

**Summaries of  
Regional Meetings**

**and**

**Staff Input  
Meeting**

## Summary of Issues Raised in All Regional Meetings

Concerns regarding the agricultural community included:

- the need to preserve agricultural land;
- the need to keep agriculture competitive, permitting it to change in response to market pressures while controlling potential pollution sources;
- there was a concern expressed regarding agriculture and the shift towards it being more intensive.
- Conflicts between farming practices and nonfarm uses need to be addressed in some way.
- property tax breaks should be provided to farming operations that employ vegetative cover strips along waterways and ditches or on land that is highly erodible;
- land use by farming operations along County Ditches should be looked at. There is a need to address the impact of pollutants from farm land runoff into the ditch system;
- sustainable agricultural operations should be encouraged;
- road ditches and drainage ditches need to have similarly sized vegetative buffer strips required;
- County needs to preserve agricultural lands;
- tax breaks should be given to property owners who provide drainageway buffer strips; and
- the need to protect non-farm residents from negative farming impacts;
- preserve farm land for future food production;
- preserve farm plow ground, fewer animal units permitted;
- concern with homes encroaching onto farm operations;
- overall prime agricultural ground is vital to the County;
- concerned with changing codes and rules governing agricultural uses. The uncertainty of code interpretation is costly and frustrating;
- The preservation of agricultural land is needed.

Concerns with feedlots, standards associated with them, and their regulation include:

- feedlots and the impacts on water resources from this land use type, both in terms of impacts from feedlot pits and from spreading site runoff. Setbacks were also a concern. A suggestion was made that the setbacks for new feedlots from other uses should be increased to one (1) mile. A representative from Beauford Township indicated that the residents of the township are concerned with hog operations.
- increase setbacks as they apply to manure spreading;
- the number of feedlots allowed in the County and their location needs to be addressed;
- who is responsible for cleanup of failed feedlots? County should ensure that it has an adequate method of covering potential costs for this activity;
- does the County currently have a method of tracking manure application by user and parcel; and
- feedlot manure disposal is a concern.
- Feedlots should be considered a business or industrial use and not an agricultural use.

Concerns raised about land use controls are listed below:

- the County should permit additional rural subdivisions with fewer restrictions;
- the County should allow smaller lots that could still accommodate septic and/or well systems;
- the County should undertake policies that limits the spread of commercial uses and encourages the reuse of existing structures;
- the County should look at the feasibility of rezoning land in Lime Township. The area east of the railroad line and the area west of Lime Valley Road should not be permitted to develop as industrial or commercial;
- in its enforcement of regulations, the County should conduct a thorough examination of each development request, considering individual merits versus simple enforcement of broad policies; and
- the County should look at the possibility of establishing a location for the expansion of small businesses.
- limits on rural development hurt the rural school districts. The same opportunity for development must be given to people in the rural areas as those in and around the more urban portions of the County.
- County is forcing growth towards the Mankato area through its existing land use controls. The opportunity for development should be treated equally throughout the County;
- the County should limit lakeshore development;
- rural housing developments should be clustered and then served by shared wastewater treatment systems and community wells. This development type would use less land area while still permitting rural development;
- floodplain development should be severely restricted;
- the need for zoning to permit accessory homes;
- cluster rural developments to minimize environmental impacts;
- concern with urban sprawl;
- concern with rural development in environmentally safe areas;
- permit rural residents the opportunity to live in rural areas;
- accessory dwelling units should be permitted on an existing lot, for a parent or child to use;
- what is the impact of this planning effort on cities? Will there be any change in land use controls;
- the need for a cluster development type of concept to be incorporated into the development policies of the County, as an effort associated with preserving agricultural land;
- the permitting of "low impact" businesses in the rural area should be considered ;
- the need to protect the rural landscape from urban types of development;
- there is a concern with the placement of underground utility lines. Utility companies should be required to put them in the road easement areas and not be allowed to stray onto private property;
- the opportunity to subdivide land for rural residential use is a need;
- line of sight tower development needs to be dealt with, microwave and other types of satellite or communication needs;

- there is a need to address illegal salvage yard uses in the rural areas;
- the use of lakeshore property, if used for some purpose, would probably be best for park land types of uses.
- the planning process should incorporate property right needs, don't take rights away;
- County planning process must take a City's growth needs into account;
- The County should restrict development along the southern bypass.
- The County should carefully consider the impacts of development adjoining the City of Mankato, especially stormwater runoff and the impacts of erosion along natural drainageways such as ravines.
- The County should permit more opportunities for small businesses to locate in the rural areas.

