



City of Mora  
Kanabec County, Minnesota  
Meeting Agenda  
Planning Commission

Mora City Hall  
101 Lake Street S  
Mora, MN 55051

**Wednesday**, July 7, 2021

5:30 PM

Mora City Hall

*City of Mora Code of Ordinances, Chapter 32: The role of the Planning Commission is to serve the City Council in an advisory capacity on matters relating to citizen requests for action, zoning changes and review, Comprehensive Plan reviews, capital improvement reviews, and other actions as deemed necessary to carry out the functions of a pro-active Planning Commission.*

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Roll Call:** Carmen Finn, Chad Gramentz, Jake Mathison, Todd Sjoberg and Sara Treiber.

**3. Adopt Agenda** *(No item of business shall be considered unless it appears on the agenda for the meeting. Board members may add items to the agenda prior to adoption of the agenda.)*

**4. Approval of Minutes**

- a. May 10, 2021 Meeting

**5. Public Hearings**

None

**6. Open Forum**

**7. New Business**

None

**8. Old Business**

- a. Comprehensive Plan Update. The commission will review the most current draft of the Comprehensive Plan and consider an update to the 2008 Trail Plan.

**9. Verbal Reports** *(In addition to the items listed below, each board and staff member will be given the opportunity to share information.)*

- a. NorthStar RE LLC – 1200 North Industrial Road
- b. Residential and Non-Residential Daycare Facilities in Residential Districts

**10. Adjournment**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 9, 2021 at 5:30 PM.



**City of Mora, MN  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes**

**May 10, 2021**

Present: Carmen Finn, Chad Gramentz, Jake Mathison, Todd Sjoberg and Sara Treiber  
Absent: None  
Staff Present: Community Development Director Beth Thorp  
Also Present: Micah Rogers, Jerry Lilyerd, Marty Carlson, Rick & Angela Tvedt, Simon Eddy,  
Paul & Karen Larson and Terry Johnson

1. Call to Order. Chair Sjoberg called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.
2. Roll Call.
  - Finn – Present
  - Gramentz – Present
  - Mathison – Present
  - Sjoberg – Present
  - Treiber – Present
3. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Gramentz, second by Mathison to adopt the May 10, 2021 agenda as presented. All present voted aye, motion carried.
4. Approval of Minutes. Motion by Treiber, second by Gramentz to approve the April 12, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. All present voted aye, motion carried.
5. Public Hearings.
  - a. Rezoning of property located at 841 Forest Avenue E. from I-1 Limited Industrial District to B-2 General Business District as requested by East Forest, LLC and Angela Tvedt. Thorp read from the public hearing notice and reviewed portions of her staff report. Thorp explained that the previous property owner, East Forest, LLC, and the current property owner, Angela Tvedt, had applied for a rezoning of the subject site from I-1 Limited Industrial District to B-2 General Business District in order to utilize the existing building for office space in addition to Tvedt's septic service business. Thorp explained that the subject site was surrounded by other B-2 properties to the north, west and south, and that the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map guided the property as Commercial. Thorp commented that the properties directly east of the subject site were residential and that the rezoning would be an improvement over the current land use relationship. Thorp stated that the only public comment received prior to the public hearing was a request for additional information. Staff recommended approval of the rezoning. Chair Sjoberg opened the public hearing at 5:35 pm. With no comments from the audience, Chair Sjoberg closed the public hearing at 5:35 pm. Treiber commented that she resided in the neighborhood directly east of the subject site and she didn't have any concerns about the rezoning. Motion by Gramentz, second by Mathison to approve Resolution No. PC2021-501, a resolution recommending approval of the rezoning of 841 Forest Avenue E. from I-1 Limited Industrial District to B-2 General Business District as requested by East Forest, LLC and Angela Tvedt, as presented. All present voted aye, motion carried.

- b. Conditional Use Permit to allow a Solar Energy System to be located in the R-1 Single Family Residential District as requested by REAL Solar and Calvary Lutheran Church of Mora. Thorp read from the public hearing notice and reviewed portions of her staff report. Thorp explained that Calvary Lutheran Church was proposing the installation of 51 solar panels on the sanctuary roof using flush-mount racking and that the panels were proposed to sit approximately seven inches above the roof plane. Thorp stated that the request had been reviewed by city and utility staff; staff found that the proposed system complied with general standards for roof-mounted systems and no concerns had been identified. Thorp added that the property owner would be required to enter into an interconnection agreement with Mora Municipal Utilities and obtain a building permit prior to installation. Thorp commented that the applicant had already submitted an application for interconnection and the city's electrical engineer had approved the application with conditions. Thorp stated that she did not receive any public comment prior to the public hearing. Staff recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit with conditions. Chair Sjoberg opened the public hearing at 5:38 pm. Terry Johnson, representing Calvary Lutheran Church of Mora, introduced himself but did not provide any comments. With no other comments from the audience, Chair Sjoberg closed the public hearing at 5:39 pm. Motion by Mathison, second by Treiber to approve Resolution No. PC2021-502, a resolution recommending approval of a Conditional Use Permit allowing a Solar Energy System to be located in the R-1 Single Family Residential District as requested by REAL Solar and Calvary Lutheran Church of Mora, as presented. All present voted aye, motion carried.
- c. Conditional Use Permit to allow a Solar Energy System to be located in the B-1 Central Business District as requested by Sun Energy and the J. Martin Carlson Trust. Thorp read from the public hearing notice and reviewed portions of her staff report. Thorp explained that Marty Carlson was proposing the installation of 26 solar panels on the building's roof using flush-mount racking and that the panels were proposed to sit approximately eight inches above the roof plane. Thorp stated that the request had been reviewed by city and utility staff; staff found that the proposed system complied with general standards for roof-mounted systems and no concerns had been identified. Thorp added that the property owner would be required to enter into an interconnection agreement with Mora Municipal Utilities and obtain a building permit prior to installation. Thorp commented that the applicant had already submitted an application for interconnection and the city's electrical engineer had approved the application with conditions. Thorp stated that the only public comment received prior to the public hearing was a request for additional information; Thorp also provided the commission with a letter of support from Seven County Senior Federation. Staff recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit with conditions. Chair Sjoberg opened the public hearing at 5:42 pm. With no comments from the audience, Chair Sjoberg closed the public hearing at 5:42 pm. Gramentz commented that the subject site had an existing solar energy system that was installed prior to the city adopting regulations; he questioned if the existing system was considered a legal non-conforming use and, if so, if the proposed system would be considered an expansion of the non-conformity. Gramentz requested that these questions be answered before the Conditional Use Permit was approved. Commissioners discussed the existing system and what made it non-conforming; Gramentz explained that the pole-mounted system was not located in the rear yard or screened. Motion by Mathison, second by Gramentz to approve Resolution No. PC2021-503, a resolution recommending approval of a Conditional Use Permit allowing a Solar Energy System to be located in the B-1 Central Business District as requested by Sun Energy and the J. Martin Carlson Trust, with the added condition that the City Attorney provide an opinion prior to the request being considered by the City Council on whether or



not the proposed solar energy system would constitute an expansion of a legal non-conforming use (existing pole-mounted solar energy system). Commissioners and Thorp discussed non-conforming uses and remedies. Jerry Lilyerd, representing Sun Energy, explained – using an analogy – that he didn't believe the existing system should be a factor when considering the proposed system; Chair Sjoberg explained that the city was required to consider non-conforming uses. All present voted aye, motion carried.

6. Open Forum. No members of the public were present for open forum.

7. New Business.

- a. Amendment to 2021 Meeting Schedule. Thorp explained that there was a conflict with the July 12, 2021 Planning Commission meeting and that she wanted the commission to consider changing the meeting date to either July 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>. Treiber suggested that there could be a potential overlap between the July 8<sup>th</sup> option and Music in the Park. Motion by Treiber, second by Finn to amend the 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule by changing the July meeting date from July 12<sup>th</sup> to July 7<sup>th</sup> with a corresponding application deadline of June 14<sup>th</sup>. All present voted aye, motion carried.

8. Old Business.

None.

9. Reports. Thorp reported the following:

- a. Fox Run 3<sup>rd</sup> Addition – Thorp informed the commission that land owner Jake Fedder was still working on Final Plat application materials for his proposed 19-lot subdivision. Treiber commented that four houses were recently constructed in Fox Run within three months. Treiber asked about the status of a park in Fox Run; Thorp stated that she believed SEH was preparing a park plan.
- b. Comprehensive Plan – Thorp shared that she and consultant Hometown Planning were working on the final draft with the goal of presenting a final draft to the commission as soon as possible.
- c. Vacant Land at SW Corner of Highways 65 and 23 – Gramentz shared that he had received a phone call regarding drainage on land currently available for development. Thorp commented that she was not aware of any projects at that site.
- d. Bartelma Properties – Thorp shared that she and City Administrator Lindy Crawford met with an individual interested in purchasing 26 acres on Highway 65 (Bartelma properties) for commercial and residential development. Thorp explained that the Bartelma properties – and others in that area of the city – had split zoning classifications (commercial and residential) and commented that the proposed project would utilize both zoning classifications. Thorp also explained that the proposed project would require multiple city approvals if it proceeded.

10. Adjournment. Motion by Gramentz, second by Mathison to adjourn. All present voted aye, motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm.

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Todd Sjoberg  
Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beth Thorp  
Community Development Director





# MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission  
 FROM: Beth Thorp, Community Development Director  
 SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update  
 DATE: July 7, 2021

## SUMMARY

The Planning Commission will review the most current draft of the Comprehensive Plan and consider an update to the 2008 Trail Plan.

## DISCUSSION

The Planning Commission will continue its effort to update the 2009 Comprehensive Plan by reviewing the most current draft of the plan as prepared by consultant Ben Oleson of Hometown Planning and city staff. Aside from any desired changes from the commission, there are only a few outstanding items that need to be addressed or completed. The outstanding items include a determination on Graph 10 (seasonal traffic variation), an update of the 2008 trail plan, and an update of the 2009 land use plan. Staff's goal is to have the commission address the first two items at the July meeting, and then focus on the land use plan at the next meeting.

### Graph 10

The information contained in Graph 10 was taken from a 2005 traffic study completed by MnDOT. Unfortunately, this information isn't readily available from MnDOT for us to simply update the graph. There are three options to consider:

1. Leave the Graph as-is for historical reference.
2. Delete the Graph from the updated Comprehensive Plan.
3. Pay the city engineer to work with traffic information available through MnDOT and provide the city with a seasonal traffic analysis. The cost estimate for this work is \$1,500-\$2,000. This option would only provide updated information on seasonal traffic; it would not be a complete traffic study.

Staff recommends either option 1 or 2 at this time. While the information that could be obtained from option 3 is desirable, its staff's opinion that the money would be better invested in a complete traffic study at some point in the future.

### Trail Plan

The current Trail Plan was adopted by the Park Board in March 2008. The city has grown significantly through annexation since 2008 as have its needs and goals as they relate to pedestrian traffic. In light of current membership issues with the Park Board, staff has prepared a draft Trail Plan for the Planning Commission's consideration. Staff is requesting that the commission provide a recommendation on the plan before it's presented to the City Council for adoption. Significant changes to the 2008 Trail Plan include:

1. A slight modification to the proposed trail on the west to bring the trail section inside the city boundary.

2. A slight modification to the proposed trail on the east to create a more logical route rather than a diagonal “cut through”.
3. A rerouting of the proposed trail running through Fox Run. The 2008 route follows a planned sidewalk, which is different than the city’s multi-purpose trail system. The proposed relocation would then also eliminate the need for the proposed trail straight south of Fox Run.
4. Given that the city has grown significantly between the Snake River Bridge and 180<sup>th</sup> Avenue since 2008 through annexation, there is tremendous need to extend the trail system south of the Snake River Bridge. The proposed trail is shown creating a connection at the Snake River Bridge as well as an overall looped system around the city.

There are three plans attached to this report:

1. The 2008 Trail Plan.
2. The 2008 Trail Plan with proposed changes shown numbered for reference.
3. A cleaner, non-aerial version of the draft Trail Plan showing only the existing trail system and the proposed trail sections.

Once the City Council has adopted an updated plan, the city engineer will prepare a new map for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan.

Many of the proposed trail sections – on both the 2008 and draft plans – are shown on private land. The Trail Plan is a guide and is subject to change, and the city works with individual property owners as opportunities to expand the trail system become available.

#### ACTION REQUESTED

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1. Review the draft Comprehensive Plan and provide staff with direction.
  - a. How would the commission like to move forward with Graph 10?
  - b. Are there any other desired changes at this point?
2. Review the draft Trail Plan and provide a recommendation to the City Council.

#### ATTACHMENTS

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1. Draft Comprehensive Plan (without Maps or Appendices A - B)
2. 2008 Trail Plan
3. 2008 Trail Plan with proposed changes
4. Draft Trail Plan



A photograph of a wooden bell tower with a shingled roof and arched openings, situated on a grassy hill. In the background, a calm lake stretches towards a distant shoreline with trees and buildings under a clear blue sky. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper right corner.

# **City of Mora, MN Comprehensive Plan 2021**







# 2021 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Mora City Council on .....





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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement of excellent service and public dedication is extended to the following persons who have drafted, deliberated and discussed the contents of the City of Mora Comprehensive Plan from its early inception to the final draft.

### City Council

Alan Skramstad, Mayor  
Jody Anderson  
Sadie Broekemeier  
Jake Mathison  
Kyle Shepard  
Sam Pioske, Past  
Sara Treiber, Past

### Planning Commission

Todd Sjoberg, Chair  
Carmen Finn  
Chad Gramentz  
Jake Mathison, City Council Representative  
Sara Treiber  
Mike Johnson, Past  
Karen Onan, Past

### Key Staff

Lindy Crawford, City Administrator / Public Utilities General Manager  
Joe Kohlgraf, Public Works Director  
Jeff Krie, Activities & Recreation Coordinator  
Beth Thorp, Community Development Director

### Comprehensive Plan Committee

Gene Anderson, Kanabec County Board of Commissioners  
Bob Benes, Lakes & Pines Community Action Council  
Rose Dunn, Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Mora  
Jenna Maciej, Mora Area Chamber of Commerce  
Sadie Hosley, City of Mora Park Board and Recovering Hope Treatment Center  
Mike Johnson, City of Mora Planning Commission  
Karla Kastenbauer, City of Mora Airport Board  
Jake Mathison, City of Mora City Council  
Karen Onan, City of Mora EDA and East Central Regional Development Commission  
Craig Schultz, ISD 332  
Joe Stitz, Seven County Senior Federation  
Lori Swanson, Kanabec County Public Health  
Randy Ulseth, Welia Health  
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Nick Stafford  
[Beth Thorp](#)  
Welia Health

Deleted: Beth Thorp



## VISION STATEMENT

The City of Mora is committed to a Comprehensive Plan which provides a basis for carefully managed growth while preserving the community's identity, valued traditions, and natural resources. Mora will be known as a thriving and welcoming community that provides residents of all ages with opportunities for personal enrichment and a high quality of life; seeks to attract economic growth and development while maintaining a small-town atmosphere; and, provides exceptional municipal services.

Supporting this vision, the City of Mora values:

- Community growth through residential, commercial and industrial development;
- Residential development which provides a variety of housing options, with an emphasis on multi-family, workforce, and affordable housing;
- Preservation of community identity and traditions;
- Staying current with information technology;
- Promotion of health and wellness, including mental health awareness; and,
- Maintenance and improvement of municipal utility infrastructure.

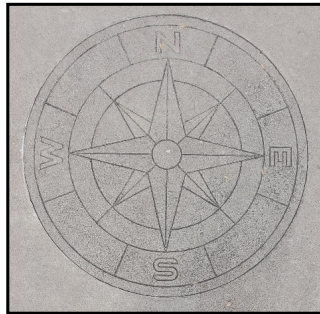


## INTRODUCTION

Planning is a continuous process. A community updates and modifies its plans to respond to its changing social, economic, environmental and political conditions. This process involves looking toward the future and anticipating problems and opportunities which may occur. (Paraphrased from Chapin, Urban Land Use Planning)

The four basic elements which are considered in an on-going comprehensive planning program include:

- Development of goals and policies to guide decision making;
- Identification of planning issues and data collection;
- Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan to serve as a guide for future activities within the City;
- Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan which will support and direct activities such as zoning, shoreland management, subdivision control, and capital improvement programs.



The Plan is designed to correct existing problems and to help increase the City's quality of life by helping to realize a well-functioning community.

The Comprehensive Plan and its well thought out goals and policies are vital in the future implementation of the City's development controls. Future development should be based upon the goals and policies stated in the Comprehensive Plan. This provides the City with a sound legal framework for the implementation and enforcement of future ordinances.

After the Comprehensive Plan has been prepared and adopted it must then be implemented to be effective. The Plan itself does nothing to ensure that its contents will be accomplished. Implementation tools typically include a zoning map, a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, shoreland management ordinance, floodplain management ordinance, capital improvement programs and utilization of federal and state aid programs.

The planning process should continue to offer a flexible process which is adaptable to change. A continual re-evaluation of the issues and data which formulated the initial plan should be undertaken on a periodic basis. It is important to remember that the development of the implementation tool is not the conclusion of an overall planning program. These tools must be updated on a continual basis. This process will provide Mora with a flexible planning program which will respond to the needs of its residents.

### Authority to Plan

Municipal planning is authorized under Minnesota State Statute 462.351-462.364 which include the authority to plan, the definition of planning terms, community-based planning, organization for planning, as well as the preparation, adoption and amendment of the comprehensive municipal plan and zoning and subdivision authority. The statement of policy from the legislature includes: "Municipal planning will assist in developing lands more wisely to serve citizens more effectively, will make the provision of public services less costly, and will achieve a more secure tax base." The City of Mora complies with this legislature in its ability, authority and need to plan.

### **Previous Plans**

This document is a continuation of the on-going planning process in Mora. It legally amends the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the latest official Comprehensive Plan for the City. The City has used this planning process as an opportunity to evaluate and reinforce the existing growth and development policies and to evaluate previous planning efforts in order to update and reinforce past decisions that are still valid. A major premise of this Plan, therefore, is to utilize portions of previous community plans whenever applicable.

### **Methodology**

This Comprehensive Plan is the product of several entities and systemic, ongoing, forward-looking processes including:

- The development of a community survey which was distributed to all customers of Mora Municipal Utilities, which includes all Mora residences and businesses as well as some residences and businesses in Arthur Township. The survey was also made available in an online format. A total of 200 responses were received to the survey;
- The formation of an ad hoc Comprehensive Plan Committee, appointed by the Planning Commission and composed of a cross section of representatives of governmental, non-profit and private entities from throughout the community;
- The garnering of input from the Mora City Council, Planning Commission, Economic Development Authority, Public Utilities Commission, Park Board and Airport Board;
- The gathering of demographic and historical data from a variety of sources including the City of Mora, Kanabec County, the State of Minnesota and the US Census. Review of City ordinances, prior planning documents, reports, studies, etc.;
- Assistance from the City Engineer;
- Assistance from a planning consultant; and,
- Assistance from City Staff.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Plan is to guide City leaders in making decisions on the growth of Mora. A good Comprehensive Plan provides a direction for making public decisions by the establishment of goals and policies. These goals and policies are in essence a yardstick that provides a uniform set of measurements on which to judge development proposals. This Plan gives a sense of direction for change and establishes a community development concept that will have meaning for the residents of Mora.

This Comprehensive Plan has a variety of uses. Elected and appointed officials and staff use it as the basis for decisions regarding land development, infrastructure improvements, acquisition and utilization of public land, capital improvements planning, orderly annexation, natural resources protection and establishing regulatory changes. Property owners can use it to determine potential uses of property, establishing reasonable land values, and making property improvements. Developers can use the Plan for acquiring property for development, complementing the City's other plans, and establishing major street alignments in newly developing areas.

A Comprehensive Plan is more than a series of maps and written policies. Because the City has decided to continue its involvement in this planning process, it indicates that the citizens of the community are interested in continuing to take an active role in positively influencing the changes that are naturally occurring in Mora. The act of being involved in the planning process, however, does not end with the completion of the Plan. Planning is an ongoing process and the Planning Commission and City Council will be asked to make many land use decisions in the future. These decisions should be based, in large part, on the information, goals, and policies contained within this document.

The Plan is a general guide for development; however, it is the only time when future growth and development is considered in a comprehensive manner. While no plan should be considered final or inflexible, it should be adhered to as much as possible or it will soon become meaningless. As a public document, it is a statement of where various land uses are planned. This information is important when decisions are made for sewer, water, streets, and other public services. It is also important that the citizens know what is planned for their community and they can then make land purchase decisions accordingly. The tools that are available in the form of zoning and subdivision control give a degree of public input into development decisions that can dramatically improve the future environment. If fully utilized by decision makers, this Plan and available management tools will combine to serve as practical working guides to achieve economically efficient, aesthetically-pleasing, and environmentally sound development in Mora.

### **Comprehensive Planning Process**

The Mora Planning Commission began looking into updating the 2009 Comprehensive Plan in late January 2019.

