



MEMORANDUM

TO: Douglas County Comprehensive Plan Task Force

FROM: Dan Jochum

DATE: November 10, 2009

RE: Douglas County Task Force Meeting #2 Summary
SEH No. DOUGM 109637

The following document summarizes the second Task Force meeting for the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan; it is not meant to be a complete record of discussions which took place, but rather a summary of the various topics and issues raised and discussed.

Date of Event: September 24, 2009, 2:00pm – 3:30 pm

Location: Douglas County Public Works Facility

Attendees:

Dave Rush	DC Land & Resource Mgt	Al Leifort	DC Parks Dept.
Dave Robley	DC Engineer	Carl Kvale	Realtors Assoc.
Jessica Peterson	DC Public Health	Jason Murray	AA EDC
Dan Jochum	SEH	Mark Jahner	Alex Chamber
Karin Tank	City of Alexandria	Jerry Haggemiller	DC SWCD
Dean Beck	DNR Fisheries	Emily Siira	DC SWCD
Holly Kovarik	Sauk River Watershed District	Jim Hultman	Runestone Elect. Assoc.
Jim Jensen	DC Planning Com.	Dan New	DC Planning Com.
Jane Michaels	DC Public Health		

Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Presentation on Douglas County Demographics – Present and Future
- 3) Review of SWOT Exercise Results from August Meeting
- 4) Questions and Adjourn

Meeting Summary

- Jochum gave a brief overview of the agenda and went through a demographics presentation. The demographics presentation is attached to the end of these notes.
- It was noted that the HRA recently completed a housing study.

- City of Alex completed new demographics for city comp plan and would like those to be indicated in the County Plan.
- It was suggested that we get number of households in addition to population - HRA may have that data
- Suggested that we get data from School District 206 that was completed for re-districting. Includes projections for children and student numbers for next decade.
- Might be useful to have resident vs. non-resident households because currently many homes are non-resident and may increase with more retired people. More snowbirds.
- Significant discussion was had about numbers of retired folks. (65+) Is increase do to influx or aging of population in place? Some of both. Concerns that increase in 65+ will put more stress on infrastructure but not greatly increase tax base. Will not add to local available workforce. Use more resources.
- Significant discussion on sewer district. Concerns about capacity for new development. New would like this to be a main theme. Rush suggested that it may take focus away from long range planning and lead to heated debate in public forums. Robely suggested it be added to the Public Infrastructure theme. Tank agreed that there should be some discussion and projection of capacity of infrastructure to support development. Rush asked if it would be of the current capacity, because it will be difficult to project changes in technology 10 or 20 years down the road.
- EDC has a new fact book available that Jason will pass on to Dan.
- Public meetings were discussed.

Jochum proceeded to give the group an overview of the SWOT results from the August Task Force Meeting. Themes were developed based on these results. The themes are as follows:

Natural Resource Preservation/Conservation – Respondents indicated strengths related to natural resources and lakes. Things that should be preserved/conserved should be prioritized.

Strong Economic Base – Respondents indicated Douglas County has a strong agricultural and industrial base, as well as a diverse economy overall.

Recreational Amenities – Respondents indicated Douglas County has a wide array of recreational amenities including lakes, trails, parks, and resorts.

Demographics – It was noted that the demographics of Douglas County are changing. The population is becoming older and this trend is occurring nationwide.

Agriculture Preservation – Area suited for long term agriculture should be preserved and the Comprehensive Plan should lay out goals, policies, and objectives for this to happen.

Strong Public Infrastructure – Douglas County is well served by Interstate 94, as well as the other State Highways in the area. The Plan will strive to promote multi-modal transportation as it relates to Active Living. Sanitation and sewer is also strong, as well as the solid waste incinerator.

Intergovernmental Cooperation – There is an opportunity for the Comprehensive Plan to help improve cooperation between different governmental entities.

Land Use – The Plan needs to address conflicting land uses between commercial and residential uses, as well as agricultural and lake shore uses. The plan also needs to address issues including the location and appropriate amount of rural residential land uses and the preservation of agricultural land.

These themes will be used as the basis for the issues and opportunities public meetings held with the public on October 21 and 22.

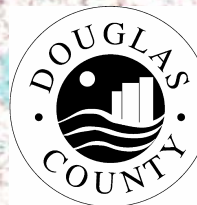
Next Steps

A task force meeting will not be held in October. There will be public meetings on October 21 in Alexandria, October 22 in Brandon, and October 22 in Osakis.



