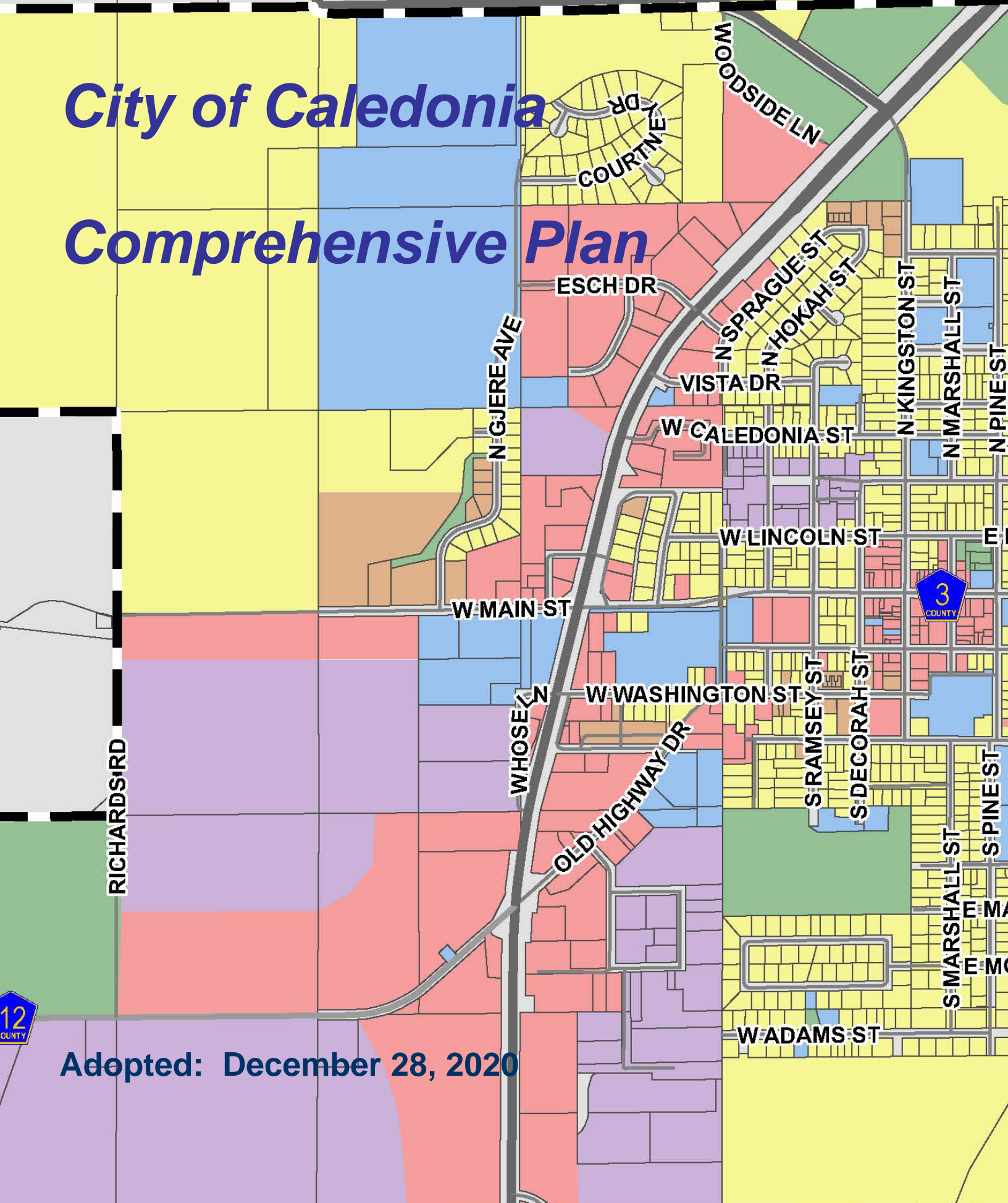


# *City of Caledonia*

## *Comprehensive Plan*



Adopted: December 28, 2020

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## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PLANNING PROCESS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PLAN SETTING.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Population .....	8
Diversity.....	9
Income.....	9
Housing Statistics.....	9
Mobility .....	9
<b>COMMUNITY STRENGTHS &amp; WEAKNESSES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Strengths/Opportunities .....	11
Community Challenges .....	11
<b>GOALS, POLICIES, AND INITIATIVES.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Goal #1:.....	12
Goal #2:.....	12
Goal #3:.....	13
Goal #4:.....	13
Goal #5:.....	14
Goal #6:.....	14
Goal #7:.....	14
Goal #8:.....	15
Goal #9:.....	15
Goal #10:.....	15
Goal #11:.....	16
Goal #12:.....	16
Goal #13:.....	16
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PARKS &amp; RECREATION .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Veteran’s Memorial Recreation Area .....	21
North Park .....	21
City Complex – Downtown Park .....	22
South Park.....	22
Sprague Woods .....	23
Other Parks .....	23
Four Season’s Community Center.....	24
Auditorium .....	24
<b>TRAIL/SIDEWALK MAP .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>EXISTING LAND USE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Residential.....	26
Commercial/Industrial .....	27
Public/Institutional .....	27
Vacant .....	27
Land Use Conflicts .....	27
Existing Land Use Map .....	28
<b>FUTURE LAND USE .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Residential Growth.....	29
Highway Commercial Growth.....	29
Central Business District .....	29
Industrial.....	29
Parks .....	30
Zoning Map .....	30
Future Land Use Map .....	31
<b>IMPLEMENTATION.....</b>	<b>32</b>

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Investor Confidence .....	32
Governmental Programs and Ordinances .....	32
Capital Improvement Planning.....	33
Intergovernmental Cooperation.....	33

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1854 the town of Caledonia was platted by Samuel McPhail, which he named for his ancestral home in Scotland. Caledonia identifies itself as a “City for All Seasons” due to the tremendous opportunities available to enjoy the natural resources of the area. The City also has secured the status as Minnesota’s Wild Turkey Capital due to the fact the wild turkey was reintroduced to the State in the Caledonia area.

Located at the intersection of State Highways 44 and 76, the City of Caledonia is located approximately 23 miles southwest of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and 76 miles southeast of Rochester, Minnesota. The City serves as the county seat for Houston County, and has benefited from the stability offered by a variety of local employers including Caledonia Haulers, Sno Pac Foods, Miken Sports, and Fastenal to name a few. Couple this with the natural amenities of the Mississippi River Valley and you will find that Caledonia offers a quality of life that is not available in many communities.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Caledonia is to assist in shaping the future for the community by creating a set of guiding principles. The Comprehensive Plan builds on previous community planning projects including the 1980 and 2007 Comprehensive Plans.

There are several reasons for the City of Caledonia to initiate this process of planning for the future. In addition to enhancing and maintaining the area as a good environment in which to live, work, and play, planning can fulfill other desirable objectives. The City, Township, and County each represent separate political jurisdictions that are in a constant state of change. As public investments are made by each of these entities to build new roads and utilities, private businesses are also making significant financial investments. With or without local government’s preparation for these changes, community development and redevelopment continue to take place. Community decision makers find themselves confronted with a very important challenge; that is, whether to react to changes in an incremental and inefficient manner, or to assemble a plan that takes a complete look at the community for the purpose of guiding development and coordinating public and private investment.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a brief overview of the community by examining the setting, reviewing the demographic makeup, and studying existing conditions. From this foundation of information those involved in the planning process are able to actively discuss the future needs of the community as they relate to land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, and economic development.

The goals and policies section of the Comprehensive Plan was created based on the analysis of the base line information. Goals and policies assist in describing the aspirations of the community and how those aspirations can be achieved.

The remaining portions of the Plan are divided into several sections that include: Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Economic Development. Within each of these sections a variety of issues are addressed including such items as housing, trails, and future land use.

