

Plan Action Steps

This section of the *City of Big Lake Comprehensive Plan* lists the major actions that the City expects to take to carry out the recommendations of the plan. This work plan should be updated annually.

The *Comprehensive Plan* must also respond to the continuous stream of changes that occur in the community. This chapter describes how the plan’s usefulness will be monitored and how it may be amended.

Key Actions by Priority

The Big Lake City Council should establish a schedule of short-term and long-term actions as a targeted work program to guide the ongoing implementation of the plan.

The City should conduct the actions listed in the following table through annual and multiple-year assignments.

The City’s actions should be consistent with the policies of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Those actions include but are not limited to:

- Review of development applications
- The City’s capital improvements and operations budgets
- Any sub-area plans
- Plans of other agencies as they affect the city
- Officially-adopted plan maps that show the intended route for roads, sewer lines or similar public improvements
- Land development or changes in zoning
- Land subdivision.

**Table 17-1
Major Plan Actions**

Major Actions	Timing
Land Use and Development	
Use the <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> when reviewing land development or zoning applications .	Continuous
Strictly enforce the current zoning regulations for the Shoreland Areas .	Continuous
Urge Sherburne County and Big Lake Township to set a minimum residential lot size of at least 5 acres but ideally 10 acres in areas of Big Lake Township south of the Elk River to protect the ability of land near the City to be subdivided and served with sewer and water lines, and to protect agriculture and rural character.	Continuous
Consider annexation applications that are consistent with the Land Use Plan Map and Policy 5 under Perimeter Growth.	Continuous
Amend the zoning ordinance as described on page 11-14.	2018 – 2019
Study and consider amending the zoning map in locations that are planned for land uses that are distinctly different than their current use and which contain buildings or activities that appear to be harmful to adjacent land development. Discuss land use prospects and zoning requirements with the owner before proceeding.	Continuous

Major Actions	Timing
Transportation	
Adopt a road functional classification system and apply it to those streets and roads that are under municipal jurisdiction	2018 and ongoing
Continue involvement with TH 25 Coalition to advocate Big Lake’s position on the possible second river bridge and the “rail served industrial park.” Advance the discussion on the viability or feasibility of new roles for TH 25, CSAH 17 and CSAH 11.	Following discussions
Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of the proposed parkway system :	2019
Apply the road access management guidelines when building new streets or reviewing plats and site plans. Ensure that plans are sent to MnDOT or Sherburne County during the plan review period for their comment.	Ongoing
Amend the zoning ordinance to greatly reduce or eliminate minimum off-street parking requirements for businesses and industry.	2019
Natural Resources	
Provide some level of public access to the riverfront through the acquisition of land for public parks and trails.	Continuous
Look favorably upon annexation petitions along the river as a means of protecting these resources and because these are prime housing development locations.	Continuous
Continue to protect groves and forests across the city by enforcing the protective regulations in the zoning ordinance, Section 1027.06, and the subdivision ordinance, Section 1108.22 of the City Code.	Continuous

Major Actions	Timing
Consult with experts and decide whether to submit historic designation nominations for a higher level of projection for Big Lake Public School and the Hanson House.	By 2020
Protect farm lands by properly managing the perimeter growth of the city.	Continuous
Parks and Trails	
Acquire land for new parks during the process of land subdivision. Require dedication of cash when the plat does not include a location planned for park. Use the money to acquire land in the proper location later.	Ongoing
Acquire land for a new community park in the southeastern quadrant of the city. It is anticipated that most of this acquisition will have to be done through direct purchase because of the planned size of this park.	2018 - 2030
Continue to improve River Oaks Park according to the adopted master plan.	2018 - 2020
Prepare a master plan for continued improvement of Lakeside Park .	2020
Continue to consider acquiring a location for and building a site for several athletic fields .	2018 - 2025
Discuss how the City and the School District could collaborate for mutual benefit.	Ongoing
Follow the 2016 Trails Master Plan and build or extend off-road paved paths.	Ongoing

