

# **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Pelican Rapids, Minnesota**

**Volume 1**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	Tab
1.0 Introduction .....	2	1
2.0 Demographic and Economic Analysis.....	6	2
3.0 Community Vision 2001, Vision Update 2003, and Overall Goals .....	11	3
4.0 Economic Development.....	19	4
5.0 Development Capabilities and Limitations.....	22	5
6.0 Land Use.....	23	6
7.0 Transportation.....	32	7
8.0 Water and Wastewater Systems.....	44	8
9.0 Parks.....	49	9
10.0 Implementation and Coordination.....	55	10

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

**All exhibits shown are shown with and without a photo background.**

### Existing Conditions in the Community

Exhibit 1	Parcels
Exhibit 2	Zoning
Exhibit 3	Utility
Exhibit 4	Service
Exhibit 5	Public Lands and Open Spaces

### Citizen Involvement Matrix

Exhibit 6	Citizen Suggestions
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### New Conditions recommended by the Comprehensive Plan

Exhibit 7	Annexation areas
Exhibit 8	Future Zoning Boundaries
Exhibit 9	Development Patterns / Traffic Circulation
Exhibit 10	River Walk / Parks
Exhibit 11	Downtown Park and Foot Traffic Circulation
Exhibit 12	Downtown Street Trees / Picnic Lots
Exhibit 13	Downtown Redevelopment Area
Exhibit 14	Downtown Redevelopment Area Detail

#### Note:

- The annexation shown in the Exhibits is the total annexation from both the Planning Commission and Public input.
- This set is a two-volume set:
  - Volume 1 is the text portion of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - Volume 2 is the reference volume of the Comprehensive Plan. This is a chronological file of all events during the comprehensive plan process.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan has been prepared under the direction of the Planning Commission of Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. The Plan is structured around the priority areas identified by thorough public involvement meetings with the citizens of the Pelican Rapids area.

The preparation of this plan was guided by Minnesota's comprehensive planning statute, Chapter 462.355, and utilized Minnesota's local planning manual entitled, "Under Construction, Tools And Techniques For Local Planning"

As this Comprehensive Plan was conceived, there was some real concern by the City Council that the money spent on the plan would be wasted, and the plan would be put on the shelf and forgotten forever, or at least until the next time there was a movement by the community to look at a plan.

The Pelican Rapids City Council Members interviewed other cities and looked at what they had received from their planning process. The council members did not like what they saw in other communities. The documents were written in such a way that it was hard to understand what the City needed to do next. The direction that the City was to go was vague in their eyes and understanding of the plan was not detailed enough for them. The Council wanted specific marching orders or a to do list of what needs to be done. The Council, then using that list, could prioritize the list and get to work on implementing it.

The marching orders, from Pelican Rapids City Council, were to make a plan that everyone could understand, and to solve the major issues facing the City. The issues that were foremost in people's minds were an industrial area, an upscale residential area, a river crossing, a downtown plan, and city parks.

The City wanted a specific "To Do List".

The plan herein is somewhat in between a normal plan and a detail (design) plan. The detail included in the plan, is shown to help the City make decisions and to make a "to do list". However, the detail is not intended to be absolute in form. This document is meant to be adjustable, but the intent of the plan should be absolute if at all possible. An example of this is the "Transportation Circulation Plan" should be adhered to, but adjustments can be made as long as the circulation suggested in the plan is provided for in the adjustments.

Why a Comprehensive Plan at this time? The effort comes from a community action group by the name of "The Blandin Group". The Blandin Group is a group of people in the community that have been to intensive training by the Blandin Organization (private training organization for public involvement) on how to be effective and involved in their community.

The first part or step of a Comprehensive Plan is a Community Vision. From that vision and more direct input from the community, a Comprehensive Plan is developed.

In 2001, the Blandin Group members of the local community determined that the City needed, at least, a Vision for the future. The group formed a committee to see what they could do. They contacted The Blandin Organization and through that organization, they contacted Mr. Jackson Huntley. Mr. Huntley was hired to facilitate a vision statement for the City.

An organizational meeting was held and the community was organized around stockholders that the group wanted to be representatives of the community. All known groups were identified and key stockholders were determined. The groups met with each key stockholder and asked their help in getting their part of the community to the public meeting where all and any issues that the City faces could be addressed.

The final result of this effort is a completely documented (with all backup information) volume titled "Vision Statement 2001". This Vision Statement has been made part of the ordinances of the City of Pelican Rapids by Resolution number 1128.01.

After the Vision statement was complete, the Blandin Organization suggested that the local Blandin Group keep the Vision in front of the people by doing a project, keeping the vision in front of the community. After some soul searching, it was determined that there were already a number of groups planning projects and starting to work on them. Therefore, it was determined to just keep the Vision in front of the people by establishing a new group called "Friends of the Vision". This new group took on the job of writing articles about projects being done that were part of the Vision Statement.

The "Friends of the Vision" committee, after writing a lot of articles (published in the Pelican Rapids Press) about the vision, also organized a general public meeting on April 26, 2003 to ask the community what additional projects they wanted to see worked on.

The final result of this effort is a completely documented (with all backup information) volume titled "Vision Update, April 2003". This Vision Update statement has been made part of the ordinances of the City of Pelican Rapids by Resolution number 609.03.

The City Council took over at this point and recommended that a Comprehensive Plan be developed which would include the above two previous works, Vision Statement 2001, and Vision Update 2003. The City developed a scope of work with a consultant that was contracted to do the work.

The planning process was guided by the City Council-appointed Planning Commission which met with the Consultant many times to review planning information and provide input and policy guidance. The members of the Planning Commission are: Daren J. Berube (Chairperson), Bard Miller, Dan Skinner, John Waller III (City Council representative), Mel Zierke, and Glenys Ehlert (Secretary).

The consultant developed a series of planning meetings to facilitate input and feedback from the Planning Commission and the public.

Upon meeting with the planning commission and establishing the needs of the Comprehensive Plan, the consultant suggested to the planning commission a list of meetings with area representative groups and a general public meeting that could be used to get input from the public. That list was reviewed by the planning commission and modified to reflect the planning commission's knowledge of the area.

These meetings included:

1. The Pelican Rapids School District
2. The Financial Decision Makers of the Community
  - The Economic Development Authority (members of the City Council) (EDA)
  - Economic Development Corporation (EDC)
  - West Central Initiative
3. The Chamber of Commerce

**4. Service Groups**

- Rotary International
- Jaycees
- Legions
- People for Pelican
- Lions
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Pelican Rapids Fire Department

**5. The Library and Park Boards**

**6. Minority Groups**

This meeting was organized and conducted by local people involved in the minority community (Johanna Christianson and Diana Kimm).

**7. Youth Meeting with the Senior Class of Pelican High School. This meeting was organized by the "Friends of the Vision" and conducted by the Senior Class of Pelican High School.**

**8. General Public Meeting**

All Group meetings were notified by letter and phone calls to the group leaders.

All Public meetings were notified by posted notices to the public. Printed notices were placed in the City's designated paper, the Pelican Rapids Press, and the meetings were the subject of several different articles in the Pelican Rapids Press, before and after the meetings. All of this information and associated articles are included as reference in Volume 2 of this plan.

## 2.0 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

### General Observations

Community demographic factors, such as population, income, and employment are the measure of city growth or decline.

The engine of City growth is its economy; and in Pelican Rapid's case, it extends to the economy of the cities of Detroit Lakes and Fergus Falls. The key measure of a city's economy is jobs and related income levels. The economy of most small and medium-sized cities is the regional economy. Not all cities in any given region are equally capable of tapping or benefiting from that region's economy.

The most important local factors that determine a city's growth capability are:

- Location
- Natural Resources
- Available land free of major development limitations.
- The infrastructure needed to service growth, such as utilities and transportation.
- Institutional structures and services.
- Leadership.

Cities typically do not excel in all of these factors; however, some come close. Other unusual factors can sometimes determine a city's growth capability, such as political decisions to locate or terminate a major industry or a government facility.

The most important factor is leadership.

### Regional Context

The greatest meaning of Pelican Rapid's demographics comes from an analysis of the information within a regional context. Pelican Rapids is connected to the region by both Minnesota Highways 59 and 108. Highway 59 runs north and south, while Highway 108 runs east and west, through the western part of the state. These major transportation links of this region of the state make Pelican Rapids a very well connected community with people commuting to work as far away as North Dakota.

During the research of the community, it was found that a number of people work in Pelican Rapids and live outside of the community. But on the other hand it was also found that a number of people live in Pelican Rapids and work outside of town.

Analysis of traffic numbers suggest that most of the people that do work outside of the community and live in Pelican Rapids work in Fergus Falls. The City of Pelican Rapids is both a bedroom community for some commuters and a region work center for others. It would be to the benefit of the City to determine how to get the people who work in the City to live in the City.

## **Employment**

Even though this abbreviated Comprehensive Plan does not allow for detailed economic analysis, it is sufficient to conclude that Pelican Rapids possesses a somewhat typical employment profile for a rural Minnesota community.

Any community close to other larger cities (both Fergus Falls and Detroit Lakes are 3 to 4 times the size of Pelican Rapids) will have a difficult time providing its full potential for retail sales and related jobs due to the draw of retail shopping in the larger cities. All such communities have retail sales loss to the larger community. It can be expected that general merchandise retail activity in Pelican Rapids will remain at modest levels.

Pelican Rapids economical basis is the industrial facilities (turkey plant, ect.) that are in the City along with such employers as the Lake Region Electrical Headquarters, Pelican Rapids School District and of course the farm economy in the area.

## **Age**

The age structure of Pelican Rapid's population is typical for a healthy small rural community.

The most significant population change, which will take place during this planning period, will be the large increase in the elderly population of 65+ age persons. This will be due to the aging of the "baby boom" population, which is beginning a twenty-year period of increase. This elderly group is also expected to grow, based on the increasing life expectancy from improved healthy lifestyles and advancements in medical care. This age sector could also grow if there is a significant in-migration of retirees into Pelican Rapids, which is suggested by the demographic projections.

During this same time, the working age population will decline within the state, depending on in-migration rates. Pelican Rapid's population profile may vary from this general outlook depending on the number of working age individuals and families who locate in the city. Significant increases in this younger age group may be expected due to preferences for living in Pelican Rapids, and to the maintenance of and growth of employment within the city. Both of these factors are directly under the influence of what the community and especially the leadership does with this plan

**Population Projections**

These population projections are for the planning period of 2004 to 2024. These projections assume the presence of the following basic conditions throughout the planning period:

**Assumptions:**

- The national and state economy will continue to experience growth and stability.
- The regional economy, and particularly the Otter Tail County area economy, will continue to grow in line with recent trends.
- The City of Pelican Rapids will continue to be receptive to population growth and a range of housing styles.
- The capability will be available to finance infrastructure and public service improvements, based on arrangements between developers, the city and availability of outside funds.
- The City of Pelican Rapids will maintain its present school infrastructure levels.
- The City of Pelican Rapids will remain competitive with other communities in the area.

Like all projections, they should be re-evaluated whenever any of the basic assumptions experience a major change. Since comprehensive plans should be reevaluated on five-year intervals, this would be an advisable time to re-evaluate population projections.

