

### Phase One - Industrial Land Use

The expansion of the existing industrial park on the southern edge of city limits is defined as the phase one growth area for industrial land uses. The continued growth and expansion of the industrial park and proximity to US Highway 71 make this the prime area for future industrial expansion.

### Phase One - Mixed-Use Land Use

All mixed-use future land use designations are included in phase one. Both areas are relatively small sites, and are located on major corridors. The mixed-use designation on Minnesota 29 is served well by its proximity to the high school and M-State, as well as the adjacent residential land uses. The second area, on the east side of Wadena, is currently located on vacant platted land adjacent to a platted residential subdivision.

### Phase One - Medium Density Residential Land Use

There are three areas of medium density residential in phase one. The first area is located in the southeast portion of the city in a subdivision that has only been partially developed. This area is prime for development in phase one as it is platted and zoned and a majority of the streets and utilities are installed. The remaining two areas are currently undeveloped and still in agricultural production. These areas are good locations because both are located near job centers.

### Phase One - Low Density Residential Land Use

Phase one includes four major areas of future low density residential land use. Infill of vacant parcels within the city's existing residential neighborhoods is also included in the phase. Two areas of low density residential land uses are located to the west of US Highway 71. Both areas are currently subdivided for single-family homes, though construction costs and housing demands have limited the development within the subdivisions, thus making these locations ideal for low density residential land use. The remaining two areas are located to the west of city limits, serving as an expansion of the existing residential neighborhoods.

## LAND USE PLAN RELATIONSHIP TO ZONING

As noted earlier, the purpose of a land use plan is to guide the community leaders as decisions are made during the zoning, subdivision, and development process. Zoning decisions should be consistent with the intent of the land use plan. An agricultural district should be adopted into the zoning ordinance and applied to undeveloped areas, preventing urban sprawl. When appropriate, a zone change can be requested and considered by the city. **Table 6-2** lists each of the land use

categories described within this comprehensive plan and shows how they relate to the permitted and conditional uses of Wadena’s zoning districts. This table should be used for guidance only, and the zoning ordinance should be referred to for specific information regarding permitted, prohibited, and conditional permitted uses. It should be noted that some of the land use categories are not permitted by right in any of Wadena’s zoning districts. This occurs for two reasons; either the land use is located outside of city limits and Wadena or Otter Tail Counties’ zoning ordinance applies, or it is a new use within the City of Wadena. Recommendations to accommodate the allowed uses for all land use categories are made within the Implementation Plan (Chapter 7).

**Table 6-2: Land Uses Allowed by Zoning District**

Land Use Category	R-1	R-2	C-B	C-1	I-1	I-2	F	PID
Commercial	-	-	P	P	-	-	O	C
Industrial	-	-	-	-	P	P	O	P
Public and Institutional	C	P	-	-	-	-	O	-
Mixed Use: Commercial and Residential	-	C	-	-	-	-	O	-
Medium Density Residential	C	P	-	-	-	-	O	-
Low Density Residential	P	P	-	-	-	-	O	-
Conservation Design District	P	P	-	-	-	-	O	-
Rural Residential	-	-	-	-	-	-	O	-
Park and Open Space	P	P	-	-	-	-	O	-
Agricultural	P	P	-	-	-	-	O	-

O – Flood Plain District may apply as an overlay in any land use category if the land is identified in the flood plain according FEMA’s Flood Insurance Rate Map.

P – Indicates that most of the uses designated by that land use category are permitted uses under that zoning district.

C – Indicates that a majority of the uses designated with that land use category are conditionally permitted uses under that zoning district.

## ZONING ORDINANCE

A city’s zoning ordinance provides regulations that define the development and character of a city. Maintaining an up-to-date zoning ordinance can assist in healthy growth within the City of Wadena. To allow for the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, the city should proactively review the existing zoning

ordinance for areas in need of modernization. Initial recommendations for zoning ordinance updates are included as part of the Implementation Plan.

