

CHAPTER SIX: Vision Statements, Goals, Objectives and Strategies

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan establishes Yellow Medicine County's vision statements, goals, objectives and strategies. The vision statements were developed by the Comprehensive Plan Task Force and are used as the framework for the goals, objectives and strategies. They have been organized into the six planning areas discussed in Chapter Two. The goals, objectives and strategies are based on the public input collected and summarized in Chapter Five; were developed by the Comprehensive Plan Task Force; were reviewed by the Planning Commission; and were adopted by the County Board of Commissioners. Collectively, they should be used to help make decisions and create or update official controls for Yellow Medicine County.

DEFINITIONS

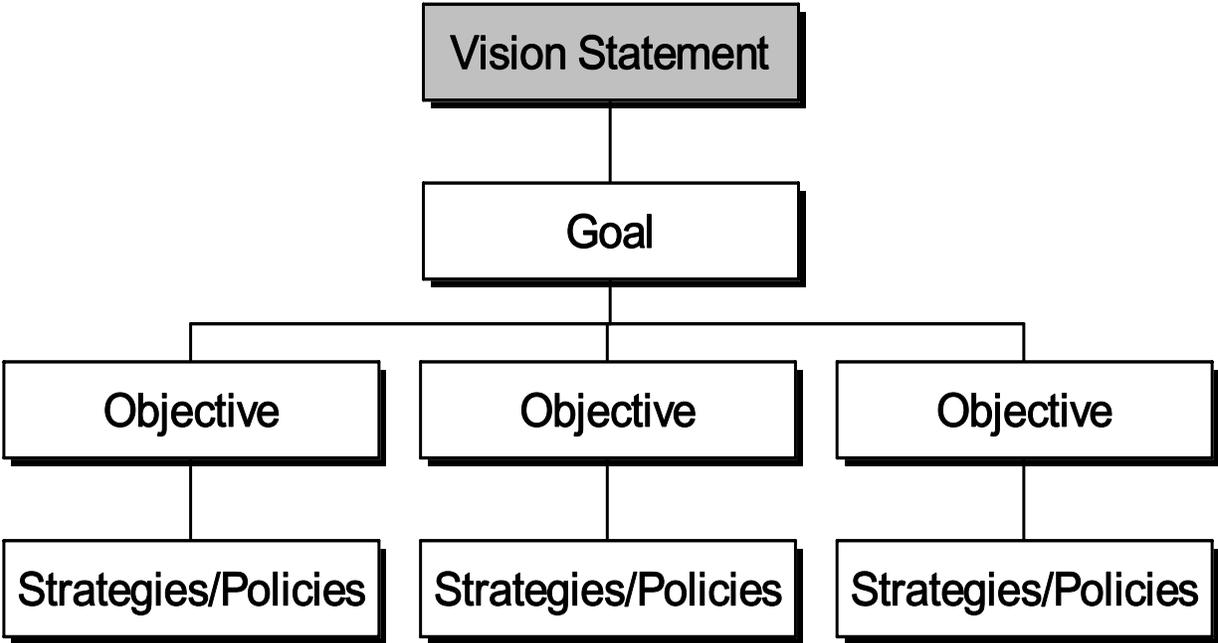
The following definitions are used throughout the Comprehensive Plan:

- ✓ **Vision Statements** are the **internal hope** or what you hope to become in the future. It is a picture or dream that captures values and concerns/issues.
- ✓ **Goals** are broad general statements to be accomplished or attained in the future. They are the **destination** or the target and are tied to the vision statements.
- ✓ **Objectives** are action-oriented and operational. They tell specific things you will be accomplishing by a given point of time in order to reach the goal. Objectives always begin with an action verb. They are the intended **outcomes or results** and are measurable.
- ✓ **Strategies** are the **activities** that support the objectives and serve as the basis for evaluation. These strategies will serve as guidelines for the County to use in their decision-making processes. It should be noted that these strategies are not all-inclusive to address every issue, project and decision the County will encounter. Rather, these strategies should be used as general policy guidelines. In addition to policy guidelines, these strategies can be converted into work plans for the County.



You can shoot your arrows (objectives) many ways. The important thing is that they reach your target (goals) and score the bull's eye!

Goals, Objectives and Strategies Hierarchy



The Peter Principle

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you will probably end up somewhere else.”