<i><b>Historic Population levels</b></i>	<i><b>Projection Population Levels</b></i>	<i><b>Planning Commission Population Level</b></i>
1970.....1,835	2004.....2,464	
1980.....1,867	2010.....2,626	
1990.....1,886	2015.....2,783	
1997.....1,934	2020.....2,945	
2000.....2,374	2024.....3,075	2024.....3,750

These projections are just that, projections, and they assume that a status quo will be the determining factor. However, the Planning Commission has determined that they want to look at the future with different eyes than just going along with the rest of the world. The planning commission wants the City of Pelican Rapids to change from the sleepy little town that is losing their downtown to an alive and growing community that has an active business district. Therefore, the Planning Commission wanted to develop a Comprehensive Plan that fits the future they see of the community, rather than where the city might go in the next twenty years.

The Planning Commission determined from a random choice that they wanted to look at a city with at least a population of 3,750 by the year 2024. The Comprehensive Plan is then to look at the physical limits of the city and fill that area in as much as possible and not be limited by a population number. This concern was for new industrial and upscale residential areas that could easily be more area than the city needs for a population of 3,750. The projection of 3,750 people is only a three percent growth rate per year or approximately 64 people per year. Sixty-four people per year, and assuming 2.57 people per household (the U.S. Census number for Pelican Rapids 2000), would equate to approximately 25 new housing units per year.

Assuming that each new housing unit uses approximately 0.3 acre of land per housing unit. Assuming that the 25 new housing units per year are single-family units with 10,000 square foot building lots, then those numbers translates into approximately 8 acres of land subdivided each year or 152 acres of land in the next twenty years.

The age of the future population is a major factor on how the City sees itself. The projections show an aging population. Today's largest sectors of the population are the 10-19 year olds and the 35-50 year olds are approximately 50% greater than the other age groups. By 2024 those numbers have changed to an almost even distribution of all age groups, except for the 60-75 year olds, which have become the largest sector with a differential of 40 percent greater than all the other age groups. The conclusion of all this is that the largest age group of the population is going to grow older (60+) and the rest of the community is going to be more consistent without spikes in any one age group.

The Pelican Rapids School District is already experiencing the above issues. The existing student body is 1250 students. However, the existing kindergarten is only 60 students. This would indicate a future student body of approximately 720 in just twelve years.

The Planning Commission has determined that they want the City to be aggressive and look for ways to bring more jobs to town. Jobs bring families and families bring kids. Therefore, the Commission asked for an aggressive industrial park concept. The desire of the Commission was to balance out the population so that there is an even population spread. A community that caters to just one population group will lose the other groups. A healthy community is a balanced community in all areas of endeavor.

## **Demographic References**

This Comprehensive Plan incorporates the analysis of population and economic information from the 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, U. S. Census Bureau, and the State of Minnesota Department of Administration, Land Management Information Center, Minnesota Environmental Atlas with Minnesota Data disks and GIS Data information.

## **Implications and Conclusions**

1. If the Planning Commission has its way, and the City is aggressive in bringing industry to town, then the growth could be forced to a level that will sustain the City business district and school system. Pelican Rapids could then expect to experience population growth, possibly in excess of historic growth rates, projections for the 2004 to 2024 planning period.
2. The elderly population will constitute an increasingly large portion of the local population, thereby presenting needs for more health and fitness services, and specialized housing needs.
3. The community can be expected to be both a bedroom and a jobs community, housing a significant proportion of working age families, which, in turn, will continue to support school enrollment levels and related educational services.
4. The working age family and retired person components of the population can be expected to require related programs to provide wellness and leisure time facilities and activities.
5. Pelican Rapid's regional location, good access, and surrounding land development capability, would indicate that it could remain a popular growth center within the Otter Tail County sphere of influence.
6. Since the regional economy is concentrated in only a few job sectors, a significant downturn in any one of these sectors would have adverse effects on Pelican Rapid's economy and growth outlook. To help protect against this, a conventional city development strategy would be to diversify its job base. One of the strategies could be to bring other industrial businesses to the community that are not food related (turkey).
7. A recent published motivational book titled "Who Moved my Cheese" is about what happened to your past business (cheese) and what are you going to do about your future business (cheese). The message is that the Chamber of Commerce of Pelican Rapids needs to find where their "cheese" was moved to, find it, and start mining the new "cheese" block.

### **3.0 COMMUNITY VISION AND OVERALL GOALS**

Pelican Rapid's vision statement and overall planning goals were produced from the planning process developed by the Blandin Group. The input from those Public Meetings was helpful input into the planning process for the Comprehensive Plan.

Definitions of the terms: vision statement, goals and objectives.

A community vision is an "idealized, long term view" of one's community.

Goals are "aspirations". Goals identify specific planning subjects.

Objectives are "targets". Objectives identify specific measures of accomplishment.

This Comprehensive Plan combines specific programs with objectives to leave no doubt that the regular programs related to city development are the planning targets, which implement a Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Vision Statement**

##### **Community Vision – 2001**

The community of Pelican Rapids boasts enormous natural beauty in its sweeping fields, rolling hills and plentiful pristine lakes. Yet its most enduring beauty is intangible and can be found in the innovative spirit of its citizenry as they improve their lives and invigorate the local economy. Long recognized as a premier living location, Pelican Rapids is the third largest city in the county of Otter Tail. Now, as we look forward, and to help provide focus as we continue our progress, we have created this vision of our future:

##### **Economy**

The economy of the community is strongly supported, safe, respected and affordable by all members of the community, governmental agencies and businesses. The community needs are met in an environment that promotes the historical, natural resources, beauty, talents, agricultural, and recreational assets in a responsible, safe and respectful manner that is cognizant of all members of the community. Agriculture, commercial businesses, tourism, lake property owners, rural and city residents, work cooperatively to aggressively promote, research, enhance, maintain, support and develop new and existing opportunities. A vibrant, respected, friendly, and welcoming business environment encourages expansion of existing and development of new, commercial, industrial, and agricultural businesses that provide employment opportunities for all levels of income and talents. Investment and reinvestment into our community is recognized, encouraged and supported.

**Government**

Local government is a working collaboration of Township, City, Civic and Lake Associations, and is responsible to and receptive of all members of the community. By maintaining a commitment to the needs and perspective of both residents and visitors, and by working with various organizations and volunteers to create an environment of trust, cooperation and ownership, it helps develop a strong sense of community pride and a welcoming spirit. It aggressively researches and develops progressive and proactive policies and programs to encourage robust commercial, agricultural, residential and recreational development, simultaneously promoting investment in our community from outside and within. Further, managed policies for preservation and development of natural resources and historical assets assure a continued appreciation for community aesthetics. Cooperative and approachable officials maintain hours providing access and services to all members of the community.

**Diversity**

Community members are proud of their diverse cultural citizenship, recognizing the needs and celebrating the opportunities of this diversity. The community encourages, develops and maintains the leadership, talents, and potential business opportunities, in a cooperative, trusting manner. All citizens enjoy bonds of mutual acceptance and respect.

**Aesthetics**

Our Community is filled with natural beauty, diverse cultures, and friendly citizens who feel safe and display a proud sense of ownership. Our members work to research, develop, enhance and maintain an aesthetically pleasing, inviting and welcoming environment while respecting our natural resources.

**Education**

Renowned and respected within and outside our community, our education system provides and promotes academic excellence in a safe, respectful, prejudice free, morally strong and drug free environment. It provides affordable, locally available continuing education utilizing all educational systems and methods and is focused on the desires and interests of community members. Staff, parents, and students maintain respectful and courteous bonds of communication while working to encourage participation and volunteerism.

**Youth**

The community recognizes the value of its youths and provides support for their recreational, educational and social needs by maintaining, enhancing existing facilities, aggressively researching, and developing new ones. Through existing and newly developed civic organizations, volunteers, educational, and religious sources, the needs of our youths are fulfilled in a safe and respected way.

**Recreation**

The Pelican Rapids area community researches, develops, maintains and expands year round affordable private and publicly owned recreational facilities, allowing for all interests, ages, genders, and cultures to come together in safe and varying complexes.

**Pride**

Pride is reflected in every aspect of our community; business, churches, educational system, civic groups and volunteerism. Our community builds on its successes by working cooperatively and making positive change happen. In every endeavor, a safe, vibrant, cooperative and welcoming community is evidenced by mutually respected new and existing members.

**Medical**

The community researches, maintains, enhances and develops new and existing medical facilities that provide affordable, locally available, 24 hour/7 day a week medical and support services to all members of the community in a knowledgeable, friendly, safe, and respectful manner for all ages.

**Housing**

The Community provides housing to meet the needs of all income levels, genders, ages and physical conditions that is safe, inviting and affordable. Enforced policies, support, and financing are readily available.

**Ethics**

Our community morals are reflected through a safe, respecting, fair and trustful environment among all members.

**Community Information**

The community provides and disseminates complete and organized information for newcomers, current citizens, and both existing and potential new business enterprises that is visible and readily accessible.

**Religion**

The religious environment of the community reflects its religious and community needs in a safe, responsive, cooperative and respectful manner.

**Conclusion**

With our positive attitude and enduring spirit, the Pelican Rapids area citizens will use this vision statement to help guide us as we build a more vibrant, attractive, open and welcoming community. We will support and develop business, agricultural, educational and recreational opportunities, responsibly using fiscal resources, personnel and information technology assets. We will ensure access to public services, including health care and public safety. Through participation and cooperation, we will build a community of which our families can be proud.

# SUGGESTED PROJECTS LIST

<b>ECONOMY</b>		
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
Create downtown theme	Electrical power generation using the river	Clothing Store
Spec. retail building	Festival similar to "Showboat" in Grand Rapids	Shoe Store
Promote ice fishing/hunting	Promote winter activities for tourism	Full time grant writer
EDC person	Business incubator	
	Expand marketplace (farmer's market)	
	Antique stores	
	Pizza parlor	
	Expand Pelican Drug - add products based on needs	
	Higher wage jobs	
	More unique shopping	
	Furniture store	
	City liquor store with trailer parking	
	Butcher shop	
	Industrial parks lots utilized	
	Clearinghouse for donations	
	General store	
	Hot air balloon festival	
	Mini mail with ethnic consignment gifts	
	Internet used to sell local goods	
	Public restrooms	
	More parking	
	Expand group to discuss needs	
	Pay phones	
	Drinking fountains	

<b>GOVERNMENT</b>		
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
City Manager	Early childhood family center	City comprehensive plan
Land use regulations	Residents groups - farmers, lake prop. Owners, city res.	County services available locally
Greater Pelican Rapids Community Committee	County support office	
	Deputy register	
	Stop light at Citgo	

# SUGGESTED PROJECTS LIST

<p><b>Suggested in 2001</b> Multicultural learning center/museum</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DIVERSITY</b></p> <p><b>Suggested in 2003</b> Local restaurants host ethnic meal night Build on diversities Refugee center Multicultural event schedule Activity group for seniors - more effort to involve them Multicultural daycares Help for cultural new businesses Activities for all cultures/incomes/ages Ethnic bazaar Driver's education for adult new drivers</p>	<p><b>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</b> Multicultural restaurants</p>
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<p><b>Suggested in 2001</b> Attractive community welcome signs Flower baskets on street lights</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AESTHETICS</b></p> <p><b>Suggested in 2003</b> More trees on main street Street lights in south town near schools Better sidewalk upkeep Funds set aside to maintain parks More lighting Refresh/paint main street, clean it up Improved parks - more equipment Community garden - flower/vegetable Murals Renovate/beautify empty lots Another river crossing on N.E. part of city</p>	<p><b>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</b> Storefront upkeep No interest loans for storefront improvement Flower gardens Benches on main street</p>
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<p><b>Suggested in 2001</b> Student safety committee</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <p><b>Suggested in 2003</b> Expand community education - more promotion before and after; statistics of results; concerts for beginner instruments; more ethnic courses Early childhood developments especially for non-english speaking Expand community ed. for families beyond ECFE</p>	<p><b>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</b> College courses available locally</p>
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# SUGGESTED PROJECTS LIST

