

1. INTRODUCTION

Plan overview and goals, community profile, and engagement summary.

OVERVIEW

The story of the City of Hopkins is one of reinvention and renewal, while still maintaining the community's core identity and unique character.

Like many small towns, the first settlement in this location sprung up as a modest clustering of housing and businesses along a railroad line, serving local farmers and factory workers. Rail, streetcar, and highways connected it to the Twin Cities metropolitan core, bringing growth and change. These connections were no accident – settlers chose the site strategically along a major corridor used by indigenous people for generations before.

The distinction for Hopkins is that it chose to embrace change, without erasing its past. Decades of growth and investment have added a wide range of housing, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses to the original core settlement. However, the original layout and form of the traditional small town has remained at the heart, instead of being swept away in the name of progress. This has meant continual efforts to reinvent and renew older areas, so that they can accommodate change.

The result is a community that has managed to merge old and new, bringing together the classic charm of a small town with modern amenities. The faces of Hopkins reflect this continuum as well, with households tracing their history back to its origins (and prior indigenous people who inhabited this area) alongside those that are new to the city and the nation.

This experience and history translates into a built-in understanding of the principles and values of sustainability – a long term perspective of how to sustain a community (and all its elements) successfully over time. As the past has shown, this process is a continuum, not a destination, and change will continue to happen even in places that remain essentially the same.

This plan further explores the concept of sustainability – and the related concept of resilience – and what it means to plan for the future of the city with this in mind. As outlined below, this has implications for all elements of the community environment: built, natural, social, and economic.



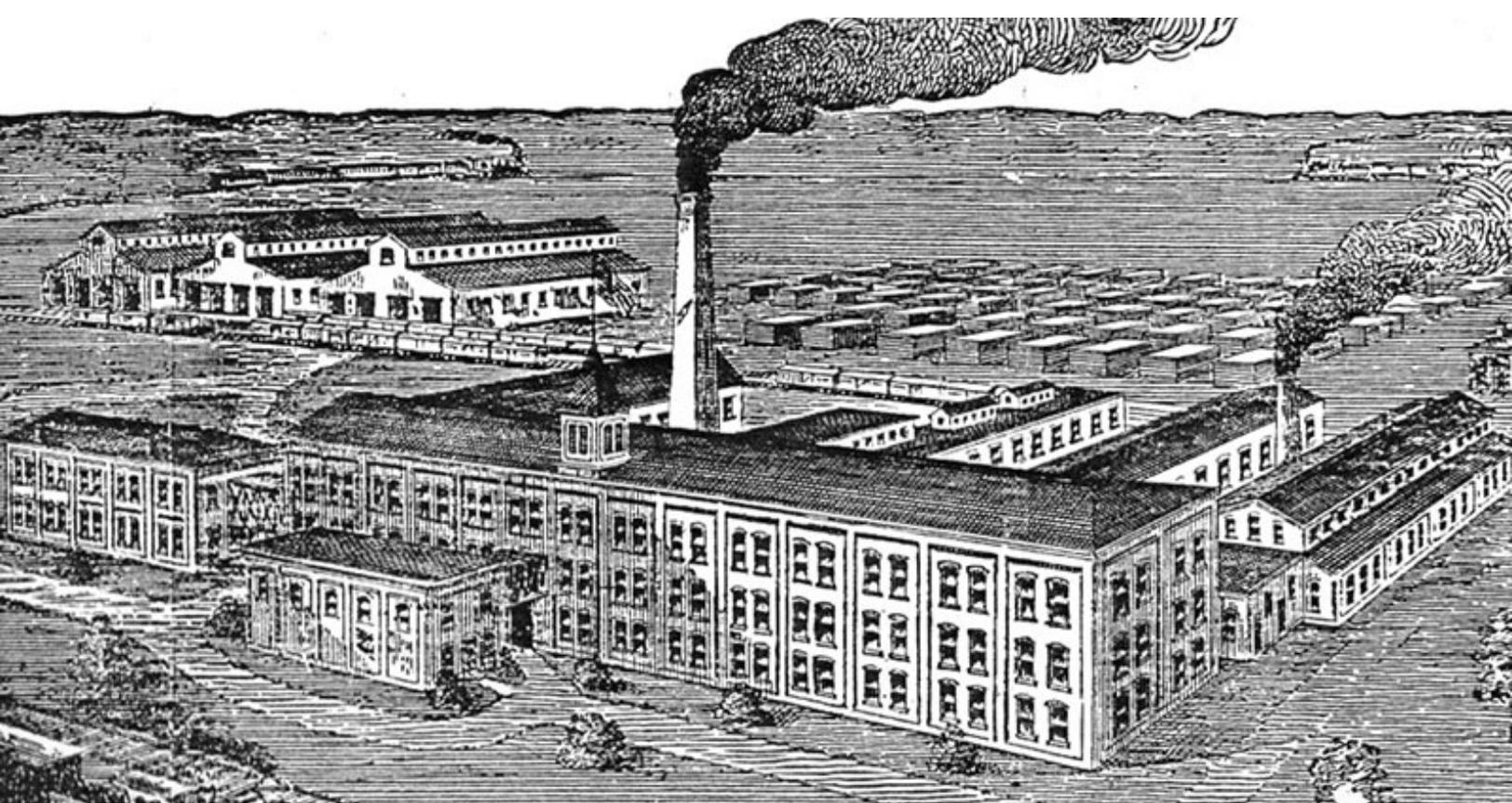
PURPOSE

The purpose of this comprehensive plan is to provide long range guidance for growth, development, and investment in the City of Hopkins. It replaces the City's former comprehensive plan which was adopted in 2009. This comprehensive plan envisions the growth and change the community will see by 2040, and creates a framework for what the City needs to do to get there. To do this, the plan interweaves guidance from City-established goals, public comments and feedback, past plans and initiatives, and analysis of data and trends.