## 6.3 TRANSPORTATION

### THE TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE RELATIONSHIP

The Wadena Transportation Plan addresses the highway and street system, traffic operations, and future transportation project in detail. For the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, acknowledging the relationship between land use and transportation is important. For this reason, ensuring on-going consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan is also important. Neither document should be prepared independently from the other. Transportation decisions should consider existing land uses and the future land use plan. Land use decisions should be respectful of existing and planned transportation facilities and avoid placement of residents and businesses in situations that will either reduce their quality of life or result in unsafe ingress and egress.

Although the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan are two separate documents, amendments to elements within either should be reflected and carried over from one plan to another.

The City of Wadena should facilitate the future updates to US Highway 10 and the surrounding properties by preventing additional intersections and driveways along the highway. This allows current commercial and industrial businesses between US Highway 10 and the railroad tracks to transition into a greenway. Furthermore, the City of Wadena should begin to address access management issues throughout the city, by updating the subdivision regulations as recommended in the Wadena Transportation Plan. When reviewing proposed development, careful consideration should be given to proposed and existing intersections and access spacing.

## 6.4 BUILDING BEAUTY INTO THE CITY

There are many elements of a city's fabric that contribute to its attractiveness, and these elements have an impact on the perception of the community to residents, potential homeowners and business owners, and visitors. The results of the Visual Preference Survey and public involvement efforts uncovered general agreement regarding physical features of Wadena that could use improvements. A few simple elements can be incorporated into a city's fabric to build beauty into the community. These elements and practices are a shared responsibility of the public and private sectors, although they are monitored and enforced by the city.

## BOULEVARD TREES

Boulevard trees are a valued characteristic of many neighborhoods throughout the region. Tree lined streets provide a neighborhood with a calm sense of beauty; shade for homes, yards, and buildings; separate the vehicle and pedestrian realm; and provide a sense of place. Many of Wadena's tree lined streets were uprooted or damaged by the 2010 tornado. Efforts to replace of the missing or damaged trees were initiated, but were only moderately successful due to continued watering needs and overall maintenance. The effort to replace trees and expansion of boulevard trees into growth areas can be improved by the creation or enhancement of a boulevard tree planting program. The program should focus on three forms of development within the city:

- New Development – Prior to building occupancy or within a certain amount of time from the issuance of a building permit, planting boulevard trees at certain spacing should be required, which should be dependent on the functional classification of the street
- Infill Planting Program – A city developed initiative to plant boulevard trees in areas where trees were never planted.
- Replacement Program – In areas where trees are missing, city-led efforts would replace them. Wadena has already initiated elements of this type of program to replace dead or damaged trees resulting from the tornado.

Wadena has adopted some elements into the city code which lay out the foundation for a well-functioning boulevard tree program. The first step beyond what has already been accomplished is to develop and adopt an ordinance with requirements for boulevard trees in new developments. The planting of boulevard trees prior to the issuance of a certification of occupancy should be required, or as an alternative, a requirement illustrating the planting of boulevard trees on a site plan during the building permit process (requiring plants to be installed within a certain time frame). These regulations should set the minimum spacing between boulevard plantings, determined by the functional classification of the street. Wadena's current Boulevard Tree Policy defines the tree varieties appropriate for planting. These mandates should also be adopted into the zoning and subdivision ordinance. The program should also include replacement requirements if a tree does not survive, which serves as an incentive for the property owner to maintain and water the boulevard trees. Once the requirements are adopted into the ordinance, consistent enforcement of these regulations will ensure the program's success.

The city is responsible for providing information about the benefit of boulevard trees in established areas without consistent boulevard tree plantings. This information, aimed at property owners along these streets, includes information about the city's boulevard tree program, the benefit of boulevard trees, and can offer assistance with organized planting days. One or two neighborhoods may agree to become a demonstration project, and once the program is up and running, neighborhood groups can continue with the effort. At that point it will be the city's responsibility to have the utilities marked and stake the location of the proposed trees. The city can also facilitate the selection of tree choices and could offer tree discounts or develop funding for a reimbursement program.

Similar to the current efforts to replace damaged trees by the tornado, the city shall remove and replace trees that are dead or damaged; at that point, the property owner is responsible for watering and maintenance of the newly planted trees.

### COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

Immediate perceptions of Wadena are made by travelers as they enter the community along US Highway 10 and 71. The appearance of these gateway areas was a highlighted concern in the Visual Preference Survey. The development of a gateway overlay can regulate the overall appearance of properties along the major entrances to the community. A overlay zoning district can be established, similar to the existing flood plain overlay district, which would apply to properties adjacent to these major corridors. This overlay district can regulate the following elements beyond the base zoning district requirements:

- Building Materials
- Parking and Driveway Surface Material and Location
- Building and Parking Lot Setbacks
- Parking Lot Buffers
- Outdoor Storage
- Dumpster and Trash Compactors
- Loading and Delivery Areas
- Lighting
- Signs

### LANDSCAPING

According to Wadena's zoning ordinance, principle and accessory uses of the C-1, I-1, and I-2 districts within 50 feet of a residential use are required to provide screening according to Wadena's zoning ordinance. The code also requires the landscaping of ground areas not dedicated to drives, buildings, or walks with grass, shrubs, trees, or other ornamental landscape materials. These requirements lay the foundation for improved general appearance, though these elements can be built

upon and enhanced for a greater result. The following elements can be considered for incorporation into the zoning ordinance for the appropriate districts.

- **Minimum number of planting units** – Ground areas are currently required to be landscaped according to the zoning ordinance. However, there are no requirements for the number of plantings, nor are there requirements for plantings other than grass. A number of required planting units can be established as a requirement based upon the square footage of the lot and zoning district. A value should be placed on different sizes of plantings, ranging from large trees, ornamental trees, shrubs, and perennials. As part of the requirements, front and side yards can be the required location of a certain percentage of the planting units. These requirements are recommended for the R-2 district, and more intense districts.
- **Residential Protection Buffers** – Intense zoning districts (commercial and industrial) located within 50 feet of a less intense district (i.e., single and multiple family residential) are required by Wadena’s zoning ordinance to construct a fence to provide screening between the districts. This requirement can be enhanced to require a buffer of a minimum width with varying options of screening types, including landscaping. Industrial sites can also be required to include a buffer when adjacent to commercial uses. In addition to the buffer and screening requirements, additional restrictions, such as noise, light, and building height, can become a part of the residential protection buffer.
- **Landscaping replacement requirement** – The zoning ordinance should require that the landscaping be replaced if 10 percent or more of the planting units do not survive within a prescribed time frame.
- **Recommended Vegetation Guide** – The city should develop a guide that suggests appropriate vegetation for the region. This assistance provides developers and property owners an organized resource when developing a site plan.

On-site landscaping requirements provide to the overall feel and appearance of a community, which cannot be over-emphasized. The public will notice the well maintained sites, which will become a source of compliments. Landscaping ultimately contributes to the overall desirability of the property for customers and building tenants.

## 6.5 THE PUBLIC REALM

The public realm includes areas such as parks, public properties, highway right of way, and public street right of way. These spaces provide opportunities for beautification, which in turn serve as incentives for beautification and upkeep of adjacent private properties. Elements of the public realm also provide spaces for community groups to gather and neighbors to meet. These spaces contribute to the community's sense of place.

### PARKS

There are currently no requirements for the dedication or development of new parks in conjunction with new subdivisions. Parks serve as an important element in the public realm, providing a community gathering space, a space for recreation, and a defining feature for a neighborhood. The City of Wadena should adopt a policy requiring the dedication of 10 percent of residential acreage to the Wadena Parks and Recreation Department for the creation of new parks and open spaces. The location of parkland dedication within a development should be discussed with the developer during the subdivision process.