Concerns regarding water resource impacts included:

- the need to identify who or what agency is responsible for water planning issues that occur in a City;
- well sealing is a concern, especially in terms of the need to protect aquifers;
- there was a concern with the stormwater drainage impacts from development;
- a need to protect wetlands;
- a concern with impacts on water resources from urban fertilizing runoff;
- a concern with water quality;
- there needs to be a plan and standards associated with the creation of detention basins that are associated with development and how many ponds can be created or permitted within a set area.
- water resources are among our most important resources and need to be protected.
- aquifer recharge areas need to be identified and protected from pollutants. Does anyone know where the major recharge areas are?
- stormwater runoff and the quality of the runoff from urbanized areas needs to be addressed;
- bluff erosion is a concern;
- sloughing of river banks is a common occurrence. Riparian preservation should become a priority;
- contamination of shallow water wells by failing septic systems is a concern;
- aquifer contamination is a concern;
- consumption of water is too excessive. Conservation of our water resources should become a priority;
- the sealing of existing wells on abandoned housing sites should become a priority;
- the protection and improvement of Lake Crystal's water quality is a concern;
- Lake water quality and clean up needs to be addressed. Potential pollutant sources should be identified and efforts taken to reduce the impacts from such sources needs to be done;
- the need to protect and clean up water bodies is important, especially when they are used as a source for drinking water;
- there is a concern with stormwater runoff, that manmade environments have decreased the time in which water is channeled into surface water bodies. Perhaps there is a need to

link the creation of stormwater detention sites and wetland restoration sites with development.

- what are the impacts of urban lawn fertilizing on water quality;
- the County should support Phase 2 of the Cleanwater Partnership activities for Loon Lake and Lake Crystal;
- storm water management and control is a concern, especially along road construction sites;
- sealing of abandoned wells is needed;
- impacts on water quality from feedlot manure spreading practices;
- wetlands and drainage issues, restrictions are too great for farm uses;
- good management of drainage, both urban and rural;
- urban pollution of water resources;
- riverbank erosion is a concern;
- Ground water quality needs to be addressed. Potential pollutant sources need to be identified and efforts need to be taken to reduce or eliminate the impacts to surface water bodies from such sources.
- ground water quality is a concern;
- we all need clean drinking water;
- drainage ditch cleanup and improvements were a concern;
- The water level of Madison Lake is too high, primarily because water flows coming into the lake occur at faster rates than the outlet structure that permits water to flow out of the lake. The outlet structure is too small and is easily blocked or plugged by vegetation.
- The Minnesota DNR must be made to be more responsive to the water level problems being experienced in Madison Lake.
- shore erosion that occurs from the high water levels;
- shoreland rules that apply to septic systems and wells are too restrictive;
- there needs to be more control over the flow of water into the lakes from the watershed;
- there is a need to prohibit further development in the floodplain, especially urban type uses due to the potential pollution problems;
- development of lake shore property should be addressed, both in the types and densities permitted;
- there is a concern with fish kills on the lake and what is causing those kills;
- the change in drainage flows to the lake from urban development is causing shoreline erosion;
- there is a need for total watershed planning and the drafting of an overall master plan to manage the water resources, both urban and rural, is needed;
- the water flow to the lake region from the TH #14 and #60 area is a concern;
- water quality impacts from lawn fertilizer in the urban settings and from feedlots in the rural settings is a concern;
- if the lake level were lowered, and the exposed land were reclaimed, who decides who can reclaim how much?
- contamination of the lake due to manure runoff from adjacent agricultural lands;
- Madison Lake spillway cleaning;
- increased flows from the lake is a concern with only one outlet point. Additional drainage is needed;

- weed growth in the lake is a concern;
- who can people go to for the resolution of problems associated with the lake, the County and/or the Mn. DNR?

Issues associated with transportation include:

- there is a need to coordinate the use of land with the planning that is occurring in the transportation area;
- the County should look at methods to eliminate hazardous spots along rural roads, especially along blind curves and valley crossings;
- there is a concern that the southern bypass will encourage urban sprawl, especially along Indian Lake Road;
- the transportation plan (MATAPS) has provided some direction for future land use planning. The County should look at what has been done with this transportation planning and craft land use planning around this work; and
- there was a concern with the land speculation that occurs around public improvement projects.
- the need to improve roads with the gasoline tax increase;
- concern with road improvements and this type of development's impact upon wetlands;

Issues associated with septics and their regulation include:

- septic systems and what the County currently requires for upgrades;
- septic systems are a concern;
- unsewered municipalities are a concern;
- urban sludge on fields should be treated the same as manure from feedlot operations;
- septic systems, which type of system is best for reducing impacts on water quality;
- Septic systems in incorporated cities, who will inspect these systems when needed?
- What type of changes are being considered by the County as regards to septic systems?
- septic system impacts on water quality is a concern;
- regarding septic systems in Cities, who inspects these systems since smaller cities do not have staffing or expertise to deal with them;
- what is the status and type of septic system rule changes being considered by the County;
- there was concern with constructing a complying septic system and then in a short while being required to invest additional dollars into upgrading due to changing rules;
- there is a need to think bigger than individual septic systems for rural areas;

Issues raised regarding suggested County projects or activities it should undertake or become involved with include:

- the need to implement a road naming and numbering system in the County;
- the County Board and Planning Commission needs to establish better communication links with the County's Township Association;
- while current recycling efforts are good, more encouragement needs to be given regarding the need to increase this conservation technique.

- public education of urban residents in the use of fertilizers and chemicals;
- Educate the public about the responsibility for drainage runoff from their property. A drainage problem doesn't end at a persons property line;
- apathy of public to participate and understand planning efforts;
- will public input into this process be recognized by local officials;
- will the input from these regional meetings be recognized and considered by the County Board and Planning Commission;
- There is a concern with the application of rules to residents. Uneven or biased enforcement of rules needs to be ended and replaced with the uniform application of rules to all.
- will the input from these regional meetings be listened to and considered by elected officials;
- concern with "political" exceptions to the enforcement of rules regarding nonconforming septic systems. Uniform enforcement of rules must be applied;
- concern with rules changes, how often and who is affected by these changes;
- in regards to the extraterritorial planning effort, the County needs to publicize what it intends to support and do;
- the County needs to establish development areas and publicize this planning effort;
- there appears to be a lack of good vision in the area. What does the County want to be; and
- the County needs to be proactive and craft a proactive plan that provides some type of vision for the Planning Commission and County Board.

Cooperative Issues raised include:

- Annexation agreements between Cities and their surrounding Townships should include standards that encourage infill.
- a need for accessing county or other knowledgeable sources regarding urban infrastructure needs;
- cities need to share information to address urban concerns;
- cost sharing for emergency service charges to townships. Base cost for services on the road classification on which accidents occurred. For example, if an accident on a state road generates an emergency call, the state should pay. An accident on a county road, the county should pay, etc.;
- sheriff's staff is trained for medical emergencies. Is there a need to improve the dispatch center service.
- concern with the pressures being put upon rural fire departments to make more emergency medical evaluations;
- there is a need for cooperative agreements when improvements are needed for developed rural areas. Assistance must come from the County, MPCA, EPA, and others. A cooperative agreement must be reached between the County and the Township when the need is determined for extending sewer services to rural areas. The extension should occur over a period of time based on need;
- how is sewer extension to be paid for, rates or taxes;

- what is the best direction for the city's (Madison Lake) growth? How does City coordinate with the County;
- there is a need to control or limit Mankato's annexation powers;
- there needs to be cooperation between regulating agencies and the County, City and Townships;
- there is a need to identify specifically who is responsible for resolving issues that occur in the region. Currently, entities are passing on responsibility for problems encountered to other entities, making it impossible for concerned citizens to have their questions answered and concerns heard;
- the County should take a more aggressive stance in dealing with impacts of development occurring in the City but which may have extended impacts outside the City; and
- there needs to be more intergovernmental cooperation to protect land.

Issues regarding recreation or wildlife projects include:

- the County should use available tools to help facilitate open space acquisition, specifically the expansion of Minneopa State Park;
- maintain and expand wildlife areas;
- Bass habitat needs to be preserved and protected;
- need for more C-1 ground for wildlife habitat, open space, and set aside area;
- the County should set aside areas in its land use plan for the creation or expansion of additional park space, just as the planning effort in the 1960s did;
- concern with expansion of Bray Park campsites and how many sites are permitted to be developed;
- park development and use should be made compatible with neighbors;

Other issues:

- the viability of small rural towns with aging populations;
- increased demands for urban types of services in rural areas;
- concerned with political pressure by municipalities for liberalizing annexation laws that would hurt townships.