As a community within the seven county Twin Cities metropolitan region, Hopkins is required by [state statute](#) to update its comprehensive plan every ten years, as part of an overall regional planning cycle managed through the Metropolitan Council. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that local plans conform with regional system plans – including transportation, wastewater, and regional parks – as well as policy plans for housing and water supply. This plan is submitted as a fulfillment for this requirement, and as consistent with [Thrive MSP 2040](#), the regional plan.

Additionally, the comprehensive plan stands as a central guidance document for the City of Hopkins. Over the next ten years, the City will make numerous decisions related to development, infrastructure, public services, budgeting, and many other topics that need to be aligned with its overall goals. This plan provides a framework for this decision making process – to ensure consistency and progress toward longer range goals.

While the plan provides an overarching framework for the City, it does not stand alone. As referenced throughout this plan, there are numerous other city produced plans, studies, regulations, programs, and practices that provide more detailed and specific guidance. Additionally, numerous other jurisdictions have oversight and influence in the community – ranging from local to national. For the sake of brevity, most of these are incorporated only by reference.



HISTORY

The land where Hopkins was established was originally Dakota Sioux territory. It was situated along a trail established by indigenous people that followed the high ground along the path of the Minnesota River, connecting Bde Maka Ska (formerly Lake Calhoun) to Shakopee. The Treaty of the Traverse des Sioux and the Treaty of Mendota in 1851 resulted in the Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of the Upper Dakota and the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute Dakota people ceding land west of the Mississippi River that was exclusively theirs to the United States government, to open up the territory to European American settlement.

Yankee and Bohemian farmers were the first European Americans to stake claims in what is now Hopkins. Between 1854 and 1870 more settlers migrated to the area and cleared land for farming and raising cattle. Early farmers found that the land was ideal for growing raspberries. By the 1920s, raspberry farming had become a big business, which led to Hopkins being known as the “Raspberry Capital of the World.”

A big change came between 1871 and 1881 when three railroad companies laid their tracks through the area, which brought great potential for industrial growth. Early settler Harley Hopkins negotiated a deal with one of the railroad companies that in return for donating a portion of his land, a railroad station bearing the name “Hopkins” would be built on the property. Harley Hopkins’ land and home was where Excelsior Crossings and the Depot Coffee House are now, just east of Highway 169 on Excelsior Boulevard. The area was the first part of the present town to develop as a business center, with a blacksmith shop, a dry goods store, a lumber company, and a wood-frame apartment building. This area was unofficially known as “Hopkins.”

Another big change came in 1887, when a farm machine factory was established about a mile west of the railroad depot – the Minneapolis Threshing Machine Company – better known as MTM. The factory brought more Bohemian and Scandinavian machine workers to the area. MTM included massive factory buildings surrounded by farms and settler’s cabins when it was first built. The company was situated on 40 acres, south of what is now Excelsior Boulevard and the railroad tracks, roughly between 8th and 11th Avenues South. The area north of the railroad tracks included the continuation of Excelsior Avenue, now known as Mainstreet, and this area became a thriving business center and the primary market hub for surrounding communities.



MTM grew quickly, and by 1893 employed 400 to 500 men – the largest employer in western Hennepin County. This growth brought about a need for housing for workers and their families. A real estate company sold building sites north of the factory as lots in “West Minneapolis”, and this became the unofficial name of the developing village. In a 1929 merger, MTM became known as the Minneapolis Moline Power Implement Company – better known as “The Moline”.

In 1893, with the factory and businesses thriving, and with a population of 1,105 people, a vote was held to incorporate as the Village of West Minneapolis. The vote was held on the third floor of the Olson Building at 9th and Mainstreet, where Hoagie’s Family Restaurant is now. Although the Village’s name was officially West Minneapolis, most people referred to it as Hopkins. To eliminate the confusion, in 1928 a resolution was passed to change the name to the Village of Hopkins and in 1947, Hopkins became a city through adoption of a city charter.

Between 1887 and 1945, Hopkins grew as a farming area and prospered as a small business community. Following World War II, a large scale business and population boom saw the Twin Cities spread west to, and beyond, Hopkins. Until about 1950, Hopkins was the largest city in the western suburbs and its downtown was the area’s major shopping district. By the mid-1950s, new dwellings and businesses to serve the incoming residents covered the pastures and prairies.

Transportation was one of the reasons Hopkins was such a focal point. Hopkins was always easy to get to, first by trails, then by dirt roads and railways, next by street cars connecting to Minneapolis and Lake Minnetonka, and after the automobile was introduced, by the major north-south and east-west roads running through it. The streetcar era (1899-1951) was Hopkins heyday. The streetcar allowed Hopkins residents easy access to the big cities for jobs, higher education or services.

Downtown Hopkins evolved over time. In the early years, Mainstreet (formerly Excelsior Avenue) had services such as a general store, meat market, milk depot, saloons, and an opera house. In the early to mid-twentieth century, merchants such as doctors, dentists, grocers and hardware stores outgrew Mainstreet and built on side streets, thus creating Downtown Hopkins. In the latter half of the twentieth century, cars became the predominant mode of transportation and auto lots lined portions of Mainstreet. In 1997, Hopkins Cinema 6 and the Hopkins Center for the Arts opened on former car lots, setting the stage for creating a central social district in Downtown Hopkins.

Although Hopkins has changed dramatically over the last two centuries, it is still rooted in its past. The raspberry farms are gone, but the community holds an annual Raspberry Festival celebration. North of the former MTM site is The Moline apartment building, which features a gallery that displays original Moline tractor models. Transportation still makes Hopkins a focal point—former railroad corridors have been converted into multi-use regional trails and will hold the future Green Line Extension of light rail transit (LRT). The Artery along 8th Avenue was built as a multimodal connection to bring bicyclists and pedestrians from the future LRT station to Downtown Hopkins, which remains the lifeblood of the community.