As the city grows, the park system should be expanded. The completion of a park master plan would address existing park facilities and identify deficiencies and additional needs. The master plan should include future parks with a variety of purposes. The surrounding regional park and trail system should also be considered when deciding the designation of future parks. A community's demographics should be considered in this programming, ensuring the development of parks for a variety of residents. A brief summary of park designations are provided below:

- **Neighborhood Parks** – These parks are often small in size (from less than one acre to five acres). They typically serve an area that is viewed as a neighborhood, which often involves a population within ½ mile of the park, with no major physical barriers between the residences and the park. Ideally, everyone in the neighborhood should be able to walk to a neighborhood park within 10 minutes. Sometimes the grounds of an elementary school serve as a neighborhood park. These parks should be centrally located within the area they serve, and should be visible from residential streets to provide security (i.e., “eyes on the park”). Facilities in a neighborhood park typically include a tot lot, benches, and some play areas at a minimum. Providing a variety of park facilities within sectors of the city will increase the circulation of residents throughout the city. Parking lots are typically not provided for a neighborhood park. Existing parks in this designation include:
  - Burlington Northern Park

- Sunnybrook Park
  - Travelers Park
- **Community Park** – These parks are typically larger than neighborhood parks, ranging in size from 5-15 acres, and are often adjacent to a school. This type of park typically serves an area that is up to two miles from the park. Community parks typically include sports facilities, such as soccer fields, hockey rinks, basketball and tennis courts, but are minimally booked by organized sports groups, and therefore, available for use by residents of the surrounding area. Typically, fields are not lit, and use of fields, sports equipment, and playgrounds is from dawn till dusk to minimize lighting and noise impacts to surrounding residents. Recommended base level facilities in a community park include playground equipment, picnic tables and shelters, restrooms and a potable water source, open space for play, bicycle racks and small scale sports activities. Existing community park facilities include:
    - Northwest Park
    - Softball Complex
    - Tapley Park
  - **Regional Parks** - These parks are typically larger (15 acres or more) and have special significance of some kind, and therefore attract people beyond city boundaries. Regional parks can be either passive in nature, reflecting a focus on ecological or natural features, or they can be active with features and events that attract large crowds of people from the region. Base level features for a regional park would typically be the same for a community park. Specialized features are oriented toward the unique nature of each park and can include:
    - Natural features such as a waterfront, forest, etc.
    - Interconnected bike, hiking, or skilling trail facilities
    - Camping facilities
    - Natural or historical interpretive features
    - Sports facilities, as in a sports complex or sports facility that requires specialized equipment
    - Recreational attractions such as an amusement park, outdoor art attraction, sledding hill, ice skating rink or pond and warming house, cross-country ski rails and ski rental equipment, or community center.

Existing regional park facilities include:

- Blacks Grove Park

- Sunnybrook Park and Campground
- Wadena County Fair
- Wadena Community Center
- Whitetail Run Golf Course

### **PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

The public right of way includes streets, sidewalks, and boulevards which provide access to private properties throughout the city. Sidewalks are an important element of the right of way, as they allow for the movement of pedestrians and bicyclists. To ensure the safe movement of all forms of transportation, the city should require the construction of sidewalks along all city streets as part of their subdivision regulations. Additionally, review of the location and width of the proposed sidewalks should be included during the approval of a building permit.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

Facilities (i.e., city hall, fire and police stations, library) and services (i.e., community programs, utilities, emergency response) are essential to the overall function of a city. Updating and maintaining these elements is critical to survival of any community. The following methods should be utilized to provide for the healthy growth of the city:

- **Orderly extension of city infrastructure** – This allows for the expansion of infrastructure in a cost effective manner and requires the review of the system’s capacity to ensure the provision of quality services. Cost sharing programs between the city, developers and property owners should be developed to allocate cost of newly developed infrastructure/facilities in an equitable manner (i.e., deferrals). The construction of street and utilities should be required prior to the occupancy of new structures.
- **Monitor the condition and service level of city infrastructure** – To continue to provide a high level of infrastructure services, procedures should be developed to annually review the condition and capacity of the water and sewer system. The potential extension of services into new growth areas should be included as part of this review. During the completion of the annual review, system upgrades should be identified and prioritized.
- **Assess police and fire response times** – A short response time is extremely important for the health and safety of Wadena citizens. The quality of response time should be monitored, along with addressing procedures, road maintenance, and street system extensions.
- **Provide adequate city facilities that facilitate city tasks and community programs** – City buildings provide spaces for staff and elected officials to carry out daily tasks necessary for the function of a city. The city should develop and maintain a database of existing city facilities. This database should

include the location, condition, capacity, and date of construction. Continued review of this information will assist in the prioritization of necessary updates within the City.