## **Mapleton Meeting - April 17, 1997**

The first of the six (6) regional meetings scheduled to gather information from residents of Blue Earth County regarding land use, water planning efforts, and transportation issues was sparsely attended in Mapleton. Issues that were raised by those attending included:

- septic systems and what the County currently requires for upgrades;
- feedlots and the impacts on water resources from this land use type, both in terms of impacts from feedlot pits and from spreading site runoff. Setbacks were also a concern. A suggestion was made that the setbacks for new feedlots from other uses should be increased to one (1) mile. A representative from Beauford Township indicated that the residents of the township are concerned with hog operations.
- water resources are among our most important resources and need to be protected.
- aquifer recharge areas need to be identified and protected from pollutants. Does anyone know where the major recharge areas are?
- Conflicts between farming practices and nonfarm uses need to be addressed in some way.
- limits on rural development hurt the rural school districts. The same opportunity for development must be given to people in the rural areas as those in and around the more urban portions of the County.

## Lake Crystal Meeting - April 21, 1997

The second of six (6) regional issues identification meetings was attended by about 20 people. The process involved asking each person attending what concerns they had regarding the use of land. Each concern or issue was written down on a card and taped to the wall. Following this issue identification, all participants were asked to rank three of the issues as the most critical for the County to address. This process allowed for the generation of issues that concern the meeting attendees and also provided a ranking of most important issues. The top four issues from this meeting's attendees are as follows:

- Lake water quality and clean up needs to be addressed. Potential pollutant sources need to be identified and efforts need to be taken to reduce or eliminate the impacts to surface water bodies from such sources (9 votes).
- The County is forcing growth towards the Mankato area through its existing land use controls. The opportunity for development should be treated equally throughout the County (5 votes).
- Land use by farming operations along County Ditches should be examined. There is a need to address the impact of pollutants from farm land runoff into the ditch system (4 votes).
- The County should support Phase 2 of the Cleanwater Partnership activities as they relate to Loon Lake and Lake Crystal (4 votes).

All issues raised during this meeting by those attending are listed below:

- the need to implement a road naming and numbering system in the County;
- the County Board and Planning Commission needs to establish better communication links with the County's Township Association;
- the County should use available tools to help facilitate open space acquisition, specifically the expansion of Minneopa State Park;
- property tax breaks should be provided to farming operations that employ vegetative cover strips along waterways and ditches or on land that is highly erodible;
- land use by farming operations along County Ditches should be looked at. There is a need to address the impact of pollutants from farm land runoff into the ditch system;
- County is forcing growth towards the Mankato area through its existing land use controls. The opportunity for development should be treated equally throughout the County;
- It would help planning efforts if CRP enrollment figures were known;
- the County should limit lakeshore development;
- increase setbacks as they apply to manure spreading;
- rural housing developments should be clustered and then served by shared wastewater treatment systems and community wells. This development type would use less land area while still permitting rural development;
- the number of feedlots allowed in the County and their location needs to be addressed;
- stormwater runoff and the quality of the runoff from urbanized areas needs to be addressed;
- floodplain development should be severely restricted;
- sustainable agricultural operations should be encouraged;

- road ditches and drainage ditches need to have similarly sized vegetative buffer strips required;
- County needs to preserve agricultural lands;
- maintain and expand wildlife areas;
- Bass habitat needs to be preserved and protected;
- bluff erosion is a concern;
- sloughing of river banks is a common occurrence. Riparian preservation should become a priority;
- contamination of shallow water wells by failing septic systems is a concern;
- aquifer contamination is a concern;
- consumption of water is too excessive. Conservation of our water resources should become a priority;
- the sealing of existing wells on abandoned housing sites should become a priority;
- the protection and improvement of Lake Crystal's water quality is a concern;
- Lake water quality and clean up needs to be addressed. Potential pollutant sources should be identified and efforts taken to reduce the impacts from such sources needs to be done;
- the need to protect and clean up water bodies is important, especially when they are used as a source for drinking water;
- there is a concern with stormwater runoff, that manmade environments have decreased the time in which water is channeled into surface water bodies. Perhaps there is a need to link the creation of stormwater detention sites and wetland restoration sites with development.
- what are the impacts of urban lawn fertilizing on water quality;
- the County should support Phase 2 of the Cleanwater Partnership activities for Loon Lake and Lake Crystal;
- Septic systems are a concern;
- unsewered municipalities are a concern;
- tax breaks should be given to property owners who provide drainageway buffer strips; and
- while current recycling efforts are good, more encouragement needs to be given regarding the need to increase this conservation technique.

## St. Clair Meeting - April 23, 1997

The third of six (6) regional issues identification meetings was attended by about 20 people. The process involved asking each person attending what concerns they had regarding the use of land. Each concern or issue was written down on a card and taped to the wall. Following this issue identification, all participants were asked to rank three of the issues as the most critical for the County to address. This process allowed for the generation of issues that concern the meeting attendees and also provided a ranking of most important issues. The top three issues from this meeting's attendees are as follows:

- The inequity of passing emergency service (medical) costs on to townships needs to be addressed. The escalation of these costs are putting a financial burden on the townships. Some type of cost share needs to be done, perhaps a breakout of costs linked to the origination of the calls by road classification (5 votes).
- Rural development should be clustered and developed in such a way that its impacts be minimal on the environment (3 votes).
- The impacts on water quality from manure runoff is a concern (3 votes).