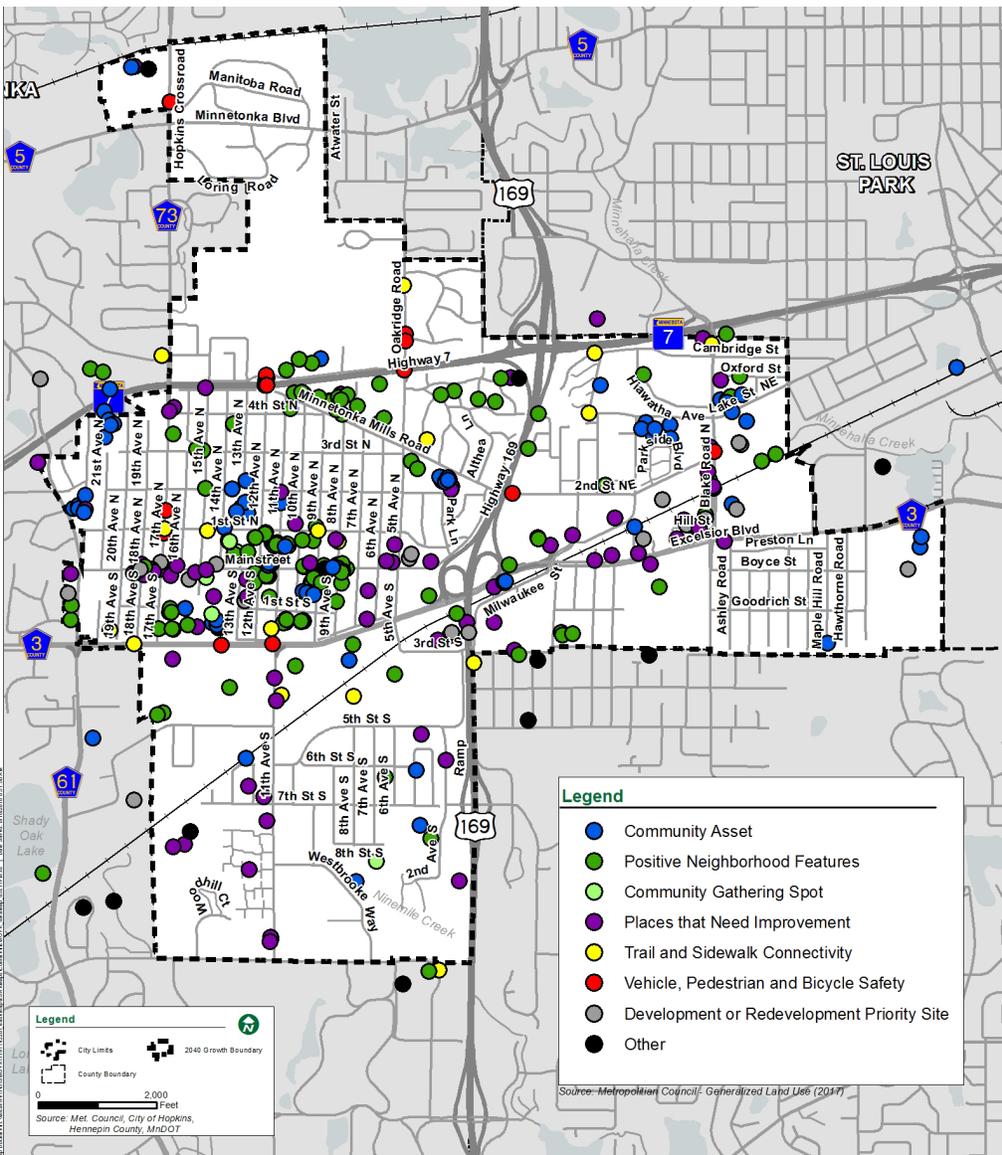
Although we don’t know exactly what the future will hold, the planning process to create this 2040 Comprehensive Plan was called Cultivate Hopkins to ensure that Hopkins remains Rooted, Vibrant, Connected, and Resilient.

Source: Hopkins Historical Society, Beverly O. Ewing, Editor (2002). [Hopkins Minnesota Through the Years](#)

PLANNING PROCESS

The Cultivate Hopkins planning process was organized in four general phases:

- **Plan Initiation.** The initiation phase of the planning process focused on gathering background information, preparing the project website, and internal discussions on priorities.
- **Public Engagement.** This included the broadest reach of public engagement, designed to determine what was most important to the community.
- **Plan Development.** Working through the Cultivate Hopkins Advisory Committee, city staff and consultants worked to review existing conditions, discuss alternatives, and develop plan policies and content.
- **Plan Review and Adoption.** This phase involved a review of the plan by city leadership and the public, as well as required interjurisdictional and Metropolitan Council reviews.





LISTENING TO HOPKINS

According to *Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans*, authentic public engagement is a central component in establishing a sustainable comprehensive plan. To this end, the Cultivate Hopkins planning process was designed to actively involve all segments of the community in analyzing issues, generating visions, developing plans, and monitoring outcomes. See **Appendix A2** for more detailed information on public engagement and input summaries.

Tools and Strategies

- **Advisory committee meetings.** The City convened a standing advisory committee to meet throughout the planning process, and provide input on plan development. This group met from Summer 2017 to Spring 2018. Members were chosen to reflect a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Take it To Them meetings.** Identified as a priority through the citywide goal-setting process, these meetings reflect a proactive approach to reaching out to the community, rather than waiting for the community to show up. Meetings focused on groups that have been traditionally under-represented.
- **Online comment mapping.** The Cultivate Hopkins website hosted an online comment tool that allowed people to map issues in the community, coded by type. This helped to pinpoint areas throughout the city that had concentrations of assets and/or concerns.
- **Targeted surveys.** There were several community surveys used during the process, both on general and specific topics. Circulating them online - including through social media - broadened the audience reached by the surveys.
- **Project website and social media.** The Cultivate Hopkins website provided an ongoing resource for information about plan development and opportunities to provide feedback.
- **Nontraditional tools.** These included a project kick-off video, poetry wagon, chalkboards, and building blocks exercise.

