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Castle Rock Township Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary

Date



Introduction

Castle Rock Township participated in a 16-community Rural Collaborative in Dakota County to prepare a comprehensive plan fulfilling the requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act: Minnesota Statutes, Section 473.859. The plan is intended to guide future land use development, redevelopment, and other planning and policy concerns for communities in the Rural Collaborative.

This executive summary is a brief of local information from the Dakota County Rural Collaborative Plan unique to Castle Rock Township. The Dakota County Rural Collaborative Plan was prepared in a joint effort by the communities between 2017 and 2018 and replaces the existing Rural Collaborative Comprehensive Plan, dated 2009.

This executive summary contains demographic trend data, growth forecasts, and a Future Land Use map with acreage table unique to Castle Rock Township. Also included is the procedure to amend the Comprehensive Plan.

This executive summary is a reference to local information and supplements the Dakota County Rural Collaborative Plan. Please refer to the Dakota County Rural Collaborative Plan for details about additional background data, regional planning data and relationships, natural features, land use descriptions, regional park planning, natural resource management, and transportation planning.

Goals and Policies

Goals and policies are official community positions that provide the basis for strategies to manage growth and change. Goals are general statements that reflect community values regarding the built and natural environments. Policies are more specific, official positions of communities that guide future planning decisions and implementation strategies. The goals for future growth management are outlined below. Descriptions of policies can be found as a subsection to each goal in the comprehensive plan.

1. Agricultural Goals

- Minimize conflicts between land uses.
- Protect the rural atmosphere of the area.
- Minimize the impact on long-term agricultural areas by maintaining very low-density residential development.
- Preserve agriculture as a primary land use and economic opportunity in the area.
- Minimize the conversion or disruption of agricultural land uses by limiting non-farm uses in long-term agricultural areas.

2. Residential Goals

- Protect residential uses from potential impacts of incompatible uses.
- Maintain the quality and character of existing residences.
- Promote higher density housing, life-cycle housing, and affordable housing opportunities in the communities with public utilities.

- Support affordable housing opportunities for all age groups.
 - Limit non-farm residences in areas designated long-term agriculture.
 - Educate non-farm residents on the potential impacts from normal farm practices and the support for long-term agriculture as a primary land use in the area.
 - Maintain the rural atmosphere.
3. Commerce/Industry Goals
- Promote the expansion of non-farm business development in area cities and designated rural centers.
 - Support agri-business expansion in the community and retain existing service industries.
 - Promote the economic viability and vitality of long-term agricultural operations.
 - Limit non-farm business development to areas not designated for long-term agriculture and areas where the provisions for higher levels of service may be available.
4. Public Facilities and Services Goals
- Cooperate and coordinate with area communities and governments on issues that have the potential for affecting the long-term goals of the community.
 - Support the preservation of cultural heritage sites.
 - Maintain responsible fiscal management based upon limited tax values and government aids.
 - Protect the health, safety, and welfare of area residents and businesses.
 - Maintain a level of public services appropriate for the rural/agricultural nature of the area, the needs and desires of the community, and the priorities of the community.
 - Ensure that residents have the opportunity to offer input and have access to local government activities.
5. Environmental Resources Goals
- Ensure that all land use activities take place in harmony with natural systems.
 - Protect the open space quality
 - Reduce instances of harmful erosion, sedimentation, and pollutants from affecting water resources.
 - Protect surface waters and wetland areas to promote water quality, natural habitat areas, groundwater recharge, and recreational opportunities.
 - Protect the natural habitat qualities and biodiversity of the area.
 - Protect and preserve natural systems for the collection and dispersion of stormwater and runoff.
 - Protect existing woodlands throughout the area.
 - Protect the quality and quantity of the groundwater supply.
 - Protect high quality aggregate resources for future use.
 - Promote solar access and sustainable energy alternatives for residents and businesses.
6. Recreation and Open Space Goals
- Preserve open spaces that enhance rural aesthetic values, protect natural habitat, allow recreational uses, and promote area-wide greenway corridor potential.
 - Support active youth and senior recreational opportunities and facilities in area cities and schools.

