Harkness Avenue
Small Area Plan

Description of land use alternatives for the area on both sides of Harkness Avenue north of 80th Street

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The City of Cottage Grove

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Executive Summary

The City of Cottage Grove is well located and has land that is well-suited for the development of businesses that will increase its tax base and bring jobs to the community. Like many cities throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Cottage Grove needs to attract talent to fill the jobs that will be created by these existing and new businesses.

The availability of skilled labor has become an increasingly important locational criterion for businesses. It is well known that the availability of housing that is affordable to workers is a key factor in attracting and retaining talent.

In addition to providing a diversity of housing choices, dependable transit service is also very important to support workers who may live elsewhere and aspire to work in the City. One of the proposed station areas for the proposed Red Rock Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Line is located immediately south of the study area on 80th Street.

The City Council identified the Harkness Avenue areas as a potential location to add some higher density housing choices, to support economic development and boost ridership for the BRT station. The following summarizes background information and identifies and describes land use alternatives for the area.
1.0 BACKGROUND

The Study Area is delineated in red on Figure 1. As this figure shows, the area is located to the north of the commercial development along 80th Street. It is north of the Kohl’s store and other retail, restaurant uses, and the library site. Figure 2 shows the existing development, based on 2010 land use information contained in the Comprehensive Plan. This figure shows that large lot single family residential lots occupy some of the area.

Figure 3 shows the adopted 2030 Land Use Plan. The study area is completely guided for Single Family Detached housing. Any increase in density, or plans for any other type of housing will require a comprehensive plan amendment.

Figure 4 shows the existing zoning for the area. The green toned area is zoned R-2 Estate Residential. The area shown in grey is zoned UR- Urban Reserve. If the City decides to pursue higher density residential uses it will require a rezoning, after the Comprehensive Plan is amended.

In addition to showing the relationship between the subject property and the businesses along 80th Street, Figure 1 also shows Oakwood Park to the south and east of the study area, Hidden Valley Park to the north and open space across Hardwood Avenue S. This proximity to these park and open space amenities present opportunities for expansion, as well as trail connections and protected view corridors.

Figure 5 is an aerial photograph of the study area and its immediate surroundings. It shows the wooded areas that occupy much of the area, as well as some ponds and ravines. The area contains rolling topography and some localized areas of steep slopes. It is reportedly a home to many birds and wildlife. Figure 6 shows the property in the context of the Existing Parks, Open Spaces, and Trails Plan. This figure reinforces the relationship between the study area and surrounding parks, open space, and potential trail connections.
Figure 1: Vicinity Map
BACKGROUND
August 21, 2017

Figure 2: 2010 Land Use
Figure 3: 2030 Future Land Use

[Map showing 2030 Future Land Use with different land use categories represented by various colors and symbols.]
Figure 4: Zoning Map
Figure 5: Site Aerial
Figure 6: Existing Parks, Open Space and Trails
WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN

A small area plan is an opportunity for the City to take a focused look at future land use opportunities within this specific geographic area. In addition to considering the background information identified above, it will include an in-depth analysis of the land, existing development, surrounding land uses and the opportunities and constraints that they present for future development.

A series of alternative development scenarios will be considered and a preferred alternative will be recommended. If one of the alternatives is approved by the City Council, then a Comprehensive Plan amendment will be prepared. Once adopted, this will be the governing Plan for this area and this land use and supporting information will be incorporated into the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update document.

2.1.1 Relationship With the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update Process

Like all the local governments within the seven county Metropolitan Area, Cottage Grove is in the process of preparing its mandatory 2040 Plan Update. This process is scheduled to be completed by the end of December 2018. The decision was made to proceed with the completion of this study before the entire Plan update is completed.

It will be included in the new 2040 Plan Update, but it will likely be adopted prior to the rest of the Plan. One of the reasons for that accelerated schedule is that if this study results in the creation of new housing opportunity sites, that could have a positive effect on businesses considering Cottage Grove for expansion, as well as regional transit funding efforts.

While this small area plan is expected to proceed faster than the Comprehensive Plan, it is still part of the City and should be evaluated based on its consistency with the Overall Vision and Key Themes that have been developed by the Steering Committee and Planning Commission. This is clearly one of those times when individuals could cite different goals to support different recommendations, but this is still an important part of the deliberations that should influence any recommendation.

The Vision, Key Themes and Goals and Policies are attached as an appendix to this report.

