

**CITY OF SHAFER  
MINNESOTA**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
PLANNING  
REPORT**

**COMPREHENSIVE  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING REPORT  
COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**OF**

**THE CITY OF SHAFER  
CHISAGO COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**PREPARED BY:**

**SHAFER PLANNING COMMISSION**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

### **CITY OFFICIALS**

DANIEL VOGEL, MAYOR  
JEFF BEHNKE, COUNCIL  
TERRY SMITH, COUNCIL

PATTY MATTSON, COUNCIL  
BRAD SWENSON, COUNCIL  
JOAN CIESLER, CLERK  
TIM BUDIG, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

RICK ANDERSON  
SCOTT VANRUDEN

TERRY SMITH, COUNCIL  
JEFF BEHNKE, COUNCIL

### **ATTORNEY**

ALLIEGRO LAW OFFICE, LLC

### **ENGINEER**

MSA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC.

# **CITY OF SHAFER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Shafer is a growing city in a rural setting. Our unique location as the east central Minnesota “link” to Wisconsin affords viable options to sustain continued growth.

We encourage a philosophy that continually evaluates existing services and strives to make us a leader by anticipating and solving municipal problems. We envision a community that will help to play an aggressive role for economic development, employment and housing opportunities for the region. Our goal is to actively participate in public and public/private endeavors that result in an expanded tax base. We strive to develop a sense of self reliance for the city and the surrounding region and cooperation with surrounding communities.

## **PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to identify problems, opportunities, issues, and needs, and organize public policy to deal with them in a manner that makes the best and most appropriate use of the City’s resources.

The comprehensive plan is no more or less than a statement of public policy, based on a common vision of where the City wants to go and how it intends to get there. In Shafer’s case, there is need for residential, commercial and industrial development. The City wants to plan for growth in a logical and efficient manner that reflects the character of the City and desires of the City’s residents.

The Comprehensive Development Plan of Shafer is intended to serve several purposes. It should serve: (1.) as a source of general information regarding the overall development of the community, (2.) as a program of correction, (3.) as an estimate for future growth prospects, (4.) as an indicator of goals and policies, (5.) as a device for coordination, (6.) as a guide for change in growth, and (7.) as a means of stimulating public interest and participation in local community development.

The Plan is broad in scope and it will serve as a basis for discussion concerning the physical growth and, indirectly, the economic and social development of the city of Shafer. Continuous review and revision of the Plan, and its elements, will be necessary from time to time in order to keep the Plan valid due to changing conditions and technology.

The Plan for Shafer is to look into the future as to how the community could develop over the next few decades given certain assumptions and sets of conditions. In order to achieve the desired community goals set forth in the Plan, the citizens of Shafer must be aware and take an active interest in community affairs.

The Plan also serves to notify those persons active in the City's physical development as to what the future decisions of the Planning commission and the City Council will be in terms of subdivision regulations, zoning, and industrial site locations in relation to public facilities and improvements and similar considerations.

## **ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN**

So that the established goals and objectives may be obtained, the Plan must be comprehensive, long-range and general for the development of the City and any area outside the current boundaries up to agreed upon future boundaries between Center City, Taylors Falls and Shafer which, in the judgment of the Planning Commission and City Council, bears a reasonable relationship to the planning and development of the City.

The Plan is comprehensive, both geographically and functionally. Often it disregards physical boundaries and elements to include all related land and water areas necessary to encompass a logical planning area. (i.e., land use, circulation, community facilities, their various components and their interrelationship with one another.)

There are important reasons why planning must be long-range. Most development decisions made today have long range implications. There is a need for requiring adherence to some sort of long-range plan since patterns of occupancy take long periods of time to develop and their results remain for much longer periods.

If the Plan is to be comprehensive and long-range, it must be general in nature. The necessary degree of flexibility can be incorporated through the establishment of sound policies with review and adjustment procedures to meet changing conditions in future years.