The implementation section describes how the City intends to accomplish the goals set forth within the Plan. It includes a description of the tools available for implementation, as well as specific strategies the City may use to ensure that the Plan remains current and continues to reflect the goals of the community.

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Perhaps the major motivation for planning arises from the growing interaction among the various governmental levels. Shared services, ordinances and regulations, state, and federal programs - each represent ways in which units of government interact with and influence each other. A comprehensive plan expresses the manner in which a local government will act to undertake programs and policies maximizing coordination and cooperation and minimizing duplication of services and potential conflicts.

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## PLANNING PROCESS

Comprehensive Planning can be described as a the systematic, ongoing, forward looking analysis of a community's opportunities and constraints for the purpose of formulating a Plan to accomplish stated goals and objectives. Through this process, a city identifies its vision for the future and specifies the actions needed to accomplish that vision.

The process typically begins with an expression of the vision for the community that the City seeks to achieve through the planning process. These goals range from general statements to the very specific. The Caledonia City Council and staff served as the primary source of input in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. Over the course of several meetings, committee members were asked to identify strengths of the community and challenges facing the community. The continued focus on economic development activities including identifying locations for future industrial and commercial growth, transportation initiatives including sidewalks and trails, and future park improvements were some of the more significant issues that received discussion.

The City of Caledonia has created and utilized comprehensive planning documents in the past. In fact, the most recent comprehensive plan was created in 2007. Through the present comprehensive planning process the City has reviewed many of fundamental goals established in earlier planning projects to find if the basic principles still hold true today.

As a part of this comprehensive planning process, general demographic information has been collected. The general base line demographic information provides the community with the opportunity to take a close look at existing conditions with regard to land use, public facilities, and household data. In other words, it is the point where all of the objective facts about the community are assembled and evaluated.

After the general information has been collected, strengths and improvement areas are identified. By identifying those qualities that make Caledonia a great place to live and work, the community can work to ensure that these qualities remain intact.

The next step of the planning process was to formulate goals and policies that articulate how the city would like to reach its vision for the future. In order to formulate the goals and policies for this Plan, a series of meetings were held with the comprehensive planning committee. The purpose of the meetings was to elicit thoughts on the issues facing the community and determine the best method for addressing these issues.

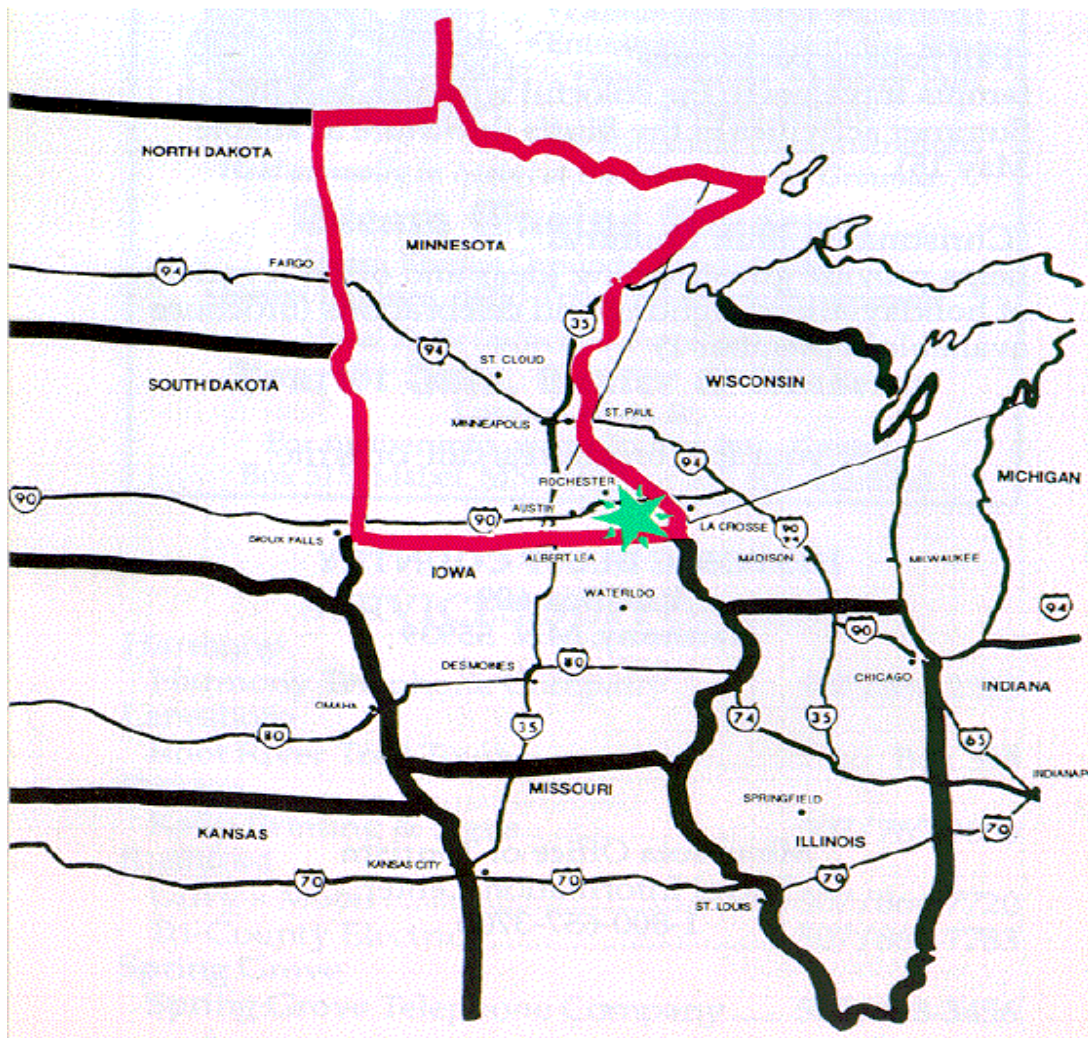
The Implementation section of the plan includes suggestions for the development and administration of official controls such as the zoning ordinance, the zoning map, building codes, etc. In the long run it is the community that will be responsible for the implementation of the plan. Elected and appointed officials will need to incorporate the thoughts and ideas included in this plan into their decision-making process. As new ideas and goals are identified in the future, the community must incorporate these items into the plan, or it will become obsolete.



## PLAN SETTING

The City of Caledonia is a community of approximately 2,868 persons located in the south-central portion of Houston County. Located at the intersection of State Highways 44 and 76, the City of Caledonia is located approximately 23 miles southwest of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and 76 miles southeast of Rochester, Minnesota.

The topography of Caledonia ranges from a low of approximately 1120 feet above sea level near the intersection of Highway 12 and Highway 76 in the southwest portion of the City, to a high of approximately 1,200 feet in the north central portion of the community, west of the intersection of State Highways 76 & 44. While the general orientation of the topography is a rising slope from southern to northern Caledonia, there is a rise from 1140 feet to 1160 feet in the far southwest corner of the City within the industrial park. Within the present corporate limits, the range of topographic conditions is generally gradual enough to accommodate development; however, some locations in the extreme north and northwest and extreme south-central portions of the community present significant constraints to future development. Small portions of these areas are included on the flood hazard boundary map.



Map Source: Bluff Country Web Site

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

Caledonia's population and housing characteristics provide us with the opportunity to identify recent trends within the community. This information is important because it can be used to determine what services are necessary to serve the residents. If Caledonia is a community of young families with children residing in new homes, or a community with an aging population living in older homes, different strategies will be needed for determining the need for parks, community facilities, senior housing, etc.

### Population

The first table shows Caledonia's population by age group for the period 2000 and 2010.