2.1.1.1 Development Opportunities and Land Use Alternative

One of the specific objectives of this study is to determine if the area is suitable for the development of higher density housing units. The study area is divided down the middle by Harkness Avenue and most the existing large lots take access off Harkness. It is a steeply rolling street and is not suitable for serving additional traffic without major improvement. That improvement would have to include considerable grading to reduce the steepness of vertical curves and that grading would result in substantial tree loss.
We also expect that different property owners will have different opinions about if they want to sell their land, or when. None of the suggested changes can occur unless these private property owners choose to sell their land. Consequently, we looked for an opportunity to site new multiple units on a new street system that will direct all the traffic on to Hardwood Avenue S. This also provides an opportunity to back the new units up to Harkness and retain trees and plant additional vegetation to screen and buffer the existing homes.

Given the steepness of the topography and the desire to retain the maximum number of trees, the decision was made to assume underground parking and limited surface parking. Careful site planning and grading analysis resulted in the concept plan shown on Figure 7.

This concept shows six buildings for a total of 420 units on a new street. The alignment of the street would support a future extension to the north and east if future development is desired there.

We were also asked to explore how the remainder of the site on the east side of Harkness could be developed in the future. There is a subdivision containing Villas under construction immediately to the north of this area. The concept shown on Figure 8 contemplates additional villas on the north side of the site and clusters of townhouses on the south side.

There are any number of options that could be pursued that would fit this basic street system and development pattern. The concept sketch illustrates an additional 55 villas and 68 townhomes for a combined total of 543 units within the Study Area.

It should be emphasized that this is a concept level drawing, but it was prepared by a very experienced residential site planner, who has successfully designed neighborhoods and saved significant amounts of trees. The routing of the street and the elevations of the buildings are realistic and the concept shows approximately 17% (9.62 acres) of the site area to remain wooded. Again, this assumes underground parking and careful site planning, but the retention of these trees will be an important asset for the developers and residents of this future neighborhood too. An extensive trail network is shown with the dashed yellow line. The concept plan shows approximately 8% of the area in ponding.

**Community Engagement**

An informational meeting was held for the community. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting and they all lived either in or nearby the study area. They were opposed to the idea of developing their neighborhood more intensely and expressed concerns about loss of the natural character of the area and wildlife habitat.

Residents were also notified of the joint work session between the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Planning Commission. They expressed similar concerns at that meeting. It was repeated at both meetings that no change can occur unless property owners choose to sell their property.
Land Use Alternatives

It bears noting that if adopted, this Plan would be guiding the future use of this land to the year 2040. That is a look 23 years in to the future. It doesn't mean the development couldn't happen sooner than that, but the point is it is a long-range planning document.

Figure 9 corresponds directly to the land uses shown on Figures 7 & 8. It designates the entire area west of Harkness as HR - High Density residential and everything east of Harkness as MR Medium Density Residential.

Figure 10 also shows HR - High Density Residential to the west of Harkness, but except for the existing Villa project to the north, it shows the rest of the area east of Harkness as LR - Low Density Residential. This scenario assumes that the City agrees to support the continuation of estate lots in this area through 2040.

Figure 11 shows the multiple units stopping part way up the west side of Harkness and the remainder of the area developing as MR – Medium Density Residential. It shows the continuation of the LR - Low density residential on the remainder of the area east of Harkness.

Obviously, there are other combinations that could be considered as well. The three selected options are really intended to provide examples to facilitate the review process for the Planning Commission and City Council.
HARKNESS AVENUE
SMALL AREA PLAN

WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN
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Figure 7: Phase 1 Concept Plan
HARKNESS AVENUE
SMALL AREA PLAN

WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN
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Figure 8: Phase 1 & 2 Concept Plan
WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN
August 21, 2017

Figure 9: Land Use Alternative 1
HARKNESS AVENUE
SMALL AREA PLAN

WHAT IS A SMALL AREA PLAN
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Figure 11: Land Use Alternative 3
3.0 SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The City Council commissioned this study to determine if this small area could accommodate high density housing and housing choices to support economic development generally and add ridership in an area close to the proposed BRT station. The area is occupied by some large lots and the owners quite understandably consider it to be a special neighborhood, with great natural amenities.

Community planning is not a completely objective process and there are often conflicting viewpoints and objectives. From our independent, outside perspective, the area is developable for a variety of housing types. Despite its steep topography, the concept plans that have been prepared work well with the land. If a future site designer followed the street layout and utilized underground parking, a significant percentage of the wooded areas could be saved.