The Plan as presented herein, relates to three basic elements: land use, transportation and community facilities. Land use deals with the manner in which the various parcels can best be utilized by any number of types, taking into account

the various aspects of natural terrain and drainage features present, locational setting, type, design and scale of development and the relationship to transportation and community facilities. The transportation segment forms the circulatory framework for land use patterns to develop. It is concerned principally with formulation of the best possible methods of efficiently moving people and goods in and about the community. Community facility planning involves outlining the various public and semi-public facilities needed within an area relative to population size, scale of development, future trends and present capacities. (i.e. parks, playgrounds, public buildings, police and fire protection and other similar elements.)

## **SURVEY AND ANALYSIS**

This area is an inventory and analysis relative to past community developments, existing conditions and problems, and potential growth trends and future planning considerations.

### **Summary of Important Findings and Conclusions.**

The City of Shafer (incorporated in 1922) is situated along both sides of U.S. Trunk Highway 8 approximately 5 miles west of Taylors Falls and 3 miles east of Center City, the county seat. Originally, the town site developed because of the influence of the now abandoned railroad branch line that extended east-west through the community about a half mile north of Highway 8. As highway travel became the main source of transportation the branch line was abandoned. This abandoned railroad bed is now a portion of the Swedish Immigrant Bike Trail that will eventually link the cities of Center City to the West and Taylors Falls to the east.

County Road 21, the principal thoroughfare, is the only continuous north-south route through the community. U.S. Highway 8 and County Road 37 serve as the east-west arteries. Most of the development that has occurred has been directly influenced by the presence of these routes.

The population of Shafer has remained fairly small; ranging from a low of 106 in 1940 to 147 in 1960. Currently with the addition of another mobile home park and additional single family dwellings the population as of 2015 reached a high of 1047.

The City occupies some 814 acres of which 58% is developed with urban uses including all opened streets and highway right-of-ways and also land zoned for industrial use. A large parcel of underdeveloped land has just been annexed and is ready for development.

Residential use accounts for the most land acreage outside of streets, yet there are a few vacant lots and parcels appearing within platted and non-platted areas. Aside from three older multiple units, all homes are single family dwellings of relatively good condition. There are two mobile home parks located within the City limits as well. It is anticipated that even larger scale developments will be attracted to the community on the basis of municipal facilities now available and such developments could easily add considerably to the community's population and economic growth potential.

Commercial and retail trade uses in Shafer appear to be quite limited at the time of the survey due mainly to surrounding competitive areas and the relative ease of access to the Twin Cities area, some 45 miles to the southwest. It would be expected that the convenience level type outlets will increase in importance and number, based on anticipated new residential surges in the form of new construction. As people within the surrounding areas move further out we should be able to expect overflow thus making it feasible for more retail businesses to move to Shafer. Shafer has an industrial park which is the home of Shafer Contracting and Lakes Area Manufacturing, with more space available. With the increase in population in the area we hope that we can attract additional industry into the City.

Shafer has a City hall, maintenance garage and a fire station. Shafer is currently lacking in semi-public facilities such as churches, cemeteries and private clubs. Shafer currently has six park areas in which improvements are made yearly. There are multiple play areas, a ball field, an Olympic size ice rink, a bike path with connectors planned throughout the city, and snowmobile trails.

The need exists, or will exist in the foreseeable future, to expand the current city limits. Areas, outside the city, located in the surrounding townships, are a potential source of expansion to meet the expected increasing need for city services. The need for expansion may be met through annexation or any other legal means.

**EXISTING LAND USE 2009  
CITY OF SHAFER**

Land use type	Approx. area in acres	% of total
Residential R-1A	286.9	35
Residential R-1B	48.3	6
Mobile Home	19.3	2
Central Business District	5.6	1
Agricultural	271.8	34
Industrial	52.9	7
Commercial	109.5	14
Parks	16.1	2
Total city area (approx.)	810.5	100

\* Acreage area computed from map measurements

**DEVELOPMENT GOALS, POLICIES AND STANDARDS**

Physical planning, as carried out under the comprehensive plan, must be accompanied by a system of local goals and policies that reflect the community's preferences and priorities as they pertain to the degree, manner, quality, and extent of development within the community. While it is a difficult task to fully establish the final goals and policy system, it is not impossible. Certain basic principles can be set forth which are general in nature and will stand the test of time.