- Support recreational opportunities that are not disruptive to long-term agriculture and are compatible with the rural character of the area.
- Promote regional trails that provide connectivity between communities, regional parks, water resources, and significant natural features.

7. Water Resources Goals

- Maintain and enhance natural systems and water resources for future generations to enjoy.
- Protect the habitat and biodiversity of the area.
- Protect water resources from improper land use resulting in unnecessary impacts.
- Protect surface waters and wetland areas to promote water quality, recreation opportunities, aesthetic qualities, natural habitat areas, and ground water recharge.
- Work with local watershed organizations to improve water resources.

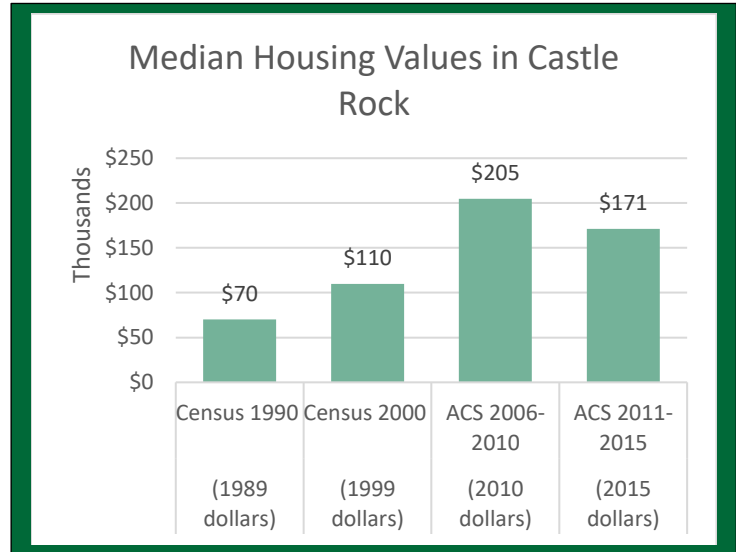
Demographic Trends in Castle Rock Township

The table below shows historical population, household, and employment counts in Castle Rock Township. Since 2000, most communities in the Rural Collaborative area saw population declines between 0% and 10%. Castle Rock Township saw an 11% decrease in population between 2000 and 2015. Only 4 of the 16 collaborative communities saw growth in this 15-year time frame. Along with population, the number of housing units also decline over this period.

Historical Population, Household, and Employment Trends for Castle Rock Township						
Category	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
Population	1235	1340	1480	1495	1342	1331
Household	290	395	460	514	504	490
Employment	40	50	100	1044	356	376

Source: US Census, Metropolitan Council, MN DEED

Population, housing, and employment trends in Castle Rock Township typically align with Collaborative averages and medians. However, Castle Rock Township has lower housing values than the Collaborative median. In 2015, the median home value in Castle Rock Township was \$171,000, compared to \$248,000 for the Collaborative.



Growth Forecasts, 2020 -2040

Population in the collaborative communities is expected to increase by roughly 3,000 persons between 2010 and 2040 and the annual rate of population growth in the collaborative area is projected to be about 0.6%. The Metropolitan Council provides population household, and employment projections for 2020, 2030, and 2040 for each community in the Metropolitan Area (see table below).

Population, Household, and Employment Forecasts for Castle Rock Township				
Category	2010	2020	2030	2040
Population	1342	1320	1300	1280
Household	504	520	520	520
Employment	356	360	360	360

Source: US Census; Metropolitan Council; DEED

The population of Castle Rock Township is projected to decrease 5% between 2010 and 2040. Meanwhile, the quantity of households is projected to increase by 3% and employment by 1%. Despite this decrease in population, the number of housing units are projected to increase partially because of the decreasing average number of people per household, a trend seen throughout most of Dakota County and the 7 County Metropolitan Area.

