

# City of Bloomington, Minnesota

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2000

This Plan includes all amendments through March 24, 2004

Bloomington's City Council adopted and placed the Comprehensive Plan 2000 into effect on **April 16, 2001** through Resolution 2001-30. The Metropolitan Council adopted its review record of the plan on April 11, 2001 (Item #2000-568).

**Comprehensive plans are frequently updated and revised. The City maintains a current version of the Comprehensive Plan on its web site, [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us). A hard copy of the current version can be obtained at:**

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(June 2000)

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# Section 1: Introduction



## Mission Statement

**The City of Bloomington's organizational mission is to be a positive, professional, productive, learning organization that builds community and its renewal by providing quality services at affordable prices.**

**The City strives to preserve and enhance neighborhood vitality while promoting a diverse and balanced local economy.**

## Community Overview

Bloomington, Minnesota, is a diverse community of 38 square miles located along the Minnesota River in the southwestern portion of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The city is fully developed but will continue to grow through redevelopment. At the turn of the century, the city encompasses 85,000 residents and well over 100,000 jobs. There are nearly two jobs for each Bloomington resident in the work force. Land use is well balanced between residential, natural, commercial, and industrial uses. Almost a third of the city has been preserved for conservation and recreation uses.

Looking forward, the city is well positioned to continue to thrive in the future. Bloomington's central location in a robust metropolitan area and its proximity to major transportation resources such as I-494 and the international airport are immense assets. Still, there are many challenges that will need to be addressed. These include:

- Increasing congestion on the area's transportation corridors;
- The construction of a new north-south airport runway which will create new noise impacts and development limitations;
- An older housing stock, with two thirds of all homes over 30 years old, a critical age at which major renovations are needed to maintain functional viability;



- A rapidly growing senior population with needs for new housing types that, due to a lack of vacant land, require the often controversial redevelopment of existing land uses; and,
- A fast changing economy that could influence land use patterns in a significant, although unpredictable, manner.

### Development History

Native Americans traveled, settled, and traded along the Minnesota River in Bloomington for centuries. The river also brought occasional European explorers and traders. In the 1820s, Fort Snelling became the first European settlement at the nearby confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. With the fort nearby, some of the earliest settlers in Bloomington were missionaries who came to convert the resident Native Americans. In the 1850s, Bloomington began to be settled by Europeans and converted to agricultural uses. The city remained primarily agricultural for a century, raising produce for the growing nearby cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

In the 1950s, Bloomington became the classic American suburban “boom town”, with the population soaring from 9,900 in 1950 to 50,500 in 1960. The city’s central location in the metropolitan area, proximity to freeways, and proximity to a major international hub airport resulted in a strong and diverse economy with a mix of commerce and industry uncharacteristic of suburban communities. Today, Bloomington is an important economic engine for the entire state and a major tourist destination for the Upper Midwest.

### Role of the Comprehensive Plan

First and foremost, the Comprehensive Plan is a statement of the City of Bloomington’s goals and objectives. The plan expresses where the city is today and where it desires to be in the future, with recommendations on how to progress there. As such, the plan is a guide to decision making, a foundation for more detailed planning efforts. The plan is implemented through the City Code, Capital Improvements Program, annual budget, smaller scale plans, day-to-day operations, and through the efforts and resources of private citizens, businesses, and organizations.

In Minnesota the comprehensive plan is also a legal document that satisfies numerous statutory requirements. The plan must be approved by the Metropolitan Council and must be consistent with adopted regional plans. The plan also serves as a good general introduction to municipal issues for a new resident, staff member, commissioner, or councilmember.

The Comprehensive Plan is not a fixed document, but rather part of an ongoing planning and implementation process. Because conditions and circumstances are constantly changing, planning efforts must continuously be re-evaluated and adjusted.

#### Update Process

This Comprehensive Plan was rewritten over a four-year period from 1996-2000. Resident input was centered around the City of Bloomington’s existing advisory commissions, including the Planning Commission, Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission, and the Parks, Arts,

and Recreation Commission. Over 60 public meetings were held, most of which were advertised and televised. Public awareness of the plan update was fostered through news updates on community television, stories in the local press, and a series of articles in the City newsletter. Updated drafts of the document have been available on the City’s website and at both Bloomington libraries. Over 2,000 property owners were notified by direct mail of public hearings and community meetings to discuss proposed changes to the Land Use Element and Guide Plan.