

Comprehensive Land Use Plan Dunn Township Otter Tail County, Minnesota

I. Introduction

Dunn Township is located in Otter Tail County, Minnesota, in the west central part of the State of Minnesota. Dunn Township has a total land area of about 36.6 square miles of which 26.2 square miles is land and 10.4 square miles (28.49%) is water. Dunn Township is predominately rural in nature.

The Dunn Township Board of Supervisors governs the Township and consists of 5 members elected for terms of four years. The Dunn Town Clerk and Treasurer serve the Township, each elected for four-year terms by the Dunn Township Electorate. Dunn Township has authority under Minnesota Statutes Sections 462.351 to 462.364 to conduct planning and zoning activities and authority under 462.353 to prepare and implement a community based plan.

Dunn Township acts in cooperation with Otter Tail County, which has adopted shoreland regulations and which has not yet adopted any county wide Zoning Ordinance, facts of which the Township takes due cognizance. It is the intention of Dunn Township to work as closely as possible with Otter Tail County in making land use planning decisions.

II. Purposes

The Dunn Township Planning Commission and the Dunn Town Board of Supervisors have prepared this Comprehensive Plan as the result of an extensive effort to reflect the values and goals that the Township's residents feel are important. This Comprehensive Plan demonstrates a desire and commitment by Dunn Township to protect the general health and welfare of residents, to protect the natural environment, and to protect and preserve property value by orderly development within the Township. The Comprehensive Plan will serve as the basis for making decisions that will preserve and enhance the general welfare of Dunn Township.

III. Dunn Township Information

A. Population

The 2000 U.S. Census shows that Dunn Township has a population of 863 residents. The 2000 Census lists all Dunn Township residents to be of mainly Caucasian descent. The average age of residents is 51 years. The population density was 32.6 people per square mile.

B. Housing

Dunn Township features abundant lakeshore and rural residences that spread across the Township in a dispersed pattern. There are a total of 2,442 parcels of land , with 1,491 housing units at an average density of 56.9 per square mile. The total township acres are 21,780, which include 44 lakes with 6,808 acres of water. The total number of acres covered in water existing within Shore Land Ordinances are 116 acres. Agriculture is the most dominant land use in the Township with a total of 2,619 taxed tillable acres. There are 1,434 E-911 addressed structures, with 1,000 being seasonal structures and 434 homesteaded structures.

By this Comprehensive Plan, Dunn Township intends to limit potential conflicts, preserve the rural character of Dunn Township, and assure that new development negatively affects neither the quality of life now enjoyed by residents in Dunn Township, the health, safety, and welfare of our citizens, property values, a healthy environment, nor the maintenance of the township roads during development, construction, and operation.

C. Geography, Soil and Water

The physical appearance of Dunn consists of a network of many lakes including Pelican Lake, Bass Lake, Franklin Lake, Elbow Lake, Fish Lake, Little Pelican Lake, and Lake Lizzy with other smaller bodies of water. It also has several creeks, farmland, grassland, drainage ditches, wildlife management areas, and the Pelican River. Dunn Township is located within Otter Tail County. Dunn Township borders Scambler Township to the west and Becker County to the north, Candor Township on the east, Lida Township on the south and Pelican Township on the southwest.

D. Roads and Other Features

Dunn Township maintains approximately 48 miles of township roads, including cart ways. There are approximately 32 miles of blacktopped township roads within Dunn Township. U.S. Highway 59 and Minnesota State Highway 34 runs from northeast to southwest thru the middle of the township and County highway 31 runs from north to south. County Highway 20 runs along the north border.

E. Utility and other Public Services

Lake Region Electric provides electrical service to the township residents. Loretel Systems provides telephone service, and has installed fiber-optic cable in areas. Cellular

telephone service is available with the township. All township residents rely on private wells for water. Several companies provide solid waste management. The County of Otter Tail provides most of the social services to the township residents. The Otter Tail County Sheriff's Department provides police protection.

The township contracts with Pelican Rapids Fire Department for fire protection. The School District of Pelican Rapids (ISD # 548) is in Dunn Township.

F. Current Community Development

The most predominant land use development in Dunn Township is lakeshore and farming, or agriculture related. Other various occupations include: executive, administrative, managerial and professional specialties; sales, service, production, trucking, homemakers, and other miscellaneous occupations. Many persons who have employment outside of the township have elected to build and maintain homes in the Township because they enjoy the lakefront views, rural nature, natural beauty and character of the area.

IV. Goal and Policies

The goals and policies outlined in this section of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to be the foundation for all programs, actions, and growth decisions which may be made by the township in the future, and are intended to set a basic direction toward a sustainable community and for a vision for how the township should look in the future.