<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
<b>YOUTH</b>		
	Arcade Youth center with organized activities - competitive tournaments; garage bands Involvement in the chamber shadow business people for a day Require volunteer hours to graduate Create a athering space for youth BMX bike track Family connection with schools/community/services	

<b>RECREATION</b>		
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
Indoor ice arena Indoor archery range Go-Kart Racing soccer field Horse back riding In-line skating Snowmobile trails	Weekly community events - socials, concerts, feeds Amphitheater for community events City square for concerts (fine arts) Expand Turkey Days - cooking competitions Park with keystone Sportsman club Sidewalk for residents Indoor water park Basketball courts Reception hall - weddings, parties, large meetings Weekly summer events Climbing wall (in community center) Mini water park Indoor pool with lessons Indoor baseball/batting cages Enhanced activities for the city Indoor play area for preschool children	Movie theater Mini golf River walks Sliding/sledding park Bike trail Public beach park Hiking trail

# SUGGESTED PROJECTS LIST

<b>PRIDE</b>	
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
Community theme/identity	more support for local businesses - Pelican pride
"I support Pelican Rapids" campaign	
"Pelican Rapids is my community" campaign	
civic organizations cooperate committee	
<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	
Promote tourism	
Promote city website	
Promote airport	
Local artist display	

<b>MEDICAL</b>	
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
24 hour/7 day a week emergency health care facility	
<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	
In home help for the elderly	

<b>HOUSING</b>	
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
Enforced policies	
Land-use regulations	
<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	
Rental unit inspections	
Restrictions on parking cars on lawns	

<b>COMMUNITY INFORMATION</b>	
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
Install community billboard with time & temp	
Central complete community information center	
<i>Suggested in 2003</i>	
Signs for our community - attractions, parks, fields	
Uniform signage for community - same theme, font, color	
Expand city website	

<b>RELIGION</b>	
<i>Suggested in 2001</i>	<i>Suggested in both 2001 &amp; 2003</i>
	(no suggestions)

## **Goals**

In recognition of Pelican Rapid's growth potential in Otter Tail County, the city will be in a position to implement high quality development standards that set Pelican Rapids apart from other communities as a preferred place to live and do business. The city should develop an "image" within this context based on the following general goals:

- Promote and protect the health, safety, general welfare and fiscal strength of the City of Pelican Rapids.
- Encourage diversity in community development as measured by diversity of land uses, businesses types, housing types & densities and ethnic diversity.
- Recognize the importance of the Pelican Rapids area farm economy, local value-added agriculture, and related agri-businesses.
- Encourage the growth of businesses that serve the growing markets of senior citizens services, housing, construction and recreation.
- Maintain Pelican Rapid's small town character.
- Maintain strong levels of municipal and educational services.
- Maintain city policies, codes and improvement programs, which are efficient, cost-effective in nature, and fair in their application.
- Strengthen the city tax base through prudent growth and city management.
- Provide job growth, stability, and overall city growth according to standards, which maintain small town quality of life, which protects the natural environment, and with diversify in local employment.
- To plan city growth, which avoids land use sprawl, while being as compatible as possible with the county and township units of government.

## 4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Summary Analysis

Pelican Rapid's overall economy has been evolving as part of the regional economy of Otter Tail County, but the City's business district has lost a lot of its draw and a number of businesses downtown have gone out of business. There have been a number of concerned business owners over the last 10 years trying to turn the central business district around.

Some of the old buildings downtown have been torn down and are now vacant lots. The Johnson Furniture store and gift shop went out of business leaving two buildings on Broadway Street / Highway 59 vacant.

Nevertheless, within the last three to four years there has been a beginning of that desired turn around. Businesses that have made an impact on the turn around are the following:

- Old Lake Region Electric building has been remodeled into a professional building and New City Hall.
- Two new coffee shops.
- Ice cream store.
- Remodeled and expanded drug store.
- Remodeled and expanded grocery store.
- New car wash.
- Old City Hall was remodeled and became the Chamber of Commerce building and historical center.
- New Pizza Restaurant.
- New full service Bank.

All of this combined has started a turn around for the downtown business district.

The citizens appreciated what has been done, but were very strong in their opinion that they wanted the City to be more proactive and assist the business district to complete the revalidation of downtown.

From public input, the City was asked, "How does economical development happen in Pelican Rapids?". The rewrite of this request is that the City, Chamber of Commerce, EDA, and EDC are to work together to develop a central position where all economic growth issues are brokered. Where all elements are involved, they strengthen and support the overall growth of the community.

Another request was for a central brokerage person for all grant work being done in the greater Pelican Rapids area. The underlining thread of the suggestions was that stronger City government take the lead and provide the services of leading the grant requests made for the betterment of the greater Pelican Rapids area.

### **Goals**

- The goal is to provide a favorable business climate in Pelican Rapids. This includes the continuation of local efforts for the promotion, retention, and expansion of local business and industry as well as the attraction of additional businesses to diversify the employment base.

### **Objectives**

- a. Public-private partnerships—continue the positive public-private partnership between the City, Economic Development Authority (EDA), Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the Chamber of Commerce.
- b. Fully utilize the leadership and resources of the City, EDA, EDC, and Chamber of Commerce organizations: To obtain business leads, new jobs, and assistance with financial programs. To promote and develop business activity and community improvements.
- c. Establish and maintain a business/industry visitation and retention program and a business/industry appreciation program.
- d. Agri-business Industries and Services -- Encourage and support the local agri-business industries and services for their job base and value-added economic base, as a means of keeping the area farming community a strong part of the Pelican Rapids economic base.
- e. Downtown Retail -- Develop and support programs to maintain a viable downtown retail and service district.
- f. Downtown Growth -- Identify potential infill sites in and on the fringe of the downtown area that could facilitate new or expanded downtown businesses and parking needs.
- g. Downtown Improvements -- identify downtown public works improvements and beautification measures to keep the area appealing for customers.
- h. Commercial Sprawl -- Monitor commercial development trends and assess impacts on the city commercial development.

- i. Tax Base Growth -- Develop tax base expansion goals in line with funding requirements for public services, and as a means of moderating tax rates.
- j. TIF Financing -- thoroughly evaluates the application of tax increment financing in each situation for financial feasibility and projected future city budget impacts.
- k. Marketing—Active City government participation in a community marketing program, including participation in the Chamber of Commerce and EDC.
- l. Environmental Quality -- Apply an environmental review to economic development proposals to identify environmental and quality of life issues to assure the best possible development and fewest adverse affects.
- m. Good Transportation -- Maintain an active interest in the state transportation improvements program to assure safe and efficient transportation services for the Pelican Rapids economy and for the commuting activity to the Fergus Falls, Detroit Lakes and Fargo areas. City Administrator should meet with regional transportation authorities on a regular basis to keep abreast of what is happening in the overall region and its affect on Pelican Rapids.
- n. Hotel -- Work toward the development of a hotel facility as a service to the business community and Pelican Rapids area in general.
- o. Retirement Housing -- Develop a strategy for accommodating the projected increase in retirement housing and related services, the need for which will accelerate near the end of the decade and remain a significant economic market for approximately 20 years.
- p. Update Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances -- Eliminate provisions in the zoning and subdivision ordinances, which inhibit business growth and add provisions, which create flexibility in the location and development standards for business. Add provisions to the ordinances to protect zoning from mixed use that does not protect the value of existing real estate. The provisions should consider mobile homes, manufactured homes, pole buildings, halfway release homes, and salvage/junk yard.

## **5.0 DEVELOPMENT CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS**

### **Summary Analysis**

There is limited restriction on development in the community. The only limitation would be for public utility services.

The utility services limitation is a cost limitation because some parts of the community and the land being annexed into the community cannot be served by gravity flow sanitary sewer lines without the cost of adding pump stations. However, in reflection, this is a normal cost to all communities.

The utility services presently have more than enough capacity to handle the growth of the city. A detail discussion of the utilities capacity is in section 8.0 Water and Wastewater Systems.

The City has acquired plan metric mapping of the City, which has located the utilities and most of the lot lines. This mapping needs to be completed. The City needs to acquire topographic mapping of the city and its growth area. Topographic mapping shows the contours of the land, which give the elevation differences. This kind of mapping has become a conventional municipal tool to enable the more effective planning and engineering of development projects. The use of this tool will help developers produce higher quality projects and aid the city in producing more expedient and detailed reviews of development proposals. Ultimately, this tool will be a significant aid in implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Added to this mapping is the need to delineate the natural resources in the area of the City. This would establish the real boundaries of the wetland areas. A tool like this allows the City to determine where development and services can be build without damaging the environment.

### **Goals**

- To determine the limiting factors to development and find ways to overcome them.

- 

### **Objectives**

- a. Acquire topographic mapping of the City
- b. Delineate the wetland.

## 6.0 LAND USE

### Summary Analysis

The Zoning map shows what the Planning Commission came up with using the suggestions received from the community meetings. Zones have been changed to reorganize the community in an effort to provide for growth, but also limit the interference between zones. In the overall planning for the community there is more area for R1 and R2 housing and Industrial areas than is needed inside the City limits for the next twenty years.

### Redevelopment Zone (see exhibit 13 and 14)

The area bounded by Highway 59 on the east, Mill Avenue on the north, 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S.E. on the south, and approximately 1<sup>st</sup> Street S.W. on the west has been determined to be in need of reorganization.

From Mill Avenue to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue S.W. is the primary area being considered, but with the Pelican Rapids School District considering building a new high school, the existing high school use comes into question and is therefore included in the zone.

The Comprehensive Plan shows a suggested layout of the area (exhibit 14). The area was looked at for a possible east/west street through the middle of it, but the distance from Mill Avenue to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is just about 800 feet. A normal spacing for streets is 500 feet. Then do you put a street in the middle of the area? If you put a street in the middle, making each block about 400 feet long, the street would go through existing buildings. The street also would not align up with streets on the east side of Broadway Street / Highway 59. Conclusion, no street, just reorganize the area into parking lots around the existing facilities. The one suggestion that should be taken into consideration is that the big propane tank should not be in the center of the City.

The redevelopment zone is just that, a zone that can be labeled as in need of a major overhaul. With the City making this determination, the zone is eligible for grant money. The City needs to take the zone and make an aggressive effort to find grant money to fix up some of the existing buildings, or help new businesses that want to take part in the zone and start a new business.

## **Annexation Areas**

The areas below are the areas that are to be annexed into the City over the next 20 years. The areas are shown in Exhibit 7.