Land Use Planning

Castle Rock Township is approximately 34 square miles, encompassing over 22,000 square acres. The tables to the right show current land uses and anticipated future land uses for 2030.

The future land use table and the following land use map are a general guide for future development and may be refined and amended over time as the community evolves. This section creates a framework upon which zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations can provide a path to future growth.

The vast majority of Castle Rock Township is designated for agricultural uses or is undeveloped. 5% of land is dedicated to residential uses. Future land uses in Castle Rock Township are expected to remain similar to existing uses. There is also land set aside for possible annexation by the City of Farmington.

Existing Land Use Characteristics		
Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	1,020	5%
Commercial	34	.2%
Industrial	70	.3%
Institutional	394	2%
Park and Recreation	9	.04%
Airport	8	.04%
Agricultural and Undeveloped	21,040	93%
Open Water	52	.2%
Total	22,627	100%

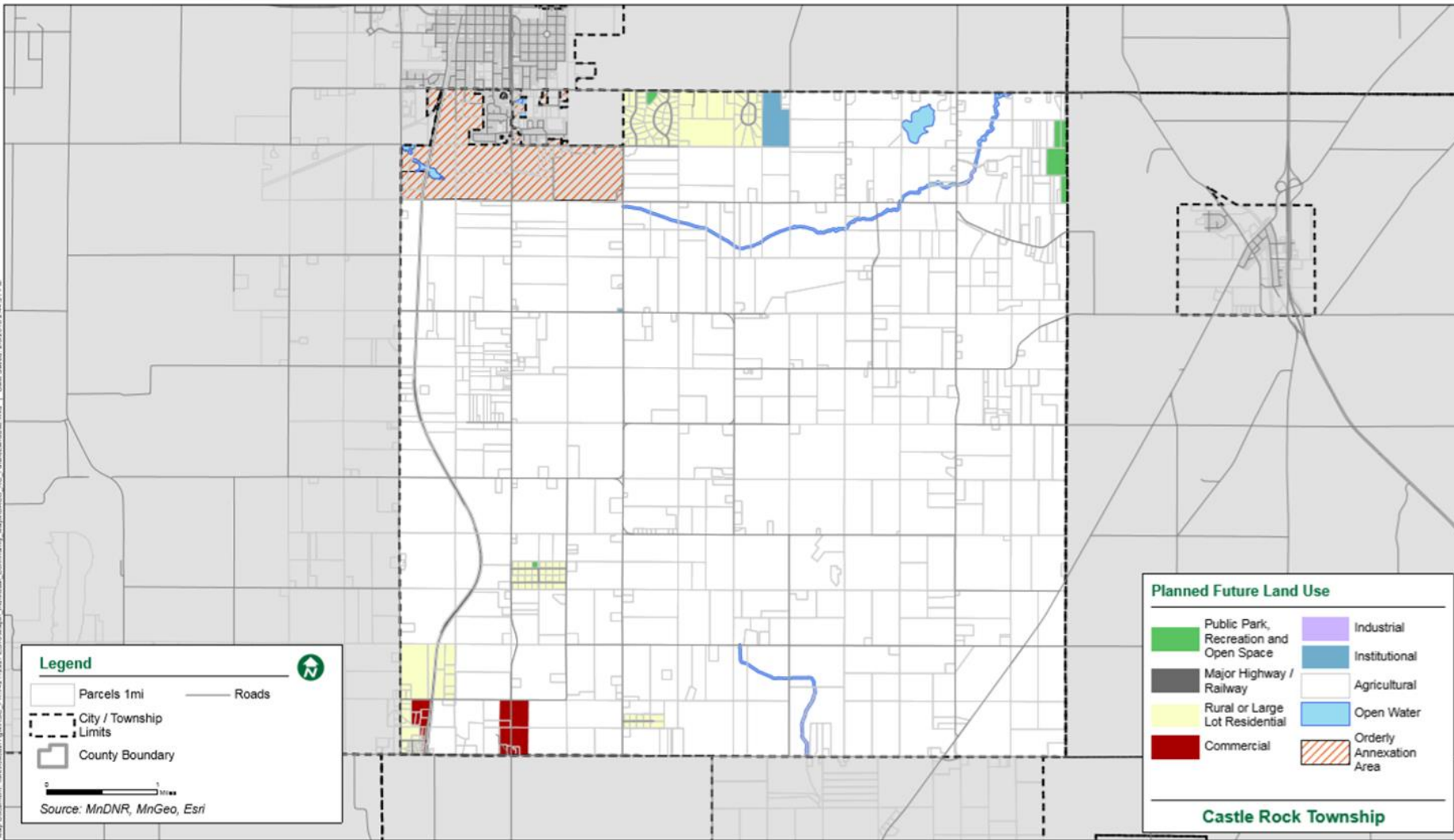
Future Land Use Characteristics (2030)		
Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Commercial	155	.7%
Agricultural	21,054	93%
Institutional	349	2%
Rural and Large-Lot Residential	929	4%
Park and Recreation	9	.04%
Railway (inc. LRT)	85	.4%
Water	48	.2%
Total	22,627	100%



