

Chapter 3: Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles reflect the expressed needs and desires of the people of Woodbury and will be used to guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. They are the framework for achieving “A Vision for Woodbury - 2020.” Both the vision statement and the guiding principles were developed through a visioning session involving residents, businesses, and landowners in the City of Woodbury. These principles will be used in the future as a tool for guiding growth and development.

Plan for good schools:

Today Woodbury is divided by three school districts. Although the school districts work together as exemplified by development of the Valley Crossing Community School, these boundaries can act as barriers in the community and are often an issue with Woodbury residents. The City must continue to work with the school districts as well as other educational providers to ensure that their long-term growth needs are met. The City must strive to provide families with choices of curriculum, class sizes and new school locations and thus help schools become a more cohesive part of Woodbury life.

Plan for growth:

Woodbury has experienced significant growth over the last decade. This growth will likely continue to occur, but at a slower pace as developable land becomes less available. A strong infrastructure support system must be logically and efficiently planned to support quality growth in areas of future MUSA expansion. Future development should occur in a logical and organized pattern that creates continuity between neighborhoods. New growth should be sensitive to the natural resources and the availability of parks and open spaces. It should result in an appropriate balance of residential, commercial and industrial land uses that maintain a connection to the existing pattern of development and conform to the overall image of Woodbury.

Balance the tax base:

The City of Woodbury should plan for the development of commercial and industrial corridors to equally distribute tax dollars among the community. The land use plan should identify these corridors with consideration toward creating a logical and orderly pattern for development.

Promote safety in the community:

Woodbury should provide a setting that is safe, where people know each other, and a place that has a strong community life and focus. Residents, businesses, schools, police and public safety providers must continue to work together to make Woodbury a safe community to live, work and play in. The City must maintain safe and connected neighborhood environments, as these form the building blocks for the greater community.

Plan for open space:

One strong point in Woodbury’s success is its commitment toward providing open spaces within the community. Through cooperative planning efforts, the City has developed a plan for the creation and

preservation of open space and must continue its implementation so that past visioning and planning efforts may be realized. Plans for future growth must relate to open spaces and tie into the overall plan for the community.

Expand opportunities for employment:

As new growth occurs, the City should encourage a diversity of employment opportunities ranging from moderate wage industrial and retail jobs to professional office jobs. It is important for the community to contain the full spectrum of employment opportunities so that Woodbury may enjoy all services and benefits that result through job diversity.

Enhance the community's image, identity and "sense of place":

Woodbury has experienced a significant change in its image while it transitions from open farm fields to a built environment. Woodbury should look to reveal the positive characteristics of its community that will enhance its image and identity. It must take advantage of its location along two interstate highways and its proximity to regional recreation areas like Afton State Park and the St. Croix and Mississippi River Valleys. It must focus on the development of a gathering point or a city center where neighbors go to socialize, kids learn culture, and residents feel a true sense of place. New development should reflect the positive characteristics that define the community's image and add to its sense of place. Neighborhoods should reflect an identity to enhance their desirability as places to live.

Provide for parks and recreation opportunities:

Parks and trails of all sorts are vital to community activity. They need to be planned, programmed and maintained to provide a variety of recreational opportunities for both children and adults. It is important to plan new parks and trails in areas of new development so that they are linked to the overall park system in the City of Woodbury. The City must devote time and money to the programming, planning and maintenance of existing and future park facilities and recreation programs for they are vital elements to the people of Woodbury.

Plan for an effective transportation system:

As the City grows, so will its demand on the existing roadway system and future roads. The City should encourage alternative forms of transportation such as car-pooling, busing, biking and walking and participating in regional efforts to study potential development of mass transportation solutions. At the same time the City needs to accommodate the demand for safe, well-maintained roadways and improve upon its pedestrian accessibility. Planning for future development needs must consider the local and regional impact on the transportation system and must provide a plan for how the system will be improved to handle added usage.

Increase housing options:

The City of Woodbury should encourage the development of a diversity of housing styles and price ranges so that Woodbury can accommodate a wide variety of homebuyers and renters including people of all ages, races, income levels, and family status. The City must identify areas where

housing growth will occur and plan for these areas to help offset the rising cost of land keeping housing affordable and yet allowing high quality housing to be built.