In October 2019 a multifaceted community survey was sent out to customers of Mora Municipal Utilities, which includes all Mora residences and businesses as well as some residences and businesses in Arthur Township, for the purpose of garnering feedback and input on a variety of issues from not only residents of Mora, but also those who do not reside within the City limits, but have a vested interest in the community. Approximately 1,770 surveys were sent out, with 200 being returned. A copy of the survey that was distributed and the survey results are attached as Appendix B.

In February 2019 the Planning Commission began forming an ad hoc Comprehensive Plan Committee to assist with the Comprehensive Plan update. The purpose of this committee was to provide the City with feedback on the planning process, and to ensure the information collected and the ideas proposed appropriately reflect the City's current condition and future needs. The committee contained a cross-section of community interests and included a total of 14 members, including representation from the Mora City Council and Mora Planning Commission.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee held several meetings and was involved in the creation of the community survey, review of survey results and discussion about common themes contained in the survey results, review of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, discussion about current needs for the community, development of an inventory of community assets, and review of the draft 2021 Comprehensive Plan prior to adoption.

### **Scope of the Plan**

Plans that anticipate too far into the future are necessarily broad in scope and will not provide the guidance needed for day-to-day decisions. The Comprehensive Plan should look first at making Mora a

better place to live, work and play for the people who live here now. Whether the City of Mora grows substantially, remains the same size, or even dwindles in size, the objective to keep improving the City should be the same. This Plan is based on a 10-20 year planning period with a limited range of recommended actions. The Plan addresses issues that need to be resolved now or in the near future. As new issues arise, the Plan should be amended accordingly.

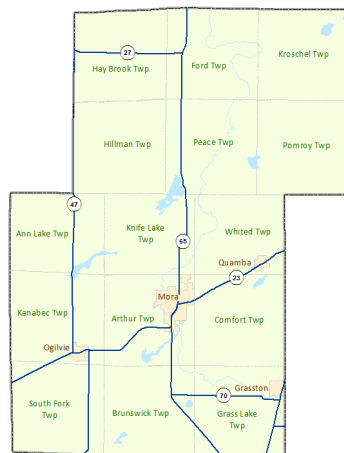
### Location

The City of Mora is located approximately 72 miles north of the Twin Cities, 90 miles southwest of Duluth, 60 miles southeast of Brainerd, and 52 miles northeast of St. Cloud. Mora is situated along the shores of scenic Lake Mora and the Snake River in south central Kanabec County. Major transportation routes include immediate access to State Highway 23 running west to US Highway 169 at Milaca and east to Interstate 35 near Hinckley, as well as State Highway 65 running south to the Twin Cities and north through the lakes country to US Highway 2.

**Figure 1. Illustration of Mora at Center of 50 and 100 Mile Diameters**

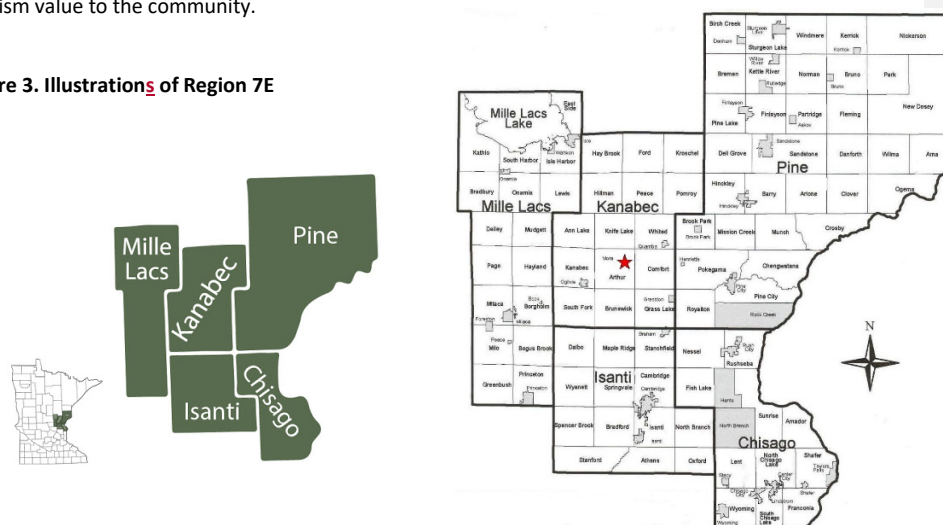


**Figure 2. Map of Kanabec County, MN**



The area around Mora is dotted with many lakes and rivers including Knife, Ann, Fish, Mora, Eleven, Bass, Lewis, Five, Full of Fish, Quamba and Pomroy lakes, as well as the Snake, Knife, Groundhouse, Grindstone, Ann and Rice rivers. These lakes and rivers represent a significant and valuable natural resource to both the City of Mora and State of Minnesota, and provide a considerable recreation and tourism value to the community.

**Figure 3. Illustrations of Region 7E**



Mora is located within the region known as "7E" consisting of the counties of Pine, Isanti, Chisago, Kanabec and Mille Lacs, also known as the PICKM counties. The region covers 3,400 square miles in area; has a population of approximately 169,242 (2019); and, includes five counties, 39 cities and 88 townships. It is one of the fastest growing regions in the State because of its proximity to the Twin Cities metro area.



## HISTORY

Myron R. Kent filed the first plat of the village of Mora in May 1882 and the first post office opened in February 1883. Since being officially incorporated as a village in 1891 and designated as a city by state statute in 1973, Mora has grown steadily into a prosperous community of 3,615 people as per 2019 estimates. Mora is the County Seat and dominant trade center of Kanabec County. Mora, which is served by State Highways 23 and 65, is located strategically in relation to the Twin Cities, St. Cloud and Duluth. It is 72 miles due north of the Twin Cities, 52 miles northeast of St. Cloud and 90 miles southwest of Duluth as shown in Figure 1.



**Deleted:** on May 19, 1882

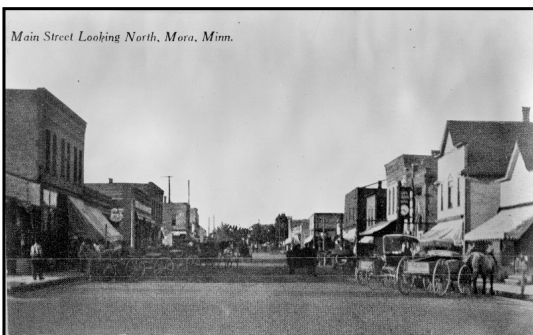
Like most other Midwest communities, Mora's beginning was tied to transportation; first water transportation and later the railroad. The Snake River was used by many early explorers and later by logging operations and steamboats. The railroad, however, put Mora on the map. In 1882, Kent, anticipating development opportunities as a result of Great Northern Railroad Company expansion through Kanabec County, conceived and platted Mora which was named after a town in central Sweden located on Lake Siljan in Dalarna Province. Israel Israelson, an early settler who homesteaded near Lewis Lake in 1871, was credited with suggesting the name of the village after his hometown in Dalarna, Sweden.

**Deleted:** Myron R.

Mora grew rapidly in its early years serving the region's thriving logging industry. In 1882, the year Mora was first platted and the County Seat of Kanabec County was moved from Brunswick to Mora, the logging industry was declining as the supply of timber dwindled. Pioneer Swedish immigrants were credited for beginning the conversion of the county from a region of logging into an area of agricultural development. Primarily through the promotion efforts of one man, J. C. Morrison, Mora's future was secured. European immigrants, particularly Swedish, were attracted by him in large numbers to settle in Kanabec County and develop farms on the cut over land. Mora grew into the community it is today. Mora residents, many who are descendants of the original European immigrants must again consciously consider the future of their community.

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The future of Mora in the early 1890's appeared extremely bleak.



Change is evident. According to demographics and community surveys conducted as part of comprehensive planning projects in 1994, 2007 and 2019, Mora's role as an agriculturally based trade center is declining. This is likely due to the decreasing farm population and encroachment of the Twin Cities metro area. Although agriculture is an important economic activity in Kanabec County, manufacturing and other industrial activities have become increasingly more important for the City of Mora.

**Deleted:** Ancestry and cultural heritage are very important aspects of life in Mora. People of German and Swedish descent are the two largest single groups in Mora and in Kanabec County. Currently, many events and activities are centered around the area's Swedish heritage.¶

Ancestry and cultural heritage are still very important aspects of life in Mora, as evidenced by the photos below. Currently, many events, activities, decorative features, buildings and developments are centered around the area's Swedish heritage.





## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Survey and Analysis

The survey and analysis section represents the data gathering process in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Its purpose is to record existing conditions and analyze trends in population, housing, economic activity, land use and natural resources. This section provides an understanding of those factors which have influenced present development and will serve as a basis in the formulation of appropriate goals, policies and development guides.

Employment, population and housing are highly interrelated and need to be studied separately as well as collectively to determine a community's growth potential. Employment opportunities provided by industrial development are the key to Mora's future growth. This in turn directly affects population and housing. Population analysis and projections are essential parts of any community planning program.

### Population

Analysis of past, current, and predicted population trends is one of the most important parts of the survey and analysis section of the Comprehensive Plan. By understanding the changes that are taking place in the City's population and the surrounding townships, development goals can be better defined to meet the needs of the community. Population trends for Mora from 1940 to 2019 and the surrounding townships from 1970 to 2019 are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1**

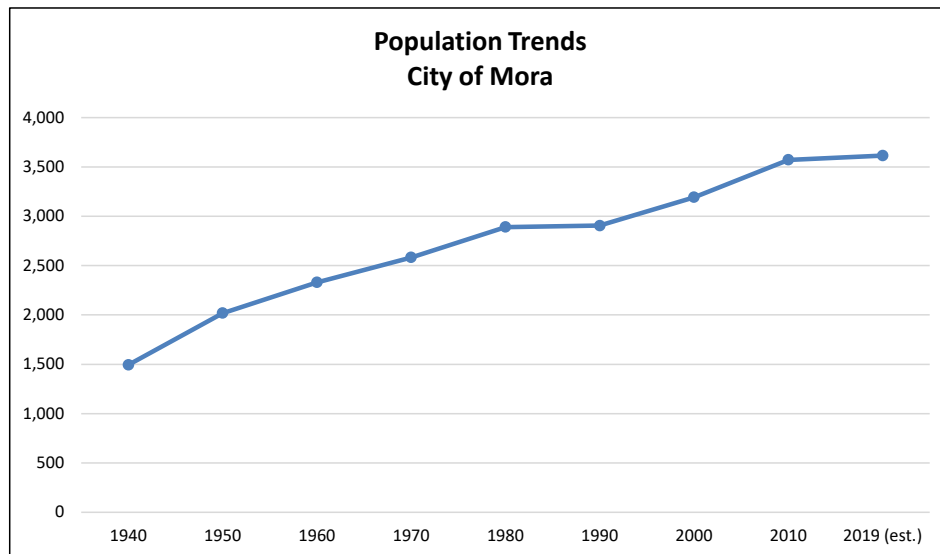
**Population Trends – City of Mora**

Year	Population	Absolute Change	Percent Change from Previous Date	Average Annual Percent Change
1940	1,494			
1950	2,018	525	35.1%	3.51%
1960	2,329	311	15.4%	1.54%
1970	2,582	253	10.9%	1.09%
1980	2,890	308	11.9%	1.19%
1990	2,905	15	0.5%	0.05%
2000	3,193	288	9.9%	0.99%
2010	3,571	378	11.8%	1.18%
2019 (est.)	3,615	44	1.2%	0.13%
<b>Average 1940-2019</b>		<b>26.9</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>1.21%</b>

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau

**Graph 1**

**Population Trends – City of Mora**



**Table 2**

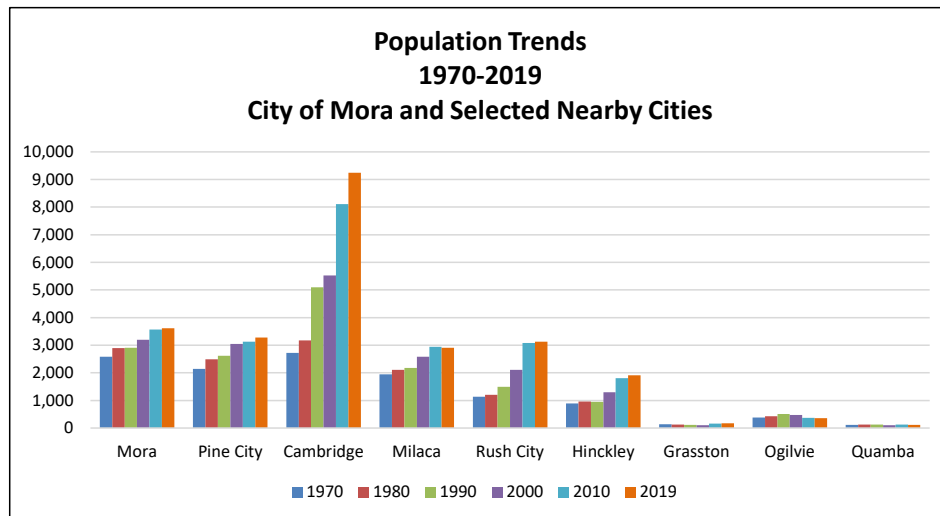
**Population Trends – City of Mora and Selected Nearby Cities**

Cities	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	2010-2019 Absolute Change	2010-2019 Percent Change
Mora	2,582	2,890	2,905	3,193	3,571	3,615	1,033	28.9%
Pine City	2,143	2,489	2,613	3,043	3,123	3,281	1,138	36.4%
Cambridge	2,720	3,170	5,094	5,520	8,111	9,249	6,529	80.5%
Milaca	1,940	2,104	2,182	2,580	2,946	2,904	964	32.7%
Rush City	1,130	1,198	1,497	2,102	3,079	3,130	2,000	65.0%
Hinckley	885	963	946	1,291	1,800	1,909	1,024	56.9%
Grasston	132	123	119	105	158	168	36	22.8%
Ogilvie	384	423	510	474	369	359	-25	-6.8%
Quamba	114	122	124	98	123	119	5	4.1%

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau

**Graph 2**

**Population Trends – City of Mora and Selected Nearby Cities**



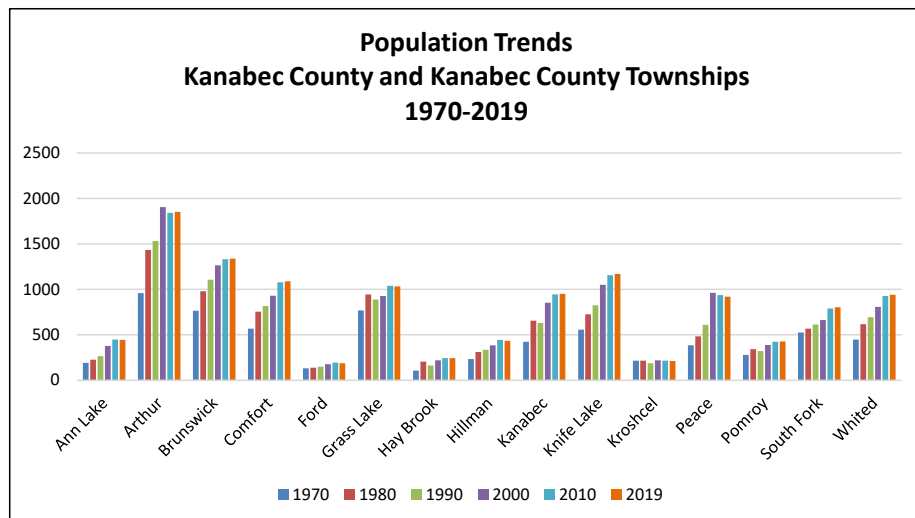
**Table 3****Population Trends – Kanabec County and Kanabec County Townships**

<b>Townships</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2010-2019 Absolute Change</b>	<b>2010-2019 Percent Change</b>
Ann Lake	193	226	264	377	447	445	252	130.5%
Arthur	957	1,435	1,533	1,905	1,843	1,851	894	93.4%
Brunswick	765	978	1,107	1,263	1,333	1,338	573	74.9%
Comfort	569	756	819	931	1,078	1,090	521	91.6%
Ford	131	137	150	177	195	187	56	42.7%
Grass Lake	769	944	888	928	1,038	1,034	265	34.5%
Hay Brook	108	206	165	218	246	244	136	125.9%
Hillman	233	311	335	384	444	434	201	86.3%
Kanabec	423	656	633	853	943	950	527	124.6%
Knife Lake	557	727	825	1049	1,156	1,171	614	110.2%
Kroshcel	216	216	188	218	216	213	-3	-1.4%
Peace	386	485	609	963	939	921	535	138.6%
Pomroy	281	342	321	390	425	428	147	52.3%
South Fork	526	568	614	662	789	803	277	52.7%
Whited	449	616	693	808	926	940	491	109.4%
<b>Counties</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2010-2019 Absolute Change</b>	<b>2010-2019 Percent Change</b>
Kanabec Co.	9,775	12,161	12,802	14,996	16,239	16,310	6,535	66.9%

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau

**Graph 3**

**Population Trends – Kanabec County and Kanabec County Townships**



Since its founding, the City of Mora has grown steadily every decade except during the 1920's and the 1980's. As can be seen in Table 1, Mora grew 10.9% in the 1960's and by 11.9% in the 1970's. The City's population began to decline in the early 1980's, but the decline bottomed out in 1986. The City again grew by about 10% in the 1990's and almost 12% in the 2000's. The latest estimates indicate that the City's population may have again mostly flattened out in the 2010's with an estimated population in 2019 of 3,615 persons.

Table 2 shows Mora's population changes as compared to other cities in the area. Cambridge has shown the most rapid growth, more than tripling in population since 1970. Mora, Pine City, Milaca, Rush City and Hinckley have all experienced slower, but steady growth over that same time period. In Kanabec County, Grasston, Ogilvie and Quamba have all maintained relatively low but stable populations over the years.

Population trends for other townships and cities in Kanabec County have also generally shown growth. Comfort, South Fork, Whited and Knife Lake townships experienced the largest increases in their total population – all growing by more than 100 persons between 2010 and 2019. Like Mora, however, their estimated 2019 populations all show significantly slower growth as a percentage – dropping from growth rates of between 10 and 20 percent to around 1-2%.