The City is faced with limited options for higher density housing near services and transit. Guiding this area for High Density and Medium Density, as shown on Figure 9, would take advantage of this opportunity. The existing property owners control whether this will happen or when they are interested in selling their property. Adopting Alternative 1 is a tangible step that the City can take in support of its economic development objectives. For that reason, it is the alternative we recommend.
APPENDIX A – VISION, THEMES & GOALS
Community Vision

**Cottage Grove** is a welcoming city with convenient access to urban opportunities while enjoying recreational amenities, open spaces, high-quality schools, and a close-knit community. We strive to address these key themes in planning for the future:

- **Commercial/Retail Offerings** – work to develop a greater variety of retail, restaurant and entertainment options

- **Business & Jobs** – expand the City’s economy with good jobs, a strong workforce and ample land for business development

- **Transportation Connections** – continue to develop walking, biking and transit as important complements to local and regional roadway access serving the City

- **Housing Options** – strive to provide a diverse mix of housing types that are needed to serve all income levels and stages in the life cycle

- **Great Schools** – work with the school district to support strong schools, to attract and retain families

- **Parks, Trails, & Recreation** – continue to build the City’s parks and trail systems as a source of pride for residents

- **Serving All Generations** – continue to create diverse and vibrant neighborhoods with equal access to services and amenities for all citizens

- **Mississippi River Access** – work to provide public access to the river and appropriate development opportunities on Lower Grey Cloud Island

- **Environmental Stewardship** – continue to protect and enhance the natural environment, including air quality, groundwater resources, stormwater management and energy usage

- **Defining Our Character** – preserve and enhance the variety of neighborhood experiences in the City

Cottage Grove - where pride and prosperity meet.
CHAPTER 2: LAND USE

GOAL 1: THE LAND USE PLAN WILL SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR LAND USE DECISIONS IN COTTAGE GROVE.

POLICY 2.1 All rezoning decisions must conform to the Land Use Plan.

POLICY 2.2 New development must conform to the Staging Plan established in this chapter.

POLICY 2.3 The Land Use Plan will be updated to reflect changing priorities and conditions or as required by the State Metropolitan Land Planning Act.

POLICY 2.4 Land Use designations must be balanced to meet projected growth demand plus some to allow for flexibility.

GOAL 2: TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF COTTAGE GROVE.

POLICY 2.5 Goals for historic preservation will be considered in land use decisions.

POLICY 2.6 Parks, trails and open spaces will be planned to be within walking distance of all residential areas.

POLICY 2.7 Subdivision and zoning standards will emphasize high quality site and architectural design.

POLICY 2.8 Public buildings and properties will be designed, constructed and maintained to be a source of civic pride and to set a standard for private property owners to follow.

POLICY 2.9 Define various character districts within the City – urban, small town, suburban, rural and natural – and strive to preserve and enhance this character in land use decisions.

POLICY 2.10 Plan for enhanced access to the Mississippi River, recognizing its importance in the City’s and the region’s environment.

POLICY 2.11 Plan for the future development of Lower Grey Cloud Island with both public and private uses, respecting its unique place in the City’s geography and natural setting.

GOAL 3: EXISTING RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAINTAINED AND REVITALIZED.

POLICY 2.12 The City and Economic Development Authority will use available resources to meet redevelopment needs. This will include cooperation with the Washington County Community Development
Agency and the Metropolitan Council to achieve redevelopment objectives.

GOAL 4: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY WILL BE SOUGHT IN LAND USE DECISIONS AND INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

POLICY 2.13 The City will encourage energy efficient design in all public and private construction.

POLICY 2.14 The City will take into account impacts on air quality in land use and infrastructure decisions.

POLICY 2.15 The City will follow best practices in land use and infrastructure decisions that impact stormwater runoff.
CHAPTER 3: HOUSING

The health and character of a community may best be measured in its housing stock. Vital cities provide a variety of housing choices and work to ensure that existing housing is well maintained. Cottage Grove is fortunate to have a relatively young housing stock without serious immediate needs for rehabilitation. In the future, however, the city will need to focus more attention on maintaining and upgrading its housing. With about one-third of all houses in the city having been built in the 1960’s and 1970’s, a large share of Cottage Grove’s housing is approaching 40 to 50 years in age, the point at which housing rehabilitation needs become more pronounced. This will require Cottage Grove to dedicate resources to inspecting existing housing and play a larger role in coordinating local and regional funding for home improvement.

While working to maintain existing housing, the city must also ensure that new housing meets the changing needs of the community. This includes providing more options for empty nesters and seniors, while also promoting move-up housing opportunities for younger families and people of all income levels.

