

COMMUNITY ELEMENTS

New Prague Comprehensive Plan Update



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & AMENITIES

Goal 1: Establish the City's role as a primary driver of all types of development throughout the community.

Strategies:

- Utilize the Future Land Use map to plan for new development of the area.
- Explore development incentives that prioritize infill development/redevelopment and utilize existing public infrastructure.
- Maintain and preserve the unique character of downtown New Prague due to its historical and cultural significance.
- Support public-private partnerships and work proactively with private business and landowners to facilitate investment in the community.

Goal 2: Maintain reliable and quality public services, utilities, and facilities to encourage growth and reinvestment.

Strategies:

- Consider adopting City ordinances and regulations to preserve and protect natural resources during and after development.
- Encourage connectivity among new and existing developments through pedestrian/bicycle facilities and trails.
- Use engagement feedback (Appendix B) to inform capital improvement planning, budgeting, and new project selection.
- Use annual capital improvement planning and budget processes to secure funding for regular facility/infrastructure maintenance, replacement, and expansion.
- Regularly engage with residents and businesses to ensure that services and facilities meet the needs of the community.



TRANSPORTATION

Goal 1: Create a multimodal transportation network that aligns with anticipated land use/development plans, protects natural resources, and balances motorized and non-motorized needs.

Strategies:

- Utilize Complete Street principles when evaluating highway and road improvement projects.
- Consider requiring and/or incentivizing developers to include non-vehicular transportation facilities in their subdivisions and development plans – particularly trail opportunities.
- Reduce the amount and density of cul-de-sacs in development to improve connectivity among vehicular and non-vehicular transportation facilities.
- Consider incentivizing sidewalk construction and maintenance to ensure a well-connected pedestrian network throughout the community.
- Ensure that City plans for vehicular and non-vehicular transportation align with each other for capital improvement planning and budgeting.

Goal 2: Develop a comprehensive and accessible system of pedestrian spaces that support users of all ages and abilities.

Strategies:

- Identify gaps in ADA-compliant access by engaging the community and analyzing current conditions.
- Identify funding opportunities and partnerships to fix instances of ADA non-compliance throughout the community.
- Utilize Safe Routes to School programs to enhance physical pedestrian crossings and educate students on safe traveling strategies.

Complete Streets are roads and adjacent areas designed with a balanced approach that better supports all modes of transportation. This is accomplished by adding more room for pedestrian and bicycle traffic while optimizing over-designed automobile infrastructure. With a Complete Street profile, visitors and residents of different ages and abilities can more safely access community events, shopping areas, and public amenities with the transportation mode that fits their lifestyle. If implemented properly, this redeveloped corridor can serve the dual purpose of creating a vibrant place (placemaking) and providing a more functional transportation network.



PARKS & RECREATION

Goal 1: Develop and support a comprehensive system of safe, aesthetically pleasing, and useful open spaces and trails that serve the entire community.

Strategies:

- Identify potential park locations in areas that have been identified as deficient in the park system as future development occurs.
- Continually plan for trail linkages to important community facilities, recreational assets, and neighborhoods.
- Through the development review process, encourage new development that preserves natural features, contributes new parkland, and extends the Greenway trail system (if applicable).
- Complete an active mobility study to identify funding and implementation strategies for off-street trail network expansion.

Goal 2: Continue partnerships with Le Sueur and Scott Counties, the State of Minnesota, adjacent communities, New Prague Area Schools, regional agencies, and civic organizations to provide comprehensive recreation facilities and programs.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with the school district to share facilities for recreation and sports programs serving all populations within the community.
- Collaborate with local and regional entities to develop an off-road trail connection between the City of New Prague and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park.
- Create directional and/or informative signage about the community's recreational assets for visitors, employers, and potential residents.
- Gather community input and collaborate with local sports organizations to identify recreational amenities that should be expanded or enhanced.



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the natural settings unique to the character of New Prague.

Strategies:

- Continue to require areas of green space in new developments to provide for preservation and aesthetics.
- Consider requiring conservation and/or comparable restoration of natural features during the development process – including preservation or replacement of trees and natural waterways.
- Prioritize infill development within the City over development on adjacent agricultural lands to maintain the rural charm surrounding the community.
- Raise residents' awareness of Minnesota's Right to Farm law to mediate potential conflicts between residential and agricultural uses.

Goal 2: Manage, enhance, and preserve unique land and water resources by avoiding development on high value wetlands and floodplains.

Strategies:

- Consider designating a new zoning district for conservation or incorporating wetlands into New Prague's park system.
- Support healthy watersheds by minimizing polluted runoff, utilizing natural wastewater management techniques, and engage in biodiversity conservation efforts.
- Preserve the natural character of the watershed through green space acquisition, floodplain regulations, and drainage corridor and buffer protection.
- Support and encourage sustainable agricultural practices to protect watershed and water resource health.