What We Learned

Many of the things we learned from engagement have been incorporated into the comprehensive plan. A few major themes that surfaced during engagement:

- **People love Hopkins.** Much of the input reflected the fact that Hopkins is greatly valued by a large proportion of the population. Quality of life, convenient location, unique neighborhoods, parks, downtown amenities, city services, and many other aspects received positive feedback. The focus was on keeping what is valued rather than replacing it.
- **People have a vision for their community.** While there was a lot of appreciation for what's already here, many also saw room for positive growth and change. This particularly related to opportunities around transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel, sustainability and the environment, and community cohesiveness.
- **Hearing diverse perspectives is vital.** Though there were positive associations in many areas, the life experience of people varied - with some facing obstacles and challenges that others did not. The City's focus on race and equity, and related outreach, revealed there is still room for improvement in many areas.

Cultivating Hopes and Dreams

The comprehensive plan is a big picture vision that impacts everyday life. Hopkins residents shared individual stories of their lives with us - what they value, what they hope for.

Below is a sampling of what we heard - including some poems from a “poetry wagon” event with artist Molly Van Avery.



give me something i didnt know i wanted
dear stranger, i meet you
with open doors
the heart, the mind, the things i know
all wide and round doors
see them open in your company
i give myself to you for free
i show up, i tend, i volunteer
why?
because i do not know what i do not know
i want to commune, to mix, to meet
the whole of me commits to this
i come back again and again
this city, this art center
a kind of place-based friend.

take me back, or rather forward
carry me into the new
but ask the new to keep the old
evidence of what has been
peppered through this treasured town
never torn down, and thank you for that
surround me with artifacts
from all i love and treasure
the list goes on forever
the arts, the eats, the people i meet
make my life of use
trust that what is meant to be
will be
see me time, tending to your passing
and your future both
meet me on your main street
where a gentle day
makes me pleased

wild ponies & jerk chicken
take the concept of main street
the main vertebrae of our city
and multiply what is working
times independent imaginations
we want to eat
we like cupcakes
and we like petting dogs
so perhaps more puppies, please?
or while we are at it, small ponies?
we love the old made new
we will grow old here
while this old concept of a small town
grows new again





TRENDS

This section summarizes some major trends shaping the future of Hopkins. More information on data and trends in Hopkins can be found in **Appendix A1**.

Growing in Diversity

Mirroring national and regional trends, Hopkins is an increasingly diverse community, both racially and socio-economically. The change has been fairly recent and steady – changing from 95% white residents in 1990 to 59% in 2015. The relative affordability and accessibility have made this an attractive location for many people, including those who are new to the region.

This increased diversity reflects immigration of many new foreign born residents to the area. As of 2015, 19% of residents in Hopkins were foreign born. While this isn't unprecedented (100 years ago, the rate of foreign born was likely higher), it does reflect people coming from different parts of the globe. While earlier waves of immigrants were from European nations, three-quarters of current foreign born residents are from Africa or Southeast Asia. Hopkins School District estimates that over 40 language groups are represented in the homes of their student body.

This increase in diversity provides an opportunity to create a more resilient, sustainable community with offerings and contributions from many cultures. Hopkins has already recognized this opportunity through the formation of its [Hopkins Race and Equity Initiative](#) (HREI). The HREI is a collaborative effort creating opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of race, equity, and diversity and promoting a sense of community that welcomes and values all residents.

This diversity isn't just a change in composition – it is driving growth. Like much of Minnesota, growth in population is coming from non-white populations. They tend to be younger than the white population, and have more children. This points to the importance of the school district, and the education system overall, of supporting families, including newer residents.

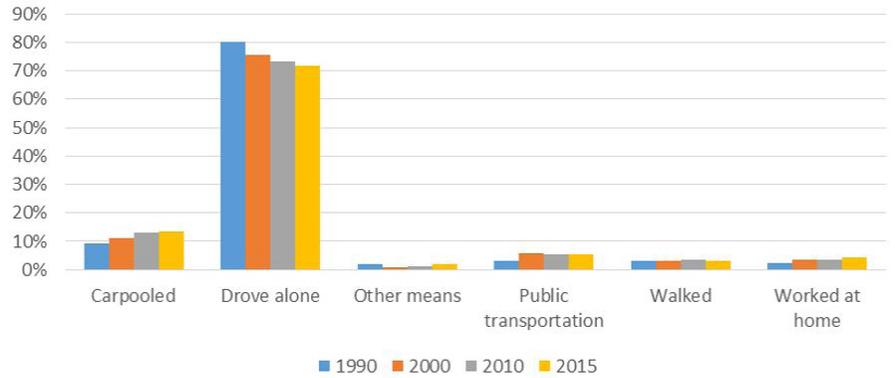
Traveling in Different Ways

While many communities aspire to see a mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles in favor of transit and non-motorized means, Hopkins is seeing this happen. The percentage of people driving alone to work in Hopkins has been decreasing steadily since 1990, while other modes (including carpooling, public transportation, and working at home) have been increasing.

Furthermore, the City's comprehensive plan survey shows that residents would like to increase this further. When questioned about what mode they would prefer, most people said they would like to drive less and walk, bike, ride share, and use transit more.