GOAL 1: PRESERVE AND IMPROVE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING UNITS.

POLICY 3.1 Continue to enforce housing maintenance and zoning codes.

POLICY 3.2 Add flexibility to the Zoning Code in areas such as building setbacks which allow expansion and reinvestment in existing houses.

POLICY 3.3 Partner with the Washington County Community Development Agency and other agencies that provide housing rehabilitation programs and services.

POLICY 3.4 Encourage the safety of the general public by requiring owners to repair substandard housing or as a last resort, abate and demolish dangerous housing.

POLICY 3.5 Develop housing maintenance program that promotes and requires safe neighborhoods.

GOAL 2: MEET FUTURE NEEDS WITH A VARIETY OF HOUSING PRODUCTS.

POLICY 3.6. Encourage life-cycle housing opportunities in Cottage Grove that allow residents to remain in the community throughout their lives. This includes:

- Maintenance of existing entry level housing.
- Construction of move-up single family housing.
- Construction of various types of senior housing, including senior ownership units, senior rental units, memory care and assisted living units.
• Providing a mix of affordable housing opportunities for all income levels, age groups, and special housing needs.

POLICY 3.7 The 2040 Housing Policy Plan prepared on December 10, 2014 will continue to be used as an implementation tool in accomplishing the City’s Livable Communities Act housing goals.

POLICY 3.8 The City will strive to encourage environmentally sustainable housing development and construction practices.

POLICY 3.9 Provide for housing development that maintains the attractiveness and distinct neighborhood characteristics in the community.

POLICY 3.10 Support the maintenance and rehabilitation of the community’s existing housing stock.

POLICY 3.11 Periodically assess the housing needs of current and prospective residents, including the elderly, disabled, active retirees, and other groups with special housing needs to determine development priorities and to formulate specific strategies and activities to meet those needs and maintain an adequate and quality housing supply.

GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE HOUSING OPTIONS THAT HAVE ACCESS TO AMENITIES, USE LAND EFFICIENTLY, CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES, UTILIZE RESOURCE-EFFICIENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, AND INCORPORATE THE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION.

POLICY 3.12 Support the design of residential neighborhoods with mixed land use at a scale appropriate to residential development and with convenient access to neighborhood shopping or larger commercial areas.

POLICY 3.13 Encourage a mix of residential housing to be near pedestrian, bicycle, and transit or high capacity transportation routes, community facilities and services, and employment to ensure that the benefits of public investment in those facilities are available to as many households as possible.

POLICY 3.14 Provide opportunities for alternative housing types and patterns, such as planned unit developments, mixed-uses, and other techniques that reduce development costs, increase density, and achieve projects that are flexible and responsive to the site and surroundings, including the conservation and enhancement of areas having special, historic, architectural, or cultural value.

POLICY 3.15 Encourage the infilling of housing in urban areas that make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

POLICY 3.16 Encourage the use of resource efficient technologies and materials in housing construction that meet adopted codes and increase the useful life of new and existing housing.
CHAPTER 4: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL 1: TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE DOCUMENTATION, PROMOTION, AND PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY.

POLICY 4.1 The City Historic Preservation Program will be coordinated with the general public, the State Historic Preservation Office, Washington County, other government entities, regional non-profit preservation organizations and neighboring communities.

POLICY 4.2 Historic preservation policies will be implemented through integration with other city activities and projects.

POLICY 4.3 To be effective and focus on preservation of documented significant resources.

GOAL 2: PERIODICALLY REVIEW ALL HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHEOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS, AND INTEGRATE DATA INTO THE PRESERVATION ARCHIVING AND PLANNING PROCESS.

POLICY 4.4 Thorough and systematic background research, including archival research, will precede all field surveys. Whenever possible, identification of heritage resources will be based upon primary, rather than secondary sources of documentary information, or field surveys, or both.

POLICY 4.5 A heritage resources inventory will be maintained by the City and made accessible through the City’s website.

POLICY 4.6 Public access to information on the precise location of archeological sites and Native American traditional cultural properties will be restricted in cases where the City has reason to believe that the integrity of the resource may be threatened by the release of that information.

POLICY 4.7 In evaluating the significance of an historic property, the Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation shall apply the City’s Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks eligibility criteria contained in City Code Title 9, Chapter 9.

POLICY 4.8 The Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation shall issue a Finding of Significance in relation to any heritage resource which it determines eligible for nomination to the City Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks.