<u>Age</u>	<u>2000 Population</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>2010 Population</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Under 5 years	160	5%	208	7%
5 to 9 years	197	7%	167	6%
10 to 19 years	467	15%	363	13%
20 to 34 years	482	16%	537	19%
35 to 59 years	879	30%	868	30%
60 to 74 years	402	14%	376	13%
75 years +	378	13%	349	12%
TOTAL	2,965	100%	2,868	100%

*Source of Data: 2000 & 2010 Census*

The overall population of Caledonia has remained stable from 1990 to 2010. The age category seeing the most significant increase in population includes the 20 to 34 years age group. The age categories with the most significant decline include the 5 to 9 years age group, the 10 to 19 years age category. The median age of the community in 2010 was 41.9 years of age.

Population trends within the City and County over the past 70 years include the following:

<u>Year</u>	<u>City Population</u>	<u>County Population</u>
1940	1,985	14,735
1950	2,243	14,435
1960	2,563	16,588
1970	2,619	17,556
1980	3,031	18,400
1990	2,846	18,497
2000	2,965	19,718
2010	2,868	19,027



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## Diversity

The racial make-up of the community provided by the 2010 census includes the following:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
White	2,916	2,785
American Indian	5	10
Black	12	38
Hispanic	32	16
Asian	18	19

*Source of Data: 2010 Census*

## Income

Household income data provides some measure of wealth in the community. The following information is from the 2017 U.S. Census projections for the City of Caledonia.

### 2017 Household Income: (Median \$46,066)

<u>Income</u>	<u># of Households</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-\$15,000	109	9%
\$15K-\$25K	158	13%
\$25K-\$35K	134	11%
\$35K-\$49K	267	22%
\$49K-\$75K	231	19%
Over \$75K	316	26%

## Housing Statistics

A review of the available housing data for Caledonia indicates the following:

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2017</u>
Total Units	1,327	1,344
Vacant Units	131	129
Owner Occupied	893	923
Rental	303	292
Average Household		
Size (owned)	2.34	2.12
Median Value (owned)	\$113,700	\$120,200

*Source of Date: 2010 U.S. Census & 2017 Census Projection*

## Mobility

Census data projections for 2017 indicate that the local labor force is mobile with a significant portion of labor force commuting 30 minutes or more to work.

Travel time to work (1,457 total)	2017:
Less than 5 minutes:	273
5 to 9 minutes:	347
10 to 14 minutes:	121
15 to 29 minutes:	138

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30 to 34 minutes:	244
35 to 59 minutes:	266
60 or more minutes:	68

Some of the conclusions drawn from the Census data would include the following:

- \* Caledonia's population decreased by approximately 3% from 2000 to 2010 which is consistent with much of greater Minnesota.
- \* Family size has decreased which follows a national trend.
- \* The City of Caledonia has a small minority population.
- \* Household incomes are distributed relatively evenly with 52% of the households falling between \$25,000 and \$75,000 in annual household income.
- \* The 2017 U.S. Census projection indicates a housing vacancy rate of 9.6% but it is anticipated that the projection is much higher than the actual vacancy rate.
- \* Residents are mobile with 40% of the labor force traveling 30 minutes or more for work.

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## COMMUNITY STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

As a part of the Comprehensive Planning process, the Comprehensive Planning Committee discussed strengths/opportunities within the community, as well as weaknesses/threats. This information has been used to formulate community goals and policies which will assist in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The committee discussion focused on addressing two questions that included the following:

### Strengths/Opportunities

The question posed to the comprehensive planning committee to identify perceived community strengths was, ***“What do we wish to preserve, protect, and promote through planning?”***

#### Responses (not in order of priority):

1. Reliable public infrastructure
2. Affordable community.
3. Large stable employers.
4. Community Center.
5. Historic structures.
6. Community Pool.
7. Walkable community.
8. Great emergency services.
9. Great business retention program.
10. Actively promoting renovation and rehabilitation of housing and commercial structures.

### Community Challenges

The question posed to the comprehensive planning committee to identify perceived community weaknesses/challenges was, ***“What can we improve upon or change through planning policy and implementation?”***

#### Responses (not in order of priority):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Investment in current park system.                           | 7. Lack of available lodging.                                     |
| 2. Property maintenance and code enforcement.                   | 8. Lack of available childcare.                                   |
| 3. Affordable and available commercial and industrial property. | 9. Access to labor for businesses.                                |
| 4. Affordable rental space for commercial businesses.           | 10. Funding for youth programs.                                   |
| 5. Declining school enrollment                                  | 11. Funding for maintenance of public facilities.                 |
| 6. Lack of youth activities outside of sports.                  | 12. Incompatible uses.  |
|   | 13. Annexation plan for urban areas adjacent to corporate limits. |

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## **GOALS, POLICIES, AND INITIATIVES**

As a result of the discussion on community strengths and challenges, the comprehensive planning committee was able to focus on goals and policies from which new initiatives could assist in promoting the strengths, as well as addressing the areas for improvement. Community goals, and the policies and initiatives to achieve those goals, include the following:

### **Goal #1:**

**Promote opportunities for safe pedestrian travel.**

#### **Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Promote the continued implementation of the City's sidewalk and trail plan.
  - 1) Promote the implementation of a trail segment adjacent to State Route 76 from County Highway 12 to County Highway 44 (Safe Routes to School).
  - 2) Extend Warrior Drive/Trail segment to County Route 1 which will provide a safe route to school and connectivity to future Beaver Creek Valley Park trail.
  - 3) Continue to monitor and update sidewalk and trail plans for the City.
  - 4) Establish policies that require new developments to connect and provide R.O.W for sidewalk and trail plan implementation (subdivision ordinance).
- b) Provide direction on a Regional Trail Plan.
  - 1) Continue to support the trail connection to Beaver Creek Valley State Park.
  - 2) Secondary goal is to continue the Beaver Creek Valley State Park trail segment to the City of Houston.
  - 3) Third goal is to serve as a trail hub with trail legs to Brownsville and Eitzen.
  - 4) Establishment of a trail link to Spring Grove.
  - 5) Work cooperatively with County, Townships, State, and regional organizations (Houston County Trails Committee, SMART) to fund and implement trail connections.

### **Goal #2:**

**Maximize the City's potential to pursue high quality economic development opportunities.**

#### **Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Support the efforts of the City and County Economic Development Authorities to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses to the community. This may require the utilization of business subsidies when necessary and appropriate.
- b) Provide adequate land areas for the expansion of commercial and industrial businesses. Initial steps for developing additional commercial industrial areas may include; 1) Securing property with purchase options; and 2) Initiating preliminary design of infrastructure to determine feasibility and cost; and 3) Use of the State's BDPI program to fund a portion of infrastructure costs that serve industrial areas.
- c) Continue to add tools to the economic development toolbox (examples: Revolving Loan Fund, Tax Increment Financing, Tax Abatement, Small Cities Development Program Grants)

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- d) Target local businesses for retention and expansion projects. Visit top 15 employers annually to discuss community issues and growth plans. Include elected officials in the site visits to demonstrate the communities' support for local businesses.
  - e) Recruit businesses that are complementary to existing service and retail businesses located in the Central Business District (CBD).
  - f) Promote the location of appropriate community facilities in the CBD.
  - g) Continue to focus resources that will assist in the revitalization of downtown (continued use of Small Cities Development Program and Revolving Loan Fund).
  - h) Continue to promote the historical character of the downtown, and provide incentives to property owners for preserving and restoring downtown buildings (Tax Increment Financing, Tax Abatement, Small Cities Development Program Grants/Loans)
  - i) Update the zoning ordinance to ensure that new development is consistent with the character of the community.
  - j) Control development of all commercial areas in order to focus development within identified corridors and areas.
  - k) Consider zoning modifications to promote infill residential development.
  - l) Consider supporting programs including Habitat for Humanity to promote infill residential development.