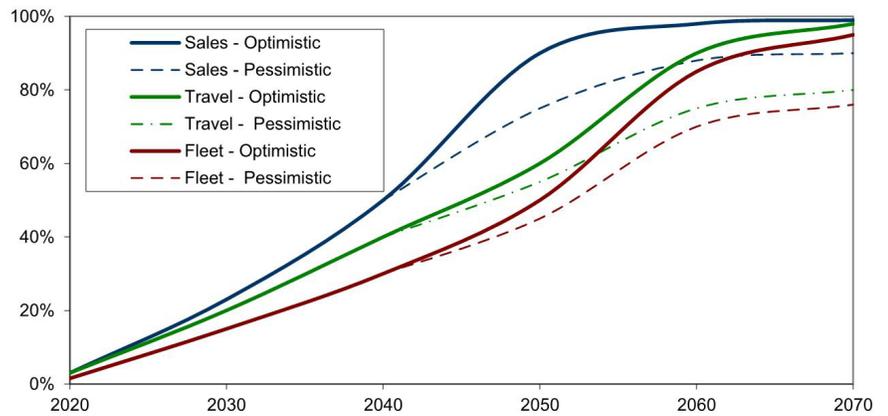
The opportunity to do so has never been better. The planned construction of the [Green Line Extension](#) light rail will substantially increase transit accessibility, as well as support the development of housing and businesses that are readily accessible from transit. This willingness and opportunity sets the stage for future mode innovations as well. Hopkins may be ideally situated to adopt newer technologies when they are available, such as autonomous vehicles. While these are still in the developmental stages, it is predicted that shifts to this form of transportation may happen before the end of this planning period in 2040.

Hopkins Means of Commuting to Work



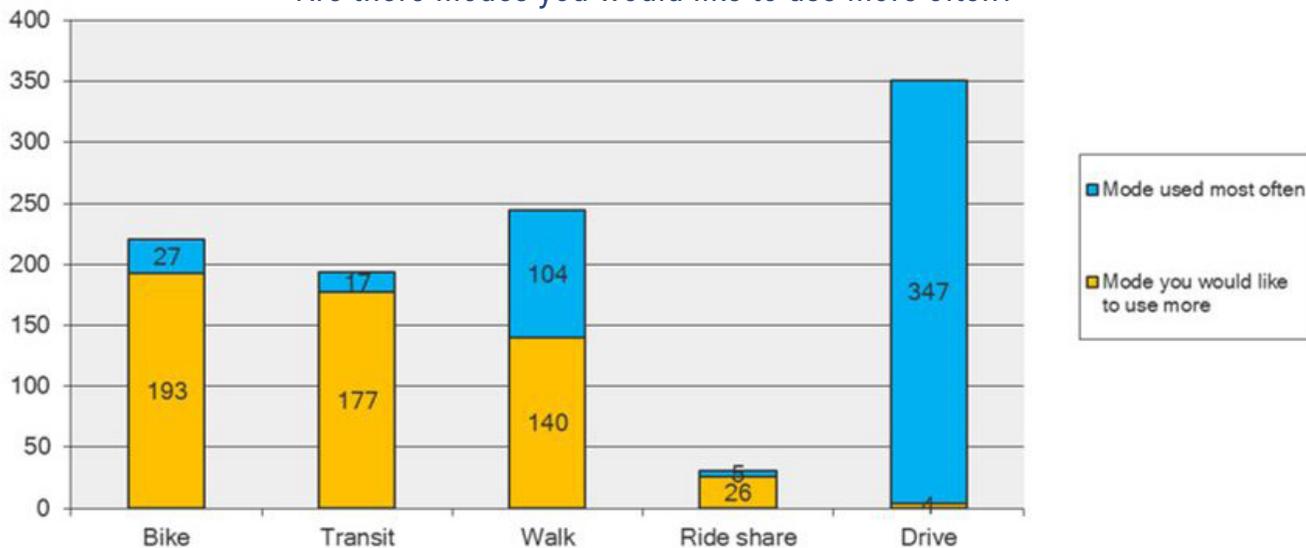
Source: US Census

Autonomous Vehicles Sales, Fleet, and Travel Projections



Source: Victoria Transport Policy Institute

What transportation mode do you use most often? Are there modes you would like to use more often?



Source: City of Hopkins

Embracing Technology

Technological changes are happening rapidly on many fronts, and Hopkins is on the forefront of embracing that change.

As of 2018, Hopkins is among the areas of the state with full access to broadband with speeds of at least 100Mbps download and 20Mbps upload – the 2026 statewide goal for the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development’s (MN DEED) [Office of Broadband Development](#).

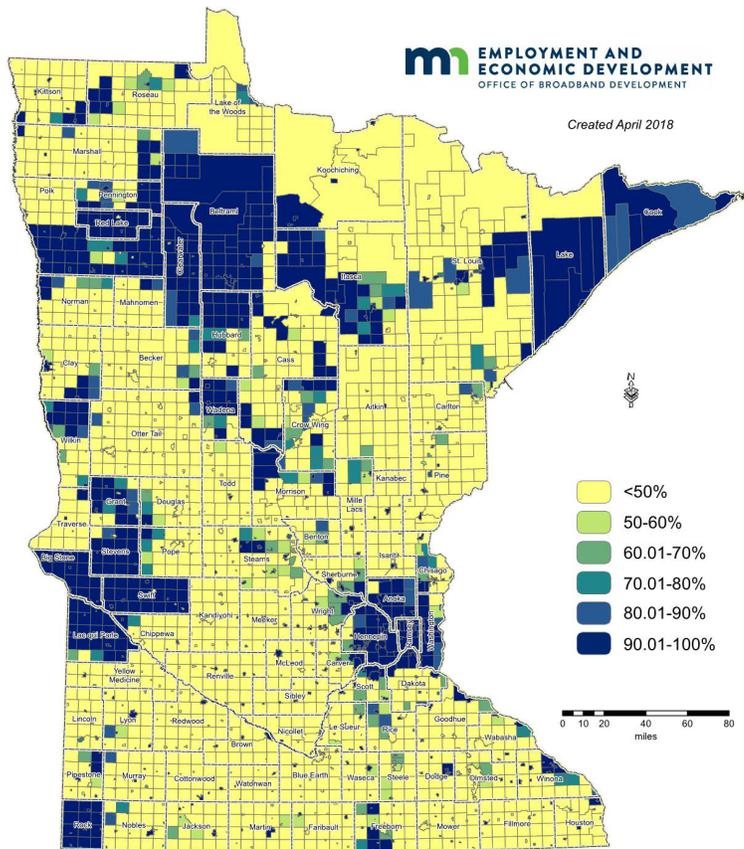
Furthermore, Hopkins has more choices than most other parts of the state. Most of Hopkins has access to at least three broadband internet providers, increasing choices and options for customers and encouraging competitive pricing.

