadway and pedestrian systems.
3. **Ped/bike trails.** Sufficient pedestrian and bike trails should be made available, especially along Highway 7.
4. **Elderly needs.** The needs of the elderly, disabled and youth should be of primary consideration in public transportation planning.
5. **Truck routes.** Analysis and identification of the best truck routes through Ortonville should be established.
6. **Weight limits.** Post and enforce weight limits throughout the city.
7. **Transportation amenities.** Highway and street improvements should include consideration for sidewalks, lighting and beautification.
8. **Safety.** Programs or projects designed to improve highway and street safety should be supported. Safety improvements, including appropriate signing or traffic lights, should be made in anticipation of problems rather than in reaction to them.
9. **Maintenance.** Ortonville should encourage maintenance improvements along U.S. Highways 12 and 75 and State Highway 7. The city should work with Big Stone County on maintaining and upgrading all Big Stone County roads in Ortonville.
10. **Land use guidance.** Land use guidelines, zoning ordinances and subdivision ordinances should be amended to include access management standards, ensuring that roadways are not used for unintended purposes and thereby creating unsafe driving conditions. Transportation services should be developed that are consistent with local land use plans as well as with other development plans.

11. **Coordinated transportation system.** The city should work with area townships, cities, Big Stone County and Mn/DOT to plan for an orderly transportation system. A transportation system should be provided that encourages employment growth, economic productivity and fosters economic competitiveness.
12. **Creative partnerships.** Creative public and private partnerships in transportation investments should be encouraged.

## RECREATION & OPEN SPACE | seven

The city's residents and visitors identify parks, trails and recreational facilities as valuable community resources that contribute positively to the quality of life offered in Ortonville. Recreation is viewed as an integral part of life, providing a necessary and satisfying change from the things we usually do and the places where we spend most of our time.

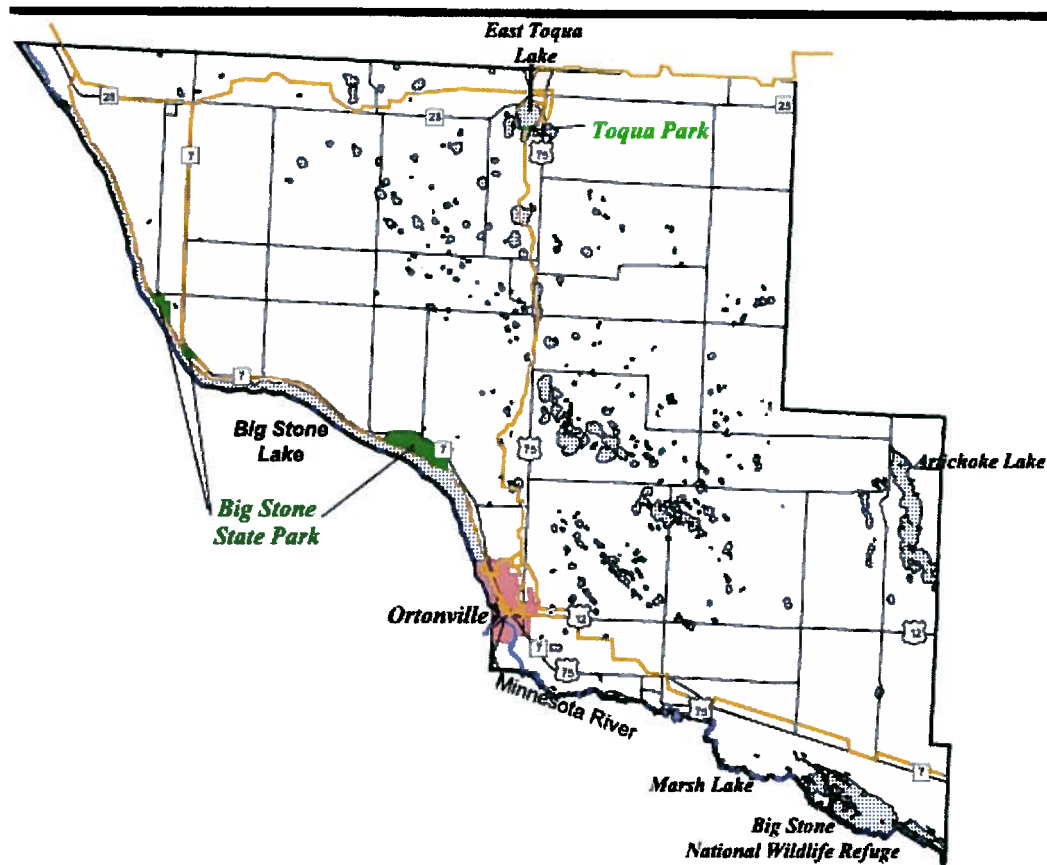
Recreational opportunities in Ortonville include a municipally owned 18-hole golf course with a full service restaurant and pro shop on site. The city also owns and operates a public swimming pool for use by all area residents. In addition to these amenities, are the ten city parks located throughout the Ortonville/Big Stone City area. Notable parks include:

- Central Park and Neilson's which offer unique hill and ravine settings with hiking trails and hideaway rest areas;
- The Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge is a 10,000-acre park that features car and bike tour routes and foot trails. Hiking in the park offers unique and rare plants and wildlife as well as the beautiful sights afforded by the granite outcroppings. The abundant wildlife can be seen in the park as well as a herd of buffalo. A public canoe access is also available in the park. The park is located just south of Ortonville on Highways 7 and 75.
- Big Stone State Park is one park but situated in two areas, both located along Big Stone Lake and accessed by Highway 7 just north of Ortonville. The Meadowbrook Area has a public lake access, electrical and water hook-ups, modern showers and bathrooms and group facilities. The Bonanza Area is set-aside for naturalist interests and provides primitive camping for groups only. This area features rare virgin prairie and is home to the Bonanza Environmental Center, staffed and maintained by a core of area school districts.

- Lakeside Park and Regional Trailhead is situated along the southeast end of Big Stone Lake and includes facilities such as rest facilities, grills, shelter and picnic facilities and swimming beach and fishing.

The following map shows the location of area parks and other recreation options in the Ortonville area. The following objectives and strategies have been provided for parks, recreation and open space in Ortonville.

**Figure 3.2 Park and Recreation Facilities**





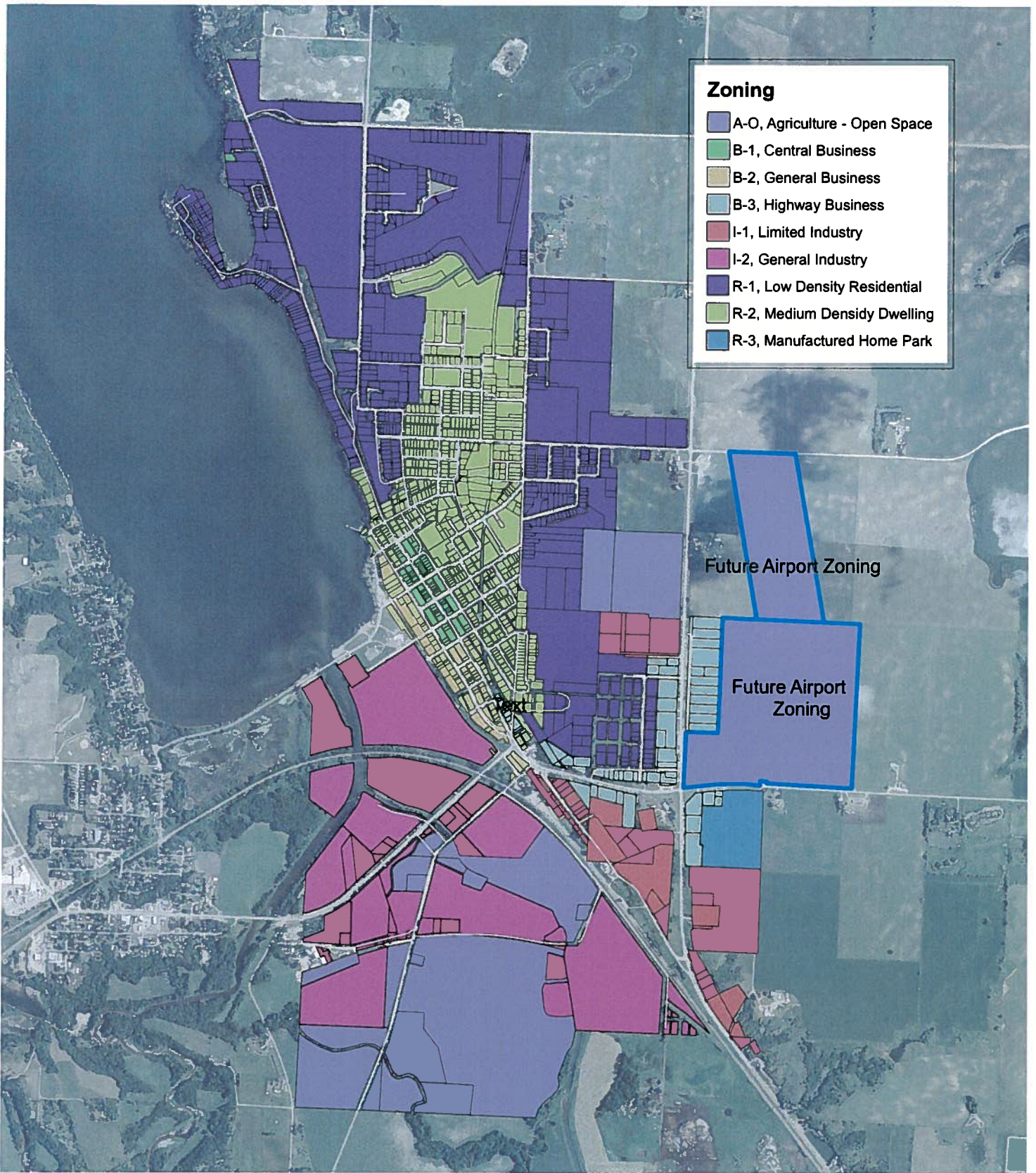
**Objective:** Promote and develop the city's recreational opportunities.

**Strategies:**

1. **Park Inventory.** Complete an inventory and evaluation of existing park, trail and recreation facilities and include this evaluation in capital improvement planning for the parks.