- **On the south side of town.** This property is on the south side of Lake Region Avenue. This area is approximately 82 acres, and is zoned as commercial and residential zoning.
- **On the northwest corner** of the city there is property presently being used as industrial that is outside of the City limits. This property should be included into the City as part of the industrial park of the city and should be grandfathered into the zoning of the city as industrial. This is the property south of the existing City industrial park and north of the turkey plant and east of the city lagoon and west of Highway 59. This area is approximately 40 acres.
- **The land east of the city.** The land from the existing east city limits to the north/south section of Bur Oak Hills Road (a township road) and north of the east/west section of Bur Oak Hills Road, north to Prairie Lake following property lines as it comes to Prairie Lake. (for details see the annexation document in volume 2 of the comprehensive plan. This total land area is approximately 534 acres, but a good part of it is river and wetlands that need to be preserved. The actual determination of how much of this land could be used for development will need to wait until the City has acquired topographic mapping, and also had the wetlands mapped (delineation) and inserted into the database. Approximate determinations are listed below.

## **Zoning**

The new zoning is shown in Exhibit 8.

In general, the City of Pelican Rapids is a fairly typical upper Midwest farm community, but with a labor force which is diversifying the community. Pelican Rapids is located along the Pelican River. Farming has been an important part of the city's heritage and it will be an important part of its future.

The City of Pelican Rapids occupies approximately 1,720 acres, or about 2.68 square miles. Approximately 400 acres or about one quarter of the city's land area is agricultural in nature. This amount of non-urban space within the city, provides lands for continuing city growth within the city's jurisdiction and accessible to city services. However, not all open land within the city limits is available for development, since

much of this land is presently required for continuing farming operations. But new land being annexed by this plan in the northeast corner of town will provide more land that could be developed into housing for the planning period. However, the land is also being annexed to protect the beauty of the Pelican River, making the River a major asset of the community.

Land use patterns within Pelican Rapids Township have remained mostly agricultural and rural residential. Urban sprawl patterns have developed within the Township, especially near the city. There is a desire on the City's behalf to control the sprawl with an agreement between the Township, County, and the City to limit the sprawl by giving the City some say over what happens within a one-mile radius of the City limits. An agreement sample will be provided to the City by the consultant.

Pelican Rapids' Planning Commission has developed a development pattern that if it extends into the future it could create a "self-fulfilling prophecy" and actually produce a significantly higher population for Pelican Rapids by the year of 2024 than the State of Minnesota Department of Administration predicts. The Planning Commission has set a population level at 3750 for the year 2024. Everything else being equal, growth will occur where development activity facilitates it; and Pelican Rapids has few physical limitations to limit development. Under these desires for growth possibilities and projecting the amount of new lands that will reasonably be needed for urban growth, it is more speculative and uncertain than in normal planning situations.

The Land Use Plan of this report attempts to accommodate this uncertainty with an area for urban expansion along the Pelican River in the northeast corner of town.

Land use patterns within Pelican Rapids are typical of most small communities in this region of the state. The central business district is in the center of town and nearly equally surrounded by residential areas.

The city is centered on or split by two state highways, dividing the town into quadrants. 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N.W. / Highway 108 is the east west highway while Broadway Street/Highway 59 is the north south highway. Highway 59 is the major corridor between Fergus Falls and Detroit Lakes.

## **Commercial**

The central business district is compact; it consists of 1 block deep on both sides of Broadway Street/Highway 59 for about 5 blocks long (depending on how you count blocks), and about two blocks east along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N.W. / Highway 108, and about three blocks west along Main Avenue / Highway 108. The existing zone is basically one block deep but with a number of inclusions of residential. An overview of the zone showed that there is little consistency from one end of town to the other.

The new commercial zone is more consistent and includes both Highway corridors extending from the property on the south end of town and south of Lake Region Avenue, then north to Prairie Lake. The east/west section along Highway 108 stays the same.

Usually the best for a city's downtown area is that it not be centered around the principal highway intersections coming through town. The principal intersections in Pelican Rapids are Broadway Street/Highway 59 with Main Avenue/Highway 108 and Broadway Street/Highway 59 with Mill Ave./Highway 108. The typical downtown expansion tendency would be to push commercial development to and around these principal highway intersections. However, the growth potential of many small town business districts is never realized due to the ease of, and sometimes the necessity of, locating commercial uses in strip patterns along highways. But for the 20 year planning period, this pattern is the best the community has to offer. In the future updates to this Comprehensive Plan, the City may want to start conversations with MDOT and regional politicians to discuss relocation of Highways 108 and 59 to a location on the outskirts of the community. This is a two-headed sword because as you relocate the highway then you lose the through commercial business that would or might stop in town.

The best solution for this is for the community to grow as a place that people want to stop, shop and work in. The situation at the present time is that people want to go north or south to do business and also find better jobs than are available locally.

The solution that the Planning Commission has come up with is to balance this issue for the present planning period, by developing a local collector system of transportation links around the community. With a collector system, not all traffic would be forced to go through the center of the community. The concern at this planning level was not to develop a by-pass system where traffic would be directed away from City center. The loop collector system suggested in this plan will eliminate the absolute need for neighborhood traffic to go through the center of town.

The through industrial traffic (large trucks) is the major component that will need to be addressed in the future. The solution may be a truck route around town. In the near future, the local industrial traffic may be reduced by the suggested industrial collector segment of the looped system. Upon completion of this segment of the loop collector, not all west and northbound industrial traffic will have to go through city center. The turkey plant industrial traffic headed south will always be a component that will have to be dealt with as part of the downtown traffic flow.

This compromise solution is a position the City should take with MnDot, when through traffic becomes a serious problem and MnDot wants to widen or impact the business environment downtown to improve traffic flow. Then the City can say simply "Go find a bypass around town, we have had this planned for years." Do not let MnDot destroy the City center for the sake of traffic flow.

Zoning and site design standards, and access limitations along arterial streets are effective techniques in minimizing and perhaps avoiding strip commercial problems. The application of such techniques along arterial streets in Pelican Rapids will minimize or avoid the serious problems typical along commercial strip zones.

Some of the answer here is an overlay of zoning ordinances that require the commercial zone to meet some strict standards as to access, parking and architectural appearance.

Pelican Rapids schools and related facilities are fronting on the community's Broadway Street / Highway 59 and near the center of town. This land use, which was warranted in the past, is not a favorable condition at the present time. The schools face onto a busy highway. Students from the high school have to cross this highway to go to the playing field (football, baseball and ice rink). The school system is considering a move of their high school facility. The planning commission hopes that the new facility would be within reasonable distance of the center of the community and directly connected to the community. The facility will most likely be on the edge of the community because the need for space can present locational challenges.

## **Industrial**

The zoning ordinance is the key tool for implementing the Land Use portion of this Plan. Upon reviewing the number of present and planned industrial parcels around the community, the planning commission decided that the best action for the City's overall health would be to concentrate the industrial area in one location. The decision was fairly easy for the Planning Commission upon reviewing the existing conditions and realizing that in the northwest corner of the community is the following:

- Existing industrial park, 40 acres.
- Turkey plant.
- Water tower, and water treatment plant.
- City Garage/Shop.
- Existing Industrial complex that is outside of the City limits.
- City's sewage lagoon system.
- County's trash transfer site.

If the City did centralize the industrial zone then the City would avoid the sometimes incompatible environments that exist between residential uses and industrial uses.

There are existing businesses that are truly industrial in type that are outside of this area. These industrial uses should be allowed to be grandfathered into the zoning ordinance where they are at, but if and when they want to improve the property, then they should be required to bring the property into the new zoning criteria.

Incompatible effects from dispersed industrial uses, which are generally absent in Pelican Rapids, include issues of esthetics, noise, blight, heavy traffic, dust and diminishment of views.

The location chosen for the industrial park by the commission was the northwest corner of town, just south of the existing sewage lagoons. All new industrial uses should be required to be located in the new industrial zone.

## **Residential**

The existing land inside the City is approximately 1720 acres. There are a number of areas in the City that have vacant lots. All of these existing areas were not counted as available space for development, but in reality are available for development.

The existing areas inside of the City, being counted here are on the northeast and east side of the community:

- 10 acres south of Highway 108 on the far east side of the community.
- 135 acres east of Highway 59 on the northeast corner of the community.

Total counted acres inside of the City available for additional residential use is 145 (10+135) acres.

The comprehensive plan shows new annexed lands in the following forms:

- 40 acres of industrial land in the northwest corner (it is existing industrial use outside of the city limits).
- 32 acres of commercial use on the southeast end of town.
- 50 acres of residential use on the southeast end of town.
- 534 acres of residential (and natural reserve) use on the northeast corner of town.

The 534 acres of new residential use land in the northeast corner of town is made up of the following:

- 28 acres of existing residential that is outside of the city limits.
- 187 acres of new residential.
- 319 acres of Pelican River and wetlands along the river.

Total new residential added to the City is approximately 237 (50+187) acres.

The grand total would then be 382 (145+237) acres of land for residential use. Using this 382 acres of land and 1/3 acres per lot would come to 1146 new lots/homes, which translates, into 2,945 people. This is over twice the number needed to fill the planning commission's goal for the next 20 years.

### **Central Business District**

Produce a Central Business District (CBD) development and enhancement plan. The City will want to organize a committee of people from the Central Business District to formalize a CBD overlay for the City. This overlay will want to address the look and feel of the CBD. The central business district shall be any property that is zoned commercial in the Comprehensive Plan zoning exhibit 8. The committee shall come up with a legal document that shall become an ordinance of the City and shall require the CBD to adhere to a set of strict rules governing the development and enhancement of the CBD. This overlay is not intended to require anyone or any business to upgrade their business at the present time, but it is intended to require an upgrade to the overlay upon making changes to their property. The committee needs to address just how much remodeling would be required, before the business needs to meet the overlay. This overlay should also address trees, lighting, signs, building fascia, parking and access.

## **Extraterritorial Land Development Agreement**

Examine the opportunities for extraterritorial land development jurisdiction for the purpose of being able to apply planning and development standards for fringe area development, which will affect the City of Pelican Rapids throughout the future. The City shall work with Otter Tail County and Pelican Rapids Township and come to an intergovernmental agreement. That agreement will require land use planning within one-mile radius of the present and future City limits. As the City grows the buffer, area would also move out. The Land use agreement would give the City some control of what happens in the buffer area. The State of Minnesota has a standard agreement for cities to use in the land use planning concerning buffer zones.

## **Goals**

- Provide for a constructive mix of uses but also protect against incompatible and conflicting activity impacts.
- Recognize the direct relationship between transportation and land use by designing and implementing a Plan according to standards, which achieves a safe and functional relationship between land activities and the street and highway system.
- To adopt and implement the City's Land Use Plan through those codes and policies tailored to this Plan; the City's Land Use/Zoning Plan is illustrated in Figure 8.

## **Objectives**

- a. Update the zoning and subdivision ordinances to be consistent with the Land Use Plan, and continue to update it on five-year intervals, or more often as needed.
- b. Update the city sign ordinance, and consider limiting the number, size and location of signs and billboards.
- c. Investigate right-to-farm provisions for the city code.
- d. Zoning districts shall have compatible land uses and standards which assure environmental and neighborhood compatibility.
- e. Examine the opportunities for extraterritorial land development jurisdiction.