Meanwhile, Kanabec County as a whole enjoyed a population growth rate of about 8.3% in the 2000's, but dropped to an estimated growth rate below 1% in the 2010's. Region 7E grew 30.7% between 1970 and 1980, and 9.4% from 1980 to 1990, shown in Table 4. The most current projections from the Minnesota State Demographer, however, indicate that Region 7E as a whole is expected to maintain a relatively flat level of population through 2050, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 4**

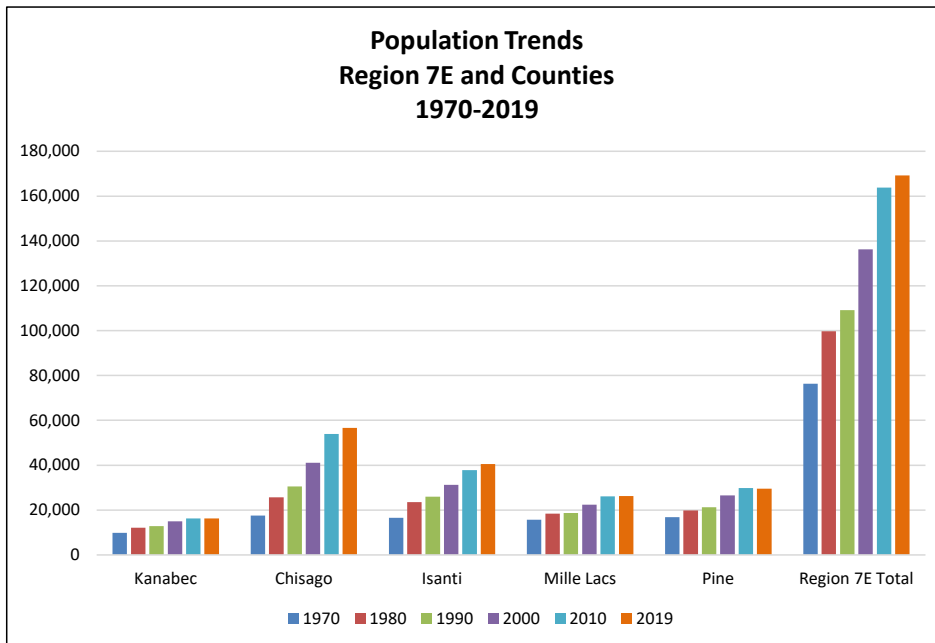
**Population Trends - Region 7E and Counties**

Counties	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	2000-2010 Percent Increase	2000-2019 (est.) Percent Increase
Kanabec	9,775	12,161	12,802	14,996	16,239	16,310	8.3%	0.4%
Chisago	17,492	25,717	30,521	41,101	53,887	56,613	31.1%	5.1%
Isanti	16,560	23,600	25,921	31,287	37,816	40,566	20.9%	7.3%
Mille Lacs	15,703	18,430	18,670	22,330	26,097	26,227	16.9%	0.5%
Pine	16,821	19,871	21,264	26,530	29,750	29,526	12.1%	-0.8%
Region 7E Total	76,351	99,779	109,178	136,244	163,789	169,242	20.2%	3.3%

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau

**Graph 4**

**Population Trends - Region 7E and Counties**



**Table 5**

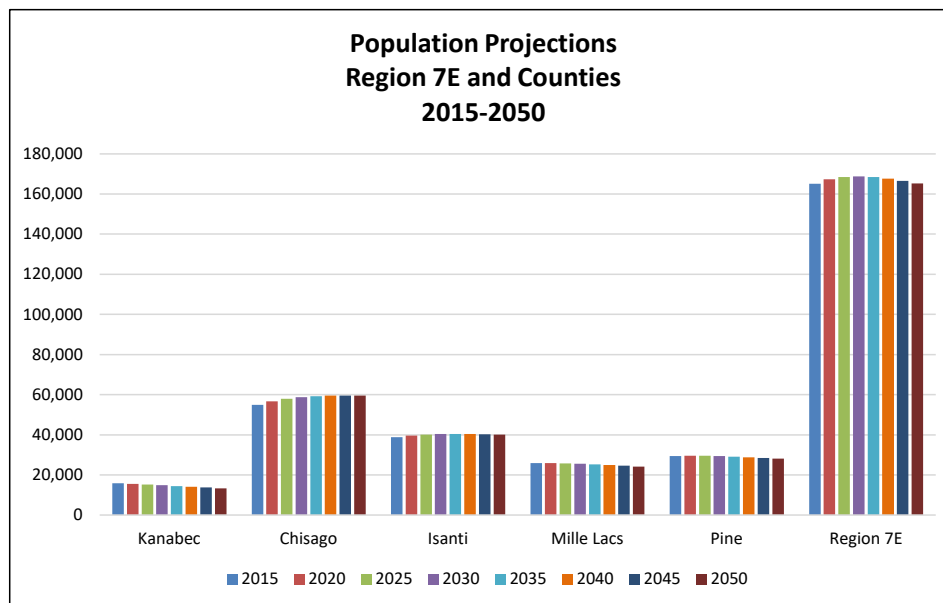
**Population Projections - Region 7E and Counties**

Counties	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Chisago	54,995	56,696	57,937	58,713	59,234	59,475	59,530	59,582
Isanti	38,780	39,570	40,090	40,345	40,455	40,410	40,262	40,112
Kanabec	15,913	15,571	15,206	14,836	14,463	14,095	13,732	13,366
Mille Lacs	25,950	25,903	25,753	25,514	25,228	24,896	24,537	24,174
Pine	29,463	29,554	29,508	29,339	29,104	28,802	28,459	28,113
Region 7E	165,101	167,294	168,494	168,747	168,484	167,678	166,520	165,347

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, March 2017

**Graph 5**

**Population Projections - Region 7E and Counties**



**Table 6****Age Group Comparisons - City of Mora**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>1990 All Persons</b>	<b>1990 Total Percent</b>	<b>2000 All Persons</b>	<b>2000 Total Percent</b>	<b>2010 All Persons</b>	<b>2010 Total Percent</b>
Under 5 years	220	8%	197	6%	229	6.4%
5 to 9 years	236	8%	200	6%	239	6.7%
10 to 14 years	197	7%	222	7%	219	6.1%
15 to 19 years	166	6%	243	8%	236	6.6%
20 to 24 years	136	5%	177	6%	214	6.0%
25 to 29 years	229	8%	209	7%	276	7.7%
30 to 34 years	179	6%	161	5%	188	5.3%
35 to 39 years	192	7%	201	6%	198	5.5%
40 to 44 years	150	5%	204	6%	160	4.5%
45 to 49 years	124	4%	213	7%	238	6.7%
50 to 54 years	111	4%	147	5%	225	6.3%
55 to 59 years	103	3.5%	136	4%	205	5.7%
60 to 64 years	129	4%	138	4%	165	4.6%
65 to 69 years	127	4%	120	4%	159	4.5%
70 to 74 years	177	6%	168	5%	148	4.1%
75 and over	429	4.5%	457	14%	472	13.2%
Total Population	2,905	100.00%	3,193	100.00%	3,571	100.00%

Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau



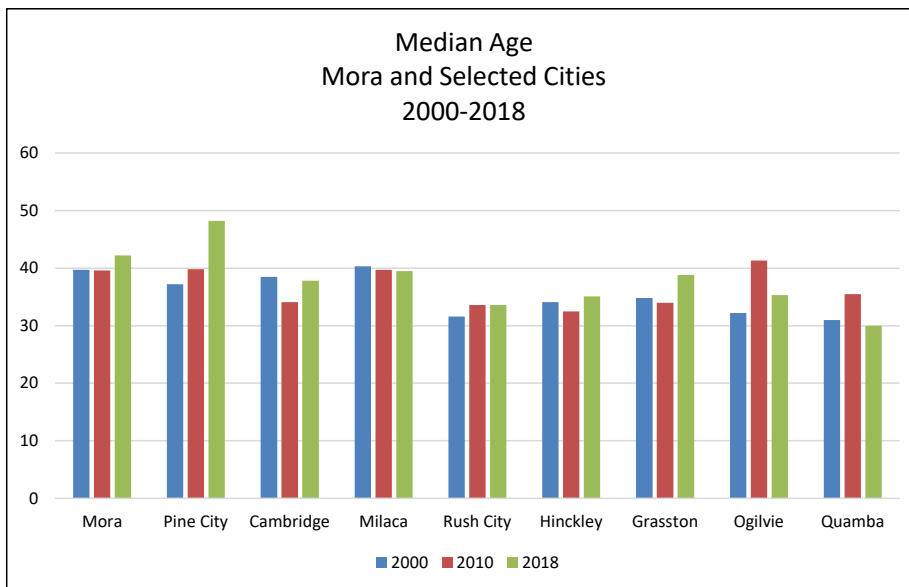
**Table 7**

**Median Age - City of Mora and Selected Nearby Cities**

Cities	2000 Median Age	2010 Median Age	2018 Median Age
Mora	39.7	39.6	42.2
Pine City	37.2	39.8	48.2
Cambridge	38.5	34.1	37.8
Milaca	40.3	39.7	39.5
Rush City	31.6	33.6	33.6
Hinckley	34.1	32.5	35.1
Grasston	34.8	34.0	38.8
Ogilvie	32.2	41.3	35.3
Quamba	31.0	35.5	30.0

**Graph 6**

**Median Age - City of Mora and Selected Nearby Cities**

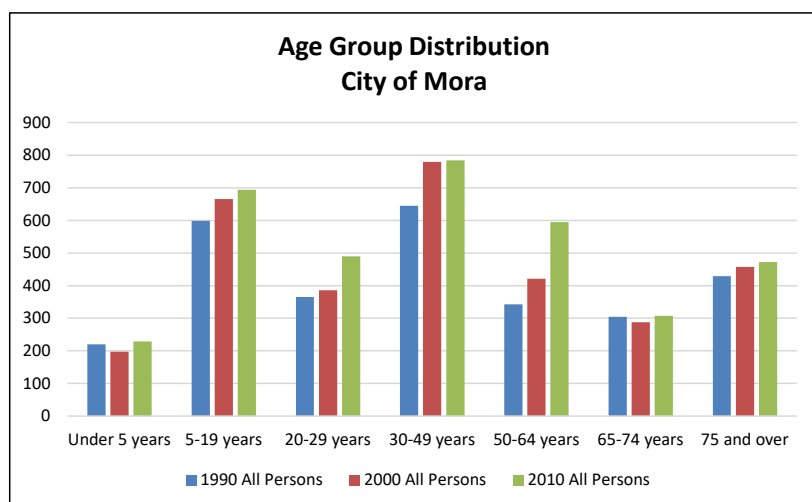


An analysis of the City's population composition is vital in planning for future services and facilities. School and recreational needs are two examples of services and facilities that are affected by changes in the composition of the City's population. The study of population by age groups provides information on the number of elderly and other age groups who might have specific or unique needs.

A review of changes among age groups (see Table 6) shows an increase in population in the over 75 years old age group and in the 25-29 years old age group. As in the United States as a whole, the older age group, over 75 years of age, has increased rapidly. The median age for Mora residents has steadily increased from 36.6 years in 1970 to 39.7 in 2000, before leveling off to 39.6 in 2010. Kanabec County's median age continued to increase between 2000 and 2010 – increasing from 38.0 to 42.1.

**Graph 7**

**Age Group Distribution – City of Mora**



Source: Minnesota State Demographer, US Census Bureau

Mora's future planning efforts should keep in mind the needs of its largest age groups – its young adults and senior citizens. These age groups are more dependent on walking, biking and/or public transit and create the bulk of the demand for services such as recreation, medical and social services.

### **Educational Attainment**

Information on educational attainment of Mora area residents is shown in Table 8. In 2018, the education level of the City's population was under the State average. The percent of high school graduates among Mora's residents over the age of 25 increased from 65% in 1990 to 78% in 2000 and to an estimated 91.2% in 2018, signaling significant progress. Still, the City remained slightly below the average for Region 7E as a whole (91.8%) and the State of Minnesota (93.0%).

In regards to the number of residents age 25 and over that had attained a bachelor's degree or higher, Mora has increased from 13.9% in 2000 to an estimated 17.0% in 2018. While this also shows significant progress, it remains slightly less than Region 7E (17.4%) and less than half of the average for the entire State of Minnesota (35.4%).

**Table 8**

**Educational Attainment in 2018 – Region 7E, Region 7E Counties, City of Mora and State of Minnesota**

Area	Number of Persons 25 Years+	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Percentage of High School or Higher	Percentage of Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Chisago County	37,802	35,657	7,737	94.3%	20.5%
Isanti County	26,632	24,410	4,718	91.7%	17.7%
Kanabec County	11,362	10,271	1,656	90.4%	14.6%
Mille Lacs County	17,645	15,849	2,703	89.8%	15.3%
Pine County	21,175	18,979	3,078	89.6%	14.5%
Region 7E	114,616	105,166	19,892	91.8%	17.4%
Mora	2,465	2,249	420	91.2%	17.0%
Minnesota	3,731,762	3,469,361	1,322,782	93.0%	35.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2018, 5-year estimates)



**Table 9a**

**Educational Attainment – City of Mora, Kanabec County and State of Minnesota**

**Percentage of High School Graduates**

Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018
Mora	52%	58%	65%	78%	88%	91%
Kanabec County	54%	59%	70%	81%	87%	90%
Minnesota	58%	73%	82%	88%	91%	93%

**Table 9b**

**Educational Attainment – City of Mora, Kanabec County and State of Minnesota**

**Percentage of Bachelor's Degree and Higher**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
Mora	10%	13%	14%	14%	20%	16%
Kanabec County	5%	9%	9%	10%	14%	15%
Minnesota	11%	17%	22%	27%	31%	36%

Source: U.S. Census and MN State Demographic Center

Tables 9a and 9b show the percentage of high school graduates and those with Bachelor's degrees or higher over time. Compared to Kanabec County as a whole, Mora's residents have slightly higher rates of educational attainment. Compared to the entire state however, Mora's percentage of high school graduates has remained below the average and significantly below the average of the state when it comes to college degrees.

**Economy**

Analyzing the makeup and current health of the economy in and around the City of Mora is an important factor used to determine the overall growth and development of the area. A healthy economy creates jobs and generates a need for new housing and services. This, in turn, generates pressure for land development. An analysis of the local and regional economy will form part of the basis from which assumptions on the future growth and development of Mora will be made.

Table 10a indicates the amount of time workers from cities in Kanabec County, Kanabec County as a whole, and Region 7E as a whole travel to their workplace. Workers who live in Mora tend to have relatively short drive times to their work (18.8 minutes on average), indicating that most workers living in Mora also work in Mora or its immediately surrounding area. Table 10b breaks down the data a bit more specifically, indicating that of Mora's 1,425 commuters more than half of them (776 or about 54%) are within a 14 minute drive of their workplace. A significant number (299 or 21.0%) drive between 25 and 39 minutes to work – suggesting locations such as Cambridge, Princeton and Hinckley. About 12.4% or 176 workers drive 45 minutes or more to work, which would indicate workplaces such as North Branch, Forest Lake, Elk River, Blaine and other northern exurban areas of the Twin Cities and to the St. Cloud area.

The data for other cities and Kanabec County as a whole indicate that a fair number of their commuters are likely driving into Mora for their work, with others driving to the other regional employment centers in the area that Mora workers are likely driving to as well.



**Table 10a**

**Travel Time for Workers 16 Years and Over – City of Mora, Kanabec County, and Region 7E**

Areas	2000	2019
Mora	23.5 minutes	18.8 minutes
Kanabec County	31.3 minutes	31.2 minutes
Region 7E	30.9 minutes	32.9 minutes

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

**Commented [BT1]:** Other Kanabec County cities deleted due to lack of available information.

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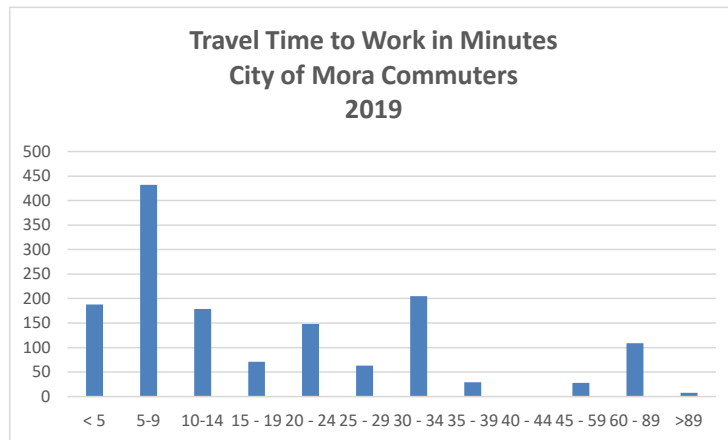
**Table 10b**

**Travel Time to Work in Minutes – Kanabec County Cities (2019)**

Cities	Number of Commuters	< 5	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	40 - 44	45 - 59	60 - 89	>89
Grasston	83	0	0	0	7	17	11	25	1	0	4	10	8
Ogilvie	220	12	15	26	41	19	5	27	33	2	22	8	10
Mora	1,460	188	432	179	71	148	63	205	29	0	28	109	8
Quamba	47	4	2	12	0	6	2	10	2	2	2	1	4

**Graph 8**

**Travel Time to Work in Minutes – City of Mora Commuters (2019)**



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 (5-year estimates)

**Table 11****Unemployment Rates – Region 7E, Region 7E Counties, State of Minnesota and United States**

Areas	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Kanabec County	4.8%	6.7%	11.2%	6.6%	6.2%
Chisago County	3.7%	4.8%	8.9%	4.2%	6.7%
Isanti County	3.4%	4.8%	9.6%	4.3%	6.9%
Mille Lacs County	4.5%	6.7%	11.1%	5.8%	7.7%
Pine County	5.3%	6.6%	9.8%	5.5%	7.5%
Region 7E	4.2%	5.6%	9.8%	4.9%	7.0%
Minnesota	3.2%	4.1%	7.4%	3.7%	7.1%
United States	4.0%	5.1%	9.6%	5.3%	8.5%

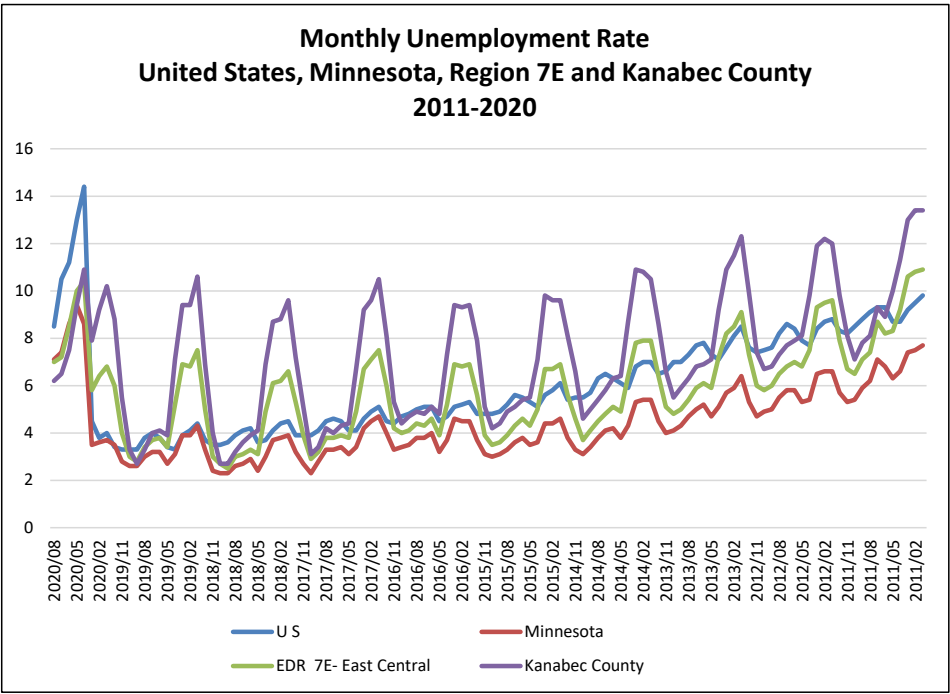
Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**Table 12****Unemployment Rates by Percentage - Region 7E, Region 7E Counties, State of Minnesota and United States**

Year/Month	United States	Minnesota	Region 7E	Pine County	Mille Lacs County	Isanti County	Chisago County	Kanabec County
2020/08	8.5	7.1	7	7.5	7.7	6.9	6.7	6.2
2020/07	10.5	7.4	7.2	7.7	8	7.2	7	6.5
2020/06	11.2	8.6	8.5	9.2	9.3	8.2	8.2	7.5
2020/05	13	9.4	10	11.9	10.9	9.4	9.3	9.4
2020/04	14.4	8.6	10.4	12.1	11.4	9.7	9.4	10.9
2020/03	4.5	3.5	5.8	6.9	6.8	5.1	4.8	7.9
2020/02	3.8	3.6	6.4	7.8	7.8	5.3	4.9	9.2
2020/01	4	3.7	6.8	8.3	8.2	5.7	5.2	10.2
2019/12	3.4	3.5	6	7.5	7.1	5.1	4.5	8.8
2019/11	3.3	2.8	4	4.6	4.7	3.4	3.2	5.5
2019/10	3.3	2.6	3	3.5	3.3	2.9	2.6	3.3
2019/09	3.3	2.6	2.8	3.2	3.1	2.7	2.5	2.7
2019/08	3.8	3	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.2	3.1	3.3
2019/07	4	3.2	3.7	4.3	4	3.4	3.4	4
2019/06	3.8	3.2	3.8	4.3	4.1	3.5	3.5	4.1
2019/05	3.4	2.7	3.4	4.2	3.8	3	3	3.9
2019/04	3.3	3.1	5.2	6.5	6.3	4.4	4	7.1
2019/03	3.9	3.9	6.9	8.3	8.4	5.9	5.5	9.4
2019/02	4.1	3.9	6.8	8.3	8.4	5.8	5.3	9.4
2019/01	4.4	4.3	7.5	9.4	9.4	6.5	5.6	10.6

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

**Graph 9**  
**Monthly Unemployment Rate – United States, State of Minnesota, Region 7E and Kanabec County (2011-2020)**



Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

As shown in Tables 11 and 12 and illustrated in Graph 9, the unemployment rate in Kanabec County has fluctuated over the years from relative lows of 4.8% in 2000 to a much higher 11.2% in 2010 as the economy nationwide was still recovering from the “Great Recession” to a rate of about 6-6.5% in more recent years.

Compared to Region 7E and the state, Kanabec County’s unemployment rate has generally been higher in recent decades, although the most recent data has actually been better than the state average. This is likely a temporary condition related to the economic upheavals from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most recent estimates (2018) indicate that household median income (defined as the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years or older in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not) for Mora was \$40,221 (up from \$30,566 in 2000 but down slightly from \$41,081 in 2010). These figures, as compared to Kanabec County and the State of Minnesota as a whole were

relatively low. Kanabec County's median household income in 2018 was \$53,300 and Minnesota's was \$68,411.

**Table 13**

**Median Household Income – City of Mora, Selected Nearby Cities, Kanabec County and State of Minnesota**

Areas	2000	2010	2018
Mora	\$30,566	\$41,081	\$40,221
Pine City	\$29,118	\$46,025	\$36,688
Cambridge	\$35,313	\$46,487	\$49,974
Milaca	\$26,964	\$33,843	\$40,545
Rush City	\$34,219	\$43,707	\$46,600
Hinckley	\$29,338	\$36,250	\$35,195
Ogilvie	\$27,292	\$24,250	\$39,167
Kanabec County	\$38,520	\$45,672	\$53,300
Minnesota	\$47,143	\$57,243	\$68,411

Source: US Census Bureau

Mora appears to have a fairly stable economy, especially in the retail area. Its retail trade attracts from a wide area, which has an impact on all City services. Additionally, Mora's industrial base is remarkable for its small size, with it also attracting employees from a wide area.