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HOUSING

Goal 1: Attract and retain residents including young professionals, families, and retirees by supporting Life Cycle Housing throughout the community.

Strategies:

- The City of New Prague should consider facilitating residential development of large and/or prohibitively expensive lots through buying and subdividing processes.
- Explore a variety of housing opportunities (not just single-family homes) to provide more affordable housing for a range of households of differing needs and incomes.
- Consider allowing the conversion of larger, centrally-located homes into two- or three-unit dwellings, as well as the installation of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on smaller lots adjacent to downtown.
- Utilize development and land use plans to guide development and placement of a variety of housing units – include single-family detached homes, townhomes, duplexes, multifamily apartment buildings, and mixed-use buildings, and other forms of housing sought out by homebuyers and renters.
- Encourage and promote the development of independent adult/senior housing within the community as needed.
- Regularly review zoning ordinances, subdivision codes, and City processes to ensure they are not a primary barrier to development.

Goal 2: Complement New Prague's housing policies with economic development goals, growing businesses and population in tandem.

Strategies:

- Locate new housing in areas with adequate access to jobs, transportation, and other daily-need amenities.
- Reduce barriers and provide targeted development incentives to attract developers for new housing or mixed-use projects.
- Encourage high-density development in areas in and near downtown, and near other commercial areas to provide a diverse and balanced housing type in the City.
- Advocate for funding opportunities that are otherwise not accessible to fringe communities like New Prague (not currently eligible for most Metropolitan Council and rural funding).

Lifecycle Housing is an approach to housing that aims to identify and accommodate the unique needs of every life stage, from college students/young adults to established families with children to empty-nesters/retirees. This approach advocates for the inclusion of numerous housing types, sizes, and price points in every neighborhood.

ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Goal 1: Support strategic economic growth within the MN 19, MN 21, and TH 13 corridors and downtown area, to provide additional retailers, businesses, and services for the community.

Strategies:

- Ensure that there is an appropriate mix of retail, restaurant, and service businesses to attract residents and regional customers to New Prague.
- Continue to engage with the community to understand what types of businesses residents want and need.
- Use capital improvement planning, development requirements, and development agreements to ensure that infrastructure is adequate immediately and in the future.
- Consider creating a corridor plan or concept with future development options for MN 19, MN 21, and/or TH 13.
- Utilize this Comprehensive Plan document to promote continued commercial development along the corridor that is in character with the recommendations.

Goal 2: Develop strategies to promote sustainable and holistic economic development.

Strategies:

- Identify and address the complex network of needs that could deter employees from settling in New Prague, such as a lack of housing diversity, childcare, long-term job opportunities, entertainment, etc.
- Support the needs of the growing population by actively assisting new business opportunities via programs, space, and infrastructure.
- Maintain an adequate supply of land for commercial and industrial development, either through annexation or redevelopment.
- Collaborate with MNDOT; Le Sueur, Scott, and Rice Counties; and local organizations and developers to execute development priorities as outlined in City plans.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Goal 1: Maintain mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with neighboring counties and municipalities, as well as state and federal agencies.

Strategies:

- Coordinate with Le Sueur and Scott Counties, the State of Minnesota, and surrounding communities to review proposed changes to land use, transportation system, and utilities that will have an impact on New Prague.
- Involve Rice County in any conversations concerning annexation of lands east of New Prague.
- Support New Prague Area Schools in their growth, community engagement activities, and site improvement initiatives.
- Partner with the school district on land use, utility, and transportation improvement planning.

Goal 2: Enhance the efficiency and quality of public services by collaborating with other governmental entities in the region.

Strategies:

- Coordinate with adjoining jurisdictions during outdoor recreation planning to seek complementary recreation investments where service areas overlap. Work to avoid duplication of unique amenities.
- Enforce, abide by, and maintain existing intergovernmental cooperative agreement with neighboring jurisdictions to provide predictability for property owners, avoid municipal boundary disputes, and plan for efficient provision of public services.

RESILIENCE

Goal 1: Encourage sustainable practices throughout the community, including development and infrastructure practices.

Strategies:

- Encourage energy efficiency in buildings, lighting, and infrastructure.
- Support development practices that allow for the capture and use of clean energy.
- Utilize native and/or disease-resistant plants to maintain aesthetic and natural qualities of the community.
- Prioritize and protect vital natural resources from overconsumption and destruction.
- Support the addition of charging stations for electric vehicles at public entities as well as with new commercial development.

Goal 2: Encourage residents to build relationships within and across neighborhoods.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with local leaders to improve residents' connections to City departments, local nonprofit organizations, and each other.
- Encourage interaction among residents through community-wide events and small-scale gatherings such as neighborhood block parties.
- Explore ways of supporting and promoting community gardens, farmers markets and other similar community-based food projects.

