

Chapter 1: Comprehensive Plan Overview

Metropolitan Council

The Metropolitan Council adopted Thrive MSP 2040 as the new regional development guide on May 28, 2014. Thrive identifies five outcomes that set the policy direction for the region’s system and policy plans. Building on our region’s history of effective stewardship of our resources, Thrive envisions a prosperous, equitable, and livable region that is sustainable for today and generations to come. The Council is directing its operations, plans, policies, programs, and resources toward achieving this shared long term vision.

Three principles define the approach to implementing regional policy: integration, collaboration, and accountability. The principles define the Council’s approach to policy implementation and set expectations for how the Council interacts with local governments.

The land use policies in Thrive establish a series of commitments from the Council for local governments and uses community designations to shape development policies for communities. Community designations group jurisdictions based on Urban or Rural character for the application of regional policies. Together, the land use policies and community designations help implement the region’s vision by setting expectations for development density and the character of development throughout the region.

Source: Metropolitan Council

Local Comprehensive Plans

Minnesota Statute requires certain topic areas to be included in local comprehensive plans. The Local Planning Handbook is organized around Plan Elements and provides guidance on how to meet requirements within these planning areas. These Plan Elements in the Local Planning Handbook are:



- Land Use
- Transportation
- Water Resources (Wastewater, Surface Water, Water Supply)
- Park & Trails
- Housing
- Plan Implementation

Other Plan Elements are identified as issues of regional importance and are reflective of Thrive MSP 2040’s policies. These Plan Elements are:

- Resilience
- Economic Competitiveness

Source: Metropolitan Council

Circle Pines Comprehensive Plan Objective and Policies

The City of Circle Pines Comprehensive Plan is a plan that was developed to provide direction for the future decisions of the city. Policies, standards and programs are contained in the plan to guide the future focus of the community. The city’s focus will be on protecting natural resources and ensuring public infrastructure. The city will utilize the Capital Improvement Program to implement the focus of the community.

Community Background

Circle Pines is located in the southeast part of Anoka County where residents enjoy the scenic and restful surroundings of a residential community located 15 miles north of the Twin Cities.

The people who settled in Circle Pines in the late 1940’s desired a “cooperative lifestyle”. A cooperative is a group of people joined together to provide for their own needs rather than buying what is needed from private enterprise.

The idea was that people who lived in Circle Pines, would have a stake in the businesses that served the community.

The symbol for cooperatives was a pine tree with a circle around it. Thus, the name Circle Pines was born. After only three years, the cooperative lifestyle was abandoned, in part because of problems in securing financing and rifts among the leaders.

On April 8, 1950, the area, former territory in Blaine and Centerville townships, was incorporated as a village. In 1974, Circle Pines received city status.

General Environmental Features

The city’s environmental features include two major resources, Golden Lake and the Rice Creek corridor. Golden Lake shoreline is completely developed and provides an important resource to the City. The Rice Creek Corridor is a vast area of open space; 230

acres of the corridor is within the City. Rice Creek runs out of Baldwin Lake, on the east side, into Circle Pines and out into Blaine on the southwestern side of the city. The open space is a very beautiful and important environmental factor of the city. Other important environmental features are the many parks and open spaces within the city, which provide citizens with a sense of country while still being in the suburbs.

Community Image

The City of Circle Pines shares borders with Lexington, Blaine, Lino Lakes and Shoreview. Circle Pines shares many services with its neighbors to create efficiency and a community sense within the Centennial area. The city shares Police Services with Lexington and Centerville, Fire and Rescue services with Centerville. Having the ability to share services gives the whole northern suburb area a sense of community.

Housing

86% of the housing in Circle Pines was built before 1990. This means Circle Pines has reached an age where ongoing maintenance and improvements is important to its continued viability. Because Circle Pines only has a few undeveloped lots, the city concentrates its efforts redevelopment and renovation. The community needs to utilize specific programs to promote redevelopment and stability for commercial and housing stock.

Schools

Circle Pines has one elementary school within its borders, Golden Lake Elementary, which serves grades K-5. Golden Lake Elementary School is located in a residential area near Golden Lake. Across the street from Circle Pines in Blaine are Centennial Elementary (grades K-5) and Centennial Senior High (grades 10-12). Centennial Middle School is located in Lino Lakes (grades 6-8)

Public Services and Centennial Utilities

The city, through its utility operation (Centennial Utilities), provides natural gas, water, sewer and storm sewer to its residents and customers. A five-member public utilities commission administers the utilities. The municipal gas system provides natural gas distribution and service to the residents of Circle Pines and portions of Lino Lakes and Blaine. Circle Pines Utilities buys gas in the producing regions of the United States and Canada. The sewer, water, and street maintenance are provided to residents throughout the city. Sewage treatment is handled through Metropolitan Council Wastewater Services. Water and street maintenance are also provided by the city.

Vision Statement:

Circle Pines is a vibrant community, treasuring our parks and open spaces. The city is dedicated to livability and safety through quality services.

Plan Objective

The City of Circle Pines is a fully developed community and utilizes the vision statement that Circle Pines uses for priorities for future action and investment is: "Circle Pines is a

vibrant community treasuring our parks and open spaces. The city is dedicated to livability and safety through quality services.

The City's future focus is to keep up with the growing trends in the metro area through renovation in all areas of city services and to be consistent with Metropolitan Council policies and systems plans as well as be compatible with plans of affected jurisdictions.