All issues raised during this meeting by those attending are listed below:

- the viability of small rural towns with aging populations;
- the need for zoning to permit accessory homes;
- the need to protect non-farm residents from negative farming impacts;
- cluster rural developments to minimize environmental impacts;
- concern with urban sprawl;
- preserve farm land for future food production;
- preserve farm plow ground, fewer animal units permitted;
- concern with homes encroaching onto farm operations;
- need for more C-1 ground for wildlife habitat, open space, and set aside area;
- concern with rural development in environmentally safe areas;
- overall prime agricultural ground is vital to the County;
- public education of urban residents in the use of fertilizers and chemicals;
- regulations need to be based upon science and facts, not emotions;
- storm water management and control is a concern, especially along road construction sites;
- urban sludge on fields should be treated the same as manure from feedlot operations;
- sealing of abandoned wells is needed;
- impacts on water quality from feedlot manure spreading practices;
- septic systems, which type of system is best for reducing impacts on water quality;
- wetlands and drainage issues, restrictions are too great for farm uses;
- good management of drainage, both urban and rural;
- urban pollution of water resources;
- riverbank erosion is a concern;
- increased demands for urban types of services in rural areas;
- apathy of public to participate and understand planning efforts;
- will public input into this process be recognized by local officials;

- concerned with changing codes and rules governing agricultural uses. The uncertainty of code interpretation is costly and frustrating;
- concerned with political pressure by municipalities for liberalizing annexation laws that would hurt townships;
- a need for accessing county or other knowledgeable sources regarding urban infrastructure needs;
- cities need to share information to address urban concerns;
- cost sharing for emergency service charges to townships. Base cost for services on the road classification on which accidents occurred. For example, if an accident on a state road generates an emergency call, the state should pay. An accident on a county road, the county should pay, etc.;
- concern with the pressures being put upon rural fire departments to make more emergency medical evaluations;
- respect "experts" opinions to effectively solve problems. Don't hamper their work with emotional outbursts;
- county road addressing and numbering system is needed; and
- sheriff's staff is trained for medical emergencies. Is there a need to improve the dispatch center service.

## Amboy Meeting - April 24, 1997

The fourth of six (6) regional issues identification meetings was attended by eight (8) people. The process involved asking each person attending what concerns they had regarding the use of land. Each concern or issue was written down on a card and taped to the wall. Following this issue identification, all participants were asked to rank three of the issues as the most critical for the County to address. This process allowed for the generation of issues that concern the meeting attendees and also provided a ranking of most important issues. The top three issues from this meeting's attendees are as follows:

- Ground water quality needs to be addressed. Potential pollutant sources need to be identified and efforts need to be taken to reduce or eliminate the impacts to surface water bodies from such sources (3 votes).
- Septic systems in incorporated cities, who will inspect these systems when needed? (3 votes).
- What type of changes are being considered by the County as regards to septic systems? (3 votes).

All issues raised during this meeting by those attending are listed below:

- the need to improve roads with the gasoline tax increase;
- will the input from these regional meetings be recognized and considered by the County Board and Planning Commission;
- Educate the public about the responsibility for drainage runoff from their property. A drainage problem doesn't end at a persons property line;
- permit rural residents the opportunity to live in rural areas;
- accessory dwelling units should be permitted on an existing lot, for a parent or child to use;
- what is the impact of this planning effort on cities? Will there be any change in land use controls;
- septic system impacts on water quality is a concern;
- what is the status of the Beauford watershed septic system study;
- regarding septic systems in Cities, who inspects these systems since smaller cities do not have staffing or expertise to deal with them;
- what is the status and type of septic system rule changes being considered by the County;
- ground water quality is a concern;
- we all need clean drinking water;
- drainage ditch cleanup and improvements were a concern;
- who is responsible for cleanup of failed feedlots? County should ensure that it has an adequate method of covering potential costs for this activity;
- does the County currently have a method of tracking manure application by user and parcel;  
and
- feedlot manure disposal is a concern.