2. **Park Dedication.** The city should as a part of the development require as per the Subdivision Ordinance, Park Dedication requirements according to M.S. 462.358 Subd. 2b. (b) on all developments.
3. The Planning Commission and/or Park Board shall review development proposals to ensure proposed parkland dedication or fee-in-lieu of dedications meet the needs of the city including type and location of land, park configuration, access and parking and compatibility with the neighborhood and other recreational offerings.
4. The city shall strive to provide active and passive park and recreational facilities to meet the needs of diverse groups within the community including, but not limited to, teenagers, physically and mentally challenged, and all household types.
5. **Downtown area.** Within the downtown area and areas surrounding the school, the city shall focus on enhancing existing parks rather than acquiring additional park land.
6. **Cooperation.** The City Council shall maximize recreational opportunities available to residents and tourists through cooperative ventures which are mutually beneficial for the city, school district, Big Stone County, Department of Natural Resources and civic organizations. Examples include coordinating trail design and construction with reconstruction of county roads and joint grant applications with the school and or county to the DNR.
7. In order to reduce the tax impact of park and recreational (re) development projects, the city should research and utilize a variety of funding sources for the acquisition, development and renovation of park and recreation facilities; including but not limited to grant applications, providing information to civic organizations regarding desired capital improvements to parks and trails, use of

volunteer labor, and use of user fees. The capital improvement plan shall be reviewed annually.