Douglas County Comprehensive Plan Task Force Meeting #2

Douglas County, Minn.
September 24, 2009



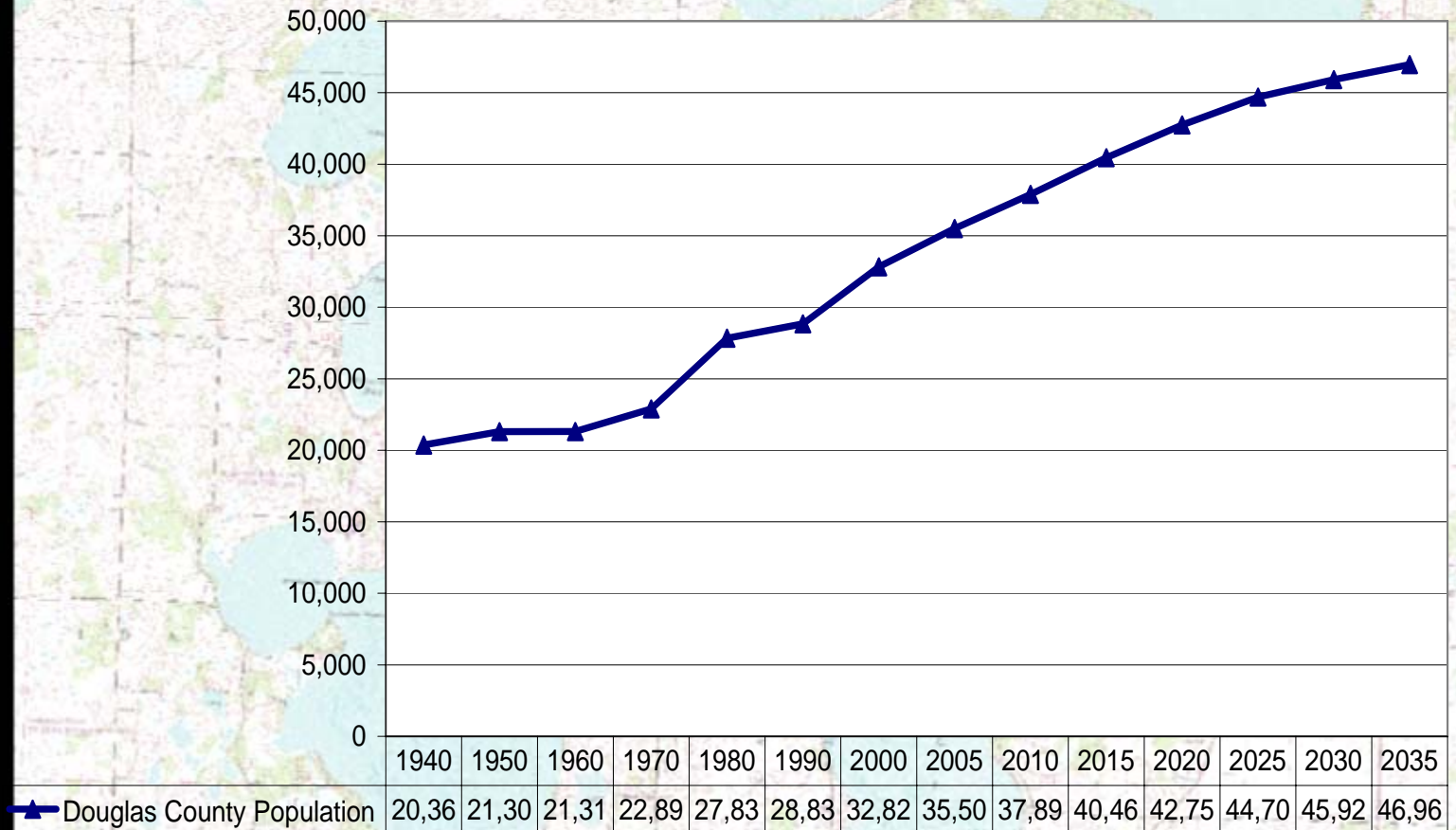
AGENDA

- **Introductions**
- **Demographics
Overview**
- **SWOT Themes**
- **Questions**
- **Adjourn**