**Goal #3:**

**Promote a variety of housing types in Caledonia by:**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Working closely with the local development community, SEMCAC, MHFA, DEED, GMHF, Rural Development, Habitat for Humanity and other organizations that can help Caledonia meet its housing goals.
- b) Encouraging the development of a variety of housing types to meet the needs of all citizens including seniors and low and moderate-income residents.
- c) Encouraging the dispersion of all housing types throughout the City so as to avoid concentrations of subsidized housing.
- d) Encouraging in-fill housing where appropriate and consider modifying the zoning ordinance to promote the development of existing vacant lots in the urban core.
- e) Continue to provide incentives for housing development by sharing infrastructure costs with new developments.

**Goal #4:**

**The City of Caledonia shall actively pursue the means of expanding recreational opportunities for residents of all ages by:**

**Policies & Initiatives:**

- a) Working with the community center to expand the time allocated as a meeting space for seniors as this demand increases; and
- b) Actively seek assistance from the school district for promoting youth recreational activities in the City auditorium; and
- c) Working with the school district to share in staffing needs for recreational activities; and
- d) Assisting the school district in promoting its recreational activities.

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**Goal #5:**

**The City of Caledonia shall lend its support to the local schools by:**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Promoting a variety of housing opportunities to grow the community with the goal of increasing enrollment.
- b) Continuing to pursue economic development opportunities that will increase the tax base and assist in keeping property taxes manageable.
- c) Continue to work cooperatively with the school district for use of the auditorium and ballpark.

**Goal #6:**

**The City of Caledonia shall address nuisance issues by:**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Continuing to apply the process and procedures established in the ordinance for addressing nuisance issues and complaints.
- b) Continuing to participate in programs that provide financial assistance for the repair and maintenance of residential properties.
- c) Promoting the relocation of incompatible business uses through the use of financial incentives and the availability of appropriately located commercial/industrial areas.
- d) Amending its zoning ordinance to provide regulations regarding buffers to mitigate the impact of adjoining incompatible uses within the urban city and adjacent rural countryside and by encouraging the Townships and County to do the same.
- e) Working with the County and Townships to develop compatible land use plans for the property along the urban and rural borders.

**Goal #7:**

**Plan for future infrastructure improvements so that adequate property can be reserved for future facilities**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) The City shall have its consulting engineers provide recommendations for the purchase or reservation of property for future infrastructure improvements.
- b) Require new developments to be served by public streets recognizing that some developments (townhouses, PUDs, schools, etc.) can have their own private internal road networks.
- c) The City shall continue to monitor the progress made by the sidewalk program for the repair, installation, and replacement of sidewalks in the City.
- d) Develop a storm water drainage plan that will analyze and address storm water issues within the City on a regional basis and encourage the Townships and County to do the same.
- e) Provide recommendations for transportation improvements that will promote continuity through the expansion of the local street system.



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**Goal #8:**

**Work cooperatively with adjacent Townships to strengthen the distinction between the urban city and rural countryside with well planned and carefully coordinated services.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Strive to have compatible zoning and land use controls along the urban border with the rural countryside.
- b) Require that properties being developed within the City be served by municipal utilities and develop a timetable that would require all developed properties located within the City to be served by municipal utilities. In instances where it is not financially feasible to connect new development within the City to municipal utilities, establish policies that would require connection to the municipal system at such time that the system extends within close proximity.
- c) Support the Townships' efforts to maintain very low residential densities.
- d) Require that properties served by municipal utilities be located within the City, recognizing that there is no immediate plan for annexation for those properties presently served by municipal utilities that are located outside of the corporate limits of the City.
- e) Work with the Townships and County in exploring options to cooperatively provide governmental services.

**Goal #9:**

**Create a high-quality living environment for the citizens of the community in all residential neighborhoods.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Adopt and enforce the necessary codes and inspection procedures to ensure the continued maintenance of the housing stock.
- b) Provide an appropriate level of regulation to promote safe building practices.

**Goal #10:**

**Work to achieve an equitable distribution of the cost of providing City services.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Guide development so that it is not constructed beyond the City's ability to provide efficient services.
- b) Work with the County and Township to ensure that growth outside the corporate limits of Caledonia can be efficiently serviced by municipal infrastructure in the future.
- c) Work with the County and adjoining Townships to avoid the duplication of services and to provide more efficient and economical government services.
- d) Promote programs that will equitably distribute the cost of using City facilities to actual users of those facilities.
- e) Identify any areas that benefit from municipal utilities that are located outside of the corporate limits. If there are any such areas, discuss options, including annexation, with the appropriate Township to achieve an equitable distribution of the cost of providing City services.

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**Goal #11:**  
**Provide an adequate and safe transportation system.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Work with Township, County, State and Federal officials to improve transportation access through, around, and within the City.
- b) Promote the improvement of Highways 44 & 76.
- c) Complete the extension of Kruckow Avenue.
- d) Establish an emergency route to the industrial park via West Adams Street.
- e) Secure right-of-way for a second entrance to the high school campus.
- f) Dedicate to the public the road right-of-way by the elementary school (Sprague Street between West Washington Street and West Grove Street).
- g) Selectively support, at the State and Federal level, increased funding for transportation projects that serve the Caledonia area.

**Goal #12:**  
**Maintain a safe and efficient local street system.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Carefully analyze the traffic generation characteristics of proposed land uses and adopt street standards to avoid exceeding the carrying capacity of local, county, and regional roadways.
- b) Design local streets to discourage unsafe speeds.

**Goal #13:**  
**Protect, conserve, and enhance the natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas within and adjacent to the City for the community's long-term environmental benefit.**

**Policies & Initiatives**

- a) Encourage all areas of urban development to be served by public facilities.
- b) Protect surface water, storm water, and ground water from hazardous waste, fertilizers, and pesticides.
- c) As the budget permits, encourage the reforestation of the community.
- d) Discourage the proliferation of individual wells and septic systems within the City and the City's wellhead protection and well recharge areas and encourage the provision of water and sewer services from the municipal system.
- e) Encourage the use of and support the County's recycling program.
- f) Encourage and support the Townships to assure that all development, both in rural areas and in subdivisions or urban-like areas, meet design standards that will provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic health is an important component of a thriving community. A strong commercial and industrial base provides jobs to community residents, contributes to the tax base, and can be a source of strength for the community.

The City of Caledonia and Houston County have been actively involved in economic development activities. Economic development goals and initiatives have been created as a part of the goal and policy discussion. Goal #2 in the previous section specifically addresses economic development and promotes some new initiatives including taking steps for the provision of new commercial and industrial areas within the community and the promotion of infill housing.

During this planning process the need for additional land use planning was identified, specifically for identifying and promoting the development of additional highway commercial and industrial areas. A lack of available and affordable property that is served by public infrastructure for each of these uses was identified. This initiative has prompted additional modifications to the Future Land Use plan and some new initiatives that include;

- 1) Securing property with purchase options; and
- 2) Initiating preliminary design of infrastructure to determine feasibility and cost; and
- 3) Use of the State's BDPI program to fund a portion of infrastructure costs that serve industrial areas.

An equally important component in the economic development mix is housing development. An adequate supply of safe and affordable housing is a goal that many communities strive to achieve. The promotion of infill housing through the modification of existing zoning ordinances was considered to be a new strategy for the promotion of additional affordable owner-occupied housing.

Assisting the community in developing housing to meet the various demands is an important part of the economic development mix in Caledonia. More housing means more people, which translate into a larger labor force to attract industry, and more customers for local retailers. The community should continually monitor its progress with regard to meeting the demand for additional housing. This can be accomplished by working with regional and state agencies that focus exclusively on housing, and by monitoring the vacancy rates within the local housing market.