GOAL 3: HISTORIC PROPERTIES THAT HAVE BEEN EVALUATED AS SIGNIFICANT BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION ARE NOMINATED TO THE CITY REGISTER OF HISTORIC SITES AND LANDMARKS. DUAL LISTING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN THE CITY REGISTER OF HISTORIC SITES AND LANDMARKS AND THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES IS ENCOURAGED, BUT NOT REQUIRED.
POLICY 4.9 Properties considered for nomination to the City’s Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks must meet the established criteria for evaluation. To qualify, a property must represent a significant facet of local history, and must retain integrity of the physical characteristics necessary to convey its historic significance.

POLICY 4.10 Prior to a City Council resolution designating a heritage resource as an Historic Site or Landmark, the City Historic Preservation Officer shall prepare a Preservation Planning Report that documents supporting evidence for the registration. Whenever appropriate, the Preservation Planning Report will also include site-specific design review and treatment recommendations which may guide decision makers in the future. These recommendations will be based upon existing city policies and procedures required by City ordinances.

GOAL 4: THAT EVERY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE APPLICATION FOR A CITY PERMIT FOR PLANNING, ZONING, DEMOLITION, OR EXTERIOR BUILDING WORK ON A PROPERTY THAT IS ELIGIBLE FOR OR LISTED IN THE CITY REGISTER OF HISTORIC SITES AND LANDMARKS SHALL BE REVIEWED BY THE CITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER FOR DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATE ACTION BY THE CITY.

POLICY 4.11 Building permits for minor work may be reviewed administratively by city staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the City Historic Preservation Officer.

POLICY 4.12 In cases involving historic properties that are eligible for listing in the City Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks, a reasonable effort will be made to preserve and protect or at a minimum document historical, architectural, archeological, and cultural resources through the administrative process.

POLICY 4.13 In cases involving historic properties which are listed in the City Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks, all efforts will be made to preserve and protect historical, architectural, archeological, and cultural resources through a Public Hearing process conducted before the City Council.

GOAL 5: TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE CITY WILL PROACTIVELY ASSIST PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE RESOURCES.

POLICY 4.14 The City shall provide owners of historic properties with information, guidelines, education, and training in the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic buildings, structures, and sites.

POLICY 4.15 The City has adopted the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation as an informative guide for historic preservation program decisions. The standards and guidelines are worded in a flexible manner and are neither technical nor prescriptive.
POLICY 4.16 Like the Secretary of the Interior’s standards, the local guidelines cannot, in and of themselves, be used to make essential decisions about heritage resource management.

POLICY 4.17 The use of modern construction materials and methods is encouraged when the historical design or purpose is effectively conveyed.
CHAPTER 5: PARKS & OPEN SPACE

GOAL 1: ACQUIRE AND PRESERVE NECESSARY PARK AND OPEN SPACE AREAS.

POLICY 5.1 Parkland and open space areas will be acquired through park dedication, purchase, or donation. Private developers will be required to dedicate a portion of their land for public use when a development includes areas planned for park and open space acquisition. Full dedication credit is not given for lands with steep slopes, tree preservation areas, wetlands, bedrock, or other areas that are development constrained.

POLICY 5.2 When feasible, the acquisition of parks, open space, and other recreational facilities should be accomplished at an early date, so that appropriate sites can be obtained to meet long-range public recreational needs before development pressures render the property too expensive.

POLICY 5.3 The City will coordinate its recreation plan with bordering communities, South Washington County School District 833, Washington County, Washington County Watershed District, South Washington Conservation District, the Metropolitan Council, and the State of Minnesota.

POLICY 5.4 Whenever practical, parks shall include conservancy open space in areas that preserve and protect woodlands, wetlands, prairies, natural or cultural resources, and environmentally sensitive areas.

GOAL 2: DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS THAT OFFERS A VARIETY OF FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS TO ALL RESIDENTS OF THE CITY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

POLICY 5.5 The City will prepare a master plan for each component of the park and recreation system based on the criteria established in this comprehensive plan. The park master plans shall be the basis for site acquisition, development, and use, and upon establishment, be reviewed in connection with updates to capital improvement plans and budgets.

POLICY 5.6 All park and open space facilities will be designed to be environmentally friendly. Appropriate measures will be taken during construction to mitigate any negative environmental impact.

