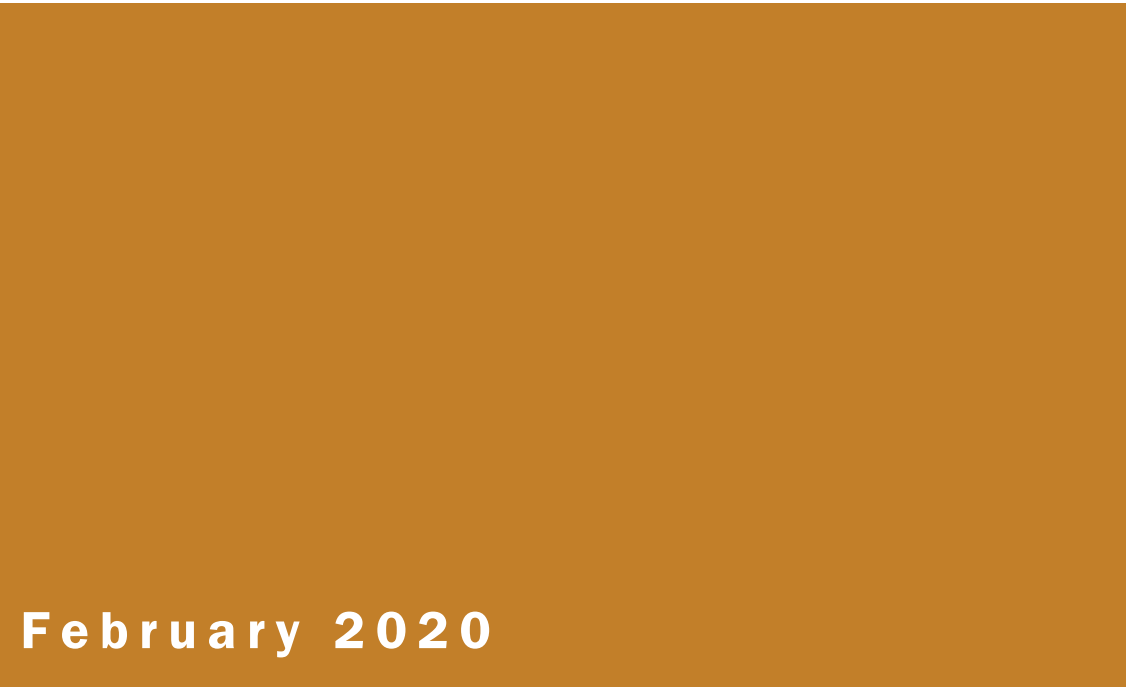




GROW Grand Rapids

2040 Comprehensive Plan
Cultivating a Vibrant Future



February 2020



Councilor Blake introduced the following resolution and moved for its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 20-19

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, the legislature of the State of Minnesota has, by enacting M.S.A. Sections 462.351-462.364, established the policy and procedure under which the City of Grand Rapids may create a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 462.353 of the act, a municipality may carry on comprehensive municipal planning activities for guiding the future development and improvement of the municipality and may prepare, adopt and amend a comprehensive municipal plan and implement such plan by ordinance and other official actions in accordance with the provisions of the act; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Grand Rapids determined there was a need to create a new/updated City Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Rapids has conducted a comprehensive planning process, which encouraged and provided opportunity for all of its citizens to voice their desires for the future of the community; and

WHEREAS, the input provided by the community served to establish a common vision for the future, which, in turn, guided the development of specific recommendations within the new/updated Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Grand Rapids has, through the participation of its citizens, community leaders, local organizations, and public officials, completed its preparation of a new/updated Comprehensive Plan, dated February 24, 2020; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 462.355, the City Planning Commission, on February 6, 2020, held a public hearing to consider their recommendation to the City Council regarding adoption of the new/updated Comprehensive Plan, and all those wishing to speak to the issue were heard; and


WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Grand Rapids, on February 24, 2020, also held a public hearing as an additional opportunity for public comment, and all those wishing to speak on the issue were heard; and