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## TRANSPORTATION

The City of Caledonia's street system consists of all of the various streets and highways within its limits that are designed to accommodate vehicular movement. A typical city street system serves the needs of two general types of traffic:

**Through-Traffic:** Traffic that has its origin and destination outside the community and merely travels through it, typically on Principal, Major, and Minor Arterials.

**Local Traffic:** Traffic that has its origin and destination inside the community, typically traveling on the local street system.

The function and basic characteristics of each of these types of roadways are as follows:

**Principal Arterial.** The primary purpose of these roadways is to move people, goods, and services long distances between regional or even national population centers. Turning movements are handled through interchanges so that the flow of traffic receives minimal disruption. I-90 is an example of a principal arterial roadway in Caledonia's transportation network.

**Major Arterial.** These roadways serve moderate to long trip lengths and provide a system to distribute traffic making external trips. Turning movements are often handled with channelized turn lanes or signalized systems. There are no roadways that would be classified as major arterials within the City of Caledonia.

**Minor Arterial.** These thoroughfares either augment the arterial system in intensively developed areas or provide service in lieu of a Major Arterial in less densely developed areas where trip lengths are relatively short. Minor arterials typically do not provide direct access to neighborhoods. State Highways 44 and 76, County Roads 1, 3, 5, 12, and 249 would be characterized as minor arterials within Caledonia's transportation system.

**Collectors.** These streets serve as connections between local streets and minor arterials. Their principal function is to carry short trips and to serve adjacent land. At the same time, they must be capable of moving relatively large traffic volumes for limited distances. They may also carry traffic to dispersed major traffic generators. In Caledonia, collectors would include Main Street, Kingston, Pine, Winnebago, and Old Trunk Highway 44.

**Local Streets.** Residential streets carrying less than 1,000 vehicles per day averaging speeds less than 20 miles per hour are the best example of local streets. They serve almost exclusively to collect and distribute traffic by connecting blocks within neighborhoods and specific activities within similar land uses.

With each step up the hierarchy of the roadway system comes an increase in size and carrying capacity. Large trucks are inappropriate on local streets just as multiple residential access points would be inappropriate on a major thoroughfare. Determining the size, location, and timing of construction of roadways is what transportation planning is all about.

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As mentioned previously, the relationships between streets in this system is hierarchical. Each street type has been designed specifically for a separate and distinct function. Local streets are intended to collect traffic from and distribute traffic to residential areas and other low traffic generators. Local streets channel traffic to collector streets, which in turn channel it to minor arterials. While the system can be seen as a hierarchy, an interconnected network of local streets such as what exists in Caledonia serves an important function. This network of streets distributes traffic throughout the transportation system and allows multiple access points to the rest of the system.

The basic principle of land use planning, tied directly to traffic, is that land uses that generate heavy traffic loads and require efficient access to function properly, such as industrial facilities, should be located near major thoroughfares. Conversely, land uses that generate very little traffic and which would not be benefited by through-traffic, such as residential neighborhoods, should be located away from the noise and bustle of busy arterials. It is the intent of the Caledonia transportation system to limit truck traffic to major arterial and minor arterial thoroughfares, and whenever possibly, eliminate truck traffic on collector and local streets.

Future growth may require the provision of additional collector streets at regular intervals and the minimization of access points to minor arterials to promote public safety and the efficient movement of traffic.

Regional transportation initiatives supported by this plan include the following MNDOT projects included in the current State Transportation Investment Plan (STIP):

State Project - TH 44:

Reconstruction of TH 44 from County Highway 12 North scheduled for 2024.

State Project - TH 44:

Reconstruction of TH 44 from County Highway 12 South 2025.

An improved pedestrian crossing of TH 44 is being considered during the TH 44 reconstruction project timeline and the use of Safe Routes to School program funding is being considered.

Other transportation initiatives supported within this plan include the following:

- 1) An update of construction standards applied to municipal road projects.
- 2) The implementation of improved construction monitoring for new street projects.
- 3) Review of development standards that govern driveway widths and separation.
- 4) Adoption of a pavement management plan for local streets.
- 5) Support of the Beaver Creek Valley State Park trail to be implemented with the reconstruction of County Highway 1.
- 6) Construction of a complete trail segment to County Highway 12 along State Highway 44.
- 7) Provide trail segments/connections along County Highway 5/South Winnebago Street in the southwestern portion of the community.
- 8) Extending North Warrior Avenue and a trail segment to County Highway 1.
- 9) Improving the alignment of County Highway 12 and Old Highway Drive intersection.
- 10) Establish an emergency route to the industrial park via West Adams Street.
- 11) Extension of sidewalks on Gjere Avenue to the townhome development.
- 12) Extension of sidewalks from Main Street to Gjere Avenue as a potential Safe Routes to School program project.
- 13) Complete the extension of Kruckow Avenue.

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- 14) Dedicate to the public the road right-of-way by the Elementary School (Sprague Street between West Washington Street and West Grove Street).



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## PARKS & RECREATION

The City of Caledonia offers a variety of park and recreational opportunities within the community enabling residents to take advantage of the natural amenities that are available in the area. An inventory of the existing park system would include the following:

### **Veteran's Memorial Recreation Area**

Veteran's Memorial Recreation Area is located in the northern portion of Caledonia and contains a number of different facilities, including; 2 baseball fields, pickle ball court, concession/storage buildings, outdoor pool complex, three shelters, lighted basketball court, 3 large play sets that serve different age groups, 6 pieces of free-standing equipment, and restrooms. Facilities in this park are in very good condition and no new improvements are planned.



### **North Park**

North Park contains 2 shelters, restrooms, a drinking fountain, 2 pieces of play equipment, and the Earthwalkers Memorial. North Park is used in the winter as well as a sledding park. The park also contains the sign/flags/flowers that welcome visitors entering the community from the east on State Highways 76 and 44. Caledonia Green/Streetscapes, a citizens committee of the city, takes care of the flower plantings here and at other locations within the City.

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Planned improvements to this park area include repair of the parking area and drive lanes, regular updating of the informational kiosk, and the removal of an unused sign structure if determined to be obsolete. A local veteran's organization has discussed securing a piece of military equipment to place in North Park.



### **City Complex – Downtown Park**

This park contains a gazebo, picnic tables, and two pieces of play equipment. Given its central location immediately adjacent to the downtown, this park serves as a focal point for a number of community activities.

Improvements planned for this area include the addition of fiber wood chips in the play areas.



### **South Park**

Located on Adams Street in the southern most portion of the community, South Park contains a shelter with tables and benches and two pieces of play equipment. At a minimum, a planned municipal well and well house will require the removal of the shelter facility and could result in the removal of the play equipment. Discussions for the future of park facilities in the southern portion of the community included the following options:

- 1) Maintaining play equipment at its present location if the space can remain undisturbed; or

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- 2) Establishing an active play area (with equipment) on the planned park portion of the Frisch Property; or
  - 3) Establishing a new park on City-owned property on Sunnyside Drive.



### **Sprague Woods**

Sprague Woods is an approximately 8-acre wooded parcel located at the intersection of State Highways 76 and 44. This parcel was donated to the City in 2006 to serve as a passive park. The cost of adequately maintaining the property has been determined to be prohibitive, and the Council has discussed guiding the property for commercial development as that may be a more appropriate use for that property based on its location.

### **Frisch Property**

The Frisch Property was acquired for the purpose of constructing a new wastewater treatment facility and storm water pond. The parcel is far larger than what is needed for those improvements and will supplement the open space areas that are available to the public within the community. Improvements discussed for the open space area includes native prairie plantings, trails, annual tree plantings, parking area, and benches. Likely access points to this open space are on Ramsey and Madison Streets.

### **Other Parks**

The public elementary school facility located in the central portion of the Caledonia community offers a large open space with baseball and soccer fields. The school grounds also offer four pieces of newer play equipment that receive use by students and the general public. Additionally, two local Churches offer several pieces of play equipment on their respective grounds which also offer large open spaces.