LAWRENCE PETER

PROCESS

The key element to a comprehensive plan is being able to address the current and emerging issues of the County. Issues and concerns are what largely dictate what Yellow Medicine County will **do** and **plan for** in the future. It was the responsibility of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force to assist in the development of the vision statement, goals, objectives and strategies for this Plan. Several tools were used throughout the planning process to identify current and emerging issues for the County and provide opportunity for public input. They included:

- Review of other adopted County plans and official controls currently in place
- Input from members of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force
- Input at public meetings held in four different locations around the County
- Public input from the comprehensive plan community survey
- Public review period of the draft comprehensive plan
- Public hearing to consider the draft comprehensive plan

Throughout the planning process, the key topic areas of housing, agriculture, business/economic development, transportation, natural resources/parks/recreation and county services were identified as the priority planning areas. Once identified, each priority area was evaluated, researched and reviewed to get ideas and determine direction for the future. The data gathered from the above tools was used to create strategies setting direction for the County in their current and future decision-making.

Identifying key planning strategies and recommending planning activities does not guarantee that the County will exclusively develop or pursue the activities in the Plan. Rather, these planning strategies provide recommendations for action that the County could take and are meant as guides only. Each strategy will need to be evaluated before implementation to determine whether it fits the County's overall vision and remains an issue.

An overall vision statement for the County and vision statements for each of the six priority issue areas were developed. They are included on the following pages of this chapter. The purpose of the vision statements is to write down the values and concerns of the County as well as creating ideas for the future. They articulate the hope for the future based on current reality and take into consideration the anticipated future changes. Yellow Medicine County's vision statement represents what people envision in 20 years for the County. The vision statements may include aspects that already exist in the County that they highly value, as well as aspects that are either new or can be improved on by the County. It is the internal hope for the future.

VISION STATEMENTS

Yellow Medicine County Overall Vision Statement

In 20 years we envision for the County:

All residents working together, using the County's resources, to create a safe, pleasant, healthy environment to live in that has a rural, small town atmosphere and quality of life for all ages and all people by preserving the environment; providing opportunities to learn and grow; supporting young families; and encouraging people to attain their dreams.

March 2006

Priority Planning Area Vision Statements

In 20 years we envision for the County...

HOUSING

A variety of affordable housing for all stages of life that is appealing and safe to live in.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture remains the County's key industry and base of the economy.

BUSINESS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small, viable and sustainable businesses and economic development opportunities are in place that provide quality employment opportunities and support families living in the County.

TRANSPORTATION

A diverse transportation system and road network to move people and goods.

NATURAL RESOURCES/PARKS/RECREATION

Natural resources/parks/recreation are protected and preserved in balance with other socioeconomic factors.

COUNTY SERVICES

High quality county services are available that fulfill the general wants and needs of residents.

HOUSING GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

HOUSING VISION STATEMENT

A variety of affordable housing for all stages of life that is appealing and safe to live in.

<p>GOAL: To support and encourage quality, affordable housing for all stages of life and socioeconomic backgrounds that provide residents a safe, appealing living environment.</p>
<p>Objective 1: Work with developers and agencies in the development or the rehabilitation of housing in the County.</p>
<p>Strategies:</p>
<p>1. Encourage the building of housing that addresses all stages of life and incomes.</p>
<p>2. Explore ways to expand the County’s Housing and Redevelopment Authority services.</p>
<p>3. Provide flexibility and support to the private sector in building housing for all life cycles and incomes.</p>
<p>4. Consider all types (wide variety) of housing options that may be innovative and new to the County.</p>
<p>5. The County should give priority to senior housing (with services) and single-family housing options throughout the County.</p>
<p>6. Consider having a countywide housing study and needs assessment done in conjunction with the cities located in the County.</p>
<p>Objective 2: Encourage preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing stock, if feasible.</p>
<p>Strategies:</p>
<p>1. Improving and maintaining existing housing should be of prime importance.</p>
<p>2. The County should actively pursue programs and funding sources for housing rehabilitation and new housing options.</p>
<p>3. Encourage housing with historic characteristics to be preserved.</p>
<p>4. An emphasis on “no net loss” in housing units should be a priority when addressing any flood prone homes for relocation.</p>
<p>Objective 3: Maintain land use controls that provide suitable locations and densities for residential development that are in harmony with agriculture activities and natural resources.</p>
<p>Strategies:</p>
<p>1. Establish a task force to evaluate the current one non-farm dwelling per 40 acre zoning requirement prior to revising the zoning ordinance to determine if this land use regulation serves the rural housing needs of the County both now and into the future.</p>
<p>2. Continue to place conditions of non-farm dwellings that are located in prime agricultural areas.</p>