2040 Comprehensive Plan
Castle Rock Township, Minnesota

Future Land Use, 2040

February 2018

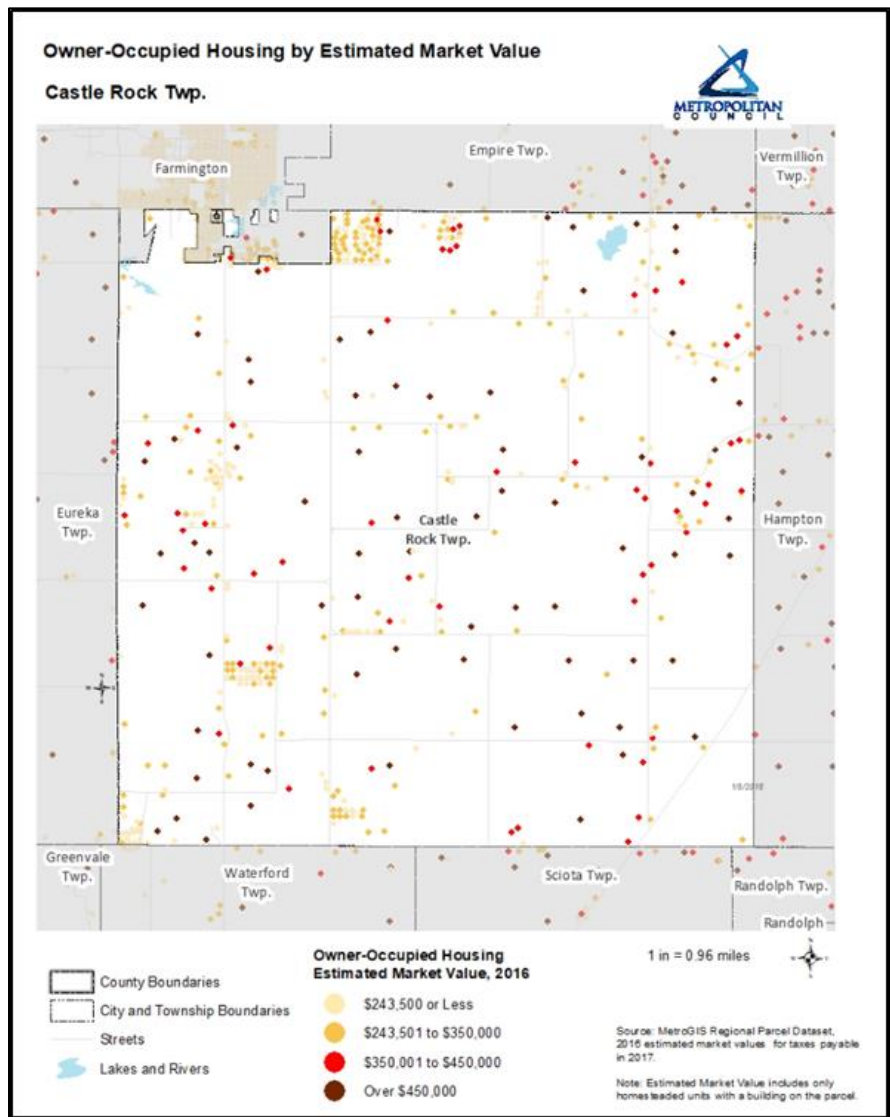


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Housing

The amount of housing units in Castle Rock are forecasted to decrease by about 62 units from 2010 to 2040 which is a decrease of 5%. In 2015, 99% of housing units were single-family detached homes and approximately 87% of units were owner occupied. The median housing value was \$171,000 in 2015 and median gross rent rose from \$917 in 2010 to \$1,281 in 2015. In Castle Rock Township, 36% of all households are cost burdened spending more than 30% of income on housing. Renters accounted for the highest cost burden with 72% spending more than 30% of income on housing.

There are available housing tools to assist with multi-generational community living, the maintenance of existing housing units, and housing affordability. Most available housing tools must be implemented by the Dakota County Community Development Agency as townships do not have the statutory authority to administer these tools themselves.