### **Four Season's Community Center**

The Four Season's Community Center provides residents with a warm and inviting venue to meet, socialize and learn. The facility is often used to host wedding receptions, family gatherings, work parties, and the like.

Programming also presently includes senior citizens utilizing the facility on Wednesdays as a senior center. As this usage continues to grow, this service could be expanded with additional funding, and perhaps additional programming provided through the City.

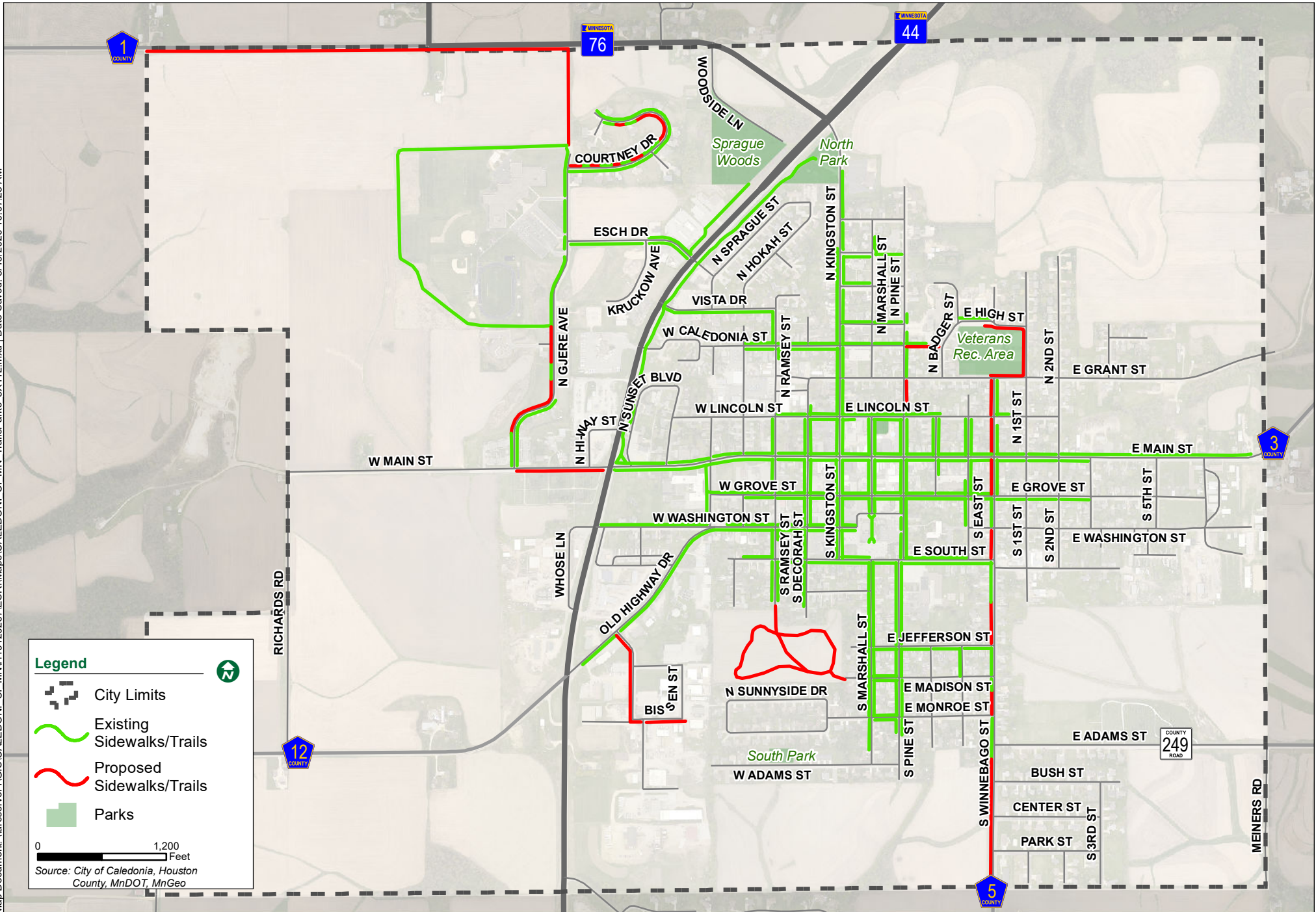
### **Auditorium**

Located adjacent to City Hall, the City Auditorium hosts numerous community activities that include both athletic and cultural events. As previously discussed in past planning activities, more focus needs to be placed on programming activities for residents of all ages. Perhaps by working with school district staff a more efficient means of programming and staffing can be created to allow existing facilities to be available for a broader range of activities.

A summary of parks and recreation directives includes the following:

- a. **Veteran's Memorial Recreation Area:** Reconstruction of the pool is anticipated to occur in 2020 due to warranty issues
- b. **North Park:** Planned improvements to this park area include updating of kiosk, pavement repair, and removal of signage display if no longer relevant.
- c. **Downtown Park:** Improvements planned for this area would include installing fiber wood chips in the play areas.
- d. **South Park:** potential elimination of this park area with replacement options being considered.
- e. **Sprague Woods:** Guide this parcel in the future land use plan for commercial development.
- f. **Frisch Property:** Once designs are finalized for the sanitary sewer plant and storm water ponding, improvements including native plantings, trails, benches, parking area, and a n on-going tree planting program will be considered.





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## EXISTING LAND USE

Much of Caledonia has developed in a grid pattern of streets, which for the most part has not been impacted by the surrounding terrain. While normally the grid pattern is easily replicated, easy to negotiate, and lends itself to expansion, this may not always be the case in Caledonia as there are a number of obstacles/amenities that will require creative design in order to meet the goals established within the comprehensive plan.

During the planning process a land use inventory was created (see attached Existing Land Use Map) for the purpose of identifying the existing development patterns of the City. From this inventory and other background information that has been compiled, areas for potential development, the intensity of development, and in some cases, the timing of development can be determined. The inventory can also help classify areas that should remain unchanged or preserved.

The following table indicates Caledonia's land use in 2020. This table shows the acreage for each land use category in the City and the total percentage of the City in that category. This inventory was conducted in the summer of 2006 and reviewed in 2020. There are approximately 1,814 acres in the City of Caledonia or approximately 2.85 square miles. Residential uses comprise approximately 27 percent of the land, while commercial and industrial uses comprise approximately 14 percent. The public/institutional category comprises approximately 12 percent of the land area. Vacant land makes up approximately 48 percent of the total area within corporate limits.

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Residential	480	27%
Commercial/Industrial	248	14%
Public/Institutional	219	12%
Vacant/Ag	867	48%
 TOTAL	 1,814	 100%

The following is a description of the individual land uses that make up the City of Caledonia.

### **Residential**

Comprising 27 percent of the City, residential development (single-family, duplex, apartments) is the largest developed land use in the City. Residential land uses are located throughout the City. The vast majority of the housing areas are single-family residential neighborhoods. Much of the housing stock is in good shape with a few scattered units requiring significant rehabilitation. Much of the new single-family development has focused in the northwest portion of the community immediately adjacent to the school, and the far southeast portion of the community.

Multi-family units are scattered throughout the community and account for only a small portion of the residential land uses. There are presently three small manufactured home parks located within the City of Caledonia.



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### **Commercial/Industrial**

With approximately 248 acres, or 14 percent of the total land area, commercial and industrial properties make up the next largest category for developed property. Much of the commercial and industrial property takes advantage of State Highway 76/44 access and visibility. Much of the more recent industrial development has occurred within an industrial park located in the south-central portion of the community adjacent to State Highway 76/44. There are, however, pockets of industrial development in the southeast portion of the community near the fairgrounds.