POLICY 5.7 Design and maintain park facilities and programs to be as accessible as possible to all ages, backgrounds and lifestyles of Cottage Grove residents, with special consideration for the needs of young people and senior citizens. Best management practices will be utilized during all grading and construction activities.
GOAL 3: CREATE A COORDINATED NETWORK OF TRAILWAY ROUTES THAT ARE DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE A VARIETY OF USERS WHILE PROVIDING FOR INTEGRATED LINKS TO NEIGHBORHOODS, THE COMMUNITY, THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND ASSOCIATED BACKWATERS, THE REGION, AND OTHER SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST.

POLICY 5.8 New trailway installations shall include the identification of future replacement and maintenance programs and appropriate funding sources for these programs.

POLICY 5.9 The trailway system will be separated from roadways whenever feasible.

POLICY 5.10 For safety reasons, the trailway system will incorporate security lighting where needed.

POLICY 5.11 The trailway system will include landscaping, informational signage, directional signage, educational signage, benches, bike racks, garbage receptacles, pet waste disposal bags, and other similar amenities where reasonable or necessary.

POLICY 5.12 The trailway system will include a variety of surfaces, slopes, and linear distance that will accommodate the needs of all segments of the general population. The system will be implemented to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act, except when topography or other environmental constraints prohibit meeting the majority of the standards.

POLICY 5.13 The trailway system within the Mississippi River Critical Area will be limited to links to scenic overlooks, public property, and other points of interest unless the existing railroad right-of-way is abandoned and a linear trailway can be established along the river.

POLICY 5.14 Transportation sidewalks and trails shall be installed by developers along all collector and minor arterial streets, or on roadways that are determined to generate sufficient traffic to warrant concern for either pedestrian or bicycle use within the street right-of-way.

POLICY 5.15 The trailway system will be implemented by creating links between all new and existing developments in the City, through the acquisition of easements, right-of-way dedications, purchase, eminent domain, or donations.

POLICY 5.16 The trailway system will include the establishment of a set of rules of operation that is actively provided to the public and is periodically updated to reflect current usage needs, problems, and trends.

POLICY 5.17 The individual components of the trailway system will be monitored for volumes of usage and safety factors to determine if additional improvements are required.
CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

GOAL 1: PROVIDE A SAFE, HIGH-QUALITY, AND COST EFFECTIVE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

POLICY 6.1 Transportation improvements will be coordinated with the plans of MnDOT, Washington County, Metropolitan Council, and adjoining communities.

POLICY 6.2 The City will support regional improvements to major transportation facilities serving the city when feasible.

POLICY 6.3 New construction techniques, technologies, and environmental sustainability will be considered in planning new transportation facilities.

POLICY 6.4 A network of sidewalks and trails will be constructed in all new developments and redevelopments, where practical and feasible.

POLICY 6.5 Developers will be required to provide the transportation facilities within and adjacent to new subdivisions, including rights-of-way, roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities necessary to support their development.

POLICY 6.6 Existing transportation facilities will be maintained so as to preserve or improve service levels and minimize life-cycle costs. This includes an ongoing pavement management program for city streets.

POLICY 6.7 Where practical and feasible, planning for roadway improvements will include consideration of aesthetic improvements such as landscaping and street lighting.

GOAL 2: EXPAND TRANSIT OPTIONS SERVING COTTAGE GROVE

POLICY 6.8 The City will continue to support and participate in the Red Rock Corridor Commission and its efforts to implement improved transit service in the Red Rock Corridor. This will include participating in all planning activities for potential transit service improvements in Cottage Grove.

POLICY 6.9 The City will seek regional, state or federal funding to expand transit services in and around the city.
CHAPTER 7: WATER RESOURCES

WATER SYSTEM [No Water System Goals in previous Plan, added to Chapter 7: Water Resources]

GOAL 1: PROVIDE THE CITY’S RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES WITH HIGH QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE POTABLE WATER FOR DAILY CONSUMPTION AND FIRE DEMAND.

POLICY 7.1 Meet National Primary (health based) and State Drinking Water Standards.

POLICY 7.2 Provide adequate water pressure for all residents and businesses.

POLICY 7.3 Continue working with adjacent communities to provide a cooperative water system for emergency service.

POLICY 7.4 Operate the water supply system so that it minimizes customer complaints due to National Secondary (aesthetic) Drinking Water Regulations.

POLICY 7.5 Operate the water supply system efficiently so that water is affordable.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE A LOW-MAINTENANCE, COST EFFECTIVE WATER SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE LONG-TERM NEEDS OF THE CITY’S RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

POLICY 7.6 Fund water system operation, maintenance, renewal and replacement through appropriate water usage charges.