3. Create flexible land use options for the construction of farm dwellings.
4. Preserving prime agricultural land should remain a priority for the County.
5. Existing public infrastructure and services should be used to guide residential development to ensure housing development efforts are cost effective.
6. Review all housing regulations including setbacks and lot size requirements in the County Zoning Ordinance and amend as needed to limit the impact to prime agriculture land and natural areas and to avoid conflict with other land uses.
7. Review the current urban expansion district regulations and areas and amend in conformance with this Comprehensive Plan. Urban expansion regulations and boundaries should be established in consultation with the County's municipalities, townships and the Upper Sioux Community.
8. Promote the establishment of orderly annexation agreements between municipalities and townships for the purpose of encouraging development in municipal areas served by municipal services.
9. Require newly developed manufactured home parks in the County be served by municipal utilities.
10. Rural housing development along shorelines and other environmentally sensitive areas should be closely monitored and regulated to prevent adverse environmental impacts to these areas.
11. Discourage housing development in any flood plain.
12. The establishment of joint planning boards pursuant to Minnesota Statutes should be considered for unincorporated areas within two miles of the County's municipalities when development pressures are, or will likely, impact these areas.

AGRICULTURE GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

<p>AGRICULTURE VISION STATEMENT</p>
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<p>Agriculture remains the County’s key industry and base of the economy.</p>
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<p>GOAL: To support agricultural strategies and opportunities that encourage economic growth, diversity and rural preservation in the County.</p>
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<p>Objective 1: Encourage agricultural strategies that maintain agriculture as the key industry and base of the economy.</p>

<p>Strategies:</p>

<p>1. Urban development should be minimized and regulated in rural areas so as to protect prime agricultural land and the rural character of the County.</p>
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<p>2. Consider adopting a “Right to Farm” ordinance and implementing an agricultural zone disclosure statement form to be signed by all non-farm development.</p>

<p>3. Review the current definitions for prime and non-prime (marginal) farmland and amend the definitions and county zoning map so these land uses are clearly understood and identified.</p>
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<p>4. Encourage alternative agricultural options (value-added agriculture and renewable energy) for economic growth that are viable and sustainable.</p>
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<p>5. Support the maintenance of a ditch system sensitive to agricultural production and preservation of natural resources.</p>

<p>6. Promote agricultural related businesses.</p>
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<p>7. Consider adopting an ordinance regulating wind towers and/or turbines.</p>
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<p>Objective 2: Support through the County’s Feedlot Ordinance agricultural growth and development in balance with non-farm development.</p>

<p>Strategies:</p>

<p>1. Conduct a public education campaign on feedlots and their impacts on the environment and economy.</p>

<p>2. Review examples of other county feedlot ordinances as options to consider for Yellow Medicine County.</p>

<p>3. Create a task force to assist in the review and updating of feedlot regulations.</p>
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<p>4. Encourage animal livestock farming activities that do not create adverse impacts to the natural environment and excessive odor levels for non-farm development.</p>

<p>5. Discuss strategies such as reclamation requirements or requiring bonds for abandoned feedlots and/or commercial businesses in an effort to encourage re-use of the land and to promote environmental, economic and aesthetically appealing land use practices.</p>
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Objective 3: Encourage way-to-market or utilization agricultural opportunities and strategies for economic growth.
Strategies:
1. Encourage livestock production within the County as a utilization strategy for agricultural products.
2. Encourage the maintenance and expansion of the rail service for transporting goods to market.
3. Look at renewable energy or other economic opportunities in the County that utilize or promote agricultural products of the County.
4. Support market strategies that promote the use of goods or services produced or provided in the County.
5. Maintain the County's excellent road network for transporting of goods to market.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION STATEMENT

Small, viable and sustainable businesses and economic development opportunities are in place that provide quality employment opportunities and support families living in the County.