According to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Table 14 shows that the industries with the highest number of employees in Kanabec County are Education and Health Services (1,335 employees), Trade, Transportation and Utilities (609), Manufacturing (443), Leisure and Hospitality (357), Public Administration (323) and Construction (291). However, in terms of average weekly wages from the various industries, the highest wage-generating industries for Kanabec County are Construction (\$1,365), Education and Health Services (\$921), Financial Activities (\$900), Public Administration (\$896) and Manufacturing (\$766).



**Table 14****Kanabec County Employment, Number of Establishments, Total Annual Wages and Average Weekly Wages by Industry with More than 100 Employees (2019)**

Industry	Number of Employees	Number of Establishments	Total Annual Wages	Average Weekly Wage
Total, All Industries	3908	333	\$161,735,503	\$795
Hospitals	507	1	\$28,543,860	\$1,082
Educational Services	407	4	\$15,635,587	\$743
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	275	6	\$8,246,446	\$577
Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support	232	10	\$10,200,796	\$847
Specialty Trade Contractors	178	32	\$12,188,775	\$1,296
Food and Beverage Stores	156	4	\$3,049,772	\$376
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	132	8	\$6,074,296	\$885
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	122	5	\$4,300,664	\$680
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	110	4	\$6,090,713	\$1,069
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	105	13	\$3,447,885	\$632
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	104	10	\$8,625,000	\$1,533

Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2019)

**Housing**

An analysis of housing characteristics is an important part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This is because housing is an essential need by residents and the size and condition of the housing stock is an important factor in the community's environment and quality of life.



**Table 15**

**Total Number of Households Trends – City of Mora, Selected Nearby Cities and Townships**

Areas	1980	1990	2000	2010	2018	Number of Increase or Decrease 2010-2018	Percentage of Increase or Decrease 2010-2018
Mora	1290	1367	1471	1480	1460	-11	-0.9%
Pine City	1013	1097	1222	1322	1373	151	14.9%
Cambridge	1261	1876	2237	3137	3315	1078	85.5%
Milaca	860	920	1115	1308	1225	110	12.8%
Rush City	477	578	705	844	924	219	45.9%
Hinckley	404	422	551	736	691	140	34.7%
Grasston	44	44	42	53	75	33	75.0%
Ogilvie	158	188	182	160	174	-8	-5.1%
Quamba	46	43	33	42	49	16	34.8%
Arthur Township	467	543	672	683	674	2	0.4%
Comfort Township	242	274	344	420	371	27	11.2%
Knife Lake Township	255	300	412	459	451	39	15.3%
Whited Township	194	241	300	356	323	23	11.9%

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center



2018 estimates show that Mora has a total of 1,460 households, down from 1,480 in 2010 and 1,471 in 2000. Mora had 22.6% of the housing stock in Kanabec County in 2018.

Mora experienced the greatest growth in the number of households between 1980 and 2018 (170 new households), but much of the new housing built in recent years in Kanabec County was located in the townships as shown on Table 15. Brunswick (152 new households) and Arthur (151) townships led the way with Grass Lake (112) and South Fork (106) townships not far behind.

Table 16 indicates that the majority of Mora's housing units are owner-occupied (57.4%) with 36.6% being rented and 6% vacant. Since 2000, the figures indicate a slightly lower percentage of owner-occupied housing and higher percentage of rental units.

**Table 16****Housing Status – City of Mora (2000 and 2018)**

Status	2000		2018	
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent
Total Housing Units	1,471	100.0	1,554	100.0
Owned	888	60.4	892	57.4
Rented	493	33.5	568	36.6
Vacant	90	6.1	94	6.0

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2018 – 5-year estimates)

Table 17 shows development trends by building permits issued within the City from 1996 to 2020. The largest amount of development of single family homes took place in 2005 when 24 single family homes were built. The largest amount of development of multi-family units took place in 1994 when 54 units were constructed in one development. The least amount of development occurred following the Great Recession, with only 4 single family homes and 0 multi-family units constructed from 2010 through 2016. Development began to increase in 2017, but again dipped in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the cost of construction materials.

**Table 17****Building Permits – City of Mora**

Year	New Single Family Homes	New Multi-Family Units	Total Number of Multi-Family Units
1996	6	0	0
1997	6	1	54
1998	6	0	0
1999	8	1	18
2000	15	0	0
2001	12	1	24
2002	7	1	21
2003	5	0	0
2004	20	0	0
2005	24	0	0
2006	9	0	0
2007	9	0	0
2008	1	1	23
2009	1	0	0
2010	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0
2013	2	0	0
2014	0	0	0
2015	2	0	0
2016	0	0	0
2017	6	1	24
2018	7	0	0
2019	19	0	0
2020	12	0	0
Total	177	6	164

Source: City of Mora, Building Department

**Table 18**

**Structures Built / Housing Units – City of Mora**

Year Built	2000	2018
<a href="#">2014 or later</a>	<a href="#">x</a>	<a href="#">65</a>
<a href="#">2010 to 2013</a>	<a href="#">x</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2000 to 2009</a>	<a href="#">x</a>	<a href="#">171</a>
<a href="#">1990 to 1999</a>	<a href="#">219</a>	<a href="#">193</a>
<a href="#">1980 to 1989</a>	<a href="#">185</a>	<a href="#">182</a>
<a href="#">1970 to 1979</a>	<a href="#">248</a>	<a href="#">297</a>
<a href="#">1960 to 1969</a>	<a href="#">140</a>	<a href="#">79</a>
<a href="#">1950 to 1959</a>	<a href="#">223</a>	<a href="#">211</a>
<a href="#">1940 to 1949</a>	<a href="#">145</a>	<a href="#">156</a>
<a href="#">1939 or earlier</a>	<a href="#">312</a>	<a href="#">215</a>

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 18 shows that as of 2018, Mora’s housing stock is fairly balanced in terms of when it was constructed, with housing construction dates spread across all decades.

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**Table 19**

**Median and Average Selected Monthly Owner Costs for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units – City of Mora (2018)**

	Median Monthly Owner Costs
Housing Units with a Mortgage	\$1,145
Housing Units without a Mortgage	\$440

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2018 – 5-year estimates)

**Table 20**

**Median Housing Value and Contract Rent – City of Mora (2018)**

Median Housing Value	Median Contract Rent
\$121,000	\$699

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2018 – 5-year estimates)

Table 19 shows that the median monthly owner payment of housing units in 2018 was \$1,145 compared to the median monthly cost of \$440 for housing units that are not mortgaged. Table 20 shows that the median housing value of a Mora home was \$121,000 and the average rent was \$699 in 2018.

**Table 21**

**Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income – City of Mora**

	Total		Less than \$10,000		\$10,000 to \$19,999		\$20,000 to \$34,999		\$35,000 to \$49,999		\$50,000 to \$74,999		\$75,000 to \$99,999		\$100,000 to \$149,999		\$150,000 and over	
	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct	Data	Pct
	892	100.0 %	27	100.0 %	72	100.0 %	140	100.0 %	186	100.0 %	178	100.0 %	98	100.0 %	174	100.0 %	17	100.0 %
Less than 20%	553	62.0 %	0	0.0 %	10	13.9 %	66	47.1 %	104	55.9 %	90	50.6 %	92	93.9 %	174	100.0 %	17	100.0 %
20 to 24.9%	89	10.0 %	0	0.0 %	8	11.1 %	0	0.0 %	53	28.5 %	22	12.4 %	6	6.1 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
25 to 29.9%	103	11.5 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	18	12.9 %	29	15.6 %	56	31.5 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
30 to 34.9%	42	4.7 %	0	0.0 %	12	16.7 %	22	15.7 %	8	4.3 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
35 to 39.9%	36	4.0 %	0	0.0 %	26	36.1 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	10	5.6 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
40 to 49.9%	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
50 percent or more	77	8.6 %	27	100.0 %	16	22.2 %	34	24.3 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2018 – 5-year estimates)

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The physical characteristics and natural resources of an area serve as a guiding force in the development of communities. Physical characteristics and natural resources played key roles in the locations where rural communities developed. Future development in Mora will be shaped to some extent by the physical characteristics and natural resources of the area.

### Topography

Topographically the built up area of the City is flat to gently rolling with an average elevation of 1,000 feet Mean Sea Level. Grades and slopes along the Snake River and Lake Mora place some restrictions on development since these areas are subject to floodplain management and shoreland management regulations.

### Climate

Mora is located at 1,000 to 1,010 feet above Mean Sea Level. The climate for this area is typically continental, characterized by wide variations in temperature. In Mora, the summers are warm and wet; the winters are freezing, snowy, and windy; and it is partly cloudy year round. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 4°F to 80°F and is rarely below -18°F or above 89°F. Each winter, on average, the risk of frost is from September 22 through May 17. Most precipitation received in the area occurs during the period from May through September, with the average annual amount of precipitation being 29.5 inches. Most snowfall occurs from November through February, with the average annual snowfall being 46 inches.

### Soils

Soils throughout the Mora area are generally well drained sandy loams with a deep water table. Limitations on development because of the soil conditions would be slight, except near the banks of the Snake River and the shores of Lake Mora and Spring Lake where flooding potential and peat may exist. Soils in the area are primarily the Milaca-Ronneby Association and the Rosholt-Onamia Association. The Milaca-Ronneby Association is described as nearly level to gently sloping, well and somewhat poorly drained soils that have dense reddish fine sandy loam subsoil. The Rosholt-Onamia Association is characterized by nearly level to gently sloping well drained soils that have loamy subsoil and gravelly sand substratum.

Development should be discouraged on environmentally sensitive soils and appropriate land regulatory measures, such as Zoning, Subdivision, Shoreland Management and Floodplain Management Ordinances, should be strictly enforced and regularly updated to ensure the protection and preservation of these areas.

### Wood

Aerial photos reveal that areas of natural vegetation exist primarily along the Snake River and the north half of Lake



Mora. Mature trees are also found in older built up residential areas and in Oakwood Cemetery. These wooded areas are a dominant visual characteristic of Mora and should be preserved for their aesthetic value as well as their environmental benefits.

### Drainage

The majority of the City of Mora is drained by the Snake River which has served for many years as Mora's natural western boundary. This is now changing, due to annexation, with the boundary of the City now on the west side of the river. The river, which flows in a relatively undisturbed natural setting, should be preserved and protected.

With increasingly large rain events and subsequent flooding within certain areas of the community, the City of Mora retained Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S) to complete a regional drainage analysis for three major watersheds located within the community: Downtown, Fairgrounds, and Lake Mora. The purpose of the analysis was to:

1. Identify and assess key storm system deficiencies and risk areas within the Downtown and Fairground watersheds;
2. Determine the hydraulic interaction between Lake Mora and the City's storm system and design a gravity outlet system for Lake Mora; and,
3. Evaluate alternative solutions to improve regional drainage and reduce the risk of flooding.

AE2S presented its findings, including implementation and prioritization of storm sewer system improvements, to the Mora City Council in October 2019. Because constructing all of the storm sewer system improvements at once is not financially feasible for the City, it is anticipated that improvements will be phased and integrated into street and utility improvement projects when possible.

### Water Resources - Shoreland

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Statewide Standards affect all lakes greater than ten acres in municipalities, and rivers with drainage areas two square miles or greater. These standards set guidelines for the use and development of shoreland property including: a sanitary code, minimum lot size, minimum water frontage, building setbacks, building heights and subdivision regulations. The public waters in the City of Mora are protected waters and are regulated by the Shoreland Management and Floodplain Management Ordinances. The DNR's definition of "shoreland" is land located within the following distances of public water: 1,000 feet from the ordinary high level of a lake, pond, or flowage; and 300 feet from a river or stream, or the landward extent of a floodplain designated by ordinance on a river or stream, whichever is greater.

The following bodies of water are classified in accordance to the shoreland classification system as follows:

Lake Mora	General Development
Spring Lake	Recreational Development
Snake River	Transition River

These bodies of water are under the jurisdiction of the City's Shoreland Management Ordinance. The Shoreland Management Ordinance defines the classifications of the bodies of water as such:



General Development Lakes -- Have greater than 225 acres of water per mile of shoreland, over 25 dwellings per mile of shoreland and are over 15 feet deep.

Recreational Development Lakes -- Have between 60 and 225 acres of water per mile of shoreline, between 3 and 25 dwellings per mile of shoreland, and are over 15 feet deep.

Transition River -- A mixture of cultivated, pasture, and forested land.

### **Floodplain**

Portions of the lakes and rivers are susceptible to periodic flooding from snow melt, rainfall, and other causes. Due to potential flood damage to property, the federal government has conducted a flood study of the City. The study designates floodway, the 100 year floodplain, and the 500 year floodplain. The floodway and floodplain are areas that pose special problems for development. For this reason, the State has mandated floodplain zoning regulations for land within the floodway and the 100 year floodplain.

A Guide for Buying and Managing Shoreland, written by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) states: "The natural floodplain is an important part of our water system. It affects storm runoff, water quality, vegetative diversity, wildlife habitat and aesthetic qualities of the lakes and river."

A Guide for Buying and Managing Shoreland has the following to say about the floodway: "The floodway is the natural conduit for flood waters. The floodway must remain open in order to allow flood waters to pass. Since these areas must be left open, only green space uses, such as farm land, residential yards or gardens, golf courses, parks, playgrounds, or parking areas, should be allowed in the floodway. The remainder of the floodplain lying outside of the floodway is called the flood fringe. This area is generally covered by shallow, slow moving flood waters. Development is normally allowed in the flood fringe as a conditional use, provided that the residential buildings are placed on fill so that the lowest floor, including the basement, is two feet above the 100 year flood level."

The City's current Floodplain Management Ordinance was adopted in February 2021, following a two-year effort by the Planning Commission and City Council to update the 1997 ordinance to be in compliance with State floodplain management rules and the floodplain management standards of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). To address local flooding concerns, and with full support from the DNR, the City established a new flood district – known as the Flood Prone District – and corresponding City of Mora Flood Prone Areas Map. The City's goal in establishing the Flood Prone District was to create awareness of potential flooding and prevent flood damage by providing recommendations for new construction in known flood prone areas.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Mora is approximately 3,500 acres in size and is laid out in a traditional small town grid pattern with State Highways 23 and 65 bisecting the City.

The City's predominant existing land use is residential. Based on past history and anticipated growth, there appears to be a sufficient amount of vacant single family residential property to meet needs for at least the next ten years. Multi-family residential land is nearing saturation and there may be a need for more multi-family vacant land in the next several years.

Commercial development straddles the State Highways 23 and 65 corridor, as well as the downtown area. Downtown businesses are located close to the sidewalk in a traditional "Main Street" pattern. Businesses include a variety of service and retail establishments.

There are several developed industrial properties in the northeast part of the City with vacant industrial lots still available in this area. Many of the vacant properties are located in the City's industrial park. With a limited number of vacant buildable lots available in Mora Industrial Park 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition, the City will need to consider installing street and utility infrastructure to serve the eastern portion of the platted industrial park to meet future industrial development needs.

Institutional uses, including City and County facilities, Welia Health and ISD 332 facilities, take up approximately 25% of the City's acreage.

The City's Official Zoning Map regulates development patterns within the community, helps ensure that new development is compatible with existing uses, and guides the community for future development in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. It's important for City staff to keep the Zoning Map updated and available to prospective developers.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Planning Assumptions

There are many assumptions in the goals formulation process and it is necessary that they be articulated. This Comprehensive Plan attempts to, at least generally, take into account the most likely factors affecting future development. There are a number of things, however, which cannot be known and certain assumptions need to be made in order to qualify the basis on which planning proposals are made.

Every plan conceived is based on both implicit and explicit assumptions. An implicit assumption, for example, would be that there will be no war or other catastrophe which precludes effective planning for the future. A number of similar assumptions could be stated, but they should not be belabored. There is, however, a need to express the explicit assumptions on which this plan is based. These assumptions need to be carefully reviewed from time to time, in order to test their validity in the light of future events and experience.

### Assumptions

The explicit assumptions made for this Plan include the following:

1. Mora's long range role in the region will continue its gradual transition from its historical role as a commercial and service center serving an agricultural trade area to a "full service balanced community" providing a broad mix of housing, shopping and employment opportunities for people throughout the broader region.
2. Mora's population, shopping opportunities and housing stock will continue to experience steady growth in the coming years as it benefits from its position as the County Seat, its location at the intersection of two major state highways and its proximity to other growing communities in the region such as Cambridge and Princeton.
3. Mora's current and future residents will tend to demand a greater focus on:
  - a. compact and family-friendly neighborhoods as opposed to the more sprawling large-lot neighborhoods in more suburban or rural areas;
  - b. well-maintained trails, public parks and playgrounds that offer a wider variety of recreation opportunities for all ages, including seniors and the elderly;
  - c. transportation infrastructure that continues to serve the personal automobile as the primary means of transportation, but that also meets the desires and needs of residents who do not have access to personal automobiles or would prefer the option of walking, biking and using public transit to move about the community; and
  - d. a broad spectrum of housing styles and neighborhoods that will serve their needs and allow them to stay in Mora throughout all stages of life.
4. The City will continue to experience growth in the number of senior and elderly residents, but should expect that the City will begin to also attract a greater number of younger residents and families - both with and without children.
5. Mora's land use patterns and mix of residents and businesses will be influenced by a number of regional economic and technological trends over which it has little direct control, including:

- a. the availability, reliability and affordability of high-speed internet;
- b. continued growth in the use of the internet for day-to-day shopping needs, entertainment and education;
- c. proximity to sub-regional growth centers such as Cambridge and Princeton and its location at the intersection of two major state highways; and
- d. the expanding influence of the Twin Cities metropolitan region on housing supply, demand and affordability, employment opportunities and shopping.

While other broader economic and technological trends will certainly create opportunities and challenges, it is these four that will have the greatest influence on Mora over the next 20 years.

### **Purpose**

This Comprehensive Plan examines the City's existing state in terms of its physical, social, and economic components. The plan, goals, and policies which have been developed should not be viewed as a "static" document. Rather, necessary changes should be made, on a regular basis, to reflect social, economic and political situations as warranted. The key to an effective plan is to strike the right balance between identifying the general framework within which to move forward, and allowing for adjustments to the details within that framework as conditions warrant. City leaders should not be afraid to suggest amendments to this Plan's goals and policies so that the City can respond in the most effective and creative manner.

The individual components of the Plan should be reviewed every few years, to determine whether policy shifts need to be made. All changes to the Plan should involve broad citizen participation and remain based upon sound planning principles that are supported by solid data and sufficient community support.

### **Planning Goals and Policies**

The formulation of goals and policies involves a significant process involving numerous considerations from a broad spectrum of government, business and citizen leaders throughout the community. The goals and policies that follow were produced after the completion of a community-wide survey, an extensive series of meetings of the Mora Comprehensive Plan Committee, and several work sessions held with input from City Council and Planning Commission members. This broad spectrum of input provides the foundation upon which the implementation tools were developed so as to guide the City's future land use and planning decisions.

Planning goals are broad general statements of value concerning the long range future of the community. Goals are the desired objectives as expressed by the planning participants. They are meant to ultimately result in the kind of living, working and playing environments desired by the residents of the community. The primary goal of this planning process is to create a "quality environment" which will enhance the "quality of life."

Planning policies are generally short range courses of action designed to achieve established goals. They are expressed courses of action by the elected body of the community. Goals and policies must be considered collectively. While an individual goal or policy may dictate a course, it is more likely that several policies should be considered in determining a course of action.

The goals and policies are as follows:

## A. Parks and Open Spaces, Environment and Natural Resources

GOAL: Improve and protect the physical environment of the community as a setting for human activities, making it more attractive, healthful and efficient.

### POLICIES:

1. Protect and enhance the City's most sensitive natural resources and amenities to preserve the benefits they provide to both wildlife and the City's residents and businesses.
2. Provide an extensive open space system for recreation and other suitable uses, taking advantage of natural features and using, where possible, land not suitable for intensive development.
3. Work to maintain or improve Lake Mora's water quality so that it remains suitable for public use and enjoyment.
4. Ensure that Mora's system of parks is well-maintained and provides recreational amenities for residents and visitors of all ages.
5. Expand, promote and integrate the City's network of off-street trails and paths for use by pedestrians, road and off-road bicyclists, cross-country skiers, and others. Work to improve linkages between the City's neighborhoods and downtown area and to public sites throughout the City such as schools, the library, parks, the Mora Aquatic Center, Lake Mora, the Snake River, and the broader regional trail system.



## B. Recreation and Tourism

GOAL: Capitalize on the many advantages of Mora's environmental and cultural amenities to attract tourists and benefit the City's residents and businesses.