## Madison Lake Meeting - May 14, 1997

The fifth of six (6) regional issues identification meetings was attended by more than 40 people, the best participation rate to this point. The meeting opened with a brief explanation of the process being undertaken by the County and an overview of the demographic highlights. Then each person was given the opportunity of stating their concerns and issues they had regarding the use of land. Each concern or issue was written down on a card and taped to the wall. Following this issue identification, all participants were asked to rank three of the issues as the most critical for the County to address. This process allowed for the generation of issues that concern the meeting attendees and also provided a ranking of most important issues. The top four issues from this meeting's attendees are as follows:

- The water level of Madison Lake is too high, primarily because water flows coming into the lake occur at faster rates than the outlet structure that permits water to flow out of the lake. The outlet structure is too small and is easily blocked or plugged by vegetation. (6 votes).
- The preservation of agricultural land is needed. (6 votes).
- The Minnesota DNR must be made to be more responsive to the water level problems being experienced in Madison Lake. (5 votes).
- There is a concern with the application of rules to residents. Uneven or biased enforcement of rules needs to be ended and replaced with the uniform application of rules to all. (5 votes)

All issues raised during this meeting by those attending are listed below:

In addition to the two issues listed above, other specific concerns raised about lakes and impacts from inlet or outlet structures, development permitted or not permitted, or impacts on water quality from adjacent land uses are listed below:

- shore erosion that occurs from the high water levels (2);
- shoreland rules that apply to septic systems and wells are too restrictive (2);
- there needs to be more control over the flow of water into the lakes from the watershed (2);
- there is a need to prohibit further development in the floodplain, especially urban type uses due to the potential pollution problems (1);
- development of lake shore property should be addressed, both in the types and densities permitted (1);
- there is a concern with fish kills on the lake and what is causing those kills (1);
- the change in drainage flows to the lake from urban development is causing shoreline erosion (1);
- there is a need for total watershed planning (1) and the drafting of an overall master plan to manage the water resources, both urban and rural, is needed (1);
- the water flow to the lake region from the TH #14 and #60 area is a concern (1);
- water quality impacts from lawn fertilizer in the urban settings and from feedlots in the rural settings is a concern (1);
- if the lake level were lowered, and the exposed land were reclaimed, who decides who can reclaim how much? (1);
- contamination of the lake due to manure runoff from adjacent agricultural lands;

- Madison Lake spillway cleaning;
- increased flows from the lake is a concern with only one outlet point. Additional drainage is needed;
- weed growth in the lake is a concern;
- who can people go to for the resolution of problems associated with the lake, the County and/or the Mn. DNR?

Several persons expressed concerns about the application of rules, enforcement, and whether the County decision makers will listen to residents' concerns. In addition to one of the top ranked issues already listed, others include:

- will the input from these regional meetings be listened to and considered by elected officials (4);
- concern with "political" exceptions to the enforcement of rules regarding nonconforming septic systems. Uniform enforcement of rules must be applied (1);
- concern with rules changes, how often and who is affected by these changes (1);

Land use issues raised include:

- the need for a cluster development type of concept to be incorporated into the development policies of the County, as an effort associated with preserving agricultural land (4);
- concern with expansion of Bray Park campsites and how many sites are permitted to be developed (4);
- the permitting of "low impact" businesses in the rural area should be considered (1);
- there is a concern with the placement of underground utility lines. Utility companies should be required to put them in the road easement areas and not be allowed to stray onto private property (1);
- park development and use should be made compatible with neighbors;
- the opportunity to subdivide land for rural residential use is a need;
- line of sight tower development needs to be dealt with, microwave and other types of satellite or communication needs;
- there is a need to address illegal salvage yard uses in the rural areas;
- the use of lakeshore property, if used for some purpose, would probably be best for park land types of uses.

Regionalized service agreements or extension of City utility services should be looked for rural development areas:

- there is a need to think bigger than individual septic systems for rural areas (3);
- there is a need for cooperative agreements when improvements are needed for developed rural areas. Assistance must come from the County, MPCA, EPA, and others (3). A cooperative agreement must be reached between the County and the Township when the need is determined for extending sewer services to rural areas. The extension should occur over a period of time based on need (2);
- how is sewer extension to be paid for, rates or taxes (1);

The remaining issues raised during this meeting were:

- the concern that rules have different standards applied to cities versus agriculture, for example, the pollution from a municipal sewage treatment plant appears to elicit much less concern than pollution from agricultural uses (2);
- there was concern with constructing a complying septic system and then in a short while being required to invest additional dollars into upgrading due to changing rules;
- the planning process should incorporate property right needs, don't take rights away (4);
- what is the best direction for the city's (Madison Lake) growth? How does City coordinate with the County (3);
- County planning process must take a City's growth needs into account (1);
- concern with road improvements and this type of development's impact upon wetlands;
- concern with County Ditch and any need for improvements to the ditch, who pays for improvements; and
- concern with speed and noise of watercraft on the lake.