GOAL: Encourage sustainable, viable economic strategies and opportunities that achieve a balanced distribution of economic growth throughout the County.

Objective 1: Encourage the expansion and retention of existing businesses in the County.

Strategies:

1. Provide incentives and/or assistance that encourage expansion of existing businesses in the County and improve their operations.
2. Encourage the development of viable, sustainable strategies and businesses, which historically have been economically sound in the County.
3. Work with cities, townships, the Upper Sioux Community, neighboring counties and regionally to identify current and future issues for existing businesses and industry.
4. Explore options for providing countywide economic development staff assistance, possibly in conjunction with another county or regionally.
5. Capitalize on the area's recreational opportunities/tourism as an economic asset but in balance with agriculture.
6. Financially support tourism regionally and in cooperation with other counties.
7. Work to strengthen wages within the workforce.

Objective 2: Encourage the development of a diversified industrial and commercial business economy to insulate the County's economy from changing markets and business cycles.

Strategies:

1. Promote diversification in the economy that encourages a variety of employment opportunities at different education and skill levels.
2. Farmers should be encouraged to diversify and add value to commodities.
3. The County should consider size, type, wage, jobs, infrastructure demands and compatibility with existing land use or zoning regulations in the recruitment of new business and industry.
4. The County should encourage entrepreneurial business development.
5. Focus economic development efforts on small businesses of 30 employees or less.
6. Work with state and federal levels of government and programs on policy direction and funding streams that are sensitive to business development and retention in rural areas.
7. Efforts to promote and maintain agricultural businesses should be a priority.
8. Efforts to promote and develop manufacturing employment opportunities should be a priority.

9. Priority should be given to business development efforts that compliment the existing economy.
10. The County needs to work with adjacent counties, the County’s municipalities and townships and the Upper Sioux Community in recruitment.
11. Encourage expansions that do not have an adverse impact on the environment.
12. Take steps to promote renewable energy opportunities in the County including, but not limited to, ethanol, biodiesel and wind energy in an effort to encourage economic growth.
Objective 3: Promote a favorable, friendly image of the County as a good place to develop or expand a business or industry.
Strategies:
1. Marketing strategies such as an updated county profile and promotional brochure should be developed that promotes the County as a good place to do business and live.
2. Exercise an open door policy to encourage communication in the recruitment and development of new businesses and economic growth in the County.
3. Networking and partnerships should occur at all levels of government to promote the County as a viable location for business expansion and development.
4. Financing tools and incentives such as tax increment financing, tax abatement, revolving loan funds and state or federal programs should be accessed and used whenever appropriate and feasible.
5. The County should utilize the internet as a marketing tool to promote economic development.
6. County services and infrastructure that are vital elements in the growth of new industry or business should be assessed periodically and expanded, improved or added as needed.
7. Encourage the development of telecommunication infrastructure countywide, with a focus on high speed Internet service, to promote business startup and expansion.
Objective 4: Encourage economic growth and development that lends toward equal distribution throughout the County.
Strategies:
1. Assess the readiness and feasibility of each community in the County for expansion and distribution of economic growth.
2. Work together with cities, townships and the Upper Sioux Community to develop infrastructure that could accommodate industry and economic growth.
3. The County should conduct land use planning together with cities, townships and the Upper Sioux Community and periodically identify future urban growth areas around these jurisdictions.
4. Work together with cities, townships and the Upper Sioux Community and the State workforce departments to train and retain labor force throughout the County.
5. Encourage economic opportunities that would slow the out-migration of youth in the County.
6. Research options for providing a countywide economic development service provider.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

TRANSPORTATION VISION STATEMENT

A diverse transportation system and road network to move people and goods.

GOAL: To improve and maintain a diverse transportation system and road network that is safe, functional and environmentally sound.

Objective 1: Support a public and private transportation system that encompasses all modes of transportation to move people and products.

Strategies:

1. Encourage planning of a transportation system that focuses on the County's economic and social needs.
2. In cooperation with private enterprise promote rail service in the County particularly near industrial and commercial developments and agricultural commodities for the transportation of their goods.
3. Encourage the maintenance and cooperation of air services regarding management, cost sharing and other cooperative ventures.
4. A plan for pedestrian and bicycle use should be part of the overall transportation system.