### POLICIES:

1. Promote Mora to tourists traveling along State Highways 23 and 65, US Highway 169 and Interstate 35 on their way to and from other regional destinations such as Lake Mille Lacs, Minneapolis/St. Paul, St. Cloud, and Duluth. Highlight Mora's many amenities, attractions and businesses as a place to stop and spend a few hours exploring rather than just passing through.
2. Promote Mora and its surrounding region as a regular destination in its own right for multi-day tourists and seasonal residents.
3. Ensure that the City's main transportation thoroughfares are well-maintained, attractive and help draw those passing through into the downtown area and to the City's many cultural, recreational and environmental amenities.
4. Seek to create attractive and visible trailheads to the City's trail and park network.
5. Enhance Lake Mora as a tourist destination by improving public access to the lake and expanding recreational and cultural opportunities on, or adjacent to, the lake.

6. Work with stakeholders, including the County and the Mora Area Chamber of Commerce, to develop a branding and marketing campaign for the community and use it to not only promote tourism in our area, but also as a great place to live and/or start a business.

### C. Business & Industry

GOAL: To promote the growth and diversification of Mora's local economy making it a "full service" community with a broad economic base.

#### POLICIES:

1. Promote Mora as a progressive, growth-oriented community that supports existing businesses and is inviting to new entrepreneurs and industries.
2. Seek to attract and support the expansion of all types of businesses - from small startups and locally owned businesses to larger regional or national businesses and "big box" retailers. The creation of a broad spectrum of business activity can serve as a catalyst for future development and growth and help to ensure that the community does not become over-dependent on any single employer or sector of the economy.
3. Work to create steady growth in the industries that make use of the area's skilled and unskilled labor forces and provide livable wages.
4. Promote coordination among the City and businesses in the central business district and other commercial districts. Work to create a sense that Mora's business districts as a whole are well-kept, attractive and respectful of the City's many historic buildings and Scandinavian heritage. Create an environment where customers may be seeking a stop at one business but are drawn to others as well.



5. Foster and promote physical, social and economic connections between the City's central business district and those businesses located along the State Highway 23 and 65 corridors.
6. Work with businesses and landowners along the City's main thoroughfares to ensure that buildings, storefronts, rear entrances and streetscapes are attractively landscaped and well-kept.

#### D. Housing

GOAL: Encourage the development and maintenance of a broad variety of housing types to provide the full range of housing opportunities at different sizes, densities and price ranges.

##### POLICIES:

1. Plan adequate and appropriate areas for residential land uses that make the most efficient use of existing and newly extended infrastructure.
2. Support policies and ordinances that allow for reasonable maintenance and expansion of existing homes that may otherwise be more difficult to sell to families that are seeking to live in the City's older neighborhoods or that may be contributing to substandard housing conditions or environmental blight.
3. Protect the City's residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses that make them less attractive for long-term investments.



4. Ensure that City ordinances and policies allow for flexibility in housing types and the design of neighborhoods so as to be responsive to the needs of current and future residents, home building professionals and land developers. Balance this flexibility with the need to promote the efficient use of infrastructure and public resources and create attractive residential neighborhoods.

GOAL: Encourage the development of additional senior living options and services within the community.

##### POLICIES:

1. Promote the development of housing types appropriate for all stages of a person's life, so as to ensure that people can live in Mora as long as they would like. This includes the development of senior living options, such as assisted living, to allow aging residents to remain in the community while at the same time keeping their independence and quality of life.
2. Promote land use that places seniors in close proximity to shopping, social opportunities, recreation and healthcare.





3. Promote the creation of infrastructure and services necessary to allow older residents to walk, bike or make use of public transit to access a full range of commercial, social and recreational opportunities in the community.
4. Work with the Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Mora (HRA) and other agencies to encourage and create additional senior living developments and services in the community.

#### **E. Public Services and Facilities**

GOAL: Maintain a high level of public services in an efficient manner that minimizes the tax burden on Mora's residents, businesses and industries.

##### **POLICIES:**

1. Encourage a balanced land use pattern, recognizing that public service costs and requirements vary substantially among the various types of land uses and are not necessarily directly proportionate to the taxes generated.
2. Realize that certain public costs, such as education and pollution control, represent an essential investment in the future and should be supported.
3. Use the Comprehensive Plan as the basis for capital improvement programming in order to ensure that the City's available revenues are spent efficiently and in a manner which promotes continued private investment and re-investment.
4. Continue to promote Mora's central business district as a hub of government, non-profit and private services and shopping opportunities for City residents and the broader region.
5. Enact and enforce appropriate regulations controlling water, land, air and noise pollution, as well as visual blight.
6. Use the Comprehensive Plan as the primary document to communicate the desired direction of Mora's future growth to residents, businesses, land developers and other governmental units.
7. Take positive, proactive steps to actively participate in finding solutions to county, state, federal and other broader issues which have an effect upon Mora's residents, businesses and government.
8. Seek out opportunities to maintain and strengthen strong working relationships with Mora's nearby townships and cities, Kanabec County and other local, state and federal governmental agencies. Continue to promote the independence of each level of government while also finding ways to coordinate activities for the good of the entire region.
9. Construct four additional reed beds at the City's wastewater treatment facility to bring the facility to the full, 8-reed bed capacity anticipated as being necessary in the City's 2012 Facility Plan.





## F. Transportation

GOAL: Maintain and expand, as appropriate, the network of roads, sidewalks and trails in and around the City of Mora so as to ensure the safe and effective movement of people and goods.

### POLICIES:

1. Establish a logical vehicular circulation pattern based on a hierarchy of streets, appropriate for different traffic speeds, volumes and purposes, to move traffic to, through and within the City.
2. Control land use and development adjacent to major thoroughfares in order to strike the appropriate balance between the free flow of traffic and providing access to and from the City's downtown and other nearby commercial areas and neighborhoods.
3. Work with MNDOT on creating a plan to better integrate State Highways 23 and 65 with their adjacent land uses through the effective use of frontage or backage roads, pedestrian/trail crossings, landscaping and wayfinding signage.
4. Develop a city-wide funding, land acquisition and construction plan for the phased expansion and maintenance of a comprehensive system of sidewalks, bikeways, trails and pathways that more effectively links the City's commercial districts, residential neighborhoods and recreational sites.
5. Work with other units of government to promote an efficient and responsible public transit system.



## G. Land Use

GOAL: Guide development in a manner which prevents land use conflicts and development inefficiencies while maintaining property values.

### POLICIES:

1. Maintain and amend, as necessary, the City's "Land Use Map" to clearly communicate to the public those areas of the City deemed appropriate for future commercial, industrial, residential, public and open space uses. Identify targeted areas where mixed-use buildings (i.e. lower level commercial with residential above) or neighborhoods (i.e. areas that allow for both residential and limited commercial) are considered appropriate.
2. Review and amend, as necessary, City regulations to promote the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the City's "Land Use Map".
3. Correct land use conflicts where they now occur through the promotion of private and public redevelopment, landscape buffering and other appropriate strategies.
4. Work to ensure that all major public and private decisions regarding land use are made with an understanding of the goals and framework of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Promote widespread knowledge of the Comprehensive Plan through a variety of distribution and education efforts.

## H. Quality of Life

GOAL: Work to create a community that meets the needs of all residents regardless of age or economic status and which grows in a manner which is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

### POLICIES:

1. Attract and retain businesses and industries which provide livable wages and benefits.
2. Promote and support a wide variety of housing options appropriate for every stage of life.
3. Provide or support the provision of a complete range of public services in an efficient and effective manner – including schools, medical and social services, and emergency and public safety services.
4. Promote a city which provides and maintains the infrastructure necessary for all modes of transportation needed by the City's residents and businesses.



GOAL: Continuously improve the general welfare of Mora's present and future residents, while respecting and protecting their individual choices.

### POLICIES:

1. Consistently seek a balance between the interests of the individual and of the community.
2. Inject long range considerations into short term actions.
3. Facilitate the democratic process in decision making on land use development.

## Implementation

The completion of this update of the Mora Comprehensive Plan represents a continuation of the City's efforts toward developing an ongoing comprehensive planning program. From this point, Mora will focus its efforts on implementing the Plan through modification and adoption of regulatory tools on a consistent basis.

The primary existing regulatory tools intended to implement the policies and goal of this Plan include the City's:

1. Capital Improvement Program;
2. Zoning Ordinance;
3. Subdivision Ordinance;
4. Shoreland Management Ordinance; and
5. Floodplain Management Ordinance.

While these will likely be the primary tools for implementation of the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan, they are not the only tools. Education, coordination with other public and private entities to implement certain goals or policies and the choices elected officials make about day-to-day expenditures can all contribute to the realization of the City's land use goals. To be most effective over time, the steps undertaken to implement the Plan also need to be updated on a regular basis so that they are well-coordinated with the City's other efforts that relate to or impact land use decisions.

## LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is simply a proposal for the future use of land with the ultimate goal of providing a pleasing, healthful and efficient urban environment in which to live, work and play. It does this by serving as a guide for public and private investment. The Land Use Plan for Mora is graphically illustrated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Minnesota Statute 462.352 defines a land use plan as follows: "Land use plan means a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps, and action programs for guiding the future development of private and public property. The term includes a plan designating types of uses for the entire municipality as well as a specialized plan showing specific areas or specific types of land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, public or semipublic uses or any combination of such uses. A land use plan may also include the proposed densities for development."

The basis for the Land Use Plan are environmental considerations, existing land use, existing and proposed transportation routes, estimated population and economic growth, community needs and goals and planning principals which relate together land use, the transportation system and open space. The present incorporated area of Mora should be more than enough land area to accommodate the likely amount of population growth and anticipated land use requirements through 2030 and likely through 2040. The distribution of land uses for the present incorporated areas are shown in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

## LAND USE PROPOSALS

### Residential

Residential land use, as it is today, will be the dominant future urban land use. Major residential expansion areas will likely occur north of Lake Mora and in the southeast and southwest regions of the City. Redevelopment should be considered in the older residential neighborhoods to eliminate substandard housing. Three categories of urban residential land use are proposed: Low Density Residential consisting of one and two family dwelling units; Medium Density Residential consisting of three to eight units; and, High Density Residential consisting of nine or more units.

### Mora Housing Projections

Population forecasts are the foundation of housing projections. Projected population divided by average household size indicates housing demand. A 3% vacancy rate is desirable to ensure an adequate supply of homes across the spectrum of housing styles and sizes. Therefore, total housing stock is slightly greater than occupied housing, plus vacant housing.

The following calculations project housing demand through 2040. The following assumptions included in the calculations that follow:

1. A vacancy rate of 3% is desirable.
2. Household sizes in Mora will continue to remain in the range of 2.15 to 2.25 persons per household.



Housing unit and acreage projections are based on the following formula:

1.  $(\text{Population} / \text{household size of } 2.20) \times \text{vacancy rate of } 1.03 = \text{the number of housing units expected to be needed in the future. Subtracting the calculated existing number of housing units from this total results in the number of new housing units needed.}$
2.  $\text{Housing units} \times 10,000 \text{ square feet} / 43,560 \text{ (square feet in an acre)} = \text{total number of acres needed to accommodate the new housing units.}$

The resulting calculations using these assumptions do not include streets, parks and other land needed to serve future residential uses. It also assumes that all new housing will need to be accommodated by development of previously undeveloped land rather than, for instance, the redevelopment of several adjacent single family homes into a more densely populated series of townhomes or apartments.

For these reasons and because many other variables will impact the need for additional land, these projections should be used only as general indications of the amount of land that will be necessary for future residential uses. Changes in any of the variables, i.e. population composition, household size,

actual lot sizes developed for residential homes, the extent to which redevelopment of existing homes into more densely populated housing, and changes in the actual population, would result in a different set of projections.

Rather than attempting to project future populations in specific years, the following calculations lay out several different scenarios in terms of how quickly the City grows in its population and what that may mean for the need for additional land.

**Table 22**

**Land Needs to Accommodate Residential Growth under Various Growth Scenarios – City of Mora**

*NOTE: Starting point is 2019 estimated population of 3,615.*

<b>Growth Scenario</b>	<b>2030 Resulting Population</b>	<b>2040 Resulting Population</b>	<b>Additional Housing Units Needed by 2040 @ 2.2 Persons per Household</b>	<b>Additional Acreage Needed by 2040 @ 10,000 sq ft per Dwelling Unit</b>
Slower Growth (0.5%/year)	3,772	3,965	233.3	53.6
Historical Average since 1990 (0.81%/year)	3,902	4,230	357.3	82.0
Historical Average since 1940 (1.23%/year)	3,122	2,762	538.0	123.5
Moderate-Growth (2%/year)	4,440	5,412	910.8	209.1
Fast Growth (3.5%/year)	5,214	7,354	1,819.9	417.8
Very Fast Growth (5%/year)	6,108	9,948	3,034.6	696.6

Given that the City of Mora currently contains about 5.47 square miles of land above water, the current City boundaries contain about 3,500 acres of land. A very rough estimate of the amount of large-tract vacant land in the City of Mora's current municipal boundaries is approximately 1000 acres. This does not include vacant land within the generally developed areas of the City, for which there is certainly additional vacant land available. At the same time, the 1,000 acre-estimate does not account for the need to develop around natural features such as streams, wetlands, ponds and steep hills or floodplains. Still, a very quick analysis suggests that the City's current boundaries could accommodate the housing needed even if it were to grow at an annual rate far in excess of what it has seen in the past.

## Commercial

Existing commercial uses are found in two major locations within the City. Commercial establishments are found along State Highways 23 and 65, which serves as the General Business District, and along Forest Avenue and Union Street, which serves as the Central Business District. The General Business District provides activities that are primarily highway or automobile oriented. Highway orientated commercial developments are to be clustered where practical and provided with adequate parking areas and served by service roads. The most recent commercial developments have occurred along State Highways 23 and 65. The Central Business District functions as "Main Street", providing a pedestrian oriented district that discourages highway oriented land uses. The Central Business District is the older of the two commercial areas. It is proposed that the Central Business District will maintain its role as the primary commercial district promoting retail and professional services. It is desired that both commercial zoning districts, the B-1 Central Business District and the B-2 General Business District, work in harmony with each other in a spirit of cooperation and connectedness for the benefit of both areas and the community as a whole. In an effort to connect these two commercial areas, the Forest Avenue corridor located between Union Street and Highway 65, is zoned for commercial use. This corridor was originally developed as a residential area, including many single family homes; however, as the residential uses are discontinued and ownership changes these properties are changing from residential use to commercial use.

### Central Business District Improvements

Improvements that should be considered in the Central Business District include a sidewalk plan to ensure a continuous system connecting downtown businesses to each other and to surrounding residential neighborhoods, the promotion of continuous maintenance and improvement to downtown buildings (including rear entries to buildings, where they exist) and an examination of the best methods



for addressing parking needs in the downtown area – whether that be with additional parking, less restrictive off-street parking regulations, the promotion of alternative methods of transportation or other appropriate measures.

### General Business District Improvements

Improvements that should be considered in the General Business District include efforts to encourage additional landscaping and aesthetic improvements to businesses and parking areas. The City should also work with MNDOT to seek improved pedestrian crossings across the Snake River and across Highway 65, in particular, as most of the community's businesses providing "basic necessities" are located adjacent to or near Highway 65. For the purposes of this section, basic necessities can be defined as food, clothing, household equipment and furniture, medical facilities and the post office.



### Industrial Land Use

Future industrial expansion is anticipated to take place in the Mora Industrial Park which is located in the northeast part of the City. In fact, the vast majority of land zoned for industrial use is located north of Highway 23 and east of Highway 65.

As the City's Industrial Park comes closer to being fully developed, potential areas for industrial uses to locate would include land near the southeast corner of the Highway 23 and 65 intersection (existing industrially zoned land) as well as areas closer to the southern intersection of Highways 23 and 65.

### Public Land Use

Public land use refers to all publicly used, owned and operated sites and buildings. The amount of land used for public purposes is projected to increase substantially. Because of the overlapping nature of many public services provided by different governmental units, coordination is essential between the Mora Public School District, Kanabec County, adjacent townships, various State agencies and the City of Mora.

Major public land use proposals that warrant continued consideration include trail construction and recreational opportunities in the Snake River flood corridor, trail construction and improved pedestrian crossings across the Snake River and across Highway 65, improvements to recreational and social opportunities on Lake Mora's shoreline, further improvements to the Spring Lake area and other open space areas taking advantage where practical of low lands, streams, ponds, and other critical environmental areas. It is recommended that the City's parks and playgrounds be improved and expanded, where appropriate (i.e. the creation of a dog park and a new park east of Highway 65 are potential expansions that have been discussed by the City's Park Board in recent years), as well as the system of trails and paths for alternative transportation.



### Land Use Compatibility

The primary purpose of this section is to evaluate the appropriateness of the existing land use arrangement and patterns in the City and to suggest guidelines for ensuring compatible relationships among the various categories of land use.

By ensuring the appropriate use of land, wasteful and inefficient partial arrangements can be avoided; the duplication of expensive facilities can be eliminated; and, the necessary facilities can more easily be programmed and provided. This section will endeavor to establish guidelines which will serve to identify various levels of compatibility in land use forms for Mora. These are designed to avoid repetition of existing types of inappropriate land use practices and to encourage the appropriate relationships.

### Guidelines for Land Use Compatibility

In order to determine the compatibility of existing and proposed land uses with other land use forms, a systematic approach was developed. It places virtually all potential land use interrelationships into one



of three basic categories. The categories are measured on a "compatibility scale." The three-level compatibility scale includes interrelationships that are deemed (1) desirable, (2) undesirable and (3) questionable. In considering a compatibility rating system, it should be noted that land use compatibility implies a two-way relationship. In instances where two different types of land uses are mutually beneficial and compatible with each other, they have been classified as "desirable." Where neither of the two land uses is in a beneficial relationship it has been classified as "undesirable." In those instances where only one form of land use may benefit from proximity with another land use, the interrelationship has been classified as "questionable."

Perhaps the best example of a desirable type of land use compatibility is the one that residential land use forms. From the residential standpoint it is desirable to have recreation, parks and open space located in close proximity to residential areas. Conversely, it is desirable to have recreation, parks and open space located in close proximity to their primary users.

Another example of a desirable land use relationship is found between high density residential use and commercial facilities. Here the rationale involves both the question of proximity of commercial services to high density residential areas and the realization that apartments and other forms of multi-family residential development frequently form a desirable buffer between traffic-generating commercial uses and less intense residential uses. When considering compatible land use relationships it should be remembered that a given form of land use is categorically assumed to be a "desirable" neighbor of a similar land use form.

Both light and heavy industrial forms are classified as "undesirable neighbors" of low density and medium density residential land uses. This rating was derived through the recognition that the various characteristics of industrial development are generally conflicting with the atmosphere sought in residential areas. Similarly, neither low density nor medium density residential land use forms benefit industrial development by being its neighbor. Undesirable land use relationships are also found between low density residential forms and utility rights-of-way which are generally undesirable in residential areas. Conversely, these facilities do not benefit by close proximity to residential areas.

Commercial activities (highway oriented) as well as recreational and open space forms are considered as "questionable" neighbors of heavy industry because proximity benefits one land use category but not the other. For example, commercial, open space and recreational lands may represent a "desirable" buffer around heavy industry, but most of the land use relationships placed in the "questionable" category are examples of relationships which benefit one of the land use forms but not the other.

Examination of Table 23 indicates that one land use, woodlands, is considered a desirable or compatible type of land use of all other land use forms. This reflects the aesthetic quality of woodlands as a characteristic desirable in virtually any type of development. It is also indicative that woodlands are a desirable buffer. Subject to limitations of any generalization, it may be observed that virtually any kind of land use can be compatible with virtually any other type of use if a buffer of woodlands of the appropriate scale separates the two land uses.

Application of compatibility ratings presented in Table 23 serve as a useful guideline in promoting orderly land use arrangements as well as in identifying areas of the City where land use conflicts already exist. Since the figure summarizes the compatibility ratings, it is subject to the limitations inherent in any form of generalization. Undoubtedly, there are specific instances that can be cited in the City where the compatibility ratings on the chart appear to be unduly harsh in view of the quality of development and other factors peculiar to specific sites. On the other hand, there are no doubt specific instances where the compatibility ratings are too generous. They may imply harmonious relationships when in reality

conflicts exist. Nevertheless, despite these inherent limitations, it is believed that the information contained in the figure serves as a useful tool for both guiding and evaluating community development.