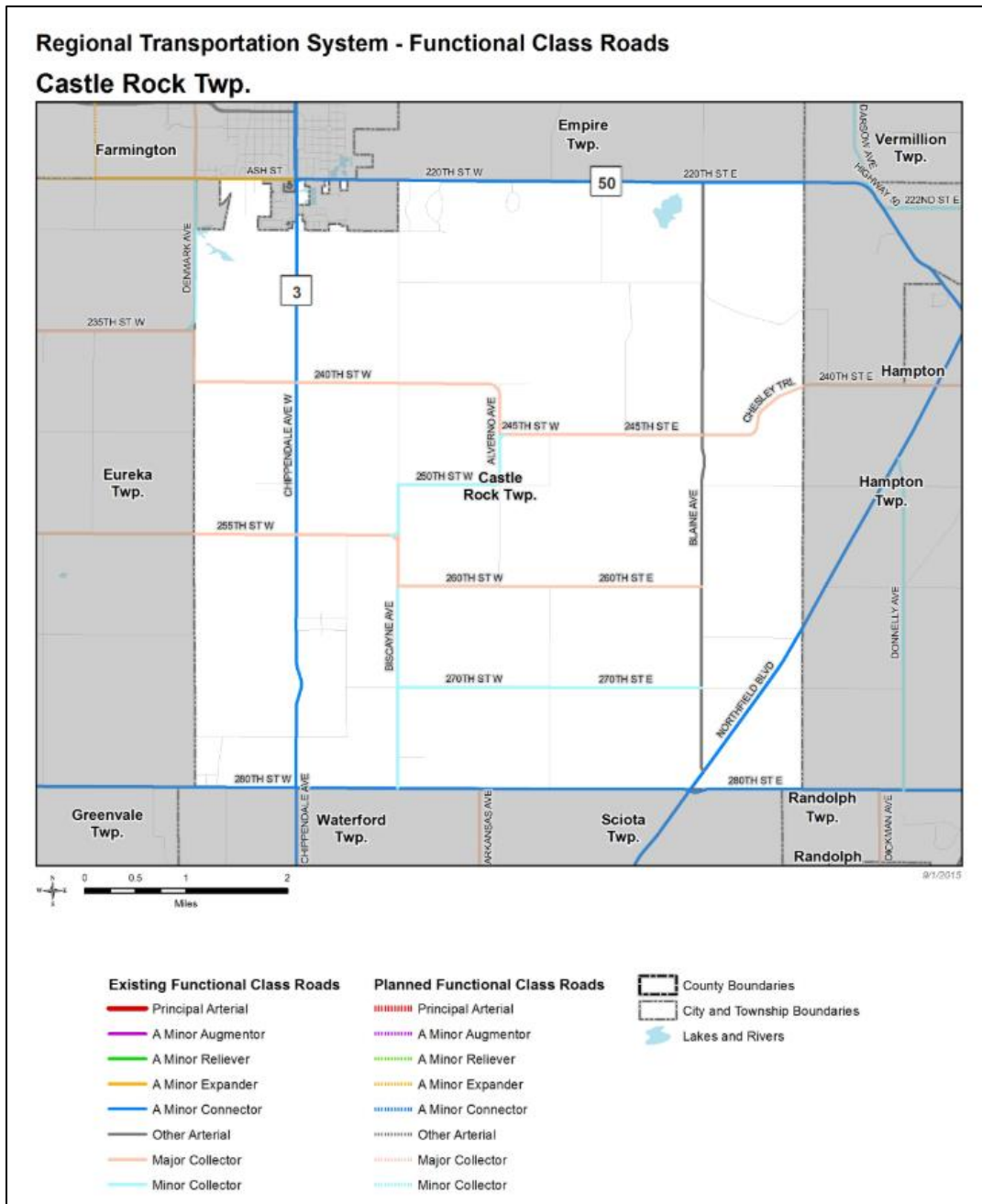
The Natural Environment

Environmentally sensitive areas and open spaces help define the community's character and enhance the quality of life. Lakes, tributaries, bluffs, wooded areas, wetlands, and ponds are valuable for their role in stormwater management, ground water recharge, nutrient assimilation, wildlife habitat, recreation, and aesthetic appeal.

As Castle Rock Township grows and changes, it will be important to compatibly integrate land uses and new development with the natural environment. Ongoing efforts to preserve the quality of natural resources include lake and river water quality protection and preserving agricultural lands.