## Mankato Meeting - May 19, 1997

The last of six (6) regional issues identification meetings was attended by less than 20 people. The meeting opened with a brief explanation of the process being undertaken by the County and an overview of the demographic highlights. Then each person was given the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the use of land. Each concern or issue was written down on a card and taped to the wall. Following this issue identification, all participants were asked to rank three of the issues they believed to be most critical for the County to address. This process allowed for the generation of issues that concern the meeting attendees and also provided a ranking of most important issues. The top five issues from this meeting's attendees are as follows:

- Annexation agreements between Cities and their surrounding Townships should include standards that encourage infill (5 votes).
- The County should restrict development along the southern bypass (4 votes).
- The County should carefully consider the impacts of development adjoining the City of Mankato, especially stormwater runoff and the impacts of erosion along natural drainageways such as ravines (4 votes).
- The County should permit more opportunities for small businesses to locate in the rural areas (4 votes).
- Feedlots should be considered a business or industrial use and not an agricultural use (3 votes).

All issues raised during this meeting by those attending are listed below:

In addition to the three issues listed above, other specific concerns raised about land use controls are listed below:

- the County should permit additional rural subdivisions with fewer restrictions (2 votes);
- the County should allow smaller lots that could still accommodate septic and/or well systems (1 vote);
- the County should undertake policies that limits the spread of commercial uses and encourages the reuse of existing structures (1 vote);
- the County should look at the feasibility of rezoning land in Lime Township. The area east of the railroad line and the area west of Lime Valley Road should not be permitted to develop as industrial or commercial;
- in its enforcement of regulations, the County should conduct a thorough examination of each development request, considering individual merits versus simple enforcement of broad policies; and
- the County should look at the possibility of establishing a location for the expansion of small businesses.

Several persons expressed the need for and concern with intergovernmental cooperation, planning, and control of the City of Mankato's annexation powers. In addition to the top ranked issue already listed, others include:

- there is a need to control or limit Mankato's annexation powers;

- there needs to be cooperation between regulating agencies and the County, City and Townships;
- there is a need to identify specifically who is responsible for resolving issues that occur in the region. Currently, entities are passing on responsibility for problems encountered to other entities, making it impossible for concerned citizens to have their questions answered and concerns heard;
- the County should take a more aggressive stance in dealing with impacts of development occurring in the City but which may have extended impacts outside the City; and
- there needs to be more intergovernmental cooperation to protect land.

Issues associated with transportation, in addition to one of the top ranked issues, include:

- there is a need to coordinate the use of land with the planning that is occurring in the transportation area (1 vote);
- the County should look at methods to eliminate hazardous spots along rural roads, especially along blind curves and valley crossings (1 vote);
- there is a concern that the southern bypass will encourage urban sprawl, especially along Indian Lake Road;
- the transportation plan (MATAPS) has provided some direction for future land use planning. The County should look at what has been done with this transportation planning and craft land use planning around this work; and
- there was a concern with the land speculation that occurs around public improvement projects.

Water planning issues included:

- the need to identify who or what agency is responsible for water planning issues that occur in a City (2 votes);
- well sealing is a concern, especially in terms of the need to protect aquifers (1 vote);
- there was a concern with the stormwater drainage impacts from development (1 vote);
- a need to protect wetlands (1 vote);
- a concern with impacts on water resources from urban fertilizing runoff;
- a concern with water quality; and
- there needs to be a plan and standards associated with the creation of detention basins that are associated with development and how many ponds can be created or permitted within a set area.

Concerns about planning and the process included:

- the County should set aside areas in its land use plan for the creation or expansion of additional park space, just as the planning effort in the 1960s did;
- in regards to the extraterritorial planning effort, the County needs to publicize what it intends to support and do;
- the County needs to establish development areas and publicize this planning effort;

- there appears to be a lack of good vision in the area. What does the County want to be; and
- the County needs to be proactive and craft a proactive plan that provides some type of vision for the Planning Commission and County Board.

Concerns with the agricultural community included:

- the need to preserve agricultural land (1 vote);
- the need to protect the rural landscape from urban types of development (1 vote);
- the need to keep agriculture competitive, permitting it to change in response to market pressures while controlling potential pollution sources; and
- there was a concern expressed regarding agriculture and the shift towards it being more intensive.

The remaining issues raised included:

- there is a need for the County to enact a rural address system;
- concerns were raised regarding pollution from urbanized areas and their wastewater treatment systems; and
- the County should consider methods of land use controls that limit the opportunity to concentrate land ownership.