- f. Facilitate annexation regarding developments needing city services. Establish a collaborative relationship with the Township on all such matters and seek compatibility between Township plans and City plans while meeting development needs.
- g. Produce a Central Business District (CBD) development and enhancement plan.
- h. Condition all development proposals on compliance with the City's master street plan. This plan shall show continuation of streets for the best access for all 911 vehicles.
- i. Encourage the use of available development capacity in the sewage treatment plant gravity service area and in existing lift station service areas as a means of minimizing the number of lift stations and as a means of minimizing housing sprawl with the unnecessary costs of maintaining an excessive street and utility system. The City shall encourage that the City be filled in from the center of the City to the outskirts.
- j. Consult the information in the county soils survey in evaluating development proposals.
- k. Incorporate conservation, environmental and historic preservation values into city land use decisions.
- l. Coordinate the pace of city growth with the capacities of the wastewater treatment plant and the city water system. The City needs to complete a complete evaluation of both systems and determine where services need to be provided to supply the needed expansion of the City.
- m. Protect the fringe area around the city's industrial uses to avoid potentially incompatible uses such as single-family housing.
- n. Identify land parcels within the city's developed area where a variety of "infilling" uses can take advantage of existing city infrastructure and increase the property tax yield from such parcels.
- o. According to public input Pelican Rapids should be providing an emphasis on higher income, smaller housing units, based on demographic projections of the State of Minnesota Administration Department and those presented in this Plan. The recommendation is that more two, four and six unit housing be provided for in the community to tap the potential of the older, retirement age housing market (upscale condominium market, especially along the Pelican River on the northeast corner of town).

## 7.0 TRANSPORTATION

### Summary Analysis

Pelican Rapid's principal transportation system consists of a conventional municipal street system, centered around two State Highways (Highway 59 and 108) that divide the city into quadrants. The Pelican River also divides the community into half.

The local street system is mostly a grid system, with some recent subdivisions having curve linear street designs with a few cul-de-sacs. The City of Pelican Rapids needs to develop a functional classification of the street system. This task is a rather simple classification of arterial and collector streets. Some street classifications may change over time as some streets assume a higher traffic service function. The loop collector system recommended in the plan would be an easy classification of the collector streets while the state Highways of 59 and 108 are the arterial streets of the community.

The Pelican Rapids street system is a relatively safe street system; there are no high-incident accident locations. State Highways 59 and 108 provide very good regional through traffic movement and good local access into the community. In general, the traffic and safety problems in a street system are concentrated in the intersection areas. Such problems typically include: intersection spacing, proximity to driveways, provisions for turning movements, signing, lighting, pavement markings, geometric design, and vision clearances. It is assumed that all new streets and highway improvements will be built according to contemporary planning and engineering standards.

## **Public Transportation System**

The city is served by a public transportation system, The Pelican Rapids Transit System, administered by the City of Pelican Rapids. This is a dial-a-ride, curb-to-curb bus service with wheel chair lift accommodations. This service is available in the city limits of Pelican Rapids. The service is available from Monday through Friday on a predetermined schedule. The present schedule has a driver available during five time slots per day. Three time slots in the morning hours and two in the early afternoon. The present cost of this service is twenty five cents per one-way trip. This dial-a-ride service presently is servicing some 5500 people per year.

## **Downtown Parking**

Parking downtown has been identified as a problem, where the only visible organized parking is on Broadway Street / Highway 59 proper. There are parking lots on the backside of the businesses on both sides of Broadway Street / Highway 59, but they are not used or developed to the level needed to supply parking for either the merchants or the customers.

Parking needs for the City liquor store blocks access to the east side parking lots. The existing parking lot for the park is presently being used for some of the downtown parking, but only employees of the businesses along Broadway Street / Highway 59 even know that the parking is available.

- **East Side of Broadway Street / Highway 59**

The Comprehensive Plan shows a new parking area on the backside of the businesses on the east side of Broadway Street / Highway 59. The plan shows the existing parking lot reorganized so that it is easier to understand where you can park.

The plan also shows parking as being extended north to Main Street. This extended parking area not only provides more parking (a house and a garage would have to be relocated), but this will open up the north end of the parking lot. The intent here is to make the parking lot available and visible to more people visiting the downtown business district. By opening up the north end of the parking lot and removing the brick walls dividing Broadway Street / Highway 59 from the parking lot on the north side of the liquor store, people visiting will have an easier time locating parking downtown.

This plan also provides sidewalks from parking and the park to both Broadway Street / Highway 59 and the Main Avenue on the north. Foot access would be through the existing parking lot on the north side of the liquor store and the sidewalk just south of Seifert Realty building.

- **West Side of Broadway Street / Highway 59**

The parking on the west side of Broadway Street / Highway 59 is shown as being reorganized to use the land in a more efficient way. Access to the back of the stores was considered and turning movements for large trucks will need to be addressed in the final detail design of the parking lot.

This is a reorganized lot with the river trail going through the lot from the northeast corner to the southwest corner. The parking lot is laid out in a formal pattern as an effort to show people where to park. The layout also leaves a small green space on both sides of the river trail as it approaches the river. The concept in this reorganizing was to green up the river edge and provide more parking. The parking lot has foot access on the north end and on the north side of the Rapids restaurant, to Highway 59. The only thing in after thought would be foot access from this parking lot to Highway 59 on the north side of the river. This access would have to be stairs that would be part of the bridge that goes to the library.

On the north end of the parking lot along the river, are two new or again reorganized parking lots that would connect Main Avenue / Highway 108 to the river parking lot area. The parking lot retaining walls on both sides of the VFW building are shown as being removed. The parking lot should be rebuilt and ramped down from Highway 108 to the river parking lot below. This concept will provide more parking spaces for the large groups of people that are drawn to the VFW and this will also provide more parking and directly visible parking from Highway 108. With proper signing the city center will have ample parking in the central business district.

- **North Side of Mill Avenue / Highway 108**

Parking on Mill Avenue / Highway 108 has been considered in the area of the existing post office. There is a community movement in motion with considerable citizen involvement that suggests that the post office will need to be moved to another location in the near future. The existing lot and building are too small for the needs of the community.

The Comprehensive Plan suggests that the existing buildings and parking lot area are to become the new improved entrance to the park, by removing the existing building.

The existing parking lot for the mail delivery vehicles is planned as the new footpath entrance to the park. The brick path that is presently throughout the park is to be extended south from the north side of the existing parking lot to Mill Avenue / Highway 108. The rest of the existing parking lot is to be turned into a landscaped green entrance to the park. This plan would open up the view of the park from the east side of the Pelican Drug store to over 300 feet east along Mill Avenue / Highway 108.

The plan shows that the existing post office building is removed and the area turned into a new parking lot for both the downtown area and the park.

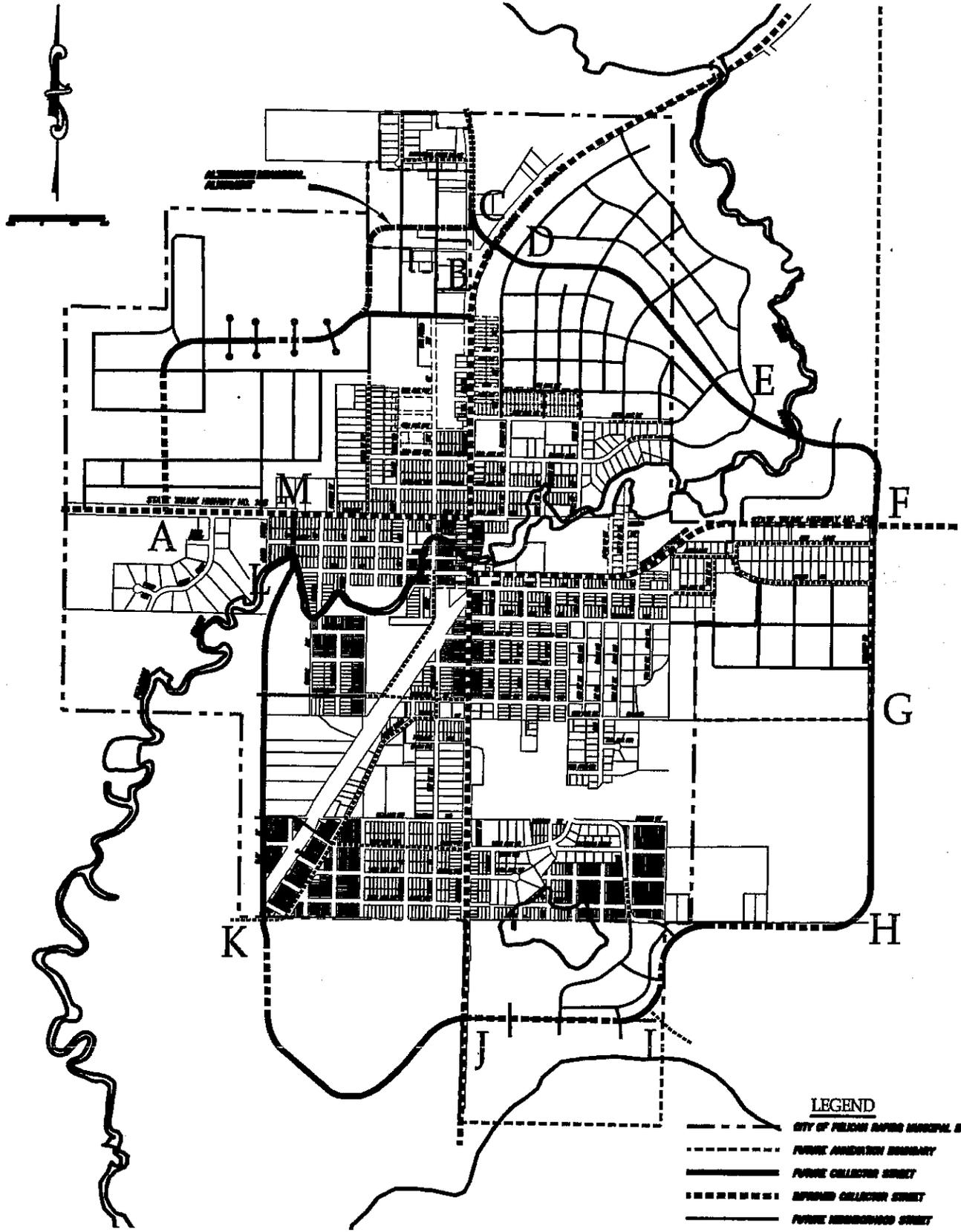
- **Redevelopment Area**

The general area is overlaid as a parking lot, see exhibit 13 and 14.

- **General Business District**

The City requirements for parking needs to strictly apply to any new facilities.

There are presently two businesses in the downtown core area that require large truck deliveries that take time to unload. Those two businesses are the Ace hardware store and the City Liquor store. The Ace hardware store unloading area is in the back (west side) side of the store and out of the way from direct flow through traffic and most deliveries are in the early morning. The other facility is the City Liquor store. This facility does disturb traffic/parking flow. The store has a number of delivery trucks that park in the parking lot just north of the liquor store. Parking in this lot for trucks is only in the through lane, which blocks access to the east side parking areas. The Liquor store also has a large number of customers during the summer that arrive at the store with a boat. Since there is very little parking on the street, the most natural place to park is in the north parking lot and with the limited space for parking a single vehicle, a vehicle and boat will take up four or five parking spaces. The conclusion is that the existing location of the City Liquor store is a very poor location for the kind of deliveries and customers that use the store. The Comprehensive Plan suggests that the Liquor store be moved to another location where there would be lots of space for parking both large trucks and vehicles with boats.