- **Ensure the development of quality buildings within the city** – The City of Wadena should encourage quality private development by setting a precedent with the development of city facilities. Adoption of the International Building Code, development of programs that assist in the retrofitting or construction of energy efficient building systems, and the use of energy efficient technologies in public buildings are all methods for promoting excellent development.

## 6.6 HOUSING

Providing a variety of housing options and affordability is a key factor for any city. Potential residents make the decision upon which community they would like to reside in, which is based upon the availability of housing that fits their desired style and price range. Staying aware of housing trends as new developments are proposed within the community to assist in meeting trend demands is important. Additionally, promoting the development of housing types for all incomes is encouraged. In the past, programs and funding sources have helped encourage housing for different housing types.

### DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROPERTY AESTHETICS

When encouraging the development of high quality residential development in the permitted districts, a city should utilize public involvement efforts, establish draft design guidelines for new development, and inquire a database that records and monitors the existing housing stock. Afterward, the design guidelines should be incorporated into ordinance language that will be later adopted, and the database should be maintained.

A city should also protect existing housing stock from becoming problem properties. To effectively combat problem properties, a task force should be assembled for the purpose of cataloging and addressing problem properties. Afterward, the task force should carry out inspections and enforce regulations. Furthermore, the City of Wadena should consider the creation of programs to assist in funding and management of home improvement loans for residents in neighborhoods that could benefit from revitalization. The use of the programs should be monitored and then evaluated for effectiveness and project success. Also, the city should consider creating a property maintenance code, particularly aimed at residential properties. Later, the city should also consider the implementation of a rental housing inspection program.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is typically defined as housing that costs no more than 30 percent of a household's gross income. This can be a difficult threshold to achieve for low and very low income households. Many of these people include senior citizens who are dependent on social security and people who are working low wage service jobs. Continued efforts by the Wadena Housing and Redevelopment Authority will be needed to ensure the amount of available affordable housing meets the demand.

Affordability is also an issue for households with moderate income levels. It is important to provide housing at a price point of these households. In some communities this is an overlooked group in the housing market. This specific demographic does not qualify for low income subsidized housing or housing vouchers, yet it is difficult for them to find affordable market-rate housing. Several approaches can be taken to address this sector of the market:

- **New Owner-Occupied Housing Stock** – Attached housing developments, such as twin homes and townhomes, have characteristics that make them more affordable housing options than single family detached dwellings. Their shared walls, narrow lots, and smaller yard sizes typically make them more affordable. If builders direct their efforts specifically towards keeping the price point on these units within reach of low to moderate income households they are a good housing option. Single family detached housing can also be designed to be affordable for low to moderate income households. They can be placed on narrow lots for the purpose of lowering the street and utility costs. Furthermore, these houses can be placed on lots of smaller than average square footage to reduce land costs. Efficient use of space and open floor plans can meet the needs of a family with fewer square feet.

Existing vacant lots situated in an established neighborhood can also provide an opportunity for affordable housing. Many of these lots have remained vacant following the 2010 tornado, which can lead to more affordable land prices. Building on these lots is also more affordable, as the utilities have already been constructed to service the previous structure on the site.

- **Existing Housing Stock** – For this sector of the housing market, older single family homes or duplexes are often most affordable for purchase. Many homes built in the 1940s through 1960s were of a modest size and were very functional. Their smaller size and their age have a tendency to make them some of the most affordable starter homes.

- **New Rental Housing Stock** – Rental housing in the form of apartments and townhomes is an important element of the affordable housing market, and overall, tends to be more affordable than buying a home. The key to successfully meeting the needs of the market will be to keep the various needs of the market in mind when deterring the type of rental housing to construct.
- **Existing Rental Housing Stock** – There are a variety of existing rental housing options available in Wadena. Many of these apartments were developed with residents over the age of 55 in mind. Maintenance of these facilities for the demographic they are serving is key to the continued success of the units.

### NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

Housing, economics, environment, and public health are all elements of the design of a neighborhood. The various combinations of these elements create the overall sense of place in the neighborhood. To achieve a diversity of ages and incomes in a neighborhood, a mix of housing styles and affordability should be included. At the land use planning stage, low and medium density land uses are identified on a broad scale. This is just the beginning of ensuring a mix of housing styles and levels of affordability in every neighborhood. Achieving this mix at the outset when zoning and subdivision design are taking place is important. Diverse neighborhoods offer built-in support systems with broader ranges of ages and household sizes. They help to ensure a community-wide blending of income levels. Family members with very different housing needs can live within walking distance from each other.

This mix can be achieved through subdivision designs that have seamless transitions from larger, more expensive single family lots, to moderate and small sized lots, twin home lots, townhome areas, and apartments or condominiums. Not every subdivision will have all of these components, but the details of every neighborhood plan should try to achieve some level of this diversity.

The existing character of neighborhoods should be considered with infill and redevelopment to ensure compatibility. Efforts can be made to preserve these characteristics by defining neighborhoods with similar housing designs within city limits. The design features of each neighborhood should then be cataloged for reference when reviewing proposals for infill and redevelopment. Overlay districts can be developed for each neighborhood, as appropriate, that define design and dimensional standards for future development. The development of overlay districts is typically initiated by residents within a specific neighborhood who are concerned with the preservation of the neighborhood character. The residents will work with city staff in the creation of the district that should include public involvement. After

this process is complete, the city should consider the adoption of the neighborhood overlay district into the zoning ordinance.

In order for a city to preserve the existing characters of its neighborhood, the city should catalog design features of and define the existing neighborhoods within its limits. Later, the city should develop overlay criteria for each neighborhood based upon the common design features, but also utilizing public involvement.

## 6.7 ENVIRONMENT

Many of the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are directed at measures that, while not directly aimed at a specific environmental issue, help create a sustainable community. There are a number of practices, programs, and projects that the city can put in place that will result in a reduced environmental impact for the city.

### PROTECT FRAGILE AREAS

Protecting environmentally sensitive areas within the City of Wadena preserves views and open spaces, while reducing the cost of development in these areas. The wooded, agricultural, and park and open space land use designations provide one form of protection for sensitive areas. Any land use amendment requests in these areas should undergo special consideration for purposes of evaluating the environmental impacts of development on the site and the surrounding area. The conservation design district designation also strives towards protecting these fragile areas as discussed previously in this chapter. The city should consider the adoption of a conservation design district into the zoning ordinance to preserve environmentally sensitive areas, such as wooded and agricultural land.

### STORM WATER DRAINAGE AND DETENTION

Storm water runoff contributes to the contamination of streams and wetlands due to the sediment and chemicals that are washed away with the runoff. City codes can require new subdivision and building projects to have storm drainage and detention systems that are designed and built to prevent downstream changes in the speed of runoff, the quantity of runoff, and the cleanliness of runoff before it is allowed back into surrounding streams. Drainage and detention improvements need to become a cost of development, and should be required either through a master storm water plan for a large development or on individual sites.

### REUSE AND RECYCLE

Wadena County contracts with Waste Management to provide transportation and marketing of recyclable products. The recycling center is located at 10542 170<sup>th</sup> Street in Wadena, and is open on weekdays from 8:30 to 4:00pm, and 9:00am to noon on Saturdays. The county accepts aerosol cans, aluminum cans, computer

paper, corrugated cardboard, glass bottles and jars, laundry bottles, magazines, paper, plastic bottles, tin cans, and junk mail. Taking the recycling program one step further would require further city involvement and would expand the number of drop off locations throughout the city. These sites can be planned in new developments. In existing areas of the city, sites must be leased or acquired, and must be situated in a way that does not generate complaints about litter and odor.

## REDUCE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

Reducing the amount that the average person or household drives each day is another way to make the community more environmentally friendly. Through street and neighborhood design principles, the city can work towards reducing the vehicular miles traveled, and in doing so, help to create a more physically active and healthier community.