With change happening so fast, it’s difficult to predict all the innovations that will occur by 2040. However, it is clear that being connected to and familiar with technology will continue to be an advantage for years to come.

The results of this accessibility are that Hopkins is well connected, and most residents regularly use technology. Compared to nationwide averages, Hopkins is “above average” in terms of the following metrics in terms of household usage of technology and the internet:

2018 Broadband Availability in the State of Minnesota

Percentage of Households Served by Wireline Broadband Service by City/Township
At Least 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload Speeds
Statewide Availability: 73.66%, Rural: 58.99%



This map was prepared by Connected Nation under contract with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The map represents areas of broadband service availability based on provider data submitted to and analyzed by Connected Nation and modified based on validation tools. The data is current as of December 31, 2017.

Additional maps and data are available at <http://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/maps>. Upon request, this information can be made available in alternate formats for people with disabilities by contacting the DEED Office of Broadband Development at 651-259-7610.

Submit questions or recommended changes to: DEED.broadband@state.mn.us

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87%

OWN AT LEAST ONE TELEVISION (+1% OVER NATIONAL AVERAGE)

86%

HAVE HIGH-SPEED INTERNET (+3%)

82%

RECENTLY USED GOOGLE (+6%)

79%

RECENTLY USED EMAIL (+7%)

77%

OWN A COMPUTER (+1%)

69%

RECENTLY ACCESSED INTERNET ON CELL PHONE (+6%)

63%

RECENTLY VISITED FACEBOOK (+5%)

Source: ESRI



The Commons shared workspace



Using underutilized land beneath an overpass

Squeezing Out Inefficiencies

The redevelopment of an existing urbanized community emphasizes how valuable and irreplaceable land is. As everything new must replace existing development, the emphasis is on ensuring the new use is a net gain for the community. Land use planning helps to guide that decision, for both how suitable a development is and how it fits into the bigger picture.

As this process continues in an urban community like Hopkins, there is continued movement towards squeezing out inefficiencies. Limited resources such as land are used with increasing efficiency, and lower value/ lower intensity uses are gradually eliminated. The result is towards uses that use land efficiently - such as higher density, mixed use concepts that maximize the value of a space.

This trend does not just impact land use. Many ownership models that involve the personal, exclusive use of a resource by one owner are becoming less relevant moving forward. This has led to the emergence of the “sharing economy” where people agree to share assets and/or services either for free or for a fee.

Aspects of the sharing economy that are potentially relevant to Hopkins include:

- Vehicle sharing. Car sharing services like Uber and Lyft have already appeared in Hopkins. Services that share bicycles, scooters, or other modes of transportation are likely to follow. These make it possible for people to live without owning a car.
- Work space sharing. With the concept of the “gig economy,” many people are working jobs

where they do not have a traditional office or worksite. Work space sharing allows for a flexible and efficient alternative. The Commons is a Hopkins example.

- Residential space sharing. Services like AirBNB and VRBO provide a flexible option for short term housing rentals, for people who have excess space or are periodically absent from home.
- Pre-owned goods. Traditional approaches such as garage sales and thrift stores has been augmented by online markets for used goods like eBay and Craigslist.

A host of other elements are being explored, from professional services to financing to food preparation. Many of these may need additional city oversight and regulation, and should be monitoring on an ongoing basis.



Outdoor dining creates a memorable experience

Valuing Unique Places

The Great Recession (2007-2009) left a noticeable mark on many communities throughout Minnesota and the nation. During the subsequent recovery, there have been some significant changes in how growth has happened that show a shift in how people value places – and what places are most attractive as choice communities.

New greenfield development on the edge of metropolitan areas has lessened, and there is increased investment in redevelopment within the urban core. While there is still interest in a wide variety of housing types, there is increasing interest in walkable, mixed use communities as opposed to lower density suburban style development. This is especially true for younger generations such as Millennials. Much of the investment in multifamily housing in particular has been in core areas that have

urban amenities, nearby shopping, and access to transit. The vast majority of multifamily development in recent years has been in the urban core, particularly along major transit corridors. As the Green Line Extension project is built out, Hopkins will be a logical place for additional housing growth.

This trend has impacted not just residential development, but retail and office as well. As the retail market continues to shift with the rise of online shopping and delivery services, traditional retail centers are struggling. In order for people to leave the house, they need unique experiences in shopping and dining. Hopkins' downtown district is well positioned to provide that kind of experience, in contrast to some other shopping centers in the area.

Office uses are also transitioning. Businesses are moving away from isolated suburban campuses to locations with access to transit, shopping, entertainment, and recreation. The footprint of office uses is shrinking, with cost savings going in part to higher quality spaces and places. Because of this, Hopkins has the potential to capture more of the office market.

While some of this is new, the trend itself is not new at all. Traditional neighborhood and commercial development have been valued for decades, and many attempts have been made to replicate the success of these locations. Hopkins' authentic character ensures that it's well positioned for future growth and development.