Commercial buildings in the Central Business District and the core of the community tend to be older brick structures. The highway-oriented businesses tend to be newer facilities that provide off-street parking and are located immediately adjacent to the State Highway corridor.

It is anticipated that most of the commercial and industrial growth will occur within the State Highway 76/44 corridor, and the Future Land Use map provides for this. Commercial property will be designated immediately adjacent to the highway and light industrial activity will also be encouraged on the west side of Highway corridor in the southern most portion of the community.

### **Public/Institutional**

Public/Institutional land uses include governmentally and institutionally owned properties, buildings, and cemeteries. Together, these land uses account for 219 acres or 12 percent of the total land area of the City.

The City of Caledonia enjoys park areas that are dispersed throughout the community with some serving as active parks and others providing natural areas in close proximity to the High School.

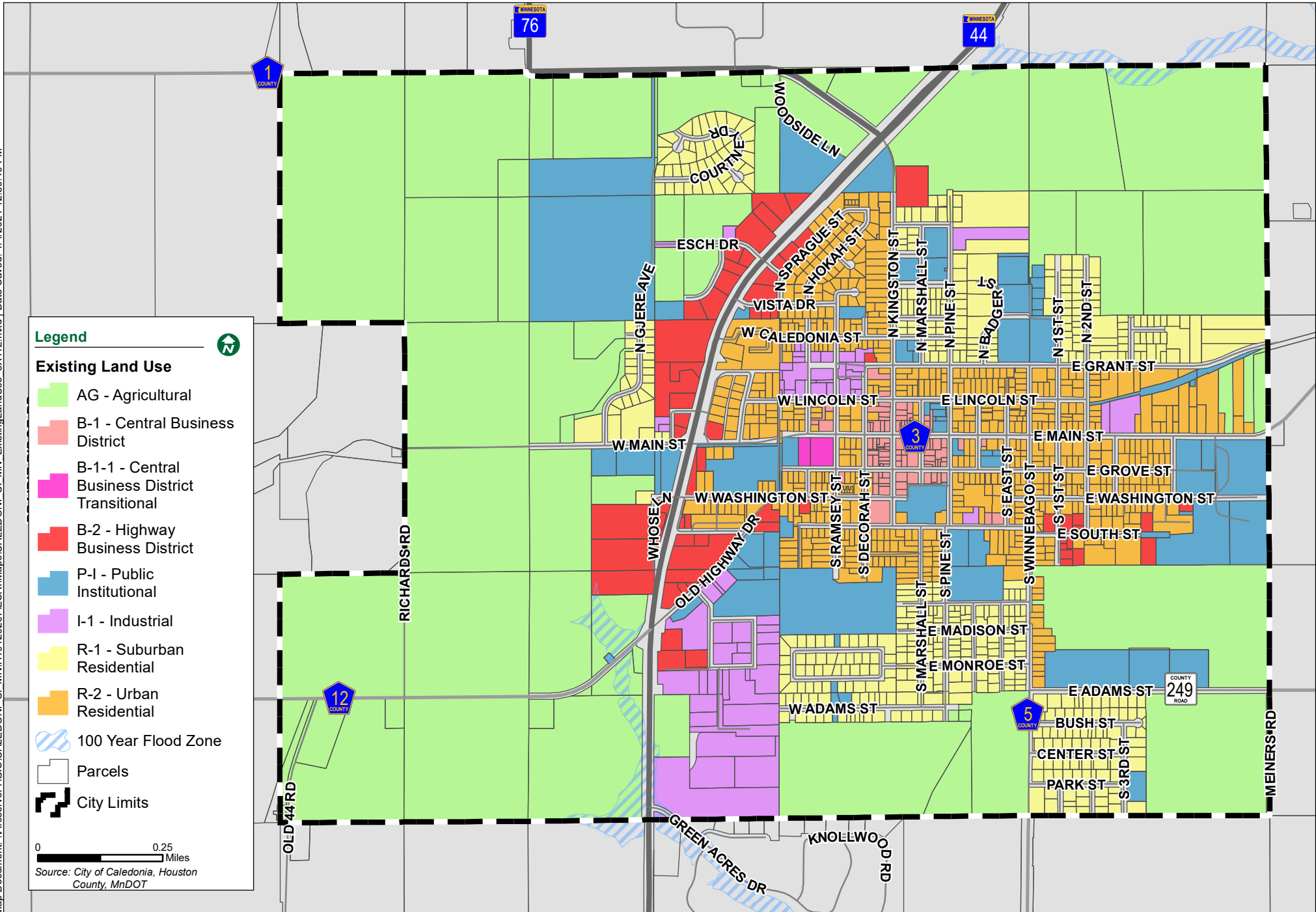
### **Vacant**

Comprising 867 acres or 48 percent of the total City, vacant land is a significant portion of the City's total land use. The majority of remaining vacant land is located in the western portion of the community and provides much opportunity for future growth. A small amount of scattered vacant areas exists in some of the land use categories and may provide opportunities for infill development that can make use of the existing infrastructure.

### **Land Use Conflicts**

The majority of land use conflicts have occurred between residential and industrial development. A neighborhood located east of the new industrial park has expressed some concerns about the lack of buffering between the two uses. Additionally, there some pockets of industrial uses mingled with residential uses near the fairgrounds. The incompatibility is apparent and has likely reduced the level of investment in both.

Land use controls have not provided the necessary separation of uses in the past, and as a result, some uses are not adequately separated or buffered in order to moderate the impact of conflicting uses. This issue will need to be addressed in land use regulations that will be used as a tool for implementing portions of this comprehensive plan.



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## **FUTURE LAND USE**

The City of Caledonia has a significant amount of land within the corporate limits that is vacant. This removes some of the potential barriers to development and offers the community the opportunity to properly plan for growth within its boundaries.

### **Future Land Use Map**

Attached you will find a Future Land Use Map which will assist in guiding the future growth and development of the City of Caledonia. Issues such as highway access, impact to existing land uses and the environment, terrain, and availability of existing infrastructure were discussed as a part of this process. While it is understood that the City of Caledonia is not the zoning authority outside of its corporate limits, the future land use map does reference some areas outside of those boundaries for the purpose of promoting continuity for the future growth of the community, and is meant to serve as a guide for those areas. The primary growth areas identified through this planning process for the City of Caledonia lie to the west of the existing community within the existing corporate limits.

### **Residential Growth**

Much of the vacant land within the existing corporate limits shall be guided for residential growth. The one exception to this is a commercial/industrial area that has been identified for the south western portion of the community within the County Highway 12 corridor. Consistent with past practice, the City will continue to promote a variety of housing types and the disbursement of higher density residential development. It is not the intent of the City of Caledonia to cluster high-density residential development in one location, but rather, to create better neighborhoods by scattering this type of development throughout the community in appropriate locations.

### **Highway Commercial Growth**

A few residential properties including a small mobile home court located within the State Highway 76/44 corridor are guided on the future land use map for commercial development. Preserving this corridor serves to promote additional commercial activity within the community that requires direct highway access. Additional commercial expansion on the north side of the County Highway 12 corridor and the south side of west main street will also be promoted in the future for commercial activity.

Caledonia Township and Houston County may be asked to assist in preserving the State Highway 76/44 corridor extending south from the southern corporate limit of the community. While extending infrastructure through the low areas on the southern most portion of the community will be an expensive endeavor, it will likely be necessary to serve these areas in the future in order to encourage additional highway commercial activity.

### **Central Business District**

The future land use preserves the existing downtown areas that presently serve the community. It is the intent of the City to focus any new downtown commercial investment on existing buildings in order to promote rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings.

### **Industrial**

In the future, industrial development will be promoted in the southwest portion of the community on the south side of the Highway 12 corridor and to the west of Whose Lane. The focus of future industrial development will be on the creation of good jobs and high-quality tax base. Highway commercial uses will be promoted on the periphery of the industrial area to assist in

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buffering the industrial uses from other less intensive land uses. This location should serve the community well in that it offers direct access to the most significant transportation corridors available within the community.