**LEGEND**

- CITY OF PELICAN RAPIDS MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
- FUTURE AMBULANCE BOUNDARY
- FUTURE COLLECTION STREET
- IMPROVED COLLECTION STREET
- FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD STREET
- IMPROVED NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

**LOOP CORRIDOR SEGMENTS**

DATE: 1/15/2010  
 DRAWN BY: J. H. HARRIS  
 CHECKED BY: J. H. HARRIS

City of Pelican Rapids

Land Use Study  
 Loop Corridor Segments

Date: 1/15/2010  
 Drawn by: J. H. HARRIS  
 Exhibit A

### **Loop Collector System**

The loop collector system is shown as Exhibit 9. See Exhibit "A" for the loop collector labeling.

Collector streets should not allow access through private access. All accesses should be through street intersections with the collector. This policy allows the collector to maintain the maximum carrying capacity and safety throughout its service life.

The collector system should be designed to handle highway design trucks. This means that the intersections should have adequate turning radius to facilitate the trucks.

To delineate the collector system a labeling system (see exhibit "A") has been employed as follows:

- A to B is the Industrial collector. This segment of the collector system should be the highest priority to the City. This segment can show potential industrial business owners that the City is interested in them and is ready to do business. The recommendation would be that the City designs the roadway and the major utility services for the overall area (ready for construction). This would also mean that property (agreements or out right purchases) should be acquired. This beginning step would be perceived by any new business, that the City means business.

The A-B section of the collector system has two options. The first option connects with Highway 59 at the water treatment plant, but the most favored option is the alternative option that connects the A-B segment with Highway 9. Highway 9 in this area is industrial and the alternative option would connect all of the industrial area with one road system before connecting to a major highway.

- Intersection at C with Highway 9, Highway 59 and collector segment D-E. This intersection should be moved to a point where Highway 9 would intersect with Highway 59 in a perpendicular intersection. This would provide for safe turning movements and connect Highway 9 with the community loop collector system.

- D to E should be the City's second priority. This collector would provide an area for upscale home development. Here again this is an area that the City should take the initiative and work with the property owner to set up a development area and get the collector street and utility backbone designed.
- E to F is the Pelican River crossing. This segment will reduce a very real and perceived threat to the community. That threat is that there is only one crossing of the river. There are two crossings (Broadway Street / Highway 59 and 1<sup>st</sup> Street N.W.) but they are only one block apart, thereby if something should happen to the community there is really only one area that the community can cross the river. This E-F segment crossing the river would connect State Highway 108 to State Highway 59 making the second separate river crossing.
- F to G is a low priority at this time, because it is an existing township gravel road that is well maintained. If a housing development would want to come into this area of the City then this road should be upgraded to a City street and be paved. Intersection improvements should be required to meet truck turning radius and sight distances.
- G to H is a very low priority at this time. It is open ground that would have to be acquired and the roadway developed. There are wetlands in this stretch of collector and would have to be avoided or mitigated before the road could be built.

The curves shown would be required to design the roadway to collector standards. The intent here is that the collector be the main road and other roads with approaching traffic be required to stop and make a turn onto the collector.

- H to I priority should depend upon the sequence of when this area might be developed. The alignment is existing township roads and City streets at this time. The plan only shows a smooth curve attaching the roadway segments to bring the segment to collector standards.
- I to J is already developed as a City street, but the east end of the segment needs to be paved and a smooth curve developed.
- J to K to L to M is the Southwest Collector and should be considered as the lowest priority. This collector segment would make up the river crossing on the west side of town. With the two river crossings right downtown, the east crossing, and this crossing would make the fourth crossing and give the City full access to all parts of town.

The Comprehensive Plan has included a Major Street Plan in the exhibits provided in the exhibits list as exhibit number 9. This plan should be adopted as the Major Street Plan. The Planning Commission should condition all plat approvals upon compliance with this Plan. As a general principal of street planning, it is important to provide interconnectedness between streets for ease of traffic circulation, utility line looping, pedestrian movement, neighborhood connectivity, and emergency vehicle ingress and egress. To accomplish this, a grid system plan of through streets should be strongly encouraged and promoted for future subdivisions.

### **Highway 59 Pedestrian Crossings**

The existing pedestrian crossing on Broadway Street / Highway 59 at mid block between Main Avenue / Highway 108 on the north and Mill Avenue / Highway 108 on the south is to be removed. This existing crossing is at the north side of the entrance to the liquor store parking lot and the front of Ace Hardware.

The new north pedestrian crossing is planned to be in line with the alleyway on the north side of The Rapids Restaurant. The south crossing is planned to be an extension of the walkway on the south side of the "Old City Hall".

These pedestrian crossings will connect the park on the east with Broadway Street / Highway 59 and then as you proceed across the crossings the path connects you to both the parking on the west side of Broadway Street / Highway 59, the library and the Library River Park. An existing building would have to be removed.

### **Access to Transportation System**

The R-2 residential area along Main Avenue / Highway 108 west of town will not have access to Main Avenue / Highway 108, especially along the north side of the roadway. Access will be by the collector street system if at all possible. On the south side of the roadway, access should be limited to common driveways to limit the number of access points.

To preserve the traffic movement functions of Highway 59 and 108, the City should limit access of the existing commercial uses on these highways. A preferred approach is to plan for consolidated access points along both sides of these highways by way of frontage roads. Continuous driveway access points are less safe and tend to disguise the actual location of street intersection locations.

Both sides of Highway 59 north of town are zoned as commercial. In exhibit 9 (development patterns/traffic circulation) there is shown a frontage road on the east side of Highway 59. The intent here is to have all traffic enter the commercial area on the east side of Highway 59 by use of the two intersections shown and then using the frontage road. The frontage road would divide the commercial and residential properties along Highway 59. On the west side, all property should access the transportation system through common access points. Properties on the very north end of town do not have an option as to an access point. However, the properties should be limited as to the number of access points that are allowed in this stretch of roadway.

### **Storm Sewer**

The City of Pelican Rapids has no stream flooding problems and few storm water problems since the city is located along side the Pelican River. Therefore, the city's storm sewer system accommodates the nominal amount of storm water flows that are generated from a design rainfall event. As the city grows, such storm water flows will increase, particularly in those drainage courses, which attract the greatest amount of urban development. During any future developments, the storm water needs to be considered for the whole drainage area that any new development is in. The development will need to provide an overall plan of the drainage basin and how the total flow would be handled and meet the new requirement mandated by the Federal Government and MPCA. All new development over one acre also needs to meet the new MPCA erosion control requirements.

The City should implement plans and standards for land development which prevents storm water flooding problems, soil erosion, health and pollution problems related to storm water, and contamination of the fishery ecology in the Pelican River receiving waters.

**New Storm Water Standards**—Incorporate into the city's storm water management ordinance, the new federal standards regarding the disturbance of one acre or more for development. Land disturbances of less than one acre also need permit coverage if that activity is part of a "larger common plan of development or sale" that is greater than one acre. Minnesota's new general storm water permit for construction activity was issued on August 1, 2003. These new standards require implementation of a Storm-water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that uses best management practices to prevent erosion and minimize polluted and sediment-laden runoff.

**Storm Water Management Measures** - Consider adopting other common storm water measures, such as: rain gardens on subdivision lots, porous pavements for parking lots and driveways, introduction of prairie plant material in drainage areas, bioswales adjacent to parking lots, and collection of water through cuts in street curbs for collection in adjacent bioswales or wetland basins.

**Education Efforts** - Work with local leaders including the school system and University Extension and other county and federal offices on general public education efforts regarding methods to minimize the amount of water that leaves a commercial or residential property. Minimize the amount of contamination that runs off from private and public property. Develop techniques that individuals can use to minimize the "hardening" of a housing or commercial property development.

### **Sidewalks**

The City shall develop a uniform policy for the installation of sidewalks. Sidewalks are increasingly being advocated and requested as a means of facilitation of pedestrian movement, as a means of minimizing auto trips, and as a means of promoting health and wellness. Uniform policies and standards for developing a continuous sidewalk system linking the core of the city with all new developments is a standard element of a City's transportation element of its Comprehensive Plan.

Sidewalks are a necessary component of a balanced city circulation plan. They will provide increasing benefits to city residents as the population ages during the next twenty to thirty years. Develop a sidewalk inspection and capital improvement plan. Sidewalk installation should be a top priority for arterial and collector streets.

### **Bike Paths**

Bicycle transportation is possible throughout the community. However, there is no bicycle master plan for the community. The only dedicated bicycle facility in the community is on the east side of Broadway Street / Highway 59 on the south end of town from the Elementary School to Lake Region Electric.

The City should develop a bicycle transportation plan connecting all parts of the city and the proposed trail system along the river.

A new bike/walking trail serving recreational purposes was proposed a few years ago. The planning commission received a few comments during the comprehensive plan process that this trail concept needs to be revived, especially to Maplewood Park

### **Airport**

The nearest commercial service airports are about twenty five miles away in both Fergus Falls and Detroit Lakes. State Highway 59 connects Pelican Rapids with both airports.

The City of Pelican Rapids has its own general service airport that is a grass (sod) landing strip five miles north of the city along the west side of County Highway 9. This airport is 1362 feet long and 150 feet wide and lays on a bearing of 15/33 (150 and 330 degrees from true north) at an elevation of 1389 feet. The airport is lighted from dusk to dawn. The airport was constructed in the mid 1960's and has had only maintenance upgrades since that time. The runway lighting at this time is in need of serious repair. The City has requested that the airport lighting, runway asphalt surfacing, and additional hangers be included in the State of Minnesota Department of Aeronautics five year Capital Improvement Plan.

The City should develop its own Capital Improvement Plan and a Master Plan for the whole property, which is mostly unused at this time.

### **Rail Service**

Rail service was discontinued years ago and most of its right-of-way was converted to other uses.

### **Bus / Truck Service**

There is no common carrier bus service to the community, nor is there any common carrier trucking terminal located in the community.

## **Goals**

- To provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the community, while minimizing the impact of the circulation system on residential areas.
- To require that all new streets meet engineering and planning standards for location, design and esthetics. These standards are to be placed in the city's Ordinance and all street proposals should be reviewed subject to these standards.

## **Objectives**

- a. Develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) which would include an annual program element for streets, sewer, water and other public facilities, and which would include a general projection of needs for five years. A standard CIP is five years in length.
- b. Develop street cross-section design standards and construction standards for the local, collector and arterial street classifications.
- c. Develop a Major Street Plan.
- d. Cul-de-sac streets should be restricted and used only in absolutely necessary situations, as may be required by topographic limitations.
- e. Develop a sidewalk inspection and improvement program and place in the proposed Capital Improvements Program
- f. Monitor State Dept. of Transportation programs for any improvements to Highway 59 and 108 and get involved early with any state plans to insure that the City of Pelican Rapids's interests are provided for, and that land use plans along the highway are adequately serviced by state plans.
- g. Provide for safe and continuous bicycle and pedestrian travel throughout the community. Connecting new residential neighborhoods into the rest of the community.
- h. Plan to connect Pelican Rapids to a regional walking/biking trail system.
- i. Support continued use of the Pelican Rapids Transit System.

j. Develop an Airport Master Plan.

k. Develop a City wide storm water management plan.

## **8.0 WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS**

### **Summary Analysis**

The water and wastewater facilities of greatest importance to the community's physical growth include; the wastewater treatment facility, the sewage collection system including lift stations, the municipal wells and the water tower.