Objective 2: Maintain a highway or road network that is capable of providing safe, accessible and convenient movement of people and products.

Strategies:

1. Support programs and projects reducing the damage to roads within the County caused by frequent heavy loads.
2. Preservation and maintenance of the current road network should be a high priority for the County.
3. The County needs to consider moving to 10-ton roads to decrease damage to the road network.
4. The County needs to be proactive in safety improvements to anticipate problems rather than having to be reactive.
5. The County needs to be legislatively active regarding funding made available for highway maintenance/improvement throughout the County and region.
6. Safety should be the County's highest priority.
7. An access management plan should be considered in areas that experience high traffic volumes and/or development pressures/potential.
8. In development located along major arterials that generate high volumes of traffic the County should encourage service roads to be built to serve the developed area.

<p>Objective 3: The County needs to work in partnership with cities, townships, the Upper Sioux Community, regional counties and cities, the Area Transportation Partnership and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to provide a transportation system and road network that moves people and products economically.</p>
<p>Strategies:</p>
<p>1. Continue to develop a multi-year improvement plan addressing transportation issues in the County.</p>
<p>2. Conduct an on-going inventory and analysis of traffic patterns and growth in the County for the prioritization of projects.</p>
<p>3. Work to ensure that the transportation system and road network encourages employment growth and opportunities throughout the entire County.</p>
<p>4. Avoid duplication of transportation within the County.</p>
<p>5. Ensure that growth is appropriate to locations where the type of transportation modes and road network are appropriate to the activity or type of growth.</p>
<p>6. Long-range plan together with the cities, townships, the Upper Sioux Community, Area Transportation Partnership and MnDOT to ensure there is a minimum of transportation barriers.</p>
<p>7. Encourage public and private partnerships for transportation investments.</p>
<p>8. Encourage a transportation system and road network in the County that is environmentally sensitive to the County's resources.</p>

NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS AND RECREATION GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS AND RECREATION VISION STATEMENT
Natural resources/parks/recreation are protected and preserved in balance with other socioeconomic factors.

GOAL: To encourage a balanced and harmonious relationship between the County’s natural resources/parks/recreation and the County’s socioeconomic factors.

Objective 1: Work together with the appropriate partners to encourage a balanced and harmonious relationship between the County’s natural resources/parks/recreation and other socioeconomic factors.

Strategies:

1. Identify and inventory natural resources the County wants to preserve and protect.
2. The County should develop ordinances/regulations/standards that address the natural resources of highest priority to the County.
3. All users should be held accountable for activities that damage or deplete the County’s natural resources.
4. The County should encourage conservation programs that protect and preserve natural resources.
5. A public education program and public input should be on-going when developing land use plans, new ordinances and regulations that encourages balance and harmony with natural resources.
6. The County should be proactive with seeking grants that focus on protecting, preserving and developing natural resources/parks/recreation [i.e., a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Outdoor Recreation Grant for Timm Lake County Park to improve and expand the park].
7. Work with others to protect and enhance the natural environment and surrounding landscape while not giving up land or other socioeconomic factors crucial to the County economy.
8. Point and non-point pollution sources should be identified and abated.
9. Open spaces and natural resources/parks/recreation should be evaluated periodically.
10. Consider participation in the Minnesota DNR Aggregate Resource Mapping Program.
11. Maintain a countywide geographical information system (GIS) database for land use decisions.

Objective 2: Develop and enforce ordinances that set standards for protecting and preserving the County’s agricultural land and activities.

Strategies:

1. Prime agricultural land should be defined and identified within the County.
2. Land use plans and ordinances should regulate and preserve prime agricultural land for agricultural purposes in the County.
3. Work together with appropriate agencies to set criteria for the entitlement land programs that will preserve and protect agricultural land in the County.

Objective 3: Develop and enforce reasonable regulations/standards/ordinances that protect and preserve the County’s natural resources/parks/recreation.