- **Safe Routes to School** – The Wadena Comprehensive Plan provides enhancements to the transportation system surrounding the elementary and middle schools in Wadena. These improvements increase the safety for students and other pedestrians while commuting to and from the schools, making it easier for students to walk and bike to school rather than being dropped off.
- **Traffic Calming** – The calming of traffic on neighborhood streets can be achieved by the planting of boulevard trees and by making local streets and neighborhood collector streets no wider than necessary. These conditions encourage walking and bicycling.
- **Compact Urban Form** – Wadena has done a good job though the years of developing in a compact urban form. As the city grows, avoiding sprawling forms of development within and adjacent to city limits is important. This includes excessively large residential lots and groups of individual sites that string out along a corridor. Compact urban developments result in fewer vehicle miles traveled by residents of the community.
- **Mixed Land Use** – Mixed land uses can be achieved through the purposeful application of the city's R-2 or C-B districts with a conditional use permit, or through the adoption of a new mixed use zoning district. The purpose of blending land uses is to place compatible commercial land uses in close proximity to residential land uses to create a vibrant walkable neighborhood. Typically a high level of residential density is applied to add to the feasibility of the commercial uses, and the arrangement of the land uses is such that the commercial uses are visible and accessible to other surrounding neighborhoods, as well as the development in which they are located. Open

space is another desirable land use blended into the mixture of residential and commercial uses.

Mixed land use doesn't need to be approached within a single development. It can also be approached through the application of the city's zoning district and subdivision design in a way that ensures close proximity to open space and land use patterns that provide for convenience and walkability.

## 6.8 ECONOMY

The economy of an area is very complex. During the comprehensive planning process, a community can look ahead and determine what it should be doing now and in the next few years to prepare itself for the long-term future. Many elements of the plan that have been discussed in this chapter have economic ramifications. Some cost money to implement in the near future, but are aimed at reducing the cost of city services while increasing property values in the long term. Others are aimed at not settling for short term solutions that do nothing to enhance the city's physical environment or tax base in the long term. Economically speaking, the following measures can be taken to benefit the city and its residents:

- **Compact forms of development** – This reduces the per capita costs of city services for street maintenance, snow plowing, and street lighting.
- **Avoid leapfrog development** – By concentrating new growth in locations contiguous to existing development, the city does not incur the expense of lengthy extension of city water, sewer infrastructure, and larger police and fire response areas.
- **Annex growth areas** – This gives the city the ability to ensure orderly, compact development which is less expensive to provide with city services.
- **Promote the development of a diversified economy** – Work closely with Wadena Development Authority to promote local business, entrepreneurship, and home occupations, and assess gaps in goods and services within the city. This can be accomplished by the completion of a needs analysis for the City of Wadena and the surrounding area.
- **Maintain a skilled and educated work force** – Continue the relationship with educational institutions and industries regarding the required skill sets of the current job market.

- **Encourage the infill development of vacant properties** - The city should identify housing units and parcels with redevelopment opportunities. These units should be monitored and marketed to encourage redevelopment, and also, financing tools should be used to help facilitate redevelopment.
- **Support local business and entrepreneurship** – Assist residents in attaining funding sources for business start-ups. Develop community events such as farmer’s markets, craft shows, and art festivals which sell locally made goods.

## 6.9 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The historic and cultural resources within the community play an important role in Wadena’s identity. The preservation of existing sites, and the discovery of new sites, will assist in maintaining this identity. This can be done by developing a process for identifying and cataloging sites in collaboration with the Wadena County Historical Society. The first step of the process requires the creation of criteria to deem a site as a historic or cultural resource. Existing sites should then be entered into a database, logging various attributes of the sites. This database should be maintained on a regular basis to provide the most up to date information. Finally, procedures and criteria should be developed and adopted for the redevelopment of the recorded historic sites and structures. These criteria should be aimed at preserving the historically and culturally significant features of the site. Furthermore, in order to aid the redevelopment of historical buildings, potential financial assistance programs should be evaluated.