POLICY 7.7 Plan for future replacement of older water system facilities and associated costs.

POLICY 7.8 Fund construction of new trunk and lateral water system facilities through area and connection charges.

POLICY 7.9 Fund construction of lateral systems through assessments to the benefited properties.

POLICY 7.10 During major street construction projects, assess the system in the project area and make improvements as needed.

POLICY 7.11 Develop and regularly update the Water System Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

POLICY 7.12 When installing water main adjacent to properties on private wells, water services will be installed to allow for cost effective connection in the future.
GOAL 3: DEVELOP THE CITY’S SOURCE WATER SUPPLY IN A MANNER THAT MINIMIZES DETRIMENTAL IMPACTS ON NATURAL RESOURCES.

POLICY 7.13 Sustain the City’s water supply through conservation by reducing demand, improving efficiency of water use, and reducing loss and waste.

POLICY 7.14 Protect the groundwater source from contamination by implementing a groundwater protection program through the City’s Wellhead Protection Plan.

POLICY 7.15 Provide a sufficient water system to establish and maintain turf areas in accordance with the City’s water conservation policies.

POLICY 7.16 Work towards meeting the MN DNR per capita usage through implementation of the City’s water conservation plan.
SANITARY SEWER

GOAL 1: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CITY’S SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM.

POLICY 7.1 Cottage Grove will construct its system to facilitate operation and maintenance and prevent inflow and infiltration.

POLICY 7.2 Cottage Grove will maintain a detailed inventory of its sanitary sewer system including an up-to-date electronic map including location and specifications of all pipes, structures, and lift stations.

POLICY 7.3 Cottage Grove will clean a portion of its sanitary sewer system every year.

POLICY 7.4 Cottage Grove will regularly televise and clean its sanitary sewer system to determine whether it is performing adequately.

POLICY 7.5 During major street reconstruction projects, Cottage Grove will assess the system within the project area and makes improvements as needed.

POLICY 7.6 Cottage Grove is committed to training those responsible for managing its sanitary sewer system and ensures that staff has the equipment necessary to properly maintain the system.

POLICY 7.7 Cottage Grove will maintain an organizational chart of its sewer maintenance department and ensure that each staff member has a job description.

POLICY 7.8 Cottage Grove will rehabilitate sewers before their deterioration negatively affects residents, businesses, or the Metropolitan Disposal System.

POLICY 7.9 Cottage Grove will maintain a general emergency response plan that pertains to sanitary sewer overflows.

POLICY 7.10 The City will coordinate sanitary sewer utility services and development with surrounding communities, Washington County, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Metropolitan Council.

GOAL 2: TO PROVIDE SANITARY SEWER SERVICE THAT IS ADEQUATE TO MEET CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

POLICY 7.11 The extension of sanitary sewers shall be programmed so as to achieve maximum benefit from the existing utilities.
POLICY 7.12 The sanitary sewer system shall be constructed to accommodate the proposed land use densities and uses identified in the future land use plan.

POLICY 7.13 Cottage Grove will provide a system reserve capacity in all trunk designs so that local occurrences of higher sewage generating uses or higher densities can be accommodated.

POLICY 7.14 When in-fill development or redevelopment occurs, Cottage Grove will evaluate existing sanitary sewer systems as to their capacity.

POLICY 7.15 Cottage Grove develops and regularly updates its sanitary sewer system Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

POLICY 7.16 The City will encourage development densities that maximize the use of the existing sanitary system. Where existing facilities do not have capacities to accommodate the maximum allowable densities, the City reserves the right to restrict development to average density.

POLICY 7.17 For properties in the rural service area, subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) shall be allowed provided such systems conform to all local, state and federal requirements.

POLICY 7.18 When feasible, maintain sanitary sewer depth to provide maximum flexibility related to future development.

POLICY 7.19 When installing new sanitary sewer adjacent to properties on private well and septic, sanitary sewer services will be installed to allow for cost effective connection in the future.

GOAL 3: COTTAGE GROVE PROVIDES A COST EFFECTIVE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM THAT IS EQUITABLY FINANCED.

POLICY 7.20 Cottage Grove finances new sanitary sewer trunks for new development through area and connection charges.

POLICY 7.21 Cottage Grove finances its existing system operation and maintenance through utility billings.

POLICY 7.22 Cottage Grove prepares for replacement of its sanitary sewer system by incorporating replacement costs into its utility billing rates.