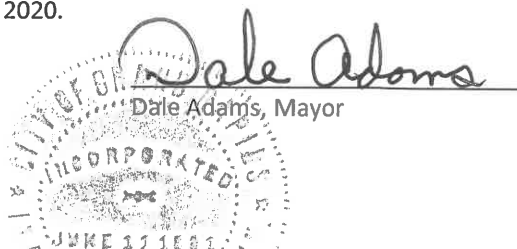
WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the recommendation forwarded by the Planning Commission and wishes to adopt the new/updated Comprehensive Plan as the community-based vision for future development within the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA: that the City of Grand Rapids Comprehensive Plan, dated February 24, 2020, is adopted as the master plan for the physical development of the community.

Adopted by the Council this 24th, day of February 2020.

ATTEST:


Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk



Councilor Toven seconded the foregoing resolution and the following voted in favor thereof; Connelly, Toven, Blake, Christy; and the following voted against same; None, whereby the resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Rick Blake
City Council

Kelly Chandler
Health and Human Services

Dale Christy
City Council

Mark Gothard
Planning Commission

Scott Juidici
Business-Manufacturing

Jean MacDonell
Health Care

Tara Makinen
Resident At Large

Isaac Meyer
Housing

Steve Welliver
Builder/Developer

Ashley Brubaker
Business-Downtown Retail/Services

Megan Christianson
Tourism/Hospitality

Pat Goggin
Education

Betsy Johnson
Resident At Large

Brynden Lenius
Resident At Large

Molly MacGregor
Planning Commission

Charlotte McDermott
Business-Non-Downtown Retail/Service

Therese Nett
Resident At Large

With Assistance From

Rob Mattei
Director of Community Development

Dale Anderson
Director of Parks & Recreation

Travis Cole
Fire Chief

Scott Johnson
Chief of Police

Will Richter
Director of Library Services

Eric Trast
Community Development Specialist

Bob Cahill
Director of Golf

Julie Kennedy
PUC General Manager

Tom Pagel
City Administrator

Matt Wegwerth, PE
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Consultant Team

SRF Consulting Group



Economic Development Services



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Introduction

A Comprehensive Plan is the official long-range policy document for the City, guiding zoning and land use decisions, investments in public infrastructure, economic development programs, natural resources use and protection, housing policy and other issues. The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that provides the legal foundation for the city’s ordinances, programs, and capital investment plans. The plan portrays the community’s desired future and serves as decision-making tool for elected and appointed officials regarding development, conservation, and public investment within the City.

What is a Comprehensive Plan

Minnesota State Statutes §462.355 provide cities within the State of Minnesota with the authority to prepare, adopt and amend a Comprehensive Plan. At its foundation, the Comprehensive Plan provides a legal basis for elected and appointed officials to make zoning and land use decisions upon. For example, as the City takes action on a zone change request, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed to confirm that the change is consistent with the future land use plan, policies, goals and guidance. Additionally, a Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity for the City to define a future vision of all its system that can be accompanied by goals, policies and implementation strategies.

Comprehensive Plans identify the community’s desired future looking out twenty years, or in this case, to the Grand Rapids of 2040. The desired future is described with a future land use map and supporting written goals and objectives. The desired future is put into action through implementation strategies described throughout the plan.

While the plan defines a future for the next twenty years, it should be referenced and reviewed on a regular basis as decisions are made. Additionally, the plan may be amended as needed to reflect current conditions and changing trends. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must follow the same public hearing process required for the adoption of the plan.

Planning Process

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan replaces the plan adopted in 2011. The previous plan was used to provide a foundation for the 2040 update, maintaining many of the plan elements. The previous plan was updated to reflect updated community input and changes in demographic and economic change. The process used for updating the plan is outlined in the following section.