Any functioning plan of development also needs to be based on the aspirations and desires of the citizens who reside in the community in order to achieve proper balance, for it rests in the end with the residents to either support the plan or reject it. The following paragraphs describe the fundamental aspects of goals, policies, and standards and how they relate to each other and apply to the needs of the City.

Goals are broad, community objectives that will ultimately result in achieving the kind of living, working and recreational environment deemed desirable for the present and future years.

Policies are the means by which goals are achieved. They involve legislative action in the form of codes and ordinances to implement the goals and also actions

taken by private and semi-private agencies that work in harmony with the public goals.

Standards are currently acceptable rules or criteria that evaluate the adequacy and quality of development such as street layout and design, recreation requirements, the degree of services offered, and various other policies. Standards have evolved from past experiences, from trial and error and from changes that have taken place in technology as our standard of living moves forward.

### **GENERAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

1. The primary goal will be to further develop and maintain the City of Shafer as an attractive and desirable community in which to live, work, and play.
2. Promote growth and development with the highest degree and quality of services as practical and feasible by encouraging public improvements, health conditions, safety features and aesthetic controls that can and will be applied uniformly throughout the community.
3. Develop a sound and broad tax base for the community and school district and minimize excessive tax burdens on individual property owners.
4. Work cooperatively with other units of government in order to achieve common objectives thus minimizing duplication or omission of efforts and excessive public expense.
5. Protect the natural resource base of the municipality and fringe areas and not add to problems of pollution, flooding, erosion or similar detrimental actions that would jeopardize the amenities and availability of needed resources.

### **GENERAL COMMUNITY POLICIES**

1. Maintain an active community planning commission of public citizens and city council representative(s) to advise the City Council relative to community welfare and development.
2. It will be the function of the planning commission to review, develop, maintain and work with the City Council in implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Recommendation from the planning commission shall be brought to the City Council to implement or amend the plan.

3. All future planning decisions will be made within the framework of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. This plan shall be accompanied by such regulations and ordinances that will insure its proper implementation.
4. Changes in the Plan may occur from time to time if it is deemed necessary to amend it in response to new conditions, consistent with the purpose and intent of the plan or to keep up with changing times.
5. Future land developments will be considered in terms of long-range effects upon the total community rather than on any immediate benefits that may be involved.
6. The maintenance of all public and private properties will be a source of general and civic pride.
7. Maximize the economic opportunities afforded by major highways for promoting further non-residential growth and development. Create the environmental conditions conducive to new industrial and business growth as well as residential growth.
8. Consider extension of the City limits to include logical and sufficient land areas that should be regulated and serviced. Parts of the more “rural” segments of the community can remain relatively undeveloped through various taxing methods and other procedures until such time as needed.
9. Establish standards to encourage high quality new construction.
10. Development of a municipal capital improvement program and budget to establish priorities of public expenditures.
11. Retain a growth pattern that is essentially compact and can be readily serviced with municipal utilities with the least cost impact on the City as a whole.
12. Exchange information with surrounding municipalities, such as the 2-mile radius future boundaries agreement, and with county governments, school boards and other agencies so as to be informed of the changes and policies affecting future developments of the community.
13. Enforce regulatory ordinances pertaining to private wells, septic systems, storm water controls, reclamation of wetlands, burning or dumping refuse, and

other issues of importance.

14. Enforce by reference a building code which sets appropriate standards for all new construction.

15. Control the location of new land uses so as to avoid incompatibility between areas and achieve confidence of property owners.

### **RESIDENTIAL POLICIES**

1. All types of housing will be permitted including apartments and townhouses provided each is properly designed and relates well with the surrounding uses and is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Home occupations may be allowed provided such activities are conducted in a manner which does not detract from the residential atmosphere of the neighborhood. This policy is in recognition of the fact that certain businesses can be operated better out of a home rather than strictly within the business district. However, such businesses will not be permitted special concessions of non-residential nature such as advertising signs, parking lots, etc.

3. Careful review of all new residential proposals and additions to insure that the best possible results pertaining to land use, compatibility and aesthetic value are achieved.

