

Oronoco Township

Land Use Plan

COUNTY OF OLMSTED

STATE OF MINNESOTA

REVISION 1.0

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 28, 2002

Introduction & Background

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In October, 1999, the Oronoco Township supervisors adopted Ordinance #97-2, establishing the Oronoco Planning Advisory Committee (OPAC). This is an advisory commission to the Township Board.

The Oronoco Planning Advisory Committee has prepared this Oronoco Township Land Use Plan (The Plan) as an aid for guiding the Township's zoning and land use decisions. The Plan is based upon specific land features and historic uses among other considerations, including available demographic and survey information. The Plan is intended to generally represent the interests and desires of the residents of Oronoco Township and will be periodically reviewed and revised.

The implementation of this Land Use Plan and its associated ordinances is meant to be done in partnership with Olmsted County and surrounding municipalities.

Oronoco Township

The following members were serving on their respective boards during the development of this plan.

Oronoco Township Board of Supervisors

- John Koenigs
- Richard Lyke
- Neil Stolp

Oronoco Planning Advisory Commission

- Kathy Adams Hayward
- Charlie Brannon
- Kevin Collins
- Georgie Decker
- Jay Hodge
- Bill Markham
- Steve Roth

Purpose of the Land Use Plan

By State law every Township Zoning Ordinance must be at least as restrictive as the County's. Therefore, any land use prohibited by the County Land Use Plan remains prohibited in Oronoco Township. The primary purpose of this Plan is to identify those areas where the long-term best interests of Oronoco Township are served by considering additional restrictions for certain uses.

A major purpose of this Land Use Plan is to provide goals and policies specific to Oronoco Township that will guide any future growth and development within Oronoco Township and provide a basis for land use decisions. The Plan will also balance the inevitable pressures for land development with the fiscal, environmental, land resource, and public infrastructure impacts which result from development.

The Plan provides the public, and particularly Oronoco Township land owners, with guidance so that they can anticipate the positions which Oronoco Township officials will take in relation to land use issues.

The plan also provides the framework from which the Oronoco Township Zoning code will be created and interpreted

Land use planning is a dynamic process and while this plan represents carefully considered goals for the long-term benefit of Oronoco Township, The Plan anticipates periodic reviews and occasional updates will be required.

Goals

The following are the overall goals of the Oronoco Township Land Use Plan:

1. Identify the following areas within the township:
 - B. Agricultural protection area
 - C. Suburban development area
 - D. Urban development area
 - E. Commercial development area
 - F. Water resource area
 - G. Development sensitive area

And establish land use policies consistent with each of these zones.

1. Manage environmental issues to preserve the physical beauty of Oronoco Township;
2. Identify, protect, and preserve historical and archeological sites in the township;

Policies and Action Steps

This section of the document will identify the policies and action steps recommended to achieve the goals described in the previous section.

Goal:

- I. Subdivide the township into one of the following areas:
- B. Agricultural protection area
- C. Suburban development area
- D. Urban development area
- E. Commercial development area
- F. Water resource area
- G. Development sensitive area

based on a subjective assessment of the following considerations:

- Existing soil maps, NRCS photos, topographical maps, and other planning resources;
- Expert environmental input;
- Historical land uses;
- Township supervisors;
- Area residents;

The current subdivision of the township into these areas is shown in Appendix A.

Policies

The following policies have been developed for each of these six areas:

Agricultural Protection Area

- A. Discourage or prevent the splitting of prime agricultural land into small parcels with accompanying home sites, which hinder many agricultural uses. In particular, the present Olmsted County A-2 Zoning allows one quarter of one quarter section into 5/35 acre splits and often results in very large lot suburban housing and hobby farms. This is not a desirable land use for prime agricultural land in Oronoco Township;
- B. Establish an Oronoco Township feedlot ordinance, with regard to state regulations. Any proposal for establishing or expanding feedlots should take into account the impact on ground water, air quality, and odor nuisance, noise, and the proximity to residential populations;
- C. Discourage roadways on prime agricultural land where reasonable alternatives for access exist;

Suburban Development Area

- A. Designate transition areas which would allow for orderly expansion of current developed urban neighborhoods, and which would encourage further suburban development between current city boundaries and existing suburban developments;
- B. Assure that approved suburban development includes sufficient transportation infrastructure so as not to create risk of significant financial burden on the Township, including facets such as grading, ditches, culverts, and black-topping.;

- C. Encourage new utility technologies as they become available, such as shared water and shared septic;
- D. Encourage suburban development plans that are mindful of environmental concerns;
- E. All suburban development will be required to include cooperatively owned Open Space areas that preserves and enhances the integrity of the developed and surrounding lands;