8. **Trail Plan.** The city should develop a trail plan to link existing parks and neighborhoods and coordinate the trail development with the school district; Big Stone County (County Road turn backs and reconstruction projects) and DNR grant programs. The city shall carefully review proposals from developers relative to proposed trail and sidewalk facilities within new subdivisions. The city should develop a sidewalk/trail policy indicating when/where sidewalks or trails should be placed. Trails connecting the new housing areas of the city to the heart of the city should be considered. The Planning Commission and City Council should require developers to install identified portions of trails/pedestrian ways with subdivision construction, even if the trail/pedestrian way temporarily dead-ends.
9. When developing parks, the Planning Commission and/or Park Board and City Council shall review its intended use, recreational voids or needs within the area and funds available.
10. **ADA Compliance.** The city shall design new facilities to be barrier free and provide other accommodations for people with disabilities, in accordance with ADA requirements.
11. **Park Signs.** As the city grows and additional parks are developed, the Planning Commission and/or Park Board and City Council shall develop a theme for park signs and budget for the installation in the city's parks.
12. **Maintenance plan.** The city should implement an overall maintenance plan, including: Capital equipment costs (i.e. new equipment, new play features, park upgrades) included in the five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and other capital expenses (e.g. pedestrian/bicycle trail construction, etc.).
13. The city should meet with local organizations regularly to discuss tourism issues and strategies.
14. **Big Stone Lake.** Efforts should be made to maximize the recreational opportunities provided by Big Stone Lake ensuring public access for all residents. The city should encourage efforts by citizens and private organizations to improve recreational opportunities provided by Big Stone Lake and cooperate in these efforts.

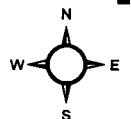


UMVRDC

UPPER  
MINNESOTA  
VALLEY  
REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION

# Ortonville Zoning Map

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1  
Miles



Map Date: March 24, 2008

\* This map is subject to the Map/Data Disclaimer on the Title Page of the 2008 Ortonville Comprehensive Plan.



# Chapter 4 – Implementation

*“Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.” Vincent van Gogh*

## INTRODUCTION | one

Implementation of this comprehensive plan depends on building partnerships. The various city, county and regional agencies need to work together, and need to work with the many community groups that improve the local quality of life in order to make many of the larger goals contained in this plan a reality. For example, economic development agencies like Big Stone Area Growth, the city EDA and a Downtown Business Association need to work together to help the city improve the climate for the types of businesses the community wants to see in its downtown and in future commercial centers. Organizations concerned with preserving the historic character of Ortonville need to work with the city to find and implement creative solutions to preserve those qualities – historic district zoning controls, for instance. In short, partnerships are key to successful implementation of Ortonville's Comprehensive Plan. There are a number of tools, in addition to the Future Land Use Map, the city can use to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This Chapter provides a brief synopsis of the following planning tools: Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Shoreland Ordinance, Capital Improvements Plan, Orderly Annexation Plan and Economic Development Tools. Guidelines for implementation are provided for each tool.

### Zoning Ordinance

Zoning can be used to preserve and protect the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of a community by outlining a pattern for orderly development. Zoning ordinances can also be used to regulate the use of property, the height, width and size of buildings, lot sizes, setbacks, density standards, vacant space and other land use characteristics. The regulations must be uniform within a district, but may vary among each district. In each use district, a city allows certain uses but can enforce a variety of conditions.

The process of determining how land should be zoned is critical to the growth and development of Ortonville. As new land becomes part of the City (and as the need to rezone to allow for consistent land use patterns occurs), a list of criteria should be used to help make consistent and well-planned land use decisions. The process of zoning new incorporated land or rezoning current property can be greatly improved through the use of specific criteria that specify which factors should be considered when evaluating proposed developments. The following list of criteria could be used to guide proposed zoning decisions until a formal criteria document is adopted. This list is only an example and should be modified or expanded to address specific issues and needs.