Table 23

Land Use Compatibility Matrix

Land Use Compatibility Matrix	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Central Business District (Pedestrian Oriented)	General Business District (Highway Oriented)	Light Industrial	Industrial / Heavy Industrial	Public / Semi-Public / Institutional	Recreation, Park or Open Space	Woodlands	Agriculture	Transportation (Major Thoroughfares)	Utility Site
Low Density Residential	D	D	Q	Q	U	U	U	Q	D	D	D	U	U
Medium Density Residential	D	D	D	D	Q	U	U	Q	D	D	Q	Q	U
High Density Residential	Q	D	D	D	D	Q	Q	D	D	D	Q	D	U
Central Business District (Pedestrian Oriented)	Q	D	D	D	Q	Q	Q	D	D	D	U	D	D
General Business District (Highway Oriented)	U	Q	D	Q	D	D	Q	Q	Q	D	U	D	D
Light Industrial	U	U	Q	Q	D	D	D	Q	Q	D	Q	D	D
Industrial / Heavy Industrial	U	U	Q	Q	Q	D	D	Q	Q	D	Q	D	D
Public / Semi-Public / Institutional	Q	Q	D	D	D	Q	Q	D	D	D	Q	Q	Q
Recreation, Park or Open Space	D	D	D	D	Q	Q	Q	D	D	D	Q	U	U
Woodlands	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Agriculture	D	Q	Q	U	U	Q	Q	Q	Q	D	D	Q	D
Transportation (Major Thoroughfares)	U	Q	D	D	D	D	D	Q	U	D	Q	D	D
Utility Site	U	U	U	D	D	D	D	Q	U	D	D	D	D

Legend: D = Desirable land use relationship or compatible

Q = Questionable Land Use Relationship (compatible if impacts can be properly mitigated)

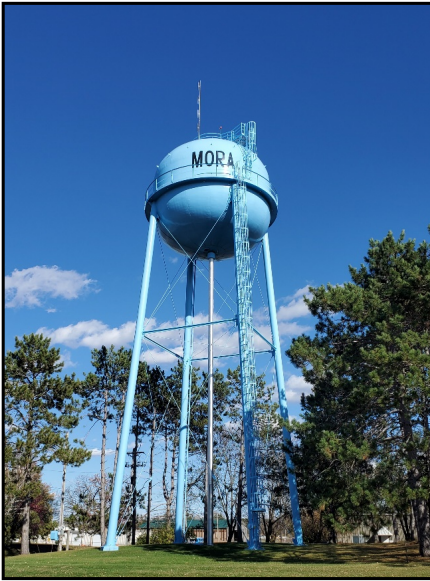
U = Undesirable land use relationship or incompatible

In addition to using the compatibility ratings listed in Table 23 to identify existing inconsistencies of land use, the ratings can and should be used in developing land use planning and zoning policies as well as in reviewing zoning proposals. In this respect, the figure will be used as a guide for land use planning.

It is recommended that Table 23 be utilized by the City as a guide in reaching decisions concerning land uses. In such a way, land use problem areas associated with conflicts and compatibility can be avoided and beneficial relationships fostered. Projected over a long term, the avoidance of land use conflicts will seem a natural objective designed to achieve harmony between areas of the community.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES PLAN

Minnesota Statute 462.352 defines a community facilities plan as follows: "Community facilities plan means a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, maps and action programs for guiding the future development of the public or semipublic facilities of the municipality such as recreational, educational and cultural facilities."



### Water System

A Water System Study was completed by Short Elliot Hendrickson Inc. in July 1994. The purpose of the study was to analyze the City's existing water distribution system and to assess the City's water requirements for the next 20 years. Based on 1994 demographic projections, this study found that the City of Mora should have adequate water capacity to facilitate growth through approximately 2020.

The City's water distribution system consists of approximately 35 miles of water main. Mora's water system consists of three wells and three storage tanks – one 150,000 gallon elevated tank, one 500,000 gallon storage tank and a 50,000 gallon underground storage tank. The City also operates its own water treatment plant.

The existing water system serves approximately 1,249 customers, including residential units and commercial and industrial establishments. Present domestic water demands and fire protection requirements are

satisfactory. The present system is able to support 400 new residential units. The three largest water customers include Regency of Minnesota (Kenwood Manufactured Home Park), Welia Health and Mora Acquisitions (Edgewood Manufactured Home Park).

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### Sanitary Sewer

Mora's sanitary sewer system consists of a collection system of over 36 miles of gravity sewer line and approximately two miles of force main. The system utilizes nine lift stations and a treatment plant. The capacity of the treatment plant is 837,000 gallons per day, with an average demand of 450,000 gallons per day. Treatment is accomplished by oxidation ditch process with final discharge into the Snake River. Nearly all developed areas of the City are served by the sanitary sewer system. Expansion of the



system can be accomplished by providing gravity sewer extensions or lift stations to serve the entire incorporated area. The treatment capacity can support an additional 400 residential units.

In the updated Facility Plan dated December 27, 2012 the projected 2034 average wet weather flow is 837,000 gpd. However, the WWTF is only permitted for an average wet weather flow of 800,000 gpd. It was known there is significant inflow and infiltration (I&I) to the collection system and the Facility Plan indicated the City would do enough I&I reduction in the collection system to remove at least 37,000 gpd to remain under the 800,000 gpd at the projected flows. Abandonment of the TH 65 lift station in the fall of 2020 should accomplish the needed reduction in I&I.

The Facility Plan also indicated that eight reed beds are required at full capacity for sludge disposal. Prior to bidding it was decided that four reed beds were sufficient for the current flows and loads (and only four reed beds were built), but understood that if the flow or sludge quantities increased, additional beds would be required. The estimated construction cost for the eight reed beds in 2012 was around \$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000. According to the construction cost index for Minneapolis (Mortenson Construction) construction costs have risen by 29% since 2012. Some of the most notable increases have been in reinforcement steel, cast-in-place concrete, and earthwork which are all included in the construction of reed beds. That would push the estimated construction cost for the eight reed beds to around \$1,300,000 - \$1,900,000 today, with the construction of just four reed beds at roughly half of that. It should be noted that estimate does not include any engineering, mobilization or mark-ups, contingency, or other administrative costs.

### **Storm Sewer**

Mora has an underground storm sewer system separate from the sanitary sewer system. Storm drainage runoff in developed areas of the City is facilitated by streets having curb and gutter, catch basins, culverts and drainage ditches. A storm water utility was established in 2005 to manage storm water projects. A monthly fee is charged to all properties to pay for this service.

### **Floodplain Management**

Including and in addition to the floodplain districts established by the federal government, the City contains several areas where flooding occurs on a regular basis. Many of these areas include existing dwellings and other structures which are at risk of damages from flooding. To prevent unnecessary harm to property and persons, the City regulates development in the flood hazard areas through the Floodplain Management Ordinance contained in the City Code.

The Floodplain Management Ordinance regulates development in the flood hazard areas of the City. Flood hazard areas are subject to periodic inundation, which may result in the loss of life and property; health and safety hazards; disruption of commerce and governmental services; extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief; and, impairment of the tax base. It is the purpose of the ordinance to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare by minimizing losses and disruptions. The ordinance is also intended to preserve the natural characteristics and functions of watercourses and floodplains in order to moderate flood and stormwater impacts, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, protect aquatic and riparian habitat, provide recreational opportunities, provide aesthetic benefits and enhance community and economic development.

The City's previous Floodplain Management Ordinance was adopted in 1997. Recognizing the increasing number of local flooding events and the fact that the ordinance had become outdated, the Planning

Commission began the process of updating the ordinance in 2019. Like the 1997 ordinance, the proposed update was largely based on guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR); however, the Planning Commission proposed, with encouragement from the DNR, to create a new flood district known as the Flood Prone District. In order to prevent unnecessary harm to property and persons in the Flood Prone District, the Planning Commission first developed a map, known as the City of Mora Flood Prone Areas Map, to identify all flood prone properties and then developed a series of recommendations for new construction and improvements in the area of the property identified as being flood prone. The City Council adopted the updated Floodplain Management Ordinance, including the establishment of the Flood Prone District and corresponding City of Mora Flood Prone Areas Map, in February 2021.

### Electrical Power Plant

The City of Mora owns and operates an electrical distribution system and power plant through Mora Municipal Utilities (MMU). The City, represented by MMU, is also a member of the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA). SMMPA provides the power and energy used by MMU to meet the needs of the City and its residents. SMMPA has a diverse portfolio of electric generation facilities that include coal, natural gas, wind, solar and biomass. In 2020, SMMPA announced plans to retire the Sherburne County Unit #3 coal plant in 2030 and replace it primarily with wind and solar resources resulting in a generation portfolio that is 80 percent carbon-free in 2030. This will represent a 90 percent reduction in carbon emissions compared to 2005 levels. The City also partners with SMMPA to provide energy efficiency programs for homes and businesses and to provide public electric vehicle charging in Mora.



The City's power plant is under contract to SMMPA and is used when dispatched by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) instructions to SMMPA. The plant capacity is 14 megawatts, which is sufficient to meet the energy demands of the City, and can be operated independent of SMMPA and MISO when needed in emergencies to maintain power to the City. The plant is a dual fuel plant that operates on Natural Gas and diesel fuel that is blended to as much as 20% bio-fuel. In 2012, SMMPA, in conjunction with the East Central Solid Waste Commission installed a 1.6 megawatt generator at the local landfill that burns the methane from the landfill. The power from this generator is brought into the City on the distribution system owned by MMU.



**Table 24****Historical and Forecasted Demand and Energy – Mora Municipal Utilities**

Year	Max Demand (KW)	Change %	Annual Energy (MWh)	Change %
2010	11,744	10.6%	57,970	4.9%
2011	12,261	4.4%	57,916	-0.1%
2012	11,872	-3.2%	58,244	0.6%
2013	12,377	4.3%	59,058	1.4%
2014	11,143	-10.0%	56,526	-4.3%
2015	11,017	-1.1%	57,616	1.9%
2016	11,035	0.2%	55,747	-3.2%
2017	10,335	-6.3%	53,299	-4.4%
2018	10,715	3.7%	54,314	1.9%
2019	10,642	-0.7%	52,651	-3.1%
2020	10,644	0.0%	52,657	0.0%
2021	10,794	1.4%	54,379	3.3%
2022	10,739	-0.5%	54,078	-0.6%
2023	10,721	-0.2%	54,002	-0.1%
2024	10,690	-0.3%	54,168	0.3%
2025	10,690	0.0%	53,884	-0.5%
2026	10,668	-0.2%	53,826	-0.1%
2027	10,643	-0.2%	53,770	-0.1%
2028	10,592	-0.5%	53,938	0.3%
2029	10,577	-0.1%	53,634	-0.6%
2030	10,544	-0.3%	53,560	-0.1%

Source: SMMPA 2020 Load Forecast

For more information on the supply and demand of electricity from MMU, please contact MMU.



### Other Municipal, Public & Semi Public Facilities and Services

The following is a partial list of other municipal and public and semi-public facilities and services available to Mora residents which were considered in this plan:

Regional Library System	Telephone Service	Public Transportation System
Outdoor Aquatic Center	Cable Television	Hospital & Medical Facilities
Parks & Trails	Broadband Access	Law Enforcement
Municipal Liquor Store	Natural Gas Utility	Fire Protection
Oakwood Cemetery	Solid Waste Disposal	Municipal Airport
	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	

Table 25

#### Student Enrollment - Mora Public Schools

Year	1999-2000	2004-2005	2009-2010	2014-2015	2019-2020
Student Population	2038	1935	1778	1674	1664

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

Table 26

#### Births – Kanabec County

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Births	164	186	168	210	212	179	168	163	123	147	157	166	181	178

Source: Minnesota Department of Health

### Schools

According to “KEN-A-BIG The Story of Kanabec County” written by Frank Ziegler in 1977, ten children comprised the entire population of Mora’s common school district no. 9 when it was organized in June 1883. School was held in a room of a building at 100 Maple Avenue E. The high school also had its start on Maple Avenue E., in 1890, located immediately west of the present day high school facility. The original high school building was demolished in 1935, following construction of a new high school in 1917 and repurposing for other school needs.

Today Mora Public Schools has two school facilities located in Mora, Mora Elementary School serving grades PreK - 6 and Mora High School serving grades 7 - 12 and housing the Alternative Learning Center (ALC). Mora Elementary School (MES) was constructed in 1996 and was the first school facility to be constructed on the school district's 9th Street E. campus. At the time of construction, the facility was known as Trailview Elementary and it served grades 3 - 6. The facility was expanded in 2017 to house

the former Fairview Elementary School which served grades PreK - 2. Mora High School (MHS), located in Mora's downtown area on Maple Avenue E., was originally constructed in 1917 with additions in the 1930s, 1950s, 1970s and 1980s. The Maple Avenue E. facility became quite aged, difficult to maintain, and, in some aspects, unsafe. In May 2020 voters in the Mora School District approved a referendum to construct a new high school facility on the school district's 9th Street E. campus. Construction began in 2021 and is scheduled to be completed in summer 2023. The 9th Street E. campus, nearly 150 acres in size, is home to other school facilities including tennis courts, ball fields, a track and football field, as well as Welia Health Wellness Center and Vasaloppet Nordic Ski Center. When construction of MHS is complete, all of the school district's facilities and athletic fields will be located on the 9th Street E. campus.



**Commented [BT8]:** Updated by BT and reviewed by Superintendent Voce.

**Deleted:** Mora Public Schools has two school facilities located in Mora, Mora Elementary School serving grades PreK – 6 and Mora High School serving grades 7 – 12 and housing the Alternative Learning Center (ALC). Mora Elementary School (MES) was constructed in 1996 and was the first school facility to be constructed on the school district's 9<sup>th</sup> Street E. campus. At the time of construction, the facility was known as Trailview Elementary and it served grades 3 – 6. The facility was expanded in 2017 to house the former Fairview Elementary School which served grades PreK – 2. Mora High School (MHS), located in Mora's downtown area on Maple Avenue E., was originally constructed in 1936 with additions in 19XX, 19XX and 19XX. The Maple Avenue E. facility became quite aged, difficult to maintain, and, in some aspects, unsafe. In May 2020 voters in the Mora School District approved a referendum to construct a new high school facility on the school district's 9<sup>th</sup> Street E. campus. Construction began in 2021 and is scheduled to be completed in summer 2023. The 9<sup>th</sup> Street E. campus, nearly 150 acres in size, is home to other school facilities including tennis courts, ball fields, a track and football field, as well as Welia Health Wellness Center and Vasaloppet Nordic Ski Center. When construction of MHS is complete, all of the school district's facilities and athletic fields will be located on the 9<sup>th</sup> Street E. campus.

## TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES PLAN

Minnesota Statutes 462.352 describes a transportation plan as follows: "Transportation Plan means a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, maps and action programs for guiding the future development of the various modes of transportation of the municipality and its environs, such as streets and highways, mass transit, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation, and includes a major thoroughfare plan."

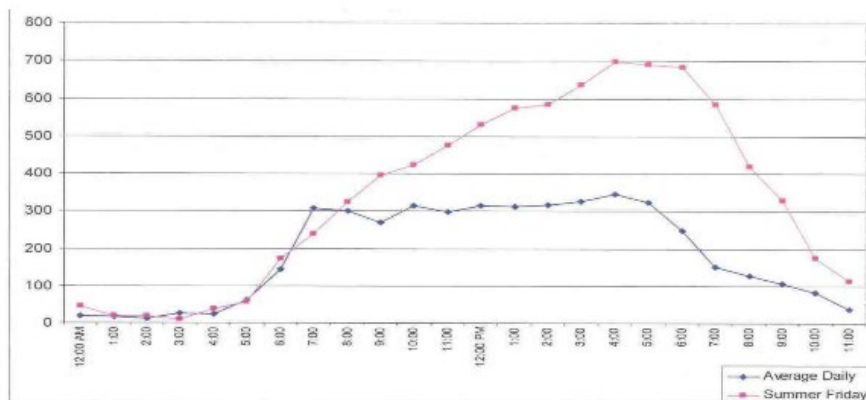
### Major Thoroughfares

Forming the backbone of the Transportation Plan are State Highways 23 and 65. These thoroughfares are designed to carry large volumes of traffic. Traffic count data in Table 28 shows that the trend for these two categories is a steady increase in traffic over time. The Minnesota Department of Transportation does not anticipate State Highways 23 and 65 reaching capacity within the next 20 years.



Graph 10

Seasonal Traffic Variation- Northbound Highways 23 & 65 between Portage Avenue and Clark Street (2005)



**Commented [BT9]:** Current information is not readily available from MnDOT. PC to consider whether 2005 information should be kept for historical purposes or deleted.

Source: MNDOT Highways 23 & 65 Corridor Study, December 2005

State Highways 23 and 65 through Mora see heavier traffic than average on weekends as they are major routes between the Twin Cities metro area and northern Minnesota, as shown on Graph 2.

The past, present and future traffic counts (Annual Average Daily Traffic -- AADT) for Highways 23 and 65 have been provided by MNDOT and are listed below:

**Table 27**

**Average Daily Traffic Volumes – 2006 and Current Volumes and 2025 and 2045 Forecasted Volumes**

<u>Location</u>	<u>2006 Volume</u>	<u>Current Volume (Year)</u>	<u>2025 Forecasted Volume</u>	<u>2045 Forecasted Volume</u>
<u>TH 65 South of S. Jct.</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>7,000 (2018)</u>	<u>7,290</u>	<u>8,120</u>
<u>TH 23/TH 65 between S. Jct. and Snake River</u>	<u>10,800</u>	<u>11,800 (2018)</u>	<u>12,210</u>	<u>13,390</u>
<u>TH 23/TH 65 between Snake River and Clark</u>	<u>11,500</u>	<u>11,400 (2018)</u>	<u>12,050</u>	<u>13,910</u>
<u>TH 23/TH 65 between Clark and N. Jct.</u>	<u>14,800</u>	<u>13,300 (2018)</u>	<u>13,770</u>	<u>15,100</u>
<u>TH 65 North of N. Jct.</u>	<u>6,700</u>	<u>6,000 (2016)</u>	<u>6,270</u>	<u>6,870</u>
<u>TH 23 West of S. Jct.</u>	<u>5,500</u>	<u>5,800 (2018)</u>	<u>6,040</u>	<u>6,720</u>
<u>TH 23 East of N. Jct.</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>9,400 (2018)</u>	<u>9,730</u>	<u>10,670</u>

Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation

Deleted: Average Daily Traffic Volumes - Years 2006 and 2018 and Projected Year 2030  
Location

**Table 28**

**Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) – Trunk Highways 23 and 65**

<b>Year</b>	<b>AADT North of the North Junction of TH 23/65</b>	<b>AADT South of the North Junction TH 23/65</b>	<b>AADT East of the North Junction of TH 23/65</b>
1972	3,420	5,120	not available
1974	3,870	5,050	not available
1976	4,300	5,545	5,600
1978	3,100	6,000	5,600
1980	4,000	6,500	not available
1982	3,800	not available	5,900

1984	4,300	6,700	5,900
1986	4,650	7,300	6,000
1988	5,020	not available	not available
1990	5,400	7,150	6,250
1992	6,100	10,000	7,800
1994	5,800	11,000	7,900
1996	5,200	10,900	8,400
1998	7,000	10,000	8,400
2000	4,950	12,500	8,700
2002	7,900	12,900	8,800
2004	7,300	14,200	9,500
2006	6,700	14,800	10,000
2008	6,600	14,700	10,000
2010	6,700	12,900	8,700
2012	5,800	12,200	8,400
2014	6,300	11,900	8,700
2016	6,000	12,500	9,000
2018	6,150	13,300	9,400

Source: Minnesota Department of Transportation

### Local Thoroughfares

These roads are the next step down in speed, volume and accessibility. Their primary function is to move traffic, although in a community the size of Mora, they may also provide access to property. Most of the indicated local thoroughfares shown in the Transportation Plan are either State Highways, County State Aid Highways or County Roads.

### Collector Streets

Traffic service and land access are equally important functions of collector streets. Collectors generally pass



through neighborhoods collecting traffic from local streets and distributing to the thoroughfares. Many local streets in Mora now act as collector streets. This is generally undesirable because it allows through traffic in residential areas. An established system of collectors eliminates the use of local streets serving as collectors.

### **Local Streets**

These streets are intended solely for the purpose of providing access to local property. Vehicle volumes should be light with low speeds. Local streets should be designed to discourage their use as short cuts between collectors or as alternate collector streets. Local streets are not shown on the Transportation Plan.

### **2005 MNDOT Study**

In 2005 the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN DOT), in conjunction with the City of Mora and the East Central Regional Development Commission, undertook a transportation study of the State Highways 23 and 65 corridor. After reviewing traffic counts, projected traffic counts, community input, traffic crash data and other information, several proposed changes to the corridor were made. Illustrations of these proposed changes are attached as Map 1 and Map 2. For more information on the proposed upgrades to the State Highway 23 and 65 corridor, please refer to the MNDOT TH Highway 23 & 65 Corridor Study in Mora, December 2005.

### **Airport**

The Mora Municipal Airport is located approximately 60 miles north of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area. The airport serves a 60-minute drive time radius around the community up to McGregor and Moose Lake to the north, St. Cloud to the west, Forest Lake to the south, and Burnett Wisconsin to the east. The Mora Municipal Airport is a public-use airport owned by the City of Mora and located two miles northeast of the downtown district. The airport and all associated property are located entirely within Mora City limits. The Airport Advisory Board meets monthly to make recommendations for the general oversight of the airport, including financial planning, growth, and development. Day-to-day operations of the airport are managed largely by the Public Works Department.