### **COMMERCIAL POLICIES**

1. Develop and strengthen the retail business and services area of the community into a primary area, providing highway accessibility and customer convenience from all parts of the trade area.

2. Encourage cooperative private planning efforts on the part of “downtown” business owners in order to develop a unified and attractive business district that can be successfully maintained to serve the needs of a limited but expandable market area.

3. As in housing developments, excellence of design and structural quality will be encouraged in commercial developments.

## **INDUSTRIAL POLICIES**

1. Encourage new industrial developments within the industrial zone as to create new job opportunities and diversify the tax base.
2. Set aside sufficient and suitable land area for most types of industrial uses which can be provided with all of the necessary municipal services and utilities and assurances that all aspects of community living and working conditions will play a major role in the location of new industries.
3. Provide for the needs of the small-scale “local” industry emerging from local entrepreneurship.
4. Establish performance standards for industrial development that will maintain acceptable levels of quality and not lead to further pollution problems and unattractive site settings.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

1. The plan is based upon the assumption that the primary mode of transportation will continue to be geared toward the private automobile and that all elements of the landscape are planned to function with this basic assumption in mind.
2. Designate a classification system for each street within and around the community based on its primary function or purpose and the construction standards that will be applicable for each type.
3. Maintain the thoroughfares as either arteries or movement of traffic versus the more local collector and residential streets as being primarily for access. These various systems imply different construction standards and limitations.
4. Prohibit the construction of any private streets in any platted development and maintain a policy of not accepting private streets or drives of less than the minimum right-of-way for minor or local residential streets as a public responsibility for the future.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICIES**

1. It is the responsibility of the City Council to provide public facilities and services to all areas within the City limits according to the actual needs in accordance with a uniform set of standards tempered by sound judgment. In no instance, though, should the City Council duplicate services now being provided by other forms of government operating in the community unless deemed necessary.
2. Work cooperatively with other units of government and agencies to utilize joint services where feasible for the sake of efficiency and economic needs.
3. Locate and provide public services which include, but are not limited to, police, fire, streets, schools, sewer and water, parks, etc. with reference to number and distribution of land use patterns and population both within and beyond the City limits if feasible.
4. Plan these public services in accordance with a long range capital improvement program and in scale with anticipated fiscal capabilities and growth of the City over a period of time.
5. Utilize all available State and Federal programs in the planning and construction of community facilities that will represent a savings to the City, be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, and meet the general timing needs of the City.
6. Assume a public responsibility for the preservation and conservation of City resources and potential recreation and open space opportunities through a number of means including, but not limited to, purchase, joint use of facilities between school district, the county, the state, etc. and dedication from private developers.
7. Guide the placement of semi-public facilities and institutions in the best site possible through a policy of maintaining a liaison with such agencies.

## **STANDARDS**

Performance standards are measures of quality that cover all aspects of the rural, suburban and urban environment. The standards are generally considered minimum and some may be enacted into law through zoning, subdivision, building, and other codes and ordinances affecting the physical environment. Such

standards also tend to serve as goals themselves although not necessarily “ultimate” goals since they are the minimum necessary for reasons of public health, safety, convenience, and general welfare. The minimum standards utilized as quality control measures in any area should, however, be as high as is practical within the range of physical, economic, social and legal feasibility.

Performance standards have been developed by the city:

Site Planning	Well Standards	Industrial Park Design
Subdivision layout	Septic System Standards	Educational Facilities
Erosion and Dust Control	Refuse Disposal	Public Facilities & Bldg
Appearance	Public Utilities	Commercial Standards
Off-Street Parking	Setbacks	Mobile Home Sites
Street Classification	Street Widths	Apartment Standards
Neighborhood Development	Industrial Requirements	Recreation Areas

These standards are contained in the city ordinance book.

## **GENERAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROPOSALS**

To insure and achieve equilibrium in the City of Shafer in the next few decades, the following Comprehensive Development Plan proposals are made to relate to a slightly broader area than just that which is currently within the City limits. The City as a whole and its relationship and location within the county must be taken into consideration. For the success of all planning proposals, the City needs to act positively towards new development and the possibility of future development. The City must form an effective guiding influence to achieve an orderly and supportive growth pattern.