#### **Example Zoning Criteria**

- ✓ Is the proposed land use compatible with existing land uses in the area?
- ✓ What is the best use of this property now and in the future?
- ✓ Is the proposed zoning request a “spot zone?” A “spot zone” is any use given to a piece of property that is generally small in size and the use is incompatible with the zoning and land use of the surrounding area, particularly when the spot zone favors a particular land owner.
- ✓ Is the zoning request consistent with the basic goal of promoting the health, safety and welfare of local residents? Basic factors to consider include:
  - Traffic impact
  - Financial impact (to the city, county, neighboring township and landowners)
  - Agricultural impact (loss of agriculture land, proximity to feedlots, soils, etc.)
  - Availability and adequacy of water, sewer, snow plowing, police and fire, etc.
  - Environmental impact (shoreland, geology, soils, wildlife, wooded areas, vegetation, wetlands, slopes, drainage areas, ground water, surface water, etc.)
- ✓ Has there been a substantial change of conditions in the area of the proposed property to be zoned?
- ✓ Will the proposed zoning meet the needs of the affected stakeholders (City, neighboring township, county and landowners)?

### Subdivision Ordinance

Minnesota Statutes give cities the authority to regulate the subdivision of land to protect the welfare of residents, promote orderly development, provide affordable housing and to allow for the provision of infrastructure and other public services. Subdivision ordinances can be used to regulate the size, location, grading and other land use issues when land under single ownership is divided into two or more lots.

A subdivision regulation should require consistency with the comprehensive plan and its implementation tools such as the capital improvements program, and environmental, natural resource, design and community character goals.

Conservation subdivision development is a concept that develops a piece of land by concentrating housing units together while leaving open space available for all to use. Pedestrian traffic and

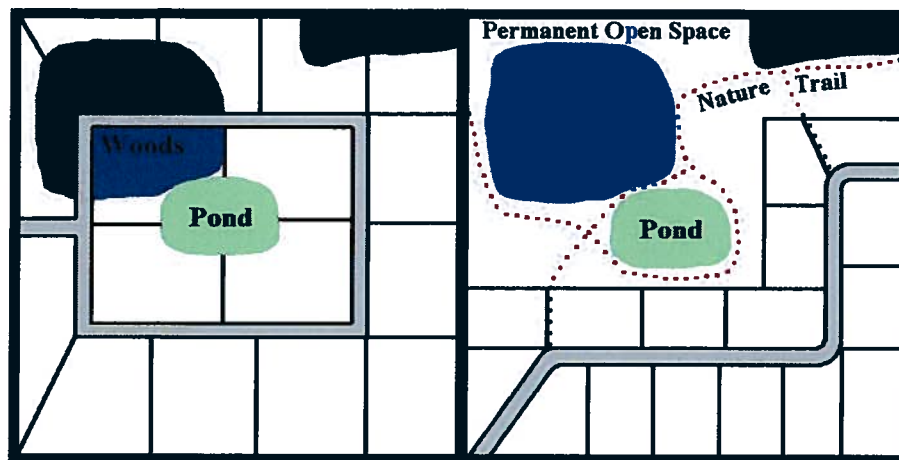
recreational areas are generally the primary themes found in these types of developments. This concept promotes the preservation of the natural environment, agricultural land and the character of the landscape. Conservation development can also minimize conflicts between residential growth and other land uses by buffering new growth from existing development.

### Meeting Housing Needs with Planned Unit Developments

Planned unit developments allow the mixed development of uses previously separated into exclusive districts, provided that they are properly designed. A PUD permit will allow for smaller lots and narrower streets than traditional zoning. The result is often increased livability and efficiency. For housing developments, a PUD allows for a variety of housing types, such as rental townhomes, apartment buildings and single-family homes, as well as for retail and other services on the same site. Local governments increasingly are willing to view development proposals in terms of integrating rather than separating different uses.

Source: Building Better Neighborhoods: Creating Affordable Homes and Livable Communities, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, 2001.

Conservation developments often require modifications in the design standards of traditional subdivision and zoning regulations. To accommodate these developments, strict compliance to minimum lot sizes, setback requirements and other regulations may be overlooked by the Planning Commission. Modifications can be granted to allow these development standards as long as the overall housing density of the entire subdivision meets the restrictions provided in the zoning and subdivision regulations. Figure 4.1 provides an example of how a conservation subdivision looks compared to traditional subdivisions.



**Figure 4.1**  
**Conservation Subdivision Example**

**Figure A: Traditional**

10 acre parcel

16 lots (average 24,000 sq. ft.)