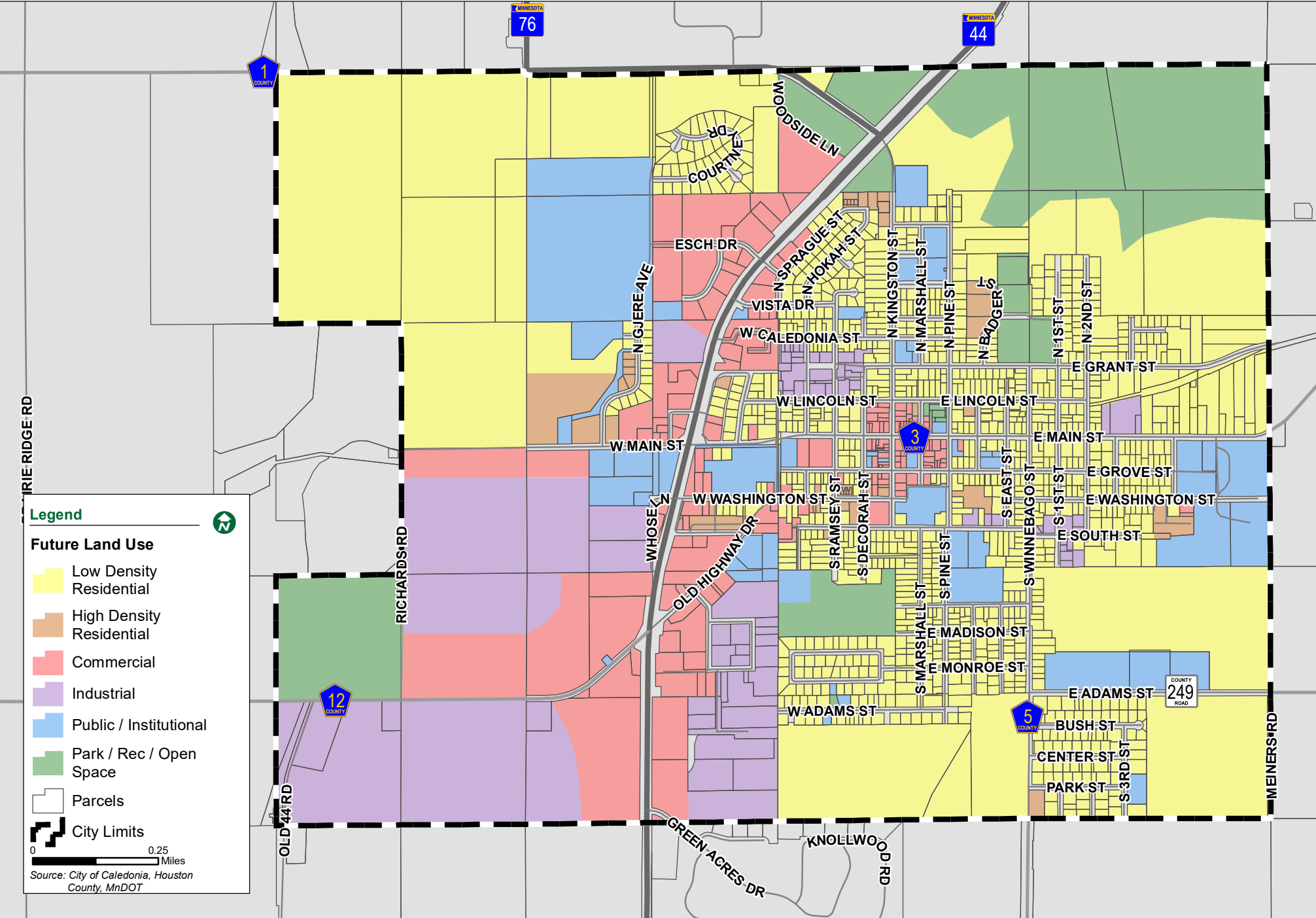
### **Parks**

As discussed in the Parks/Trails section of this plan, future additions/modifications to the trail system have land use implications that will need to be coordinated with new development. Perhaps parkland dedication requirements included in the subdivision ordinance will assist in the implementation of this initiative.

### **Zoning Map**

Continuing forward the City of Caledonia will work to bring continuity between the Zoning Map and the Future Land Use Map. As vacant areas start to see development pressure, the City will need to be proactive in establishing zoning designations that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

While the Future Land Use Map can be amended, this should only happen after careful consideration.



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## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Comprehensive Plan gains in value as issues are addressed and goals are attained through public and private action. Implementation depends on five interrelated factors, including:

### **Citizen Interest and Involvement**

This plan was prepared by the City Council and staff. During the planning process the public was invited to participate in a community meeting for the purpose of discussing significant issues that are addressed within the Comprehensive Plan.

While the participation during the planning process was very important, it is equally important that citizens continue to monitor the progress of the community within the context of the Comprehensive Plan. As projects identified within the plan are brought forward for implementation, community members need to express their support of these initiatives to elected and appointed officials. Additionally, community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce need to understand the goals of the comprehensive plan and provide support for projects that are undertaken along the way as a means of implementing the overall plan.

### **Investor Confidence**

As property owners and investors begin to understand the Comprehensive Plan and the ideas that are being promoted, they are able to make financial commitments with greater confidence by knowing where their project fits within the goals of the community.

Additionally, by expanding the availability of land within each of the land use categories, investors are better able to identify opportunities for development. This will assist in meeting the future needs of the community.

### **Governmental Programs and Ordinances**

Zoning regulates the use of land and buildings as well as the size and placement of buildings within the municipality. It interprets the land use pattern established by the Comprehensive Plan into ordinance form for legal administration. Zoning districts are delineated on a zoning map, and the type of development permitted within the district is defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

Subdivision controls regulate the manner in which land is made ready for use. Minimum development standards are set forth within the Subdivision Ordinance for the purpose of regulating street and utility construction, provision of easements, density and development standards, parkland dedication, and the platting of property. Subdivision controls also assist in efficiently designating property through a legal lot and block description rather than the more complicated metes and bounds method.

The day-to-day implementation of the comprehensive plan occurs through planning administration. By reviewing development proposals within the context of the comprehensive plan, the city and its staff play a significant role in the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Additionally, the city and its staff will play an important role in ensuring that the plan remains current and continues to reflect the needs of the community. It is recommended that the City Council takes time each year at their January meeting to review the plan and ensure that it is up



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to date. As Caledonia continues to grow and additional issues related to that growth are raised in the future, a more comprehensive review and update of the plan may be needed.

### **Capital Improvement Planning**

The City of Caledonia has identified a few capital improvements projects within the Comprehensive Plan. Updating any additional capital improvement plans to match resources with projects is an important exercise that the City should consider. A capital improvement plan will assist in the implementation of comprehensive plan elements.

Often times lists of projects or priorities are identified through a planning process with little attention paid to the financial capacity of the community. By placing these projects within the context of affordability, the community is creating a plan that can be implemented.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The communication between various units of government, and the coordination of planning activities are accomplished by a published plan. This serves to avoid duplication of effort and the coordination of zoning activities among the various units of government.

As a part of the process, a map was developed identifying property and the preferred potential land uses within the corporate limits of Caledonia. The properties identified will likely serve as growth areas for the community. This map is meant to serve as a planning tool in that property owners, township, and county officials can now be made aware of the development patterns favored by the City of Caledonia.

By formally establishing the land use needs of Caledonia within a comprehensive plan, Houston County and the surrounding townships are better able to coordinate their activities within the surrounding areas. This coordination will lead to sound investments in public infrastructure to serve the needs of the Caledonia community.