Even though the city's Comprehensive Plan is drawn for a planning horizon of twenty years, most water and wastewater systems are intended to serve much longer than this. The planning for such facilities, particularly sewer and water lines, should be planned and designed for the useful life of several decades.

The City does not have a master plan of either the water or the wastewater system for the future. The information that the City has is the existing information of what is in the ground today.

### **Water Treatment Plant and Water Distribution System**

Pelican Rapid's water system consists of ten wells, which pump water from two aquifers. This is a plentiful and high quality source of water. Water pressure is supplied by a single water storage tower. As the community grows, the need may emerge for a second water storage tank. Wellhead protection is important to assure a safe drinking water supply throughout the future. The water distribution system consists of water pipes in sizes of 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 inches in diameter. The two and four-inch diameter pipes are considered obsolete in size for municipal service and fire protection. An important purpose in keeping the water system upgraded is for fire protection. Some areas of the city water system presently require looping of water mains and up sizing of some lines for the purpose of increasing pressure, eliminating dead-end lines and improving fire protection. Separate engineering studies should be acquired to develop a master plan for these improvements.

The City has 10 water wells. At the present time, three of the wells have been contaminated by benzene and gasoline additives.

The water treatment facility can produce 1,200,000 gallons per day. The water tower has a capacity of 500,000 gallons. The city also has a wet well water storage tank at the water treatment facility that has a capacity of 20,000 gallons.

In 2002, the usage was 24.363 million gallons per month and in May of 2003, the usage was down to 16.343 million gallons per month. The reduction is the direct result of the West Central Turkey Plant reduction of their kill line. A direct translation of 16.343 million gallons per month is approximately 545,000 gallons per day. The water treatment plant has the capacity to produce approximately 650,000 gpd of additional water. The amount would suggest that the plant capacity could handle an additional 8,700 people. The outlook for sufficient water treatment services to serve the projected twenty year growth is favorable.

A capital improvement plan should be developed to make sure that the City is not caught by some unknown condition that could affect the capacity of the plant.

### **Waste Water Treatment Facility and Sewer Collection System**

The wastewater treatment facility is located on the west side of the City. The facility was built in 1988 with a 771,000 gallons per day capacity. The City also operates a lagoon system or pretreatment pond system west of West Central Turkey Plant on the northwest side of the city. The wastewater treatment facility was designed around a life expectancy of 20 years.

There were a number of comments from the citizen input on the subject of the odor that comes from the lagoon system. It is recommended that the city research ways to minimize the source of the odor.

The treatment plan was designed and sized to meet the needs of the City and West Central Turkey plant. The biological waste coming from the turkey plant was a major factor in the flow being received by the wastewater facility. In 2001, the West Central Turkey Corporation reorganized their systems and the plant in Pelican Rapids was turned into an "added value" or "further processing" plant instead of the "killing" plant. This resulted in a major reduction in water usage, which resulted in more hydrologic capacity at both the wastewater treatment facility and at the lagoons. In the lagoon system, there are two major ponds, which are the polishing and equalization ponds. The lagoons also have three small ponds, which are anaerobic style ponds (receiving ponds).

The flow to the wastewater treatment facility before the remodeling of the turkey plant was 600,000 gallons per day, while after the remodeling the flow to the plant was reduced to 450,000 gallons per day. This gives an additional capacity of 150,000 gallons per day.

The plant is designed for 771,000 gpd minus the present usage of 450,000 gpd gives us 321,000 gpd, which translates into approximately 4,280 people, using 75 gpd per person. That is to say that the plant could carry an additional 1665 homes, using 2.57 people per household.

The wastewater treatment facility is capable of handling wastewater for a city of approximately 6,500 people without the additional wastewater flow from the turkey plant. The outlook for sufficient waste treatment services to serve projected twenty year growth is favorable.

This all sounds very good, but if West Central Turkey Plant starts up an additional line that would need water, or some other water demanding industry would come to town then this additional capacity could easily disappear.

A capital improvement plan should be developed to make sure that the City is not caught by some unknown condition that could affect the capacity of the plant.

The map in exhibits 3 (utility information) and 4 (service areas) illustrates the trunk sewer and water systems and the relationship of the major utility lines to the city's growth areas.

A topographic map of the City is the next step in developing a database for the City so that the City can determine where the true service boundaries are at and where pump stations would be required.

While new sewer lift stations can be constructed in the future, good planning and use of funds would indicate that the capacity of the existing gravity lines, lift stations and related force main lines would be used before additional investments of public funds are made. Topographic mapping of the City will determine the drainage areas to both the gravity line and lift stations.

The southeast and northeast parts of town have clay tile sewer lines and have Infiltration problems. An Infiltration problem is basically an additional flow that comes through the lines because of cracks in the pipe. That additional flow goes to the treatment facility to be treated. Any additional hydrologic load on the treatment facility above the amount that really needs treatment is an additional expense that the City could and should use in other sewer related projects.

The southwest part of town is mostly PVC pipe and the northwest is half PVC and half Clay Tile.

In Conclusion, the whole town needs to go through an infiltration investigation program on all sewer lines/manholes and determine which lines/manholes need to be upgraded. This should be part of an overall Master Plan of the system.

The wastewater facility has no generator for backup power in case of emergency.

The City has two sewer lift stations at the present time. One is at the City garage and services the industrial park area. The other lift station is at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue northeast. Neither lift station has generator backup or telemeter alarms. The only alarm is an alarm at the lift station.

The sewer mains in the city range up to 12 inches in diameter.

A master plan of the water and wastewater system should be developed and shall include all areas of both the existing community and the new lands that are being annexated by this Comprehensive Plan. The master plan should address all issues as to size of all water and wastewater systems and the need for a new water tower and capacity of treatment.

### **Goals**

- Develop a Capital Improvements Plan based on a comprehensive inventory and analysis of water and wastewater needs and update every year as a part of the budget process.
- To plan, design, and program water and sanitary sewer in accord with projected growth demands.
- To place in the proposed annual budget the funds needed to implement water and sanitary sewer needs as identified for a given budget year.

## **Objectives**

- a. Develop a five year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) in 2005, along with a master plan of the water and wastewater system.
- b. Conduct a sanitary sewer inspection, televising and repair program (known as an I and I program).
- c. Conduct a needs study for a second water tower before 2010.
- d. Evaluate recommendations and growth projections of the wastewater treatment facility expansion plans to assure that they are consistent with the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- e. Adopt a wellhead protection plan to protect the city's drinking water supply. Implement recommended best land management practices for long-term protection of the drinking water supply.
- f. Take the necessary measures to assure that the city has at least ten fully operating wells on line at all times.
- g. Provide backup power using a generator at the water treatment plant.
- h. Provide backup power using a generator at the wastewater treatment facility.

## **9.0 PARKS**

### **Summary Analysis**

The existing City's parks system consists of two developed public parks (Sherin and Peterson Parks), one undeveloped public park (The River Park – North of the Library), one soccer field / play ground equipment (Thompson Memorial Park), one skateboard park and soccer field, and one ice skating rink (on the north end of the Elementary school building). There are no small neighborhood parks in the city.

Reports of the condition of the swimming pool would indicate that improvements or replacement would soon be warranted.

A walking trail along the river has been a subject of many discussions for many years and is now being brought to full light in this document.

### **River Trail**

During public input, a number of people came up with the request that the City work on making the river a central point of the community. A river walk or trail was mentioned a number of times. Businesses along the river were another subject that was brought up. The over all comments were about making the river a central part of the image of the City.

From the comments received, the Planning Commission began to look at ways and limits of where and how the river could be developed. The river trail is a linear park along the full extent of the river within the City limits starting at Prairie Lake and goes south and west to the west part of town along Highway 108.

The plan shows a walking/biking trail along the edge of the river. This trail was envisioned to be along the edge of the wetland next to the river, but not to encroach on the wetlands.

The trail should be a level walking surface and approximately 10 feet wide. This gives the opportunity for both people and bikes to pass, going either the same or opposite directions.

The grade of the trail should consider handicapped requirements in the design. The only place where the handicapped design would not have to be considered is in the center of town where there are three branches of the trail. One branch (the north branch) will need to meet handicapped requirements.

The river trail starts out at the Swimming Beach Park on Prairie Lake, then proceeds west along the lake to the boat ramp, and then crosses Highway 59 to the North Picnic Park on the south side of Highway 59. The trail then proceeds south and west along the river. The exact location of the trail will have to be field located after the wetlands have been delineated.

The plan shows the trail crossing the river on a foot bridge just south of the turkey barns on the north side of the river, and then proceeding along the south side of the river.

The trail then comes to the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Picnic Park and then proceeds along the south side of the river to Sherin Memorial Park.

At Sherin Memorial Park, the trail crosses the river again using the suspension bridge to E.L. Peterson Park. At this point, the trail is to take three branches to get to the west side of town.

- The north branch is intended to be handicapped accessible. It goes across the parking lot, along the south side of the Seifert Realty business, crosses Broadway Street / Highway 59 and goes between the Rapids restaurant and the computer store, crosses the parking lot to the river and crosses the river on a foot bridge into the library park and continues south and west to the river.
- The middle branch of the trail would go down the stairs on the east side of the "Historic City Hall" and proceed along the south side of Historic City Hall, cross Highway 59 where a new bridge is to be built from Highway 59 to the library. This route is only handicapped accessible from the bathrooms on the east side of Historic City Hall to the library.
- The south trail would start on the top of the dam, down the stairs on the south side of the windmill, proceed along the south side of the river and then go under the Highway 59 bridge. The trail would continue along the south side of the river to First Street where it would come back together with the other branches of the trail.

All branches of the trail come together and continue west along the south side of the river. The trail would again cross the river to the north side. The end of the trail is the West Picnic Park at the west end of the City property now being used as part of the sewerage treatment facility.

### **Swimming Park**

The parks start at the north end of town with a swimming beach on Prairie Lake. The swimming beach concept came from a number of sources, but especially from the youth of the community, and the minority group. The exact location of the swimming beach was not determined in the plan, but was suggested somewhere on the South shore of Prairie lake.

### **North Picnic Park**

The north picnic park is on the south side of Highway 59 on the west side of the river. This picnic park is intended to be a parking place for those people who want to use the river trail. This park would have a few picnic tables and 10 parking spaces. Access to this picnic park is from the frontage road that parallels Highway 59 on the south side.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Street Park / Picnic Park**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Street N.E. Park, is just that, a park on the north end extension of Sixth Street on the south side of the river. The city owns this property. This park is to be a picnic park without parking. This is a park on the river trail, a place for people to take a break in their walk along the trail.

### **Sherin Memorial Park / E.L. Peterson Park**

The improvements in the main parks are only the river trail through them and the connections to the trail on the west side of E.L. Peterson Park. Parking as described in the downtown parking section is on the west side of E.L. Peterson Park.

### **The Library / River Park.**

The library board, as a way to make the front entrance of the library more appealing, visioned this park. The planning commission received from the library board a list of the items that the library board had considered in the plan that they had drawn up. The planning commission also saw that there was a real need to address the access to the library. The front entrance to the library is on an alleyway and this makes it very hard for anyone that does not know the community, to find the library. A new directional sign has helped. When the visitor does find the library, it is hard to find the front door. Then the next issue is, where to park? The parking near the front door is very limited.