No open space

4 lots with pond access

**Figure B: Conservation Subdivision**

10 acre parcel

16 lots (average 12,000 sq. ft.)

5 acres of open space

All lots have pond access

### Shoreland Ordinance

Ortonville's shoreland management ordinance was adopted in March 1993. The policy, as stated in the ordinance, reads as follows:

The uncontrolled use of shorelands of the City of Ortonville, Big Stone County, Minnesota, affects the public health, safety and general welfare not only by contributing to pollution of public waters, but also by impairing the local tax base. Therefore, it is in the best interests of the public health, safety and welfare to provide for the wise subdivision, use and development of shorelands of public waters. The Legislature of Minnesota has delegated responsibility to local governments of the state to regulate the subdivision, use and development of the shoreland of public waters, and thus preserve and enhance the quality of surface waters, conserve the economic and natural environmental values of shorelands, and provide for the wise use of waters and related land resources. This responsibility is hereby recognized by the City of Ortonville.



## Capital Improvements Plan

A capital improvements plan is a comprehensive list of projects and facilities a city needs or will need to provide public services. A capital improvements plan lists improvements in order of priority and provides information on the proposed means of financing. These plans assist cities in planning for future financial commitments while avoiding the financial stress of paying for those projects on short notice.

### BENEFITS OF A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

- Project and financial planning tool
- Keep citizens and city council updated on future needs
- Prioritize projects based on need
- Help reduce or level off the municipal tax rate
- Manages a city's debt in a way that avoids extreme financial changes and burdens
- Allows a city to be less reliant on long-term debt (bonding) and provides the ability to pay for a greater portion of projects as they occur
- Provides sufficient time for detailed and careful planning of anticipated projects
- Creates an organized plan for capital improvement projects to occur
- Coordinates projects from all the City's departments while eliminating the issue of who should get money, how much they should get and when they should receive it
- Helps create a financial reserve for emergencies and prevents a city from over borrowing money

## Orderly Annexation

As the population increases, it may become necessary to expand city services outside of the current municipal boundaries. To remain healthy, Ortonville must be allowed to grow. The benefits of annexation include that of protecting the environment and natural resources, providing a wider variety of housing and commercial options than what low-density, rural zoning can offer, fairly distributing the costs of urban services among all that benefit, providing urban services more efficiently and without costly duplication, and providing sound land use planning practices by using land resourcefully.

State Statutes allow three forms of annexation:

- Automatic
  - Annexation by Ordinance (MN Statute §414.033)
  - Ordered Service Extension (MN Statute §414.0335)
- Negotiated
  - Orderly Annexation (MN Statute §414.0325)
- Contested
  - Unincorporated Land, City/Township (MN Statute §414.031)
  - Concurrent Detachment, City/City (MN Statute §414.061)

Each of these procedures can be used, but only one may apply and be appropriate in any given situation at one time.

## Economic Development

In an effort to enhance the future of business and industry in Ortonville, a number of economic development tools may be used to manage existing resources and stimulate future economic activity in the city. One important step in improving and expanding economic development efforts is having local government and community leaders successfully communicate with businesses. This should include identifying their needs and effectively using available resources to meet those needs. The following information briefly describes some other economic development tools that could be used in Ortonville.

### Creation of Additional Industrial Park Space

An industrial park is a section of land designed for industrial use due to a number of factors, including location, topography, zoning regulations, availability of utilities and accessibility to

various modes of transportation. Industrial parks are primarily created to attract industrial development. They are also created to focus industry on suitable building sites and on compatible locations with existing land use. Industrial parks can vary from a bare piece of land to a site served completely by utilities and having specific zoning and building requirements.

Adding industry to a community can increase the tax base, create jobs and attract new residents. The disadvantages to having an industrial park include the initial investment cost of purchasing the land, costs of providing infrastructure and the lost tax base that results until the city can find a private buyer. Industrial parks can be major investments for a city that require significant land use and financial planning. Although Ortonville currently has lots available in its current industrial park, additional space may be needed for future industrial development. Such an investment may offer a way to expand the current business environment, create more local jobs and strengthen the City's tax base.