Demographics Overview

Douglas County Population



Demographics – County Wide

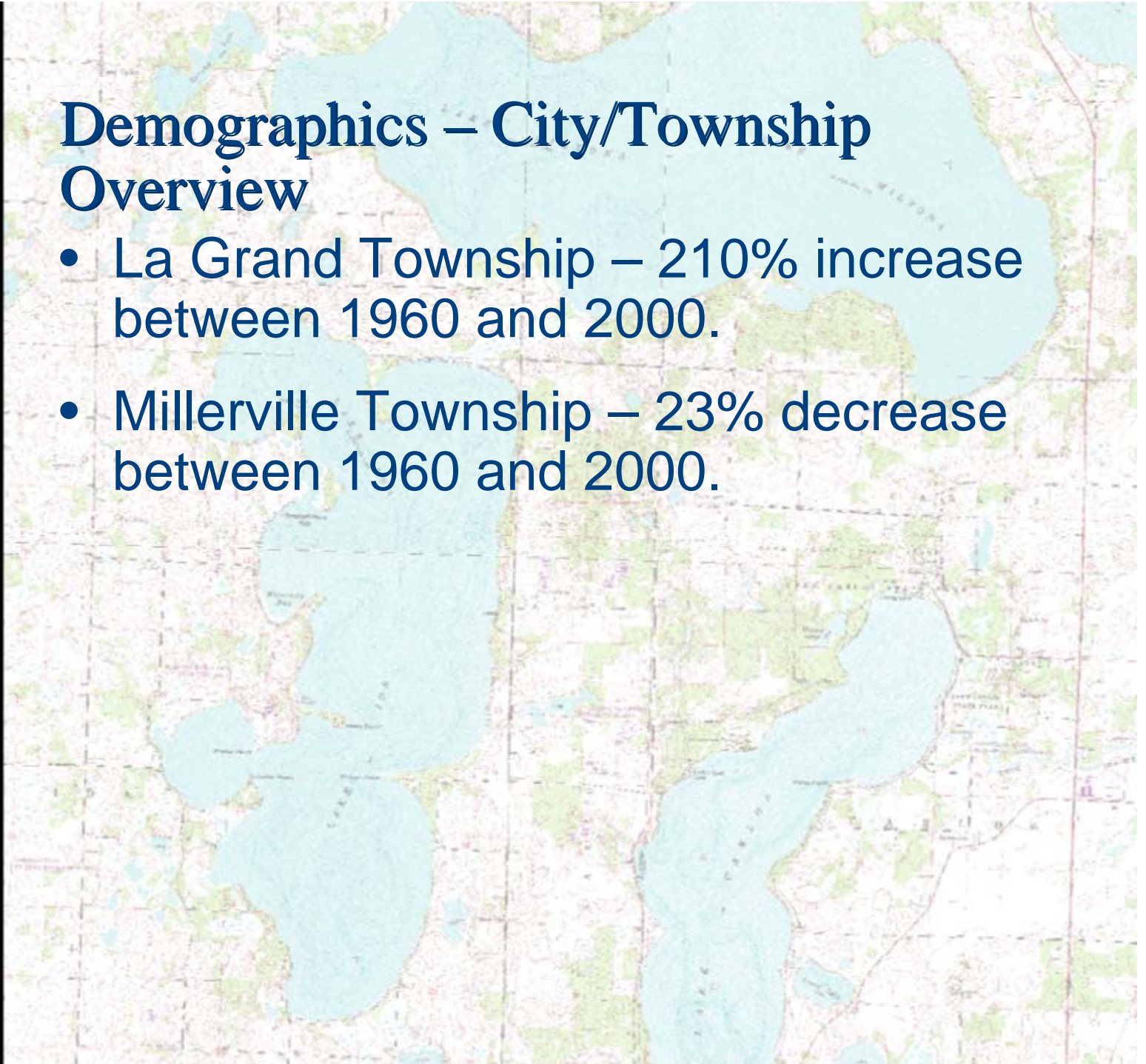
- Modest Growth between 1940 – 1970 (2,500 persons)
- Substantial Growth between 1970 – 1980 (6,000 persons)
- Recent Substantial Growth between 2000 and 2005 (2,680 persons)
- 2009 Population Estimate 36,151 – increase of (650 persons)
- Significant Growth projected between 2010 and 2035.

Demographics – City/Township Overview

- City of Alexandria – 31% growth between 1960 and 2000
- Alexandria Township – 200% growth between 1960 and 2000
- Belle River Township - -34% decrease 1960 to 2000
- Carlos Township – 200% growth between 1960 and 2000.
- Ida Township – 130% growth between 1960 and 2000.

Demographics – City/Township Overview

- La Grand Township – 210% increase between 1960 and 2000.
- Millerville Township – 23% decrease between 1960 and 2000.



Demographic Trends

- Very Rapid Growth in Townships with amenities (lakes/natural resources)
- Rapid Growth around the City of Alexandria
- Population decline in much of area that has been traditionally agricultural in nature due to changes in farming practices (larger farms).
- Steady growth in rest of County

Population Projections (2000-2035)

Highlights

- City of Alexandria – 33% increase
- Alexandria Township – 42% increase
- Carlos Township – 54% increase
- Evansville Township – 10% decrease
- Ida Township – 51% increase
- La Grand Township – 46% increase
- Lake Mary Township – 38% increase
- City of Miltona – 53% increase

Population Projections (2000-2035)

- Highlights (cont.)
- Moe Township – 53% increase
- City of Nelson – 14% decrease
- Orange Township – 13% decrease
- Overall Douglas County is expected to grow to almost 47,000 people which is a 43% increase from 2000.