The Planning Commission took all of this into consideration where they tried to connect the library to the city and provide ample parking close to the front door. The elements in the Library Board plan were considered, but not in detail. The only element from the Library Board plan that is in the Comprehensive Plan is the amphitheater. The amphitheater was shown only because of the parking issue. The parking has been rearranged and reoriented so that the parking is at the same level as the library front doors. Additional parking is shown on the East side of the library. Upon removal of the existing building on the east side of the library a parking lot would be provided, but also a wide (10 feet wide) sidewalk from Mill Street should be provided to make a more prominent entry, so that people can find the front entrance of the library. The intent is to make the Pelican Rapids Library "The Library on the River Park" and make it easily connected to parking and access from Mill Avenue. The plan would also like to suggest that the tree on the south side of the river and on the east side of the alley way that is on the east side of the library be removed and replaced with landscaping that would enhance the appearance and view of the library from Broadway Street / Highway 59.

The trail (talked about in the trail section) moves through the library park in three ways connecting the city parks together. The main access from Broadway Street / Highway 59 to the library front door would be through the new bridge crossing the river. This route does remove one business on the north side of the river. This bridge would be handicapped accessible from Broadway Street / Highway 59 to the front door of the library.

The other elements of the library park should be left up to the City park board as to what is included and how it should be arranged. The Comprehensive Plan is not the place to do a detail design of the park.

The amphitheater is shown because of the embankment caused by the parking lot. This embankment would be a natural setting for the amphitheater. The plan does show its location and especially how it also would be connected to the river trail system. With the amphitheater in this location, it could easily be a major center point of activity in the City.

The library parking lot is divided into two sections; between those two sections, the plan shows a 10-foot wide sidewalk and then stairs (north) down through the seating section to the front of the amphitheater. This will connect the library directly to both the parking and the amphitheater.

Again, these are only schematic ideas trying to show the connections between the City parks, river trail, Library, and amphitheater. The details can be worked out, but what needs to be considered as concrete in the plan is the way the City is connected together.

A few suggestions were received about the existing senior center building. If the senior center were to move to a new location (community center) then that building would be available for other uses. One use suggested was for a community restroom and a snack bar for events in the library / river park

### **West Picnic Park**

The west terminus of the river trail is another picnic park with parking and picnic tables. This picnic park is located on the corner of what would be Reed Avenue N.W. and 5<sup>th</sup> Street N.W.

### **Southwest Picnic Park**

The last picnic park is suggested on the east side of the Pelican Rapids School District property, which has been developed into a natural habitat viewing area. Again, this is for parking and a few picnic tables.

### **Street Trees along Broadway Street / Highway 59**

The concept here is to soften the impact of pavement and sidewalks. The idea is to make the city business district more appealing to the visiting public. The Comprehensive Plan suggests that the cross walks not start at the edge of the existing sidewalk, but that the sidewalk extends out into the street approximately seven (7) feet.

The sidewalk extension is to be a planter with a crosswalk in the middle. The planter is to have tall columnar trees and low shrubs. The tree and shrubs should be selected to maximize the visibility of the pedestrian, but not block the signs on the sides of the buildings.

Exhibit 12 shows the travel lanes and the clearance to the suggested raised crosswalk section.

The Comprehensive Plan only showed a typical section of what can be done from 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N.W. to Mill Avenue. The Comprehensive Plan is recommending that this typical section be implemented along Broadway Street / Highway 59 from Lake Region Avenue S.E. on the south to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E. on the north.

## **Community Trees**

A tree program should be started in the community. Every new development in all zones of the community should be required to plant trees. Every new lot, as soon as the building is built, should plant at least two trees in the front yard. All new commercial uses should be required to have a landscape plan.

## **Goals**

- To make the City, a park and river orientated space where people can stop and enjoy the beauty of the community.
- To soften the community through the use of green spaces and trees.

## **Objectives**

- a. Develop a long-range parks and open space plan. This plan should be developed by the City Park Board in enough detail so the City Council can see what the Board plans on accomplishing in the next five years. This plan should be updated every year.
- b. Evaluate the existing swimming pool and develop a plan for improving swimming pool services.

## 10.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION

### Summary Analysis

Implementation tools that are typically used to implement community planning programs include: zoning and subdivision ordinances, official street maps, extraterritorial powers, capital improvements programs, annual budget, annexation, informational meetings, public hearings, industrial development programs, community marketing, and relationships with regional and state agencies having planning and regulatory authority such as MNDot and Otter Tail County Highway Department. Pelican Rapids's principal measures for implementing its planning and development objectives are its zoning and subdivision regulations. Many of the other measures listed above are also applied, as specific circumstances arise. Some measures, such as industrial development programs and community marketing, are normally performed by non-municipal groups, such as EDC and the Chamber of Commerce.

The principal agents involved in municipal planning implementation efforts include the city Planning Commission and the City staff, all under the overall implementation leadership and authority of the Mayor and City Council. The City Attorney also has a related role in the legal elements of implementation programs.

### Zoning Ordinance Observations

- Consistency Requirement - The ordinance does not state that one of the purposes of the ordinance is, "to implement the policies of the City of Pelican Rapids pursuant to the official Comprehensive Plan". It is important to note that there has been no official Comprehensive Plan for Pelican Rapids for many years. It is important that zoning and platting decisions be "consistent" with an adopted and up-to-date Comprehensive Plan. This "consistency" doctrine is a requirement in most state planning and zoning enabling legislation upon which local programs get their authority. Consistency between zoning and an official Plan is becoming increasingly important in upholding zoning decisions in the courts.
- Zoning districts – The city's zoning map as recommended by this Comprehensive Plan is presented in Figure 8.

- **Zoning Map** – Pelican Rapid’s zoning map has a well proportioned pattern for the distribution and size of its various zoning districts. There is no apparent pattern of spot zoning. As a general precaution, large Agricultural zoned areas generally should not be rezoned to another district substantially in advance of terminating the agricultural use because the continuing agricultural use then becomes a “non-conforming” use for perhaps many years. Non-conforming use status can be a cloud over a land activity by making the activity more susceptible to complaints about its activities, and there could be questions if the nature of the farming activity could be changed or enlarged which is normally not permitted for a non-conforming use. Zoning map problems often develop under conditions of significant community growth in the absence of adherence to a Comprehensive Plan.
- The city presently cannot administer extraterritorial zoning or plat review because there is township and county zoning covering the area outside the city. Extraterritorial powers are intended to give municipalities a formal role in assuring that development outside its boundaries is compatible with its growth plans and will not cause undue problems and expenses, which the municipality may become responsible for in the future. It would be in the city’s interest to communicate its growth interests to county and township officials and seek to coordinate land use and development goals and methods through a legal document.

### **Goals**

- Incorporate development standards and land management techniques into the Ordinances.
- Maintain effective communication and coordination with other units of government involved with development activity within Pelican Rapid’s planned growth area.
- Re-evaluate and update the city’s development plans, policies and ordinances on a periodic basis to keep them relevant with growth problems and opportunities.

## Objectives

- a. Complete an assessment of all implementation ordinances and policies, with priority emphasis on the zoning and subdivision regulations.
- b. Begin a process of working with the county and surrounding townships to establish a common ground of understanding of the city's growth responsibilities and needs, and to coordinate planning and development controls to provide consistency with Pelican Rapids's specific growth area plans. An important objective of this program is to avoid patterns of sprawl and developments, which would be difficult and overly expensive to retrofit for municipal services and facilities in the future. The City of Pelican Rapids Comprehensive Land Use Plan recommends "close cooperation" with Otter Tail County and Pelican Rapids Township.
- c. Conduct workshops with the City Council and Planning Commission, after adoption of a Comprehensive Plan, on how to most effectively use the new Plan and how to incorporate up-dated implementation policies and techniques.
- d. Develop a five year Capital Improvements Program.
- e. Conduct feasibility studies of large-scale development projects requiring municipal assistance to determine municipal economic impact; this would include projects proposed for TIF assistance. Maintain a positive and active relationship with funding organizations such as the West Central Initiative Group, the Pelican Rapids Area Economical Development Corporation (EDC), and other state and federal agencies with municipal assistance programs.
- f. Re-evaluate user fees to assure that the revenue generated from municipal services is adequate to continue providing those services throughout the city and into new growth areas.
- g. Review the city's existing Storm Water Management Plan, and update, if necessary, to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- h. Consider the co-location of public and educational facilities based on a partnering outlook with other units of government and public service institutions.
- i. In pursuing continued community growth, the information in the Minnesota Planning Environmental Quality Board's documents, entitled: *Under Construction*, and *Sustainable Development Primer*, should be consulted for guidance.

- j. Update the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years per state requirements, or more often as necessary.
- k. Establish the City Administrator as the custodian of the Comprehensive Plan. This means that the City Administrator will be responsible for keeping the Plan's policies and projects before the City Council and City Planning Commission as they deal with issues addressed in the Plan.
- l. The City Council should review the Comprehensive Plan in the Fall of every year as a part of the process of assuring that the annual budget implements those parts of the Plan that are feasible to do so for that budget year, and to confirm the validity of city development policies. It should be a routine responsibility of the City Administrator's office to assist the Council with this review. This process will provide guidance to city officials in the conduct of their responsibilities regarding the city's development functions.
- m. The Planning Commission and the EDA should meet at least once a year in a joint meeting to review the Comprehensive Plan and work out an action plan for the following year.
- n. The City of Pelican Rapids has accomplished a great deal towards inventory of the existing systems in the community. Base mapping has been started in which most of the utilities have been located and most of the parcels in the community have been put into a mapping database. Aerial mapping photographs of the community have also been acquired and included into the mapping database. The next item to be included on the mapping database will be topographic mapping of the City, utilizing a two-foot contour mapping configuration.
- o. Once this is accomplished then the wetland and any sensitive areas should be delineated and then mapped and put into the mapping database. This would give the City complete knowledge on where natural resources are at and what needs to be done to protect them.
- p. This will give the city the ability to determine in great detail what areas of the city need more attention on utility services. The mapping should have utility service isobars showing where service can be provided with the existing system and then conditions if a pump station is installed into the system, what areas could be serviced.
- q. Support existing volunteer activity in community affairs and encourage volunteerism to be a part of appropriate implementation activities of the city's Comprehensive Plan. The City should develop a culture of respect and cooperation through out the community.

- r. The Pelican Rapids Fire Department is a department of the City, but also services and gets revenue from the townships in the greater area. The present Fire Department services are well organized and the personnel are well trained for this purpose. The Fire Department's ability to control fires is a direct reflection on the City. The department should be considered in any expansion of other services provided by the City.
- s. The major recommendations from the Planning Commission is that the City requires all City departments to submit a Capital Improvement Plan (minimum five years). The plan should include buildings and equipment needs. The other recommendation would be for a Staffing and Training Plan. The overall request here is for a total budget and direction.
- t. All departments should have an up to date job description, budget, and description of responsibility and accountability to the City Council.
- u. The Comprehensive Plan took in many comments that are really not directly under the control of the City. However, these comments should be considered. Some of those items were around the youth of the community, a youth center, a Community Center, and the Pelican Rapids School buildings replacement.
- v. An area where the City could get the youth involved is with government (example, a youth member on the Planning Commission, Park Board, ect.), and start or mentor a youth apprenticeship program in local businesses.
- w. For a detailed, review of what the community asked for, look in the Citizen Comment Chart (exhibit 6), and in volume two of this document. This reference volume should be taken as a serious reference as to what the community asked for in all the meetings.