Urban Development Area

- A. Identify undeveloped parcels in close proximity to the City of Rochester and the City of Oronoco which are likely to be subject to development pressures, and designate them transition zones. To the extent development is permitted, concentrate such development in those transition zones;
- B. Encourage surrounding municipalities to concentrate urban development within the present municipal boundaries;
- C. Encourage technologies which enable urban developments to use city water and sewer hookups if and when they become available;
- D. Encourage urban development on lands adjacent to existing urban developments;

Commercial Development Area

- A. Any request for commercial development will be considered in its effect on the Township as a whole, and the principal goal of preserving the rural character of most Township land;
- B. Recognize and accommodate existing land uses currently permitted within the Township and be open to new districts, including but not limited to, Rural Service Districts, Agricultural/Commercial Districts, Historical Districts, and Special Districts;
- C. Exercise control over types of commercial operations undertaken in Oronoco Township, for the benefit of adjacent land owners and the community as a whole, particularly as commercial uses involve noise, odor, and environmental concerns;
- D. Require setbacks and/or bufferyards to separate commercial operations from neighboring properties classified as urban and suburban development areas;

Water Resource Area

- A. Preserve existing water resources through thoughtful development practices (e.g., shared wells, septic).
- B. Promote plans that clearly account for existing water resource protection mechanisms (e.g., the Shoreland District of the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance).
- C. Encourage cluster and other development approaches that employ appropriate runoff prevention techniques such as rain gardens.
- D. Open areas within development should emphasize uses that are compatible with wildlife and in keeping with preservation of water resources. Examples include: trail systems, park areas, wildlife observation stations, etc.
- E. Prohibit incompatible commercial land uses such as:
 - a. Quarries
 - b. Feedlots
 - c. Dumps
 - d. Racetracks
 - e. Manure Storage Areas

- f. Salvage yards
- g. Hazardous waste storage areas
- h. Recycling facilities

Development sensitive area

A. Manage areas with pre-existing conditions (e.g., former dump sites) that may require special consideration for future development decisions.

Goal:

- 2. Manage environmental issues to preserve the physical beauty of Oronoco Township.

Policies:

- A. Encourage or require setbacks between tilled land and waterways, creeks, and rivers;
 - B. Discourage any further public or private roads in the township, and discourage developments which would require driveways on prime agricultural land or wetlands where reasonable alternatives for driveway placements exist;
 - C. In any development project, encourage the preservations of open space and park lands;
 - D. Adopt policies that help to preserve and/or minimize impact to areas such as:
 - Natural Drainage areas;
 - Wildlife corridors;
 - Lake Zumbro / Zumbro River;
 - Land Trusts;
 - Natural preserves (prairie grasses, etc.)
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Goal:

- 3. Identify, protect and preserve historical and archeological sites in the township

Policies:

- A. Complete a thorough survey of sites in the Township which may deserve historical designation or protection;
- B. When historical sites are part of potential development areas, incorporate them into the development plan so that they are protected and preserved for the future;
- C. Limit uses of historical sites which destroy or degrade the site.

Execution / Administration

1. Maintain an economic base sufficient to support the present essential services provided to Township residents.
 - a. Any development plan or request for zoning variance or conditional use permit should be evaluated for both its short-term and long-term impact on the Township's financial resources. This should include not just obvious demands like roadways and utilities, but also the economic effect of the changed land use and its impact on neighboring properties and their land uses;
 - b. Recognize that other services such as schools and emergency services are affected by development and need long-term stability and predictability;

2. Assure that any development projects undertaken within the Township follow, and are consistent with, The Plan and with due consideration to their effect on the larger community.
 - a. Land development efforts which are undertaken without regard to their effect on the larger community are sometimes later recognized as inefficient, expensive and wasteful of community and natural resources. Any land use decision made by Oronoco Township must consider the long-term effect on the entire Township;
 - b. Assist with informing and educating present and future residents and landowners in Oronoco Township of the Land Use Plan, and the community-wide benefits afforded by any restraints on land use imposed by the Plan;

3. Coordinate planning and zoning issues with Olmsted County, the City of Rochester, the City of Oronoco, and all townships in the county.
 - a. Maintain a professional relationship with the joint Olmsted County/City of Rochester Planning Department, and find areas of cooperation and common purpose.

4. The Oronoco Planning Advisory Commission should locate an organization to act as Zoning Administrator for Oronoco Township and propose this administrator to the Oronoco Township Board for approval.

Appendix A
Area Map for Oronoco Township