Update Process

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan was updated using a five step process aimed at answering five questions. The process utilized community input, stakeholder involvement, Steering Committee guidance, and technical analysis throughout each step of the process to set a vision for the future of Grand Rapids. The five-step process is visualized below and identifies the following questions that were asked throughout the process:

- **Where are we now?** This was the first question asked throughout the planning process and provided the planning team with a baseline understanding for the existing conditions of the community. The data and information collected during the first step of the process created a foundation for each of the plan elements.
- **Where can we go?** This question set the stage for the second step of the planning process and aimed at understanding the community’s desires for the future. Engagement efforts were used to gather issues and opportunities for Grand Rapids over the next twenty years.

- **Where do we want to go?** After gathering input on the issues and opportunities for the future of Grand Rapids, the planning team and Steering Committee set out to define the desired vision and goal updates for the community. The results of this third step of the process are highlighted through the vision, values and guiding principles in Chapter 3 and the goals and objectives references throughout each plan element.
- **How do we get there?** The final step of the plan development process provided an opportunity to test the future goals for each of the plan elements. This resulted in the guidance, recommendations and implementation strategies outlined in Chapters 4 through 9.



Steering Committee

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was the guiding force behind the development of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Steering Committee members were tasked to represent a broad range of stakeholder groups. Officially appointed by the City Council, the Steering Committee worked closely with city staff and the consultant team in the development of the plan. This group provided review and guidance throughout all steps of the process and forwarded a recommendation for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission and City Council.

The Steering Committee met six times throughout the planning process and helped to review existing conditions, draft goals, and the overall plan. They were also tasked with serving as advocates of the planning process, sharing information and engagement opportunities with the public.

Public Involvement

Public involvement was a key component of the planning process. Public input was the key driver in the development of the future vision and corresponding guiding principles, goals, and objectives. Engagement was used throughout the four steps of the plan’s development and included a community survey, pop-up event, economic development stakeholder interviews, and a public open house. The results of these engagement events are highlighted in [Appendix B](#). The final public involvement efforts included the public hearings held for the adoption of the plan with the Planning Commission and City Council.



Past Plans

In addition to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, other planning efforts were used to inform the Comprehensive Plan development. These documents provided technical background information that supplemented the existing conditions and an understanding for the future potential of various plan elements. These plans should continue to be referenced in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan. These plans included the Housing Market Study, Complete Street Study, Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan, Grand Rapids Market Area Profile, Grand Rapids Park, Plan, IRA Civic Center Study, Riverfront Framework Plan, Retail Trade Analysis Report, and Arts and Culture Roadmap.

Overview of Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan includes nine chapters that highlight the vision, policies, and recommendations for the next twenty years. A description of each chapter is outlined below:

Chapter 2 – Community Profile provides an overview of the historic and existing demographic information that informed the planning process. This information is intended to provide a snapshot of the community the time the plan was drafted.

Chapter 3 – Values and Guiding Principles presents the community’s vision for the future. The chapter highlights the 2040 Vision, Community Values and Guiding Principles that were used to guide the development of the plan and introduces the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies that are highlighted throughout Chapters 4 through 9.

Chapter 4 – Land Use illustrates the future development scenario for Grand Rapids. This chapter highlights existing uses and zoning districts, outlines future development guidance, and suggests considerations for the future.

Chapter 5 – Housing reviews the existing condition of the housing stock and considerations for the future. This chapter explores the issues and opportunities of the existing housing stock and recommendations for future investments.

Chapter 6 – Economic Development highlights the existing economic characteristics within Grand Rapids and the greater region. The chapter also identifies tools and actions that can be implemented by the City.

Chapter 7 – Natural Environment discusses the natural resources throughout the City of Grand Rapids. Preservation efforts for these components are highlighted throughout.

Chapter 8 – Transportation reviews the mobility options available throughout Grand Rapids. The existing vehicular, rail, transit, biking and walking modes are highlighted, along with considerations for the future of the systems.

Chapter 9 – Public Infrastructure and Services highlights the various infrastructure components and services that are provided by the City of Grand Rapids. These elements are key to the quality of life for residents and must be considered throughout development decision making.