Strategies:

1. Regulations should be developed and enforced that control new development and agricultural activities on or near wetlands and floodplains.
2. Gravel pits/mining and logging activities should have closure requirements and reclamation plans that are enforced to minimize the impact on the environment and to return the area back to an original or environmentally sound state.
3. Supported programs that limit the amount of chemicals applied to land by all users – agricultural or residential.
4. Monitor and regulate as needed land use near surface water, ground water and drinking water sources.
5. Septic system installation, maintenance and design should be closely monitored and regulated.
6. The County’s water plan should be regularly updated and implemented.
7. The County’s solid waste plan should be regularly updated and implemented.
8. Review the County’s shoreland, flood plain, feedlot and other ordinances that potentially have a direct or indirect impact on the natural resources of the County and update these official controls as needed with reasonable standards that help protect natural resources and the environment.
9. Create a wind turbine ordinance that allows for wind power development to occur in harmony with other land uses and with limited impact to the environment and landscape.
10. Encourage re-mapping of the Minnesota River Wild and Scenic River District so the designated areas more accurately represent actual environmentally sensitive locations.
11. Encourage land use policies for the Minnesota Wild and Scenic River District that provide a balance between land owners’ rights and protecting sensitive environmental areas.

Objective 4: Promote the use of best practices or conservation measures that are environmentally sound and responsible to protect and preserve the County’s natural resources/parks/recreation.

Strategies:

1. Construction sites should be encouraged to have temporary and permanent erosion control measures.
2. The County, cities and townships should consider planting trees or shrubs that will provide protection from blowing and drifting snow.
3. The County should encourage planting living windbreaks and buffer strips.
4. Care should be taken to minimize the disturbance of fragile ecosystems in the County.
5. Managed/cooperative wastewater treatment systems should be encouraged in the rural areas if there is a high density of housing.
6. Practices that decrease run-off should be encouraged.
7. Encourage the public and private sector to be energy efficient using more renewable energy resources.
8. Encourage planting of vegetation to protect buildings from extreme climatic conditions.
9. Promote best practices or conservation measures that protect the County’s groundwater quality.
10. Land should be protected from erosion with appropriate conservation measures.

COUNTY SERVICES GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

COUNTY SERVICES VISION STATEMENT

High quality county services are available that fulfill the general wants and needs of residents.

GOAL: To provide the residents of the County with affordable, quality services that meet the needs of the people while within the County’s financial limitations.

Objective 1: Maintain and provide basic County infrastructure, essential services and essential facilities to as many of the residents as possible without substantial economic problems to the County.

Strategies:

1. Work with the cities, townships and the Upper Sioux Community in the development of infrastructure in an effort to promote economic growth, cost share whenever possible and protect the environment.

2. Orderly development and growth of infrastructure should occur in anticipated growth corridors.

3. Maintenance versus replacement of infrastructure should be analyzed for cost comparisons.

4. Encourage actively pursuing funding that may be available to upgrade, replace or maintain County infrastructure.

5. The County should identify/define essential services and facilities in a planning process.

6. Encourage highly concentrated development in rural areas to be serviced by public sewer and water systems whenever feasible.

7. Support essential services and facilities useful in promoting or maintaining the economic viability necessary for population growth or maintenance.

8. Conduct capital improvements programming and budgeting to fund public facilities and services and coordinate with applicable units of government and agencies.

9. Encourage cost sharing efforts whenever possible with other jurisdictions in an effort to provide services, facilities and infrastructure in a cost effective manner.

10. Encourage maintenance, conservation, recycling or rehabilitation of services and facilities.

11. Public safety is a high priority in delivering essential services and facilities.

12. Develop and maintain appropriate emergency management procedures and plans and coordinate these procedures and plans with the local units of government in the County, the Upper Sioux Community and appropriate regional, state and federal agencies.

Objective 2: Support innovations in education to preserve and maintain the County’s public education system.

Strategies:

1. Develop public and private partnerships at all levels to work together to preserve and maintain the public education systems in the County.

2. Be proactive legislatively to ensure funding levels and programs are sensitive to delivery of education in rural areas.

3. Encourage diverse educational opportunities and delivery that meet diverse educational needs.
4. Education should be viewed as a lifelong process and should meet the needs of all ages.
5. Support technology and innovation in education to meet local needs and keep the quality of education competitive.
6. Provide quality education as a viable service needed for population retention and growth.
7. Work cooperatively with Minnesota West Community and Technical Colleges in Granite Falls and Canby and Southwest State University in Marshall to encourage educational programs that meet the needs of local residents and local employment opportunities.