A. Statement of Purpose

Both the state and federal executive branches and agencies are working in support of establishing policies for a sustainable state and country. The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board and other Minnesota leaders created a plan entitled: "Challenges for a Sustainable Minnesota: A Minnesota Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development." It is our intent to follow their lead to assure a sustainable future for our own township. Minnesota 1996 legislation defines "sustainable development" as follows:

Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and Community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Dunn Township seeks to adopt planning and zoning to help assure local control and help facilitate discussion when controversial projects are proposed. We recognize that the Township does not have authority to regulate pollution and our goals are to minimize negative impacts, protect the public health, welfare and property values and provide citizens with a local forum.

The vision for Dunn Township is to be a sustainable community that encourages sustainable development that best utilizes the knowledge and technology available.

Goals are the desired objectives or ends as expressed by the planning process participants. They are meant to ultimately result in the kind of living and working environment desired by the citizens of the Township.

Policies are the means by which the goals are achieved. Policies involve a course of conduct to be followed by the Planning Commission and Town Board of Supervisors and translate the goals into legislative and administrative action.

Goal: *To provide safe and adequate roads.*

Policy:

Require those who cause excessive wear and damage to township roads to be responsible for the cost to repair and restore those roads.

Support County and state weight restrictions and restrict activity that would require violations for weight restrictions.

Require that the construction of new development, which may impact township roads, include the cost to repair such roads in the total project cost.

Assure that development projects provide adequate roads for parking and loading and unloading on site.

Assure that there are adequate setbacks from roads to avoid obstacles that cause snow buildups.

Establish controls for the township to protect and preserve the right of way.

Goal: *To protect, preserve and enhance the quality of the natural resources of the township and require development to take place in a manner that makes wise use of Dunn Township's resources without degradation*

Policy:

Restrict hazardous developments including tire, nuclear, hazardous storage dumps, including sanitary landfills and garbage dumps, to protect the natural resources of the township.

Encourage water quality monitoring throughout the township and ensure that new development(s) provide a plan(s) for monitoring water quality through testing of existing

Dunn Township
Comprehensive Plan

Page 5

wells and closure and capping of abandoned wells.

Encourage Agricultural Best Management Practices that protect and maintain the environmental quality of the township.

Assure that any development that may occur in the township comply with all applicable regulations of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Otter Tail County, and Land and Resource Management.

Goal: *To protect property values*

Policy:

Promote economic development that increase property value while discouraging Discouraging development that will decrease property value and lower the tax base.

Goal: *To preserve the rural character of the township*

Policy:

Encourage resettling of existing and abandoned farm and residential sites.

Encourage recycling of waste, steel, unused vehicles and equipment.

Discourage the accumulation of waste, unused vehicles and equipment.

Encourage the maintenance and cleanup of abandoned residential and commercial sites including the reclamation of abandoned gravel pits.

Ensure that all new development is orderly, balanced and in keeping with the rural character of the township.

Encourage low-density development that preserves open agricultural land and maintains the rural character of the township.

Goal: *To protect the health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare of the township residents.*

Policy:

Encourage that all private or business activity not adversely affect the environment nor create a nuisance, and require that such activity minimize negative impacts upon the air, land, and water.

Goal: *To promote sustainable agriculture and rural residences as the main land uses in the township.*

Policy:

Encourage crop production on tillable acreage.

Encourage family farm operations.

Encourage rural residences.

Assure that agricultural development is consistent with policies that preserve the rural character of the township and that it protects the environment.

Encourage framing practices that minimize soil erosion.

V. Implementation

This is the comprehensive planning effort that Dunn Township has undertaken to examine the Township. Dunn Township intends that any proposed zoning or feedlot

ordinance be consistent with, or more restrictive than, the County Zoning Ordinance, if and when any is adopted.

In order to fully effectuate this Comprehensive Plan, the town Board of Supervisors is proposing to create a zoning or feedlot ordinance with a single district entitled “Agricultural/Residential/Commercial District”.

VI. Acknowledgments

We would like to thank those members of the Planning Commission and the Town Board of Supervisors for their time and commitment in helping to prepare this Comprehensive Plan. Their assistance and support made this possible.

Members of the 2007-2009 Dunn Township Planning Commission are:

Robin Johnson Doug Winter Terry Rust
Chris Haugrud Faye Spitzley-Engkjer

Members of the 2007-2009 Dunn Township Board of Supervisors are:

David L. Johnson, Chair Charles Kvare, Supervisor
Michael N. Johnson, Supervisor Jude Pare', Supervisor
Robert Dalman, Supervisor

Dunn Township Clerk and Treasurer

Judy Sumpter, Clerk Susan Pepelnjak, Treasurer