Transforming 8th Avenue into the Artery

Planning for Flexibility

One of the great strengths of Hopkins has been its ability to evolve and adapt over time. Traditional business and residential buildings and districts have been renovated and rehabilitated to meet changing needs over the course of Hopkins' history.

The city has seen shifts in housing preferences, shopping trends, transportation mode choice, and many more factors. Each of these has had implications for both land use patterns and individual buildings.

The rediscovery of the value of unique places means that people are reinvesting in older communities for homes and businesses. This means creative adaptations to meet modern needs - such as planning for accessibility.

The need for flexibility in usage of space will continue, and is even expected to increase. Examples of the trends influencing this include:

- Changes in how commercial and office space are used, including a decrease in the need for showroom and storage space, and a reorientation towards experiential elements. Spaces with a lot of "back office" type function may need to be repurposed.
- Changes in how people travel (including transit and future possibilities like autonomous vehicles) could greatly decrease the amount of space needed for vehicle storage. This could lead to the opportunity to reuse space currently occupied by parking lots or structures.

- Changes in preferences for community space, such as the view of Downtown as "central social district," may encourage the reorientation of spaces for a mix of uses and increased connectivity between uses.

While it is not possible to predict all possible future reuses of a space, planning for flexibility means being thoughtful about designing for long term single use of any facility. Considerations can include creating parking structures so they can be converted to regular building space, or ensuring that ground floors of new buildings in business districts have the ceiling height to accommodate active uses - regardless of the original uses of the property.

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

Best Practices

The vision of Hopkins is one of a sustainable community – defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It is also envisioned as a resilient community – defined as one that is able to respond to shocks and disruptions while maintaining its integrity and purpose.

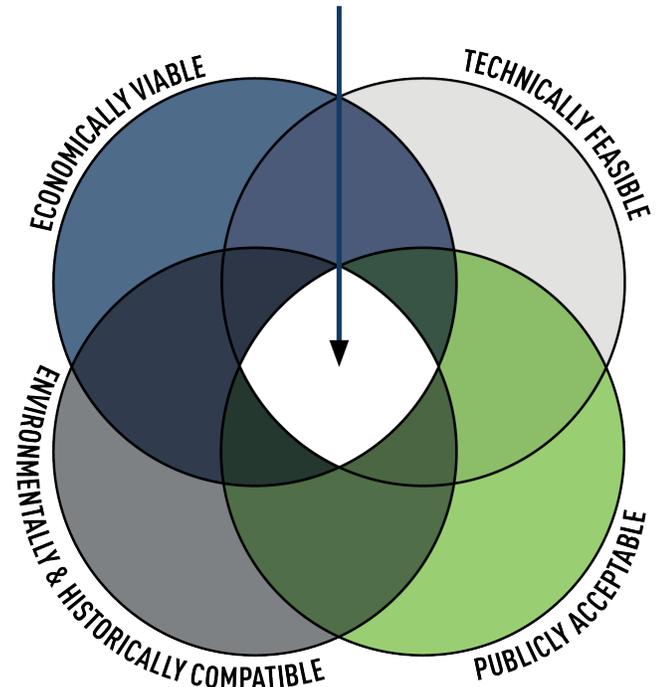
To shape and inform the sustainability framework for this plan, the City of Hopkins consulted [Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans](#) (2015). As described in its overview, this report is “the result of a four-year effort by the American Planning Association (APA) to define the role of comprehensive plans in addressing the sustainability of human settlements.” Concepts were developed through extensive consultation with experts, then field tested on a variety of communities to see if the concepts developed apply across a range of conditions. While the Hopkins plan customizes the approach to fit local conditions, the guide was used to ensure that a range of relevant topics were addressed.

The Hopkins planning process and resulting comprehensive plan fully incorporate the principles, processes, and standards identified in *Sustaining Places*. In particular, the Plan Scoring Matrix provided as a component of the report was used to evaluate the draft comprehensive plan, to ensure the plan addressed all desired elements.

The approach to sustainability was further informed by other best practice guides and initiatives (more information about all best practices is provided in Appendix A):

- **STAR Community Rating System.** Developed by [STAR Communities](#), this system is used to rate community performance on a range of topics related to promoting local sustainability, including metrics for built environment; climate and energy; economy and jobs; education, arts, and community; equity and empowerment; health and safety; natural systems; and innovation and process. Guidance is primarily at the implementation step level, rather than policy.
- **GreenStep Cities.** [Minnesota GreenStep Cities](#) is a voluntary program for cities that helps them achieve goals in sustainability and quality of life. Hopkins has been a GreenStep City since November 2010 and is currently at Step 3. Recommendations cover buildings and lighting, land use, transportation, environmental management, and economic and community development.
- **Regional Indicators Initiative.** Hopkins has participated in the [Regional Indicators Initiative](#), which helps participating communities benchmark their status on a range of metrics, to measure progress against itself and peer communities. Data from this are included in the Natural Environment appendix, and were used to inform policy development.
- **Climate Resilience Workshop Series.** In early 2017, Hopkins participated with six other cities in a workshop series designed to identify opportunities to build resilience related to local climate change, including aspects related to society, environment, and infrastructure.

Sustainable Solution



© International Association for Public Participation

THE FOUR ENVIRONMENTS

The concept of sustainability is a complex one, and there are many definitions and interpretations of how it should apply to a community. Frequently, the concept is broken down into three to four subparts, which define different aspects of a sustainable environment that need to be addressed. The Hopkins plan is organized according to this structure, as defined below.

It's worth noting that a number of these categorizations are overlapping, and there are topics that could conceivably fit into more than one category. This is to be expected, given that they intermingle in reality. Indeed, it points to the value of comprehensive planning: being able to take into consideration all the interrelated elements that make up a community. For the purposes of comprehensive plan organization, most topics reside in just one location – but will be cross referenced and hyperlinked in the final document wherever possible to ensure there are multiple ways to find needed information.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is defined as all human-made elements of a space where people live, work, and play. It includes sections on land use and development, multimodal transportation, and housing and neighborhoods. This is the most traditional element of city planning – and the land use map and supporting descriptions are at the hub of the planning framework.