The airport is home to 30 based aircraft: 28 single-engine, one jet, and one helicopter. The airport is served by one paved runway and one turf crosswind runway. The paved runway, Runway 17/35, is 4,794 feet long by 75 feet wide. The runway serves single-engine recreational and business aircraft, agricultural spray aircraft, some multi-engine aircraft, and small business jets.

A new turf runway, Runway 11/29, was constructed in 2017. The turf runway is 3,151 feet long by 80 feet wide. The runway is located on the north end of the airfield and serves small single-engine and agricultural spray aircraft.

A 20-year Master Plan was completed for the airport in 2020. The purpose of the Master Plan was to determine the facilities needed to meet the projected aviation demand in the 20-year planning period. As part of the study, aviation activity forecasts were prepared based on responses to user surveys, the airport's service area, and analysis of local and national general aviation trends and socioeconomic data. The number of based aircraft is forecasted to increase from 30 in 2019 to 48 by 2039. A takeoff and a



landing are considered two aircraft operations at an airport. Aircraft operations are expected to increase at an annual average growth rate of 1.36%, from 9,192 in 2019 to 12,055 in 2039.

The focus at the airport between 2009 and 2017, was construction of the crosswind runway. Since that time, the demand for hangar space has increased at the airport. The Master Plan was updated to document this increase in users and the potential for hangar expansion. The next 20 years at the airport will focus on maintaining existing pavement and facilities, constructing additional taxilanes for construction of new hangars, and monitoring the airspace around the airport to avoid obstructions and continue to meet MnDOT and FAA standards.

### Trail System

The City has constructed and maintains approximately 5.2 miles of paved, multi-use trail extending from the Kanabec County Historical Society north to the Mora Public Schools campus on 9<sup>th</sup> Street, east across State Highway 65 to the Spring Lake area and south to Maple Avenue E. The most recently constructed section of trail is located on the northern portion of Wood Street N. and 9<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the Mora Public Schools campus. The City has identified additional sections of trail to be added to the system which will ultimately create a looped trail system.

The Park Board first adopted a Trail Plan in March, 2008 which identified existing trail sections as well as proposed sections to be added to the system. The goal of the plan was to ultimately create a looped trail system. The City Council adopted an updated Trail Plan in [INSERT MONTH] 2021. While the 2021 plan still focuses on creating a looped trail system, it also focuses on providing trail access to the portion of the City located south of the Snake River. Providing safe pedestrian access across the river has become increasingly important with increased development south of the river and increased vehicle-pedestrian accidents on or near the Snake River Bridge.

The Trail Plan is illustrated on Map 3.



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**Deleted:** The Park Board has prioritized the four new sections as follows:¶  
Spring Lake Trail (from Highway 65 N to Highway 23 E)¶  
Downtown Trail (through the former railroad corridor)¶  
Northwest Trail (from present trail at Oakwood Cemetery to present trail at former railroad corridor via Canoe Park)¶  
Southern Trail (connecting to existing trail north of History Center and continuing south and easterly to Snake River Bridge on Highway 65 and continuing easterly to Oslin Road and northerly to Highway 23)¶

## PARKS AND RECREATIONAL SITES

Mora has several parks and recreational sites, including 22 sites described below (listed in alphabetical order). Table 31 provides an inventory of amenities at each of the sites.

### Canoe Landing

This scenic site is still fairly primitive, with a minimal amount of amenities. It has considerable frontage on the Snake River, with parking and access for canoes. Shoreline stabilization and regeneration with native plants was done in 2006. This site is used primarily by canoeists, fisherpeople and picnickers.

### Fox Run Park

This undeveloped park is centrally located in the Fox Run neighborhood. The land, which was originally platted as two single family residential lots, was conveyed to the City from the State of Minnesota in 2019 for park purposes. The City's Park Board is actively planning a park to serve neighborhood youth.

### Jaycees Park

Built in the early 1980's, this park is situated on a section of the Oakwood Cemetery property at the north end of the City. Its main use is as a softball facility, but also offers play equipment for young spectators. The park is used heavily during the summer months.

### Kanabec County Fairgrounds

This 23 acre site, under the control of the Kanabec County Agricultural Society, is the site of the annual Kanabec County Fair. While it does have large open areas, buildings, grandstands and arenas, it is greatly underused and is sorely in need of updating. The Kanabec County Fair continues to be the largest event at the Fairgrounds.

### Kanabec County Historical Society

Though primarily used as a museum, the History Center, through the use of volunteers, does keep open a set of hiking and skiing trails along the Snake River. The History Center puts on a number of other programs, including Time Line Programs, festivals, fairs, and other classes and events to use the facility and expertise.

### Keystone Park

This little known park, located on the north side of the City, serves as the trailhead to the City's trail system. The park offers access to the historic keystone bridge and incredible scenic views of Spring Lake and surrounding wetland areas.





#### **Library Park (Also called Downtown Park, Bell Tower Park or City Park)**

This fully developed park on the shores of Lake Mora provides the City with a valuable recreational area because of its facilities and location. It offers a mix of passive and active recreation adjacent to the downtown area, including tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts, volleyball court, picnic shelter and picnic tables, a play area and a gazebo for events and live entertainment. The park projects a positive impression of the City by the well maintained facilities and neat appearance. The park has an adequate amount of open space and should be considered fully developed, with the remaining open space being part of its appeal.

#### **Lions Park / Kids Kingdom**

This park is technically not a City park, but is under the control of the Kanabec County Agricultural Society and the Mora Lions Club. Through an agreement, the Kids Kingdom portion of this park, as well as lawn mowing and trash pickup, is maintained by the City of Mora. The main feature of this park is the large, community built play area called Kids Kingdom. This facility is highly used and admired and has become a regional draw. Other main features to this park are the picnic shelter, restrooms and a view of the 25-foot tall Dala Horse.

#### **Mora Aquatic Center**

Open during June, July and August, the large, heated public pool is a valuable asset to the areas recreational needs. Its unique features include a lap pool, three slides, diving area and zero entry pool with spray features. The professional staff provide swim lessons and lifeguard training.



#### **Mora Civic Center / MAYRA Complex**

Located on the Kanabec County Fairgrounds, the Mora Civic Center, and adjacent MAYRA ice rinks and buildings offer the opportunity for indoor and outdoor hockey, ice skating and other events. While the Mora Civic Center is primarily used for sporting events during winter months, it is used year-round for all manners of events.

#### **Mora Community Garden**

Managed by the Kanabec County Master Gardeners, this site is located on City owned land and offers garden plots to community members for a small fee. The community garden is typically open mid-May to mid-October.

### **Mora Elementary**

This school facility, located on the north end of the City, offers first class baseball and softball fields, practice fields, soccer fields, an outdoor track, tennis courts and playground equipment.

### **Mora High School**

The indoor gyms and basketball courts, outdoor track, football fields, and tennis courts offer opportunity for students and residents alike to watch or participate in a number of sporting, social and cultural events.

### **Oak Park**

This small park is located within the Edgewood Manufactured Home Park neighborhood, providing residents with various play equipment, a half-basketball court and a storm shelter.

### **Ole Park**

This park has little recreational use or potential, with over 75% of its land being on State right-of-way, but is valuable as a centrally located site to display the Sister City Monument with Mora, Sweden, the Skier statue, and a display area for the American, State, and Swedish Flags. Little additional change is planned for this site.

### **Peterson Park**

This little known park has been part of the park system for over 30 years. It is an undeveloped site that borders Lake Mora and Highway 65. It is mainly hilly and treed, and has little access or use at this time.

### **Skateboard & Bike Parks**

Located adjacent to the Mora Aquatic Center, the Skate and Bike Parks provide space designed specifically for skateboarders and bikers and offer several pieces of equipment. While the parks are open to all ages and skill levels, the sites are highly utilized by the community's older youth.

### **Sunrise Park**

This small park on the east side of the City offers a large sheltered picnic area with a volleyball court.

### **Trail System**

The City has constructed and maintains approximately 5.2 miles of paved multi-use trail, extending from the Kanabec County Historical Society north to the Mora Public Schools campus, east



across State Highway 65 to the Spring Lake area and south to Maple Avenue E. The most recently constructed section of trail is located on the northern portion of Wood Street N. and 9<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the Mora Public Schools campus. The City has identified additional sections of trail to be added to the system which will ultimately create a looped trail system.

#### **Welia Health Wellness Center**

Connected to Mora Elementary, the Welia Health Wellness Center was constructed in 2017 through a partnership between Independent School District 332 and Welia Health (then FirstLight Health System). The facility offers an indoor elevated walking track and various group classes. The facility is open to the community, but membership is required.

In addition to the numerous parks and recreational sites listed above, the community prides itself on its annual festivals and activities. Some of these festivals and activities include, but are not limited to, Mora's Music in the Park, Mora Municipal Airport Fly-In, Fall Fest, the Mid-Summer Swedish Festival, and the Mora Classic Series (Vasaloppet Cross Country Ski Race, Snake River Canoe Race, Mora Half Marathon and Mora Bike Tour).

**Table 29**

**Parks and Recreational Sites Inventory – City of Mora**

***City Owned or Maintained Sites***

<b>Library Park</b>	<b>Lions Park / Kids Kingdom</b>	<b>Jaycees Park</b>
5 Acres	Less than 2 Acres	10 Acres
2 Swings	Restrooms (seasonal)	3 Softball Fields
3 Toddler Swings	1 Dala Horse (Large)	1 Play Apparatus
2 Spring Animals	2 Flag Poles	1 Swing
2 Sand Scoopers	1 Picnic Shelter	Parking Lot
1 Merry-Go-Round	12 Picnic Tables	Restrooms (seasonal)
4 Slides	1 BBQ Grills	Concession Building
2 Benches by Play Apparatus	1 Flower Bed	Grand Stands
2 Benches by Gazebo	1 Large/Multi Stage Play Area	1 Flower bed
1 Picnic Shelter	2 Swings	
6 Picnic Tables	2 Toddler Swings	
1 Bell Tower	1 Tire Swing	
1 Basketball Court (2 nets)	1 Swinging Bench	
1 Drinking Fountain	2 Benches	
1 Tennis Court / 2 Pickle Ball Courts		
1 Sand Volleyball Court		
1 Older Play Apparatus	<b>Skateboard Park</b>	<b>Bike Park</b>
1 Modern Play Apparatus	1.03 Acres	1.03 Acres
1 Glider (adult exercise equipment)	Quarter Pipe	Grind Ledge
1 Stepper (adult exercise equipment)	Grind Box	Grind Box
Gazebo	Grind Rail	Quarter Pipe
Parking Lot	Street Spine	Launch Box – Quarter Pipe to Bank
Restroom (seasonal)		Bank
1 Flowerbed		Flat Grind Rail
<b>Keystone Park</b>	<b>Peterson Park</b>	<b>Ole Park</b>
34.09 Acres	15 Acres	.25 Acres
Undeveloped	Undeveloped	Sister City Monument
Wooded	Wooded Park	Skier Statue
Trail Access / Trailhead	Lakeshore	3 Flags/Poles
1 Picnic Table	1 Stone Monument	1 Picnic Table
6 Benches	Picnic Area Overlooking Lake Mora	
Parking		
Lakeshore		
Scenic Views of Spring Lake		
<b>Canoe Landing</b>	<b>Fox Run Park</b>	<b>Community Garden</b>
3.62 Acres	.7 Acres	10' x 20' Garden Plots
1 Picnic Table	Undeveloped Site Located within Fox	Open Mid-May to Mid-October
1 Bench	Run Neighborhood	Managed by Kanabec County
400 Foot River Frontage		Master Gardeners

<b>Sunrise Park</b>	<b>Mora Aquatic Center</b>	<b>Oak Park</b>
.32 Acres	Less than 1 Acre	Less than 1 Acre
1 Picnic Shelter	1 Lap Pool	Located within Edgewood
2 Picnic Tables	3 Water Slides	Manufactured Home Park
1 Volleyball Court	1 ADA Lift	2 Swings
	Diving Area	2 Toddler Swings
	1 Zero Entry Pool	2 Spring Animals
	3 Spray Features	2 Sand Scoopers
	Pool House	1 Half-Basketball Court (1 net)
	Parking	1 Storm Shelter

<b>Trail System</b>
5.2 Miles
10' Wide Paved Multi-Purpose Trail

***Non-City Owned or Maintained Sites***

<b>Mora High School</b>	<b>Mora Elementary</b>	<b>Welia Health Wellness Center</b>
1 Football Field/Track	8 Tennis Courts	Indoor Elevated Walking Track
2 Practice Fields	Baseball and Softball Fields	Various Fitness Classes
1 Softball Field	Practice Field	Parking
Play Area	Soccer Fields	
Indoor Basketball Courts and Gyms	Outdoor Track	
	Playground Equipment	
	Parking	

<b>Fair Grounds</b>	<b>Mora Civic Center/MAYRA Complex</b>	<b>Kanabec County Historical Society</b>
Large Open Spaces	Civic Center-Multi Use Facility	Skiing/Hiking Trail
Grand Stand	3 Lighted Outdoor Rinks	Parking
Arena	Warming House	Fitness Route
Various Out Buildings	Concession Area	Covered Shelter
		Museum
		Reference Library
		Gift Shop

<b>Vasaloppet USA Nordic Ski Center</b>
13 km of Groomed Trails (5 km lit for night skiing)
Snowmaking Machine
Wax Room
Changing Rooms with Saunas
Kitchen

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is primarily concerned with the current incorporated area of Mora where in a legal sense, jurisdictional controls can be exercised to achieve community goals. However, in a practical sense, Mora extends far beyond its corporate limits. The Mora community encompasses approximately 5.47 square miles. Because the Mora planning area extends beyond Mora's current corporate limits, coordination with adjacent townships and the County should be encouraged.

The Comprehensive Plan is concerned with a 10-20 year time period. It provides a process for preparing for the future. Expansion areas for each land use category are designated on the plan to meet the needs of projected population and future industrial and commercial development.

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, attached as Map 4, summarizes graphically the long range proposals for major land uses, circulation, open space and certain community facilities. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map is not precise as to areas or locations shown, rather it attempts to communicate the inter-relationships of the various Plan elements in both space and time. Integral within the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map are the elements of a Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan and Community Facilities Plan.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Comprehensive Plan gains in value and meaning as its proposals are implemented by private and public actions to achieve community goals. Implementation of the Plan is part of the on-going planning process through various ordinances and programs.

### **Zoning**

Zoning regulates the use of land and building as well as the size and placement of buildings within the municipality. It interprets the land use patterns established by the Land Use Plan into ordinance form for legal administration. Zoning districts are delineated on the City's Official Zoning Map and the type of development permitted is defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Subdivision Controls**

Subdivision controls regulate the manner in which land, whether for residential, commercial or industrial use, is made ready for use. Minimum land development design standards are set forth in ordinance form, concerning the width and construction of streets, utilities, length and depth of blocks, open space dedication and provision for easements.

### **Coordination**

Coordination of the various units of government involved in the Mora planning process is facilitated by a published Comprehensive Plan. Using the Plan, duplication of effort and conflicting plans can be avoided between the various units of government involved in community development.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

A Capital Improvements Program is a combined planning-financial operation. It is a moving schedule of major municipal projects to be accomplished during a five, ten, or twenty year period. This assists the City Council in preparing its annual budget by identifying needed public improvements, assigning costs, establishing priorities for improvements, and identifying sources of funds. Determining development timing for plan implementation is a function of the Capital Improvements Program.

### **Planning Administration**

Comprehensive Plan implementation is closely tied to day-to-day planning administration. Planning administration includes the decision making process of the governing body, citizens, private developers and others concerned with development and land use. Planning Commission review of development proposals and coordination of planning activities are major aspects of planning administration.





## Access to Post-Secondary Education and Customized Training

Residents have access to two college campuses within a 30-minute drive of Mora. Pine Technical & Community College (PTCC) is located Pine City and Anoka Ramsey Community College (ARCC) is located in Cambridge. Both colleges offer customized training programs for businesses, too!



***Where to Find It:*** PTCC is located in downtown Pine City at 900 4th Street SE and ARCC is located on the west side of Cambridge at 300 Spirit River Drive S.

## Berm Benders Raceway

Motocross enthusiasts will enjoy Berm Benders Raceway located just nine miles east of Mora in Whited Township near the border between Kanabec and Pine Counties. The facility is conveniently located approximately halfway between Highway 65 and Interstate 35. Berm Benders is home to a District 23 / AMA motocross track open for practices and races, with the season kicking off in April and wrapping up in October.



**BERM  
BENDERS**  
RECREATION PARK

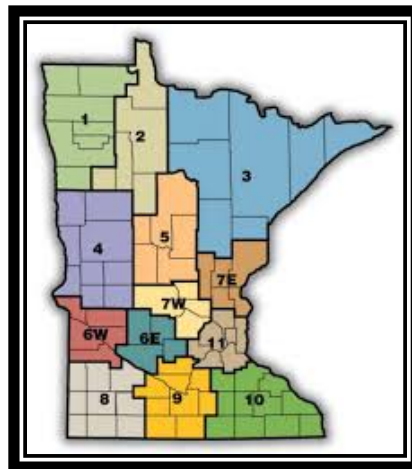


**Where to Find It:** *Berm Benders is located at 2393 Sherwood Street in Brook Park.*

## East Central Regional Development Commission

The East Central Regional Development Commission (ECRDC), officed in Mora, provides service to Pine, Isanti, Chisago, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs Counties. Formation of regional development commissions – RDCs – was authorized under the Regional Development Act of 1969; and, the ECRDC was organized by petition of local units of government in 1973. An updated Regional Development Act was passed in 1997 by the Minnesota Legislature. There are 13 development regions in Minnesota.

The ECRDC's mission is to provide leadership and direction through problem solving. They accomplish this by initiating projects and programs that lead to create solutions to regional problems, by providing technical assistance and by identifying and developing available resources. The ECRDC is a leader and an advocate for positive change throughout East Central Minnesota.



***Where to Find It:*** The ECRDC is conveniently located in downtown Mora at 100 Park Street S.

## Ideal Location

Location, location, location! Mora is conveniently located at the crossroads of State Highways 65 and 23 in east central Minnesota. Mora is located 72 miles north of the Twin Cities, 90 miles southwest of Duluth, 60 miles southeast of Brainerd, and 52 miles northeast of St. Cloud, and situated along the shores of scenic Lake Mora and the Snake River.

Major transportation routes include immediate access to State Highway 23 running west to US Highway 169 at Milaca and east to Interstate 35 near Hinckley, as well as State Highway 65 running south to the Twin Cities and north through the lakes country to US Highway 2.

Mora residents and businesses enjoy a small town atmosphere while having easy access to several larger cities.



***Where to Find It:*** Mora is located at the intersection of State Highways 65 and 23 in east central Minnesota.

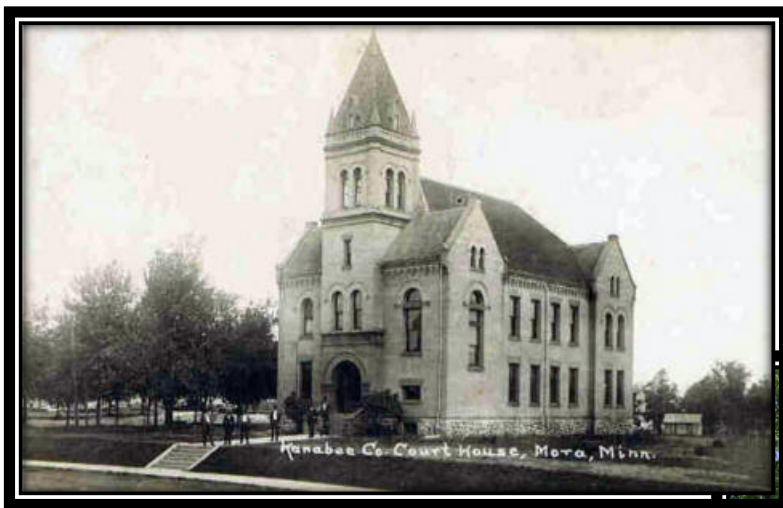


## Kanabec County Courthouse

Mora serves as the county seat for Kanabec County. The Kanabec County courthouse houses the various departments of County Government and the county's court system.

The current Courthouse, originally built in 1894 after a fire burned the County's first court house and jail building, was first enlarged in 1937 with an addition to the east end. Subsequent additions came in 1997 when the County constructed a new 20,000 square foot Public Service Building.

After consideration of moving all courthouse activities to a new site – a proposal that went by the wayside once the public demanded that the historic courthouse be preserved - more significant renovation of the existing courthouse was begun in 1998 and completed in 2000.



***Where to Find It:*** The Kanabec County Courthouse can be found at 18 Vine Street N. at the northeast section of Mora's historic downtown.

## Kanabec County Fair and Kanabec County Fairgrounds

Located on Union Street just south of downtown Mora, the fairgrounds come alive for five days in July during the Kanabec County Fair. The fair typically includes a parade, 4-H/livestock shows and exhibits, demonstrations, pine derby races, redneck races, talent show, tractor pull, truck pull, horse show, rods and rust car show, swap meet, grandstand events, entertainment, kids pedal pull, contests, kids events, carnival rides, live musical concerts, great food, vendors, and much more.