Major Actions	Timing
Public Utilities	
Follow the 2004 sanitary sewer system expansion plan .	Continuous
Require annexation or an annexation agreement to extend and connect to City sewer or water lines.	Continuous
Approve residential or commercial plats that are adjacent to or very near other, existing urban development.	Continuous
Seek to annex, develop and serve intervening locations in order to recoup some of the cost of extending trunk water lines to those locations while maintaining consistency with the land use and growth management plan	Continuous
Continue to manage surface water consistent with City, County and State regulations and guidelines for the protection of the environment and properties, including the Big Lake Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).	Continuous
Continue to enforce these and other City ordinances to protect surface water: Shorelands, Wetlands, Floodplain, Mississippi Recreational River District, Subdivision Code (Storm Water Management and Erosion Control) and Zoning Code.	Continuous
Continue to apply the guidelines of the SWPPP and other sound design ideas when reviewing site plans and plats.	Continuous
Study the feasibility of a man-made outlet to Big and Mitchell Lakes that is less prone to overflowing than the present structure.	By 2022

Major Actions	Timing
Economic Development	
Continue to apply the guidance of this comprehensive plan and the City's zoning regulations to ensure an adequate supply of well-designed and intensively developed industrial and commercial sites.	Continuous
Explore creating redevelopment financial assistance tools.	Continuous
Participate in the 2018 study with Sherburne County and the City of Becker regarding a possible rail-served industrial park.	2018 and 2019
Continue to enhance quality of life amenities that help attract and retain competitive employers and a skilled workforce.	Continuous
Work with county, utility and regional partners on marketing, workforce attraction and financial incentives.	Continuous
Build on the Northstar and CommuterLink services.	Continuous

Keeping the Plan Relevant and Fresh

The *Comprehensive Plan* should be considered a valuable, useful document. Ideally, it will become the central decision-making document for the City. The plan will be most effective in guiding decision-making if it is kept up-to-date and relevant. The physical condition of the city as well as the attitudes and thinking of its policymakers may change over time, and the comprehensive plan should be a living document designed to reflect that natural evolution and allow for the integration of new ideas.

The City can ensure that the comprehensive plan stays relevant by having staff give an annual report on the state of the plan, periodically making minor updates on an as-needed basis, and by conducting a full review of the plan with a possible major update once every 10 years.

Annual Report

Prepare an annual report describing how the plan has been used and what changes have occurred that may affect the relevance of the document. Every twelve months, City staff should prepare a brief report summarizing:

- How the plan was used to direct major spending, regulatory and construction decisions
- How development did or did not coincide with the guidance of the plan
- How the City has changed in ways that may call for amendments to the plan.

The report should be transmitted to the City Council and made available to the public. A brief verbal presentation at a workshop meeting should be conducted to call attention to the major findings of the annual report.

No plan amendments are required in conjunction with these reports, although such amendments may be appropriate depending on the reports' findings.

Periodic Amendments

Periodically propose amendments to the plan as conditions warrant.

It is appropriate that some parts of the plan would be amended quite rarely while others might be subject to much more frequent examination. Proposed changes to the plan maps, for instance, would depend on the magnitude of the revision, their relationship to the policies of the plan, and the nature of the changing circumstances that has led to the desire for amendments.

The City Planning Commission may propose amendments to the comprehensive plan from time to time as circumstances warrant. The public, including nearby cities, Big Lake Township, and Sherburne County, should be notified of any major proposed changes and given an opportunity to learn about the change and provide comment. The City will consider public opinion in evaluating how a proposed change would meet the above criteria. The City could consider soliciting public input through direct mail survey forms, neighborhood meetings, Planning Commission public meetings and through use of the internet.

Scheduled Reviews

The Planning Commission should conduct a formal review with a possible major update of the plan once every 10 years with the help of a citizens advisory committee.