POLICY 7.23 The extension of sanitary sewers shall be programmed so as to achieve maximum benefit from the existing utilities. This staging program will result in the most efficient expenditure of public funds while maintaining the City’s growth pattern.
SURFACE WATER

GOAL 1: MANAGE SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES USING APPROACHES THAT MEET OR EXCEED REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS BY FOLLOWING THE CITY’S LOCAL SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, THE LOCAL WATERSHED PLANS, AND PERMITS ADMINISTERED BY THE MPCA, BWSR, USACE, MNDNR, AND ANY OTHER GOVERNING AGENCIES THAT ARE APPLICABLE AND HAVE JURISDICTION AUTHORITY WITHIN THE CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE.

POLICY 7.1 Provide adequate flood protection for residents and structures and protect the integrity of conveyance channels and stormwater detention areas.

POLICY 7.2 Pursue the reduction of Total Phosphorus (TP) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) loading to water bodies by compliance, municipal management activities, and public education.

POLICY 7.3 Pursue the reduction of Total Phosphorus (TP) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS) loading to water bodies by compliance, municipal management activities, and public education.

POLICY 7.4 Classify and effectively manage water bodies in the community to achieve watershed management organization, state, and federal regulatory agency standards.

POLICY 7.5 Classify, manage, and administer wetlands in the community.

POLICY 7.6 Regulate new development and redevelopment activities within the community including erosion control at construction sites.
CHAPTER 8: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (new for 2017, Chapter 8)

GOAL 1: PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN COTTAGE GROVE THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO BUSINESS NEEDS.

POLICY 8.1 Manage growth and land resources to ensure an appropriate mix of development and an adequate land supply to secure new business investments.

POLICY 8.2 Retain the present industrial and commercial base and assist companies with their expansion needs where appropriate.

POLICY 8.3 Attract quality businesses consistent with the City’s target market to areas available for development.

POLICY 8.4 Encourage an adequate supply of sites and buildings to meet the demand for commercial and industrial development.

POLICY 8.5 Maintain an infrastructure system to meet the needs of current businesses and facilitate future growth.

POLICY 8.6 Work to maintain and grow a labor force in the immediate area that supports the growth of business and industry.

POLICY 8.7 Address unique development challenges including the reuse and redevelopment of vacant buildings.

POLICY 8.8 Foster private investment and economic activity without compromising community objectives to maintain and enhance Cottage Grove’s environment.

GOAL 2: PROMOTE BUSINESS ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION IN COTTAGE GROVE.

POLICY 8.9 Identify target markets and prepare and implement a marketing plan to attract businesses that fit this market.

POLICY 8.10 Work with local businesses and industry to ensure needs for expansion and development are adequately met and maintain an open line of communication with the business sector through the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

POLICY 8.11 Continue to actively market Cottage Grove to commercial brokers and retail businesses to expand retail opportunities in the City.

POLICY 8.12 Work cooperatively with local business groups, the school district, and area colleges and universities to provide training for workers with the skills needed for existing and future Cottage Grove businesses.
GOAL 3: PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PUBLIC FINANCING TOOLS.

POLICY 8.13 Periodically review economic development incentive programs such as the City’s Public Finance Policy as well as the county, regional and state incentive programs.

POLICY 8.14 Review new and innovative economic development incentives for application in Cottage Grove.

POLICY 8.15 Pursue outside funding sources to develop or redevelop land for commercial and industrial uses, such as Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Demonstration Account and Tax Base Revitalization Account, Washington County Community Development Agency, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and other applicable grants.

GOAL 4: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL AREAS THAT SERVE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.

POLICY 8.16 Provide neighborhood commercial areas to supply convenience goods and services for residents of Cottage Grove.

POLICY 8.17 Require appropriate land use transitions at the edges of residential neighborhoods through the use of setbacks, screening, buffering and fencing to alleviate conflicts between commercial and residential development.

POLICY 8.18 Require sidewalk connections along major streets leading up to neighborhood commercial centers and direct connections from the public sidewalk to the storefronts.

GOAL 5: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP BUSINESS PARK AREAS THAT PROVIDE JOBS AND SERVE THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMY.

POLICY 8.19 Provide opportunities for new industrial development and expanded employment opportunities to create livable-wage positions in Cottage Grove and the redevelopment of existing industrial uses to serve existing businesses in the community.

POLICY 8.20 Provide attractive, planned environments as means to induce employers to locate within the City.

POLICY 8.21 Enact standards for industrial developments that are in keeping with the need to improve the appearance and character of industrial properties.

POLICY 8.22 Provide Quality public services and infrastructure in all commercial and industrial districts.