The natural environment relates to natural systems and resources, including land, water, air, habitat, and ecology. In addition to addressing policies around these specific systems and resources, it includes direction for practices that are specifically aimed at protecting or improving the natural environment, including guidance for parks and open space, renewable energy, and climate change resilience.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The social environment is defined as human interaction and engagement in the community. It includes sections on public services and facilities, education, public health, community connections, equity, and arts and culture. Much of the content for this element is new to the Hopkins comprehensive plan this time around, motivated by the City's focus on related issues as citywide priorities.

The economic environment covers the economy, jobs, businesses, income and poverty, and affordability. This section includes economic development and competitiveness, and guidance for Downtown Hopkins (as the city's economic hub). Issues related to affordability and poverty are covered in overlapping sections in the built environment (housing) and social environment (equity).

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT





FOCUS AREAS

Throughout the Cultivate Hopkins planning process, several topics were identified as high priorities for the city. These reflect both input from the community and results of analysis conducted as part of this process. The purpose of these focus areas is not to provide a comprehensive approach. Rather, it reflects priorities both for policy development and plan implementation, across a range of topics and approaches.

Affordability

Promote affordability of housing so that residents at all levels of income are able to afford to live in Hopkins, and current ones are able to remain here.

Downtown Hopkins

Support Downtown Hopkins as the central social district and economic hub of the city.

Accessible and Connected Communities

Develop and maintain networks that allow for people to walk, bike, and ride transit through safe and accessible connections.

Race and Equity

Proactively identify and address racial disparities in the community and promote equity for everyone.

Livable Communities

Support the maintenance of a community that provides a high quality of life, including convenient access to needs for daily life.

Climate Change

Identify and address increased risks to Hopkins due to climate change, including assessing needs of those most vulnerable.

Sustainable Buildings

Encourage incorporation of best practices for green energy and efficient building in public and private development.

Arts and Culture

Support the presence of arts and culture in the community through multiple means and media.



CULTIVATE HOPKINS VISION STATEMENT

Hopkins will cultivate the best elements of the Built, Natural, Social, and Economic Environments into complete and sustainable community that is rooted in tradition, characterized by vibrant and unique places, physically and socially connected, and resilient to changing conditions.

The concept for Cultivate Hopkins came out of a desire to continue to cultivate and grow the City of Hopkins as a distinct and meaningful place. Based around principles of sustainability, resilience, equity, and complete and connected communities, it provides a framework for preparing for the future. The plan emphasizes retaining what is valued, while proactively addressing and welcoming change.





City Goals

The 2018 [Hopkins City Council Goals and Strategic Plan](#), adopted by the City Council in 2017, provides important context for the comprehensive plan in terms of current city priorities. While these goals do not provide detailed guidance for every area covered by the plan, they focus attention on some of higher priority elements for consideration and action.

The mission for the City is “Inspire. Educate. Involve. Communicate.” The vision and goals provide a picture of the city as a place that people can call home, connect with one another, and explore on foot, bicycle, or transit. It focuses on inclusion of everyone – in community events, governmental services, and decision making processes. This spirit has been modeled in the planning process for the comprehensive plan, as well as its outcomes and policies.

MISSION Inspire. Educate. Involve. Communicate.

VISION Creating a spirit of community where...

All people feel safe and respected, and diversity is celebrated.

Business growth is supported and a vibrant downtown is maintained.

People enjoy exceptional government services, neighborhoods and outstanding schools.

	GOALS	Urban Design: Do It Right	Take It To Them
STRATEGIES	Preserve the Home Town Feel of Hopkins		
	Support a vibrant business community	Improve walking and biking infrastructure in the city	Involve diverse populations
	Promote and enhance city events	Practice environmental responsibility	Engage the rental community of Hopkins
	Provide accessible, friendly and efficient city services	Support a range of housing options	Inspire community and citizen engagement
	Embrace and strengthen partnerships	Support transit-oriented development	

What's New?

The vision and goals also contributed to the decision during the planning process to go over and above what is required in a comprehensive plan, to include some new elements not previously featured. These sections include:



New element on **sense of community**, exploring equity, race, and social connectedness, and the role of the city in addressing disparities and encouraging engagement and connections.



New content on **public health**, with a holistic understanding of the role of a city in fostering well-being for all residents.



New details related to **environmental responsibility**, including renewable energy, climate change and resilience, and sustainable building practices.



Expanded focus on **housing issues**, including dynamics around affordability and potential for displacement of low income populations.

USING THIS PLAN

This plan has been organized to put the most impactful elements in the main body of the document, with supporting data and information in companion appendices. This is done for readability and accessibility, as the amount of information is extensive.

As stated above, the plan is divided into the four environments – built, social, natural, and economic – with a series of elements covered within each. For each element the plan includes:

- **Introduction** – what is included in the element, and its importance to the city.
- **Main Ideas** – included as part of the introduction section, these are issues that have risen to the top through the planning process in terms of importance to the community; supporting information is included in the appendices.
- **Trends and Challenges** – overall existing and emerging patterns that are impacting the City’s role, creating opportunities for innovation and new directions.
- **Goals and Policies** – guidance for a range of subtopics, addressing current conditions and opportunities.

The final element is Implementation, which lays the groundwork for how the City will implement the plan. This section takes the policies outlined in earlier elements to the next level, with more specific implementation steps tied to timelines and responsible parties. Since this is a comprehensive plan, not all specifics are spelled out – and some follow-up work on specific areas will be needed. However, this does provide a place to start when tracking progress and ensuring the plan remains relevant and impactful throughout its life cycle.