### **Economic Development Financing Tools**

A number of financing tools are available to assist with economic development. The city of Ortonville or the Ortonville Economic Development Authority could use these tools to help promote economic growth and prosperity.

***Tax increment financing*** (TIF) is a funding tool used widely by cities that uses the increases in tax capacity and property taxes from development or redevelopment to pay public development and redevelopment costs. The increased taxes paid as a result of new construction or development are the tax increments. Unlike property taxes, increments are not used to pay for general costs incurred by cities, counties and schools. Instead, increments go to the development authority to repay costs incurred in the new development. TIF does not use the original tax amount for a piece of property so the tax base is not lost. Increments are captured for a set number of years (as regulated by State Law) to pay for new development. After a TIF district is decertified, the increments become general property taxes that go towards paying the costs of operating the city, county and school.

TIF is an excellent tool Ortonville could use to attract new business, encourage business expansion and promote development and redevelopment projects. TIF can increase tax base, create new jobs and strengthen the economy of a city. However, due to the complexity of the laws governing TIF, a city should work directly with professional TIF consultants before using this financing tool.

A **revolving loan fund** (RLF) is a financing tool the city or the Ortonville Economic Development Authority has to help businesses start or expand by providing the financing necessary to purchase new buildings, machinery and equipment. Many RLF's provide businesses with "gap" financing which is the amount of money needed by a business that is the difference between what a private financial institution is willing to lend the business and the amount they need to purchase their new assets.

RLFs often provide cost advantages to businesses borrowing money in an effort to lessen the financial burden of the new or expanding business. As a result, the benefits to a community include an increased tax base, new jobs and a stronger economic environment. Some of the benefits an RLF can offer over private funding are lower interest rates, flexible equity requirements, longer terms, deferred payments and lesser collateral positions to the bank's loan.

There are a variety of ways to fund a local RLF. The Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development's Minnesota Investment Fund has funded a number of RLFs across the state. Cities can apply for grant funding from the Investment Fund for specific business development projects. If that project is approved for funding, the city receives the grant and then loans the money to the business. As that business repays the loan to the city, the city can keep the money with interest and put it into its RLF to loan out to other businesses. Other sources of RLF funding include monies from the general fund, municipal utility reserves, TIF reserves and donations from businesses and organizations. The Ortonville EDA currently runs a Revolving Loan Fund available to Ortonville businesses. The Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission also has an RLF that can be used throughout the Ortonville area.

### **Grants and Loans**

In addition to the Minnesota Investment Fund and RLF, a number of other funding sources are available to businesses in Ortonville. The city could expand its efforts in the future to assist local businesses with obtaining funds from sources such as the Southwest Minnesota Foundation, Small Business Development Administration and various loan and grant programs offered by the state and federal government. Ortonville could better promote these programs to businesses with informational packets about the various programs and by using city staff to provide assistance in using these various funding tools.

### **Downtown Renovation and Enhancement**

Ortonville's downtown serves as the city's core for retail and commercial business. Issues that need to be addressed when looking at Ortonville's downtown include the variety of business, condition of the buildings, infrastructure, parking and the character and design of the downtown area.

In addition to TIF and RLF possibilities, the Ortonville EDA should actively work with downtown businesses on promotional events that attract people to the downtown. Downtown businesses could also form a task force to discuss concerns and think of ways to promote and enhance all of the downtown businesses. Commercial building rehabilitation is also possible through SCDP grant funds.

#### **Creating the Land Use Element of a Downtown Plan**

A model sustainable downtown plan illustrates the process a community might use to develop its strategies. Steps include:

- Develop a shared understanding of sustainability principles.
- Design and implement a public participation process.
- Review existing conditions and land uses in the downtown.
- Working within the participation process, establish a community vision for a sustainable downtown.
- Based on the vision, create sustainable development goals for downtown.
- Identify how people use – and should use – the downtown.
- Question whether existing land uses help or hinder sustainable economic development efforts.
- Define strategies for implementing the downtown land use plan.

To successfully implement the contents of the Comprehensive Plan and to determine if the Plan is consistent with the growth and development activities of the city, an annual review of the document is necessary.