Also located on the fairgrounds are Lions Park / Kids Kingdom and the Mora Civic Center; and, the Mora Aquatic Center and Skateboard and Bike Parks are located adjacent to the fairgrounds. There's something for everyone, all year long.



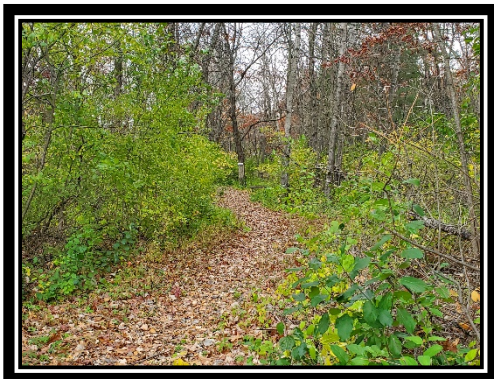
***Where to Find It:*** The Kanabec County Fairgrounds are located at the southwest corner Union Street S. and Fair Avenue W. at 701 Union Street S. To learn more about the fair, visit <http://www.kanabecfair.org>.



## Kanabec County Historical Society

Established in 1978, the Kanabec County Historical Society – also known as the History Center – is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization supported entirely through memberships and donations. The History Center hosts a variety of programs and exhibits and offers educational programs and workshops throughout the year. The gift shop offers a selection of books, hand crafted items and souvenirs, and a robust library is available for genealogy research. An updated banquet room and outdoor space is available to rent for events.

Although close to the City's main business district, the History Center is situated on 37 acres of land bordered by the Snake River. In addition to the historic exhibits, this beautiful woodland site provides ample opportunity to enjoy Minnesota's parade of seasons from the lush wild flower display of springtime to the quiet beauty of the snow covered trails.



***Where to Find It:*** The History Center is located on the west side of Mora on the banks of the Snake River at 805 Forest Avenue W.

## Lakes and Rivers

The Mora area is rich with many lakes and rivers for water enthusiasts. The Snake River, Ann River and Knife River are all popular destinations in Kanabec County, with camping and lake access available at Ann Lake, Knife Lake, Fish Lake, Lake Full of Fish and Quamba Lake. Lake Mora and Spring Lake are located within Mora and provide opportunities for fishing, recreation and visual enjoyment. The area lakes and rivers offer endless opportunities for swimming, fishing, boating, sailing and water skiing in the summer months, and ice fishing, skating, cross country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter months.



**Where to Find It:** For a map of public water accesses in Kanabec County, visit [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/water\\_access/counties/kanabec\\_millelacs.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/water_access/counties/kanabec_millelacs.pdf).



## Links to Scandinavian Culture and Swedish Landmarks

Of the roughly 1.25 million Swedish men, women, and children who came to the United States between 1845 and 1930, more settled in Minnesota than in any other state. Named after Mora, Sweden, Mora, Minnesota was first platted in 1882 and officially incorporated as a village in 1891 and its strong Swedish heritage can still be seen in its buildings, decorations, monuments and events.



***Where to Find It:*** Signs of Mora's Swedish heritage can be found all throughout the community!

## Mora Aquatic Center

This city-owned outdoor pool complex features one full-depth pool with two flume slides and one drop slide, two diving boards, and a zero-depth pool with water features. Concessions are available as well as lounge chairs, tables and umbrellas for shade. The Mora Aquatic Center offers swim lessons and life guard training courses each summer. The facility is open during June, July and August.



***Where to Find It:*** The aquatic center is located at 611 Union Street S. adjacent to the Kanabec County Fairgrounds.



## Mora Area Chamber of Commerce and Kanabec Area Chamber Foundation

The Mora Area Chamber of Commerce is an organization of business and community members working together in support of its membership with an ongoing mission to create, promote and enhance a healthy business environment. Providing leadership, resources and support necessary for business success, growth and viability, the Mora Area Chamber of Commerce exists to help businesses succeed. In addition to supporting local businesses and the community, the chamber seeks to present the excellent prospects that the Mora area offers to those looking for opportunities to relocate or expand, or enter into a new venture.

The Kanabec Area Chamber Foundation was built upon the need for 501(C)3 non-profit status, in order to apply for grants, make donations tax deductible, and to be able to contribute scholarships to its membership. The Mission of the Kanabec Area Chamber Foundation is to support the Mora Area Chamber of Commerce as it works for local economic and business

The foundation organizes the annual Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre Fundraiser for to support its Business Development Education Scholarship Program.



***Where to Find It:*** The chamber office is located in downtown Mora at 16 Lake Street N.

## The Mora Area Youth Recreation Association and Mora Civic Center

The mission of the Mora Area Youth Recreation Association (MAYRA) is to organize, direct and promote youth activities in a manner that will positively represent the community in a fun, fair and safe environment for all participating youth. To house and support activities, MAYRA operates the Mora Civic Center, an indoor hockey arena situated on the site of the Kanabec County Fairgrounds. While hockey and ice skating are popular events during fall and winter months, the civic center hosts many other events throughout the year. MAYRA also coordinates other youth activities such as football, soccer, and Tball.



**Where to Find It:** The Mora Civic Center is located at 701 Union Street S. Visit <https://www.mayrasports.com> to learn more about the organization and the programs it offers.

## Mora Classic Series

The Mora Classic Series is a great way to stay active and enjoy “silent sports” all year long. The series includes four events throughout the year: the **Vasaloppet USA Ski Race** held on the second Saturday in February; the **Snake River Canoe Race** held on the first Saturday in May; the **Mora Half Marathon & 5K** held on the third Saturday in August; and, the **Mora Bike Tour** held on the third Saturday in September.

Individuals completing each event within a 12 month timespan will earn a Classic Medal, or the Motion Series Award for those choosing shorter races within the series.

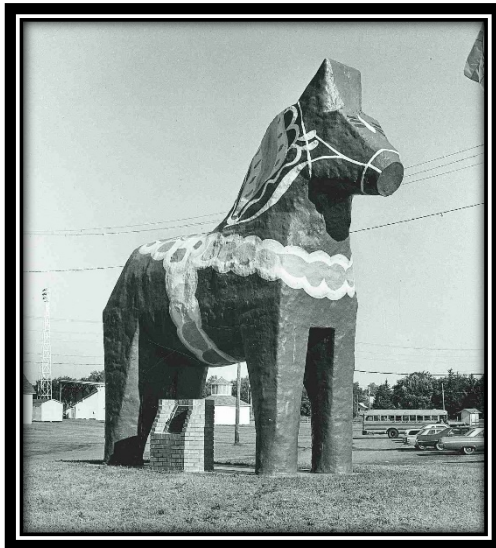


**Where to Find It:** The Mora Classic Series events happen in and around Mora. For more information about each event, visit <https://vasaloppet.us/>.



## Mora Dala Horse

According to the plaque displayed with the beloved Dala Horse, the statue is a replica of the Dalecarlian horses hand carved in Mora, Sweden since the 1840s. The statue was constructed and decorated in 1971 by the Mora Jaycees, and presented to the community as a reminder of their cultural heritage and as a tourist attraction. At the time of construction, the statue weighed approximately 3,000 pounds and was 22 feet tall, 17 feet long and 6 feet wide.



**Where to Find It:** The Dala Horse can be found at 701 Union Street S. at the entrance of the Kanabec County Fairgrounds.

## Mora Municipal Airport (JMR)

The airport is located approximately two miles northeast of downtown Mora just north of State Highway 23 and adjacent to the Mora Industrial Park. The airport was constructed in 1945 and expanded in 1950, 1964, 1983, 2007, and 2017 and now covers over 400 acres.

Owned and operated by the City, the airport features a 4,800 foot paved primary runway, a paved parallel taxiway, and a grass crosswind runway. The airport facility includes a 24/7 unattended arrival / departure building, self-service 100LL and Jet A fuel, tie-downs, and hangar space. Building sites for hangars and aviation related businesses are available.

Mora Municipal Airport received the Intermediate General Aviation Airport Project of the Year award for the Turf Crosswind Runway 11/29 project.



**Where to Find It:** The airport is located in the northeast section of Mora at 2085 Mahogany Street, just north of Highway 23.

## Mora Public Library

A branch of the East Central Regional Library System, the Mora Public Library is located in downtown Mora on the shores of Lake Mora. The Mora Public Library offers a wide selection of books, large print books, e-books, videos, reference materials, CDs, audio books, public computers, wireless access and other resources. The facility also has meeting space available for large groups; reservations are required.



***Where to Find It:*** The library is located in downtown Mora adjacent to Library Park at 200 Maple Avenue W.



## Paradise Community Theatre

Born of the desire to renovate the historically rich, fondly remembered, but physically dilapidated structure constructed in 1947, Paradise Community Theatre established its status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with the dream of bringing quality cinema and live entertainment to the Mora community. Through thousands of hours of donated manual labor and the generous donations of movie lovers near and far, the dream became reality.

The community-owned, not-for-profit Paradise Community Theatre Association provides art and entertainment, such as first-run digital movies, stage productions, concerts, meetings and seminars, at a reasonable cost to the citizens of Kanabec County and surrounding areas. The Paradise Theatre is also available to rent for special events such as birthday parties, school functions, live music, stage performances, and other private celebrations. The single screen auditorium remains the only cinema venue in Kanabec County.



**Where to Find It:** The Paradise Theatre is located in downtown Mora at 237 Union Street S.

## Parks and Picnic Areas

Mora offers several parks and picnic areas for those who enjoy the outdoors. Two of the larger parks are Lions Park / Kids Kingdom near the Kanabec County Fairgrounds and Library Park near the shores of Lake Mora. Lions Park / Kids Kingdom offers a large wooden playground for youth, two shelter areas and restroom facilities. Library Park offers a gazebo / band shelter, picnic shelter, tennis and pickleball courts, a basketball court, and playground. Canoe Park, located on the shores of the Snake River, is a great spot for picnicking, accessing the river, and enjoying the scenery.



**Where to Find It:** For a map of parks in the City of Mora, visit the city's website at [www.ci.mora.mn.us](http://www.ci.mora.mn.us).



## Spring Brook Golf Course

Located just east of Mora in Comfort Township, Spring Brook Golf Course and Country Club offers guests a beautiful 18-hole championship layout that can test the skills of even the most elite players. The Front nine holes allow players ample room to hit the rolling fairways, but miss any of the elevated, well-bunkered greens and bogey or worse is likely. The Back nine holes are literally cut out of the woods and lowlands of the property. Short and tight fairways force players to use every club in their bag. The slippery slopes of the back-side greens emphasize the importance of well-placed approach shots.



***Where to Find It:*** Spring Brook Golf Course can be found just east of Mora at 2276 200<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas

Kanabec County is home to two state forests and two wildlife management areas, including the Snake River State Forest located in northeastern Kanabec County, the Rum River State Forest located in western Kanabec County, the Mille Lacs Wildlife Management Area located in northwestern Kanabec County and the Ann Lake Management Area located in western Kanabec County.

State forest lands are available for a variety of recreational activities, including hunting, trapping, off-highway vehicle riding, camping, fishing, mountain biking, horseback riding, and wildlife watching.

Wildlife management areas (WMAs) are part of Minnesota's outdoor recreation system and are established to protect those lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses. They are the backbone to DNR's wildlife management efforts in Minnesota and are key to protecting wildlife habitat for future generations; providing citizens with opportunities for hunting, fishing and wildlife watching; and, and promoting important wildlife-based tourism in the state.



***Where to Find It:*** For more information about the wildlife management areas visit <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/wmas>, and for more information about the state forests visit [https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_forests](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_forests).

## Kanabec County Timber Trails Public Transit

Timber Trails Public Transit, a public transit bus service provided by Kanabec County, strives to make it as easy as possible to access public transportation within the county. Timber Trails' mission is to meet the public transportation needs of all Kanabec County residents, from children to senior citizens.



***Where to Find It:*** Timber Trails Public Transit is based in Mora at 300 Industrial Park Road.



## Vasaloppet Headquarters

Vasaloppet USA is headquartered in downtown Mora in an attractive Swedish-style building converted from the former Burlington Northern Depot.

The site is also home to Mora's "little" Dala Horse which, like its larger counterpart located at 701 Union Street S., is visited by many tourists every year.



**Where to Find It:** The Vasaloppet Headquarters building is centrally located in Mora's historic downtown at 100 Union Street S.

## Vasaloppet USA Nordic Ski Center

The Vasaloppet Nordic Ski Center provides a convenient place for skiers to train or to simply enjoy skiing. Providing access to 15 kilometers of groomed trails, the center features a wax room, changing rooms and sauna, a small kitchen with plenty of room for ski gear and events. The complex was funded entirely by private donations and is used throughout the year. Rental of the facility is available for meetings and social events.

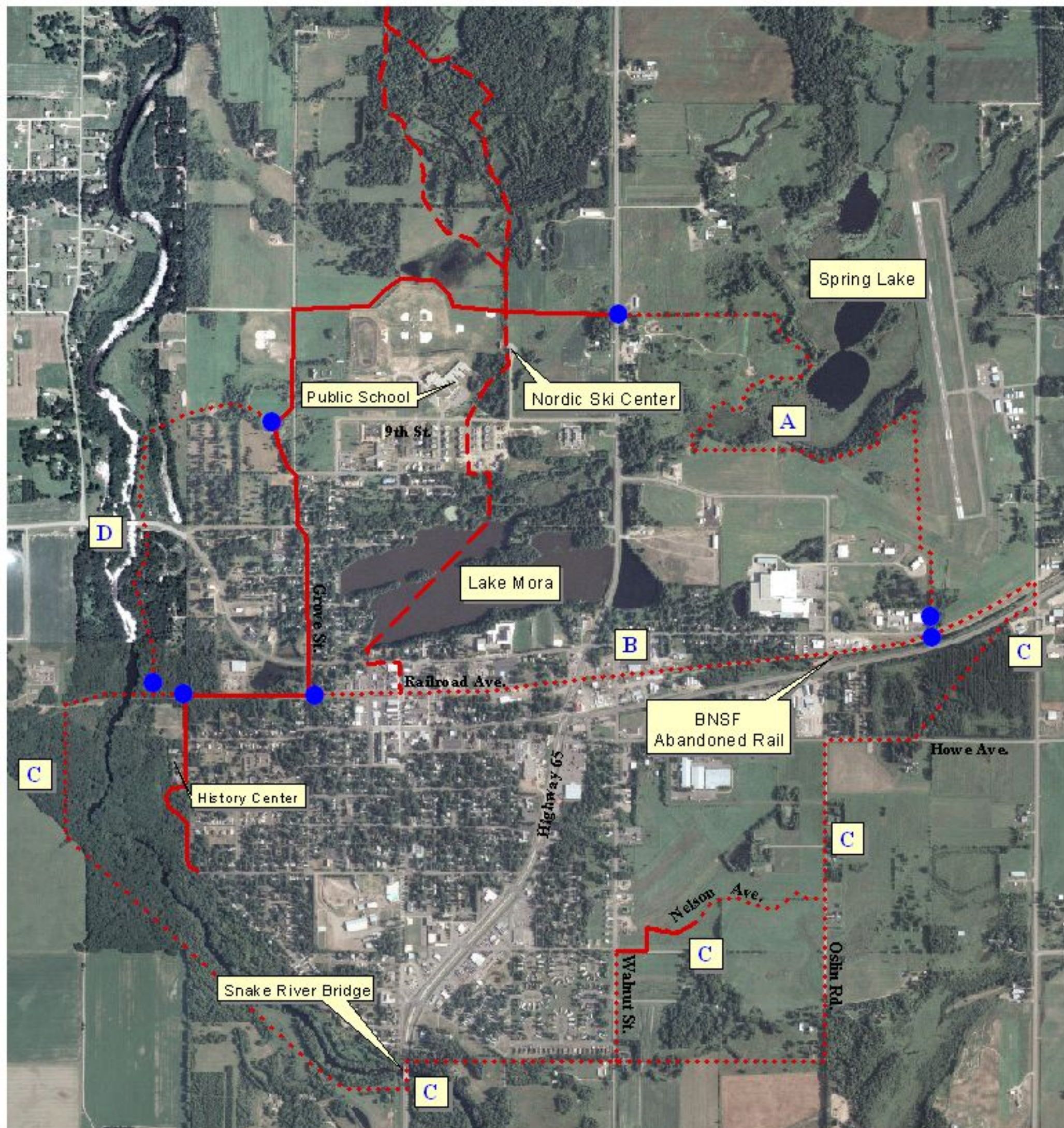


***Where to Find It:*** The Nordic Ski Center and related facilities are located at the northern boundary of Mora at 400-420 Nordic Center Drive.





# Mora Trail System



 Existing Trail  
 Vasaloppet Ski Trail  
 Proposed Trail

Future Trail Extensions

1. Spring Lake Trail (A)
2. Downtown Trail (B)
3. Northwest Trail (D)
4. Southern Trail (C)

1" = 1600'

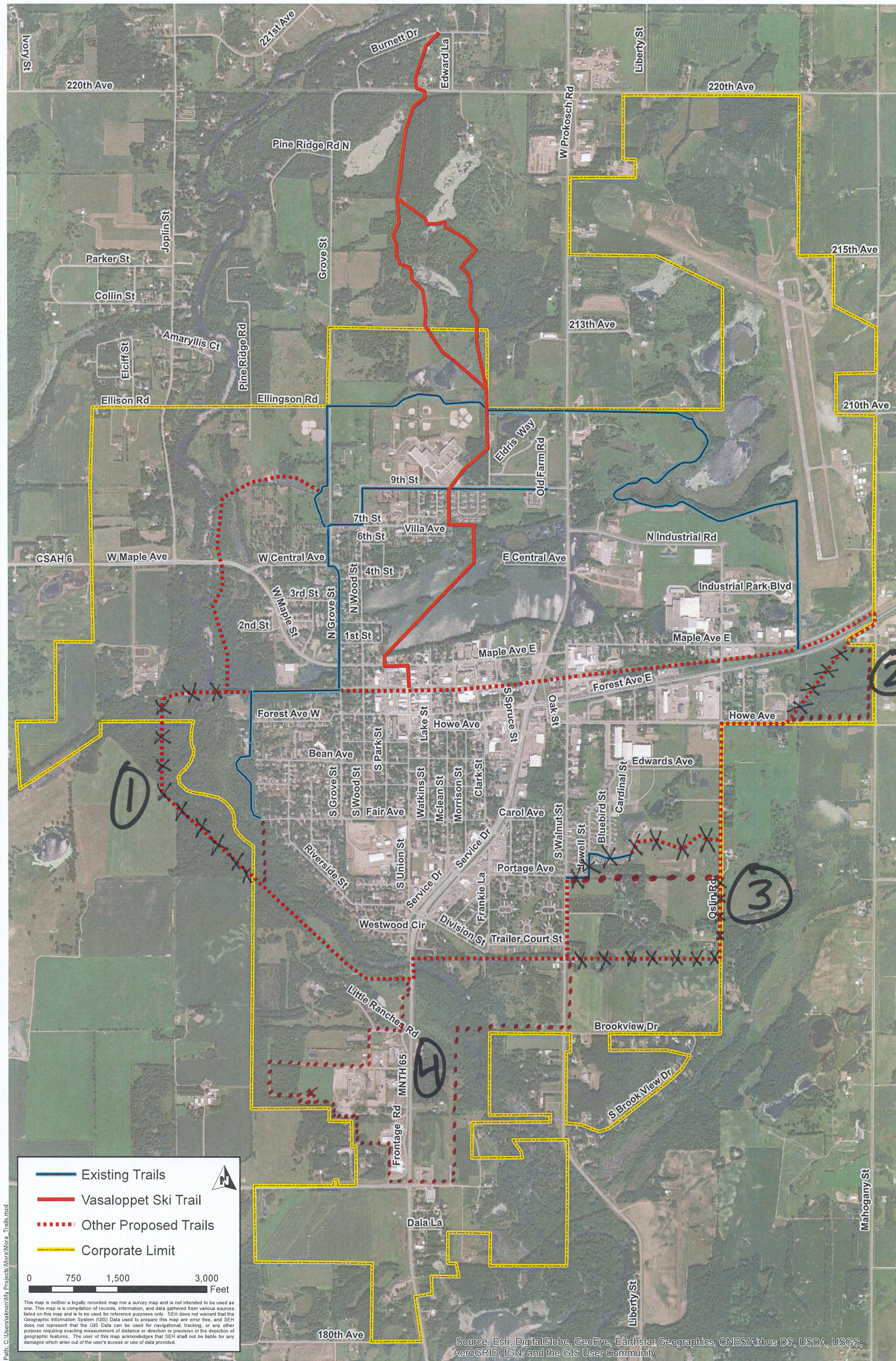


March 2008









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# TRAIL SYSTEM Mora, Minnesota

**FIGURE 1**  
Trails