## **LAND USE PLAN**

The land use plan is simply a segment of the total plan and is intended to indicate, in a generalized fashion, what uses could be allowed into certain broad areas given the existing conditions, problems and factors that will influence development decisions in the future.

As the City continues to grow, adequate provisions should be made through annexation and adequate provisions of utility and street extensions should be ensured. The area east and northeast of the center of the City should be reserved for living purposes, recreation or civic uses.

Southward, directly off Highway 8 and beyond will eventually become prime areas due to accessibility. As indicated in the plan map, fairly large tracts should be preserved through zoning and subdivision controls for future highway commercial and industrial uses. In conjunction, large parcels could also be developed for higher density residential uses on appropriate sites that can be properly serviced.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN**

Sewer and water facilities have been expanded, to include a 3<sup>rd</sup> pond, and proposal for aeration which will be adequate for additional developments. There is the capability for further expansion if the need should arise. All future urban development will be influenced by the extent to which municipal facilities are available.

The Parks Committee is responsible for ongoing maintenance of existing parks and development of any new parks.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The City's existing and unopened streets form the basic framework upon which the future public thoroughfares will emerge to provide for movement and/or access. The ultimate land use pattern is directly conditioned by the provisions of streets. In order to best ascertain the proper function of these streets plus the present alignments, each street has been classified as to its functional ability to handle the traffic needs and access requirements as generated by the surrounding types and densities of land use.

**EXPRESSWAY:** U.S. Highway 8 provides for inter-county and inter-regional needs. Controlled limited access will be a feature of the facility for this high-volume, high-speed traffic carrier. To insure adequate land controls for Shafer's intersection points, the City should consider eventual annexation to the south of the present limits at a time deemed necessary. This to be determined by the degree of pressure for development within this area.

**MAJOR THOROUGHFARE:** Present U.S. Highway 8 and County Road 37 act as the major thoroughfares through the City, although County Road 21 acts as the only means of movement through the downtown area. County Road 21 is the principal commercial and industrial thoroughfare of the City. All other streets rely and feed into these routes directly. The principal function of this type of roadway should be strictly for movement and not direct access. As Redwing Avenue, (County Road 21), assumes more importance, direct access to side streets and abutting properties needs to be strictly regulated and controlled.

**MINOR THOROUGHFARES:** These are those collector routes illustrated on the plan map as dashed lines, which facilitate movement around the retail and industrial core areas, thus freeing Redfield Blvd somewhat to perform more as it should. These routes, will, by their construction, open new areas for development particularly emphasizing the importance of developing around the core area first.

**LOCAL STREETS:** These are all other municipal streets in the city which have the prime function of direct access to all adjacent land use. Future street platting should conform to contemporary subdivision techniques and design standards.

## **UTILITY SUMMARY**

### **A. Wastewater Treatment Facility**

Capacity:

Primary Ponds (Existing).....	12.933MG
Primary Ponds (With Future Aeration).....	26.279MG
Secondary Ponds.....	6.606MG
Total.....	19.539MG
Total (With Future Aeration).....	32.885MG

Flow:

2015 Population.....	1,047Persons
Design Flow.....	105,000GPD

Existing Flow (2015).....52,630GPD  
 Flow Based on Population.....78,375GPD  
 Flow Remaining.....26,625GPD

Biochemical Oxygen Demand:

Design BOD.....210 Lbs/Day  
 Existing BOD (2015).....112 Lbs/Day  
 Remaining BOD.....98 Lbs/Day

Expansion Capacities:

Assumptions: 3 Persons/Unit  
                   75 Gal/Person/Day  
                   240 mg/L BOD/Person/Day  
                   \_\_\_\_\_ Vacant Units

Daily Flow = 26,625 Gal/Day  
                   225 Gal/Unit/Day.....118 New Units<sup>(1)</sup>

BOD = 225 Gal/Unit/Day x 240 mg/L x 8.34 Lbs/Gal x 118 Units  
                   1,000,000 Gal/Day....53 Lbs/Day

<sup>(1)</sup>New units includes existing vacant units