Age of Population

- 10-14 year olds and 15-19 year olds actually decrease from 2000 to 2035.
- 25-29 year olds and 30-34 year olds increase substantially (approximately 45%)
- Significant increase in population from age 50 to 64.
- Tremendous increase in population age 65+
 - 65-69 – 106% increase, 70-74 – 136% increase, 75-79 – 156% increase, 80-84 – 138% increase, 85+ - 106% increase.

Aging Population Ramifications

- Older people have different community needs than younger people
 - Healthcare
 - Transportation
 - Housing
- How do we Plan for this?
 - Active Living
 - Multi-modal transportation
 - Mix of housing types
 - Other??

Median Household Income

- Douglas County \$43,002
- Second Highest in area behind Stearns County (51K)
- State of MN \$55K
- Douglas County had the lowest percentage increase in income from 2000 to 2007 at only 14%.

Education

- Almost 86% of Douglas County residents have at least a high diploma.
- This is the 2nd highest percentage in the region behind Stearns County.
- State of MN average is 88%.
- National Average is 80%

Major Employers

- Alexandria Public Schools (640)
- Douglas County Hospital (620)
- Douglas Machine Inc. (530)
- Tastefully Simple (365)
- Douglas County (360)
- Alexandria Extrusion (315)
- Knute Nelson (300)

Major Industries

- Education, health and social services
- Retail Trade
- Manufacturing
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, etc
- Construction
- Professional Services
- Transportation
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate

S.W.O.T. Results

- Strengths
 - Natural resources/lakes (10)
 - Strong agricultural base (3)
 - Strong industrial base (3)
 - Interstate (3)
 - Recreational opportunities (3)
 - Diverse economy/workforce (2)
 - Healthcare (2)
 - Good school system (2)
 - Water quality/quality fisheries (1)
 - Sewer Districts (1)
 - Technical college (1)
 - High draw factor (1)
 - Distance to Twin Cities (1)
 - No floodplain issues
 - Transportation infrastructure
 - County hospital
 - Historic resources

S.W.O.T. Results

- Weaknesses
 - Socio-economic weakness – financial issues (4)
 - Lack of protection of natural environment and lakes (3)
 - Weak agricultural and natural resource preservation (2)
 - Contentious sewer issues – cost (2)
 - Cost of services to rural residential areas (2)
 - Lack of understanding between urban and rural populations (2)
 - Conflicting idea of what rural is (1)
 - Lack of preservation of small towns (1)
 - Lack of rapid transit (1)
 - Lack of major carriers at airport (1)
 - Large area defined as rural residential
 - Distance to the Twin Cities
 - Economic disparity
 - Zebra mussels
 - Lack of public beaches
 - Expensive lakeshore property
 - Limited amount of quality lakeshore left

S.W.O.T. Results

- Opportunities
 - Location – distance from major centers (3)
 - Still have rural areas that are rural (1)
 - Still have natural resources (1)
 - Create Boulevard along Hwy 29 by Lake Le Homme Dieu
 - Live in rural area and enjoy Alexandria's amenities
 - Continue with low taxes
 - People want to come to Alexandria
 - Opportunities for better inter-governmental cooperation
 - Adopt building code
 - Growth in retired population
 - Opportunity for more land dedication

S.W.O.T. Results

- Threats
 - NIMBY and NOML (8)
 - Government conflicts (6)
 - Trickle down affect of state budget problems (3)
 - Water quality (1)
 - Growth (1)
 - Zebra mussels (1)
 - Other invasive species
 - Aging
 - Unplanned growth
 - Workforce issues with amount of retirees

Major S.W.O.T. Themes

- **Natural Resource Preservation**
- **Strong Economic Base**
- **Recreational Amenities**
- **Demographics**
- **Agriculture Preservation**
- **Strong Transportation Infrastructure**
- **Intergovernmental Cooperation**
- **Land Use**

Building the Plan

- These S.W.O.T. Themes will be the basis for the Plan along with the other public input gathered (upcoming public meetings)
- Goals, policies, maps, and implementation steps will be developed to address the major themes
- Role of the Task Force is provide input related to the development of goals, policies, maps, and implementation steps.

Next Steps

- Public S.W.O.T. Meetings – tentatively Oct. 21-23 (only two days – either Oct. 21 and 22 or 22 and 23).
- Plan is to have 3 meetings
 - Alexandria – evening meeting
 - Brandon – morning meeting
 - Osakis – afternoon/evening (4:00 – 7:00)
- Format
 - Brief Introduction on Planning Process
 - Map Exercise
 - SWOT Exercise
 - Report Back to Group

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Questions