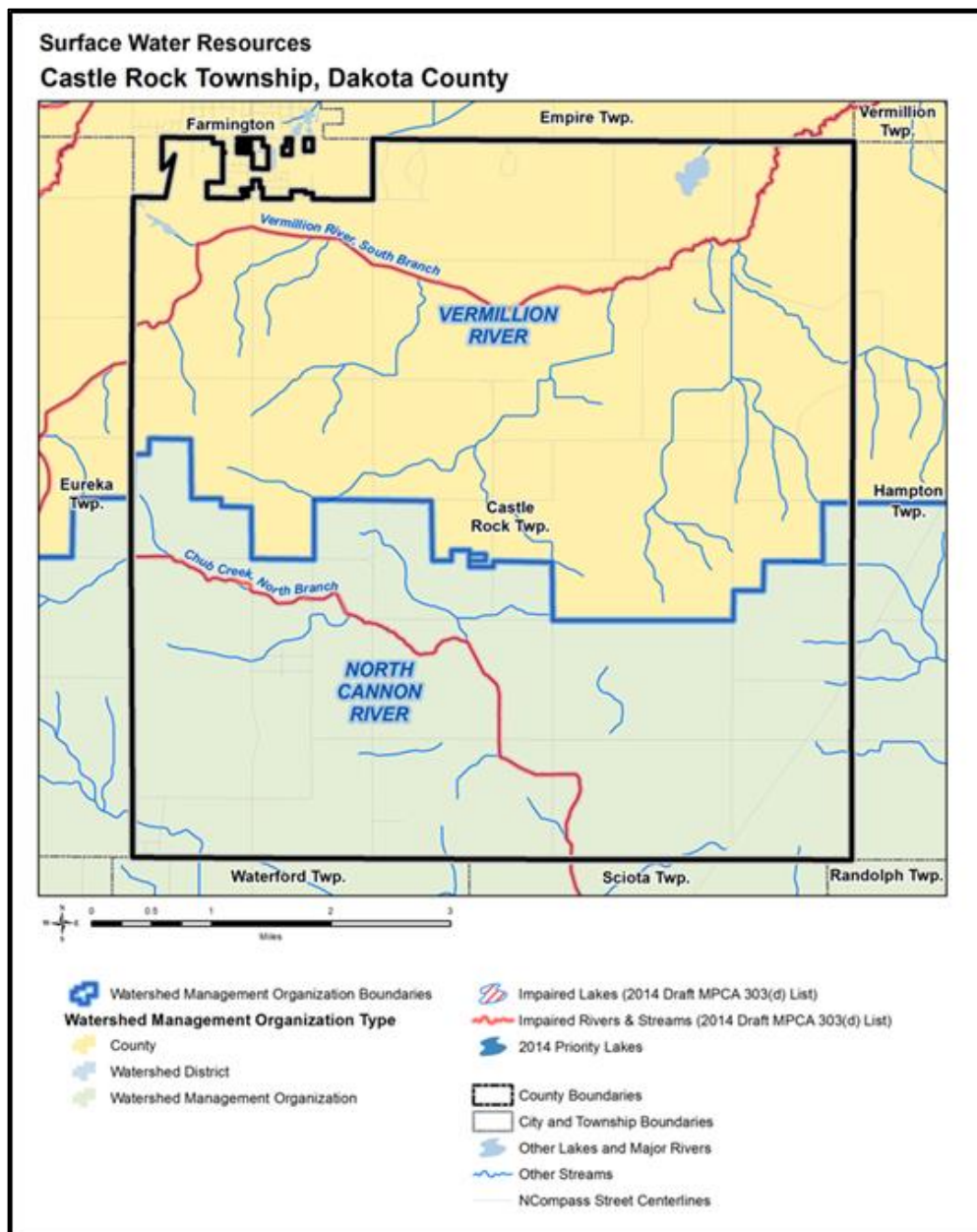
Transportation

The goal of the Transportation chapter is to provide guidance to community members and elected officials regarding the implementation of transportation facilities and programs throughout the 2040 planning timeframe. In general, the transportation network in Castle Rock and southern Dakota County is sufficient to meet community needs at current and forecasted capacities. If growth occurs faster than expected, transportation system improvements may become necessary.



Water Resources

The Local Water Management Plan (LWMP) meets Minnesota Statute requirements and are consistent with the goals and policies of the management organizations that have jurisdiction in the township. Castle Rock has a primary responsibility for enforcement of the County Shoreland and Floodplain Management Regulations to protect rivers, streams, and lakes. Castle Rock Township has adopted the Vermillion River and North Cannon River Watershed Management Plan. These plans and their managing organizations have the primary purpose of protecting and preserving natural drainage systems, surface water quality, and groundwater quality. They also assure that local water management plans have been properly and consistently implemented.



Implementation

Castle Rock Township will be evaluating the existing zoning and subdivision ordinances for consistency with the Rural Collaborative Plan. Once the Collaborative Plan is approved by all communities and the Metropolitan Council, the Township will update zoning ordinances to remove any inconsistencies. Subdivision and platting of land within townships are required to conform to local zoning and subdivision ordinances. Local zoning ordinances have performance standards that address development requirements as they relate to densities, lot size, and other dimensional standards. Castle Rock Township is responsible for the adoption and enforcement of local zoning and subdivision ordinances. Provisions of the ordinances will be maintained throughout the term of the Comprehensive Plan, unless formally amended. Amendments to the local zoning ordinances will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

When considering amendments to this plan, local units will use the following procedure:

1. Landowners, the Planning Commission, the Town Board/City Council or other interested parties may initiate amendments.
2. The Planning Commission will conduct a thorough analysis of the proposed amendment.
3. The Planning Commission will prepare a report analyzing the proposed changes, including their findings and recommendations regarding the proposed plan amendment.
4. The Planning Commission will hold a formal public hearing on the proposed amendment.
5. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the Town Board/City Council.
6. The Town Board/City Council will receive the recommendation from the Planning Commission and make a final decision on whether to adopt the amendment.
7. All amendments to the plan will be submitted to adjacent and affected jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Council for review prior to implementation, as required by State law.