DATE: January 28, 1997  
TO: Veryl Morrell, Zoning Administrator  
Blue Earth County Environmental Services  
FROM: Steve Moline, Pettipiece & Associates  
RE: Meeting with Resource Committee

On January 22, 1997 the first meeting with the Resource Committee was held for the purpose of reviewing materials gathered through data research efforts, review materials that will be sent out to each Township Board, review how the public input process was proposed to be run, and to give each member of the Committee the opportunity express their concerns regarding issues that face the County. Following the review of how the public input process might be run, Mr. Twa suggested one of the regional meetings be conducted in the Amboy area. This meeting will be added to the proposed schedule. The regional meetings, at least five to be scheduled around the County, will be scheduled to start following the completion and mailing of separate information packets to each Town Board. The packets will contain basic demographic data about each Township and the County and will contain updates on each Township's land use map. The Town Board members will be asked to review the maps and comment on their accuracy. Estimates for completing all Town packets are for sometime in mid February. The regional meetings will likely be scheduled to occur during March. A meeting with the Resource Committee will be scheduled following these input sessions to review the issues and concerns raised by citizens. The Committee will then be asked to provide input regarding possible policies the County could implement to address those concerns.

Following this overview, the Resource Committee members were asked to provide input regarding their own concerns or issues they felt were important to include in this planning process. The following list is a comprehensive listing of all suggestions made.

A. Land Use or Land Use Regulation:

- concern regarding Duck Lake and other lakeshore development;
- concern with nonconforming businesses in the County's agricultural district and how to regulate them;
- a need to be proactive in land use planning along the southern bypass route;
- a need to tie in County park and recreation planning efforts to the Comprehensive Land Use plan;
- evaluate the need for the County to adopt a building code;
- is there a need to adopt regulations and standards to protect the Minnesota River corridor;
- regarding the Transfer of Development Rights, clarify how and when the County will require platting of splits; how many splits trigger this requirement? Also, when dealing with TDRs, at what point does it become a subdivision? Does the County evaluate the cost of providing infrastructure when dealing with proposed development;
- also regarding small subdivisions, should the County ask the question "Is this the best use of land;"
- financial assurances need to be incorporated into the subdivision process that a developer will make road improvements that meet or exceed Township road standards thereby limiting a Township's exposure to making road improvements serving the to be developed area;

- concern was raised regarding the development of duplexes in rural areas, specifically about septic requirements and the UBC;
- concern was raised about the need to classify commercial development in the rural area based upon water usage and fire protection needs;
- there is a need to fit septic system requirements based upon a structure's usage, for example, child care in a family type home or buildings used as repair shops that deal with vehicle fluid pollutants; and
- rural commercial uses that have a need for city utilities or specialized on-site waste systems.

**B. Transportation Issues:**

- need for an evaluation of Township roads and identify potential problems;
- need to coordinate development with the County highway department for road upgrades and service roads;
- need to include transportation planning into Comprehensive Land Use plan;
- need to consider what will happen with land use along old highway #14 once the new highway #14 is built and opened;
- need to address access pressure points along highway #14 (intersections) as well as along the southern bypass route;
- should the County require that rural subdivision road approval be given to the County Engineer;
- need to evaluate the number of field approaches permitted along roads;
- need to coordinate transportation planning efforts in conjunction with the utility improvements to be made in the Thompson Ravine area; and
- need to deal with the impacts of a major utility extension through the County such as the pipeline construction that will go through the northeast corner of the County. What types of impacts will this use have on existing subdivisions or proposed subdivisions.

**C. Communication Process Improvements or Public Information Needs:**

- regarding the 2 mile subdivision extension, the public is confused as to who needs to review and approve improvements or development proposals;
- need to educate the public and real estate people on what is required by County land use ordinances;
- new residents in rural areas are not knowledgeable about requirements needed for proposed improvements made to property; further education is needed;
- need for readable and enforceable codes; and
- make copies of code available and affordable (cheap); it might help reduce enforcement costs.

**D. Coordination with Municipalities:**

- need to maintain quality housing stock around the edge of cities;
- need to coordinate city and county planning efforts as utility extensions are made outside the City;
- need to develop growth areas in County based upon the adjacent City's develop plans and utility service capabilities;

- need to consider findings and future develop identified in the quadrant studies being conducted by the City of Mankato;
- need to consider the implications of sanitary sewer extension to the Airport, possible sewer district creation (Lake Washington, other areas);
- need for the County to encourage and support the establishment of annexation agreements between municipalities and adjacent townships;
- Thompson Ravine sewer extension project will open 640 acres to city types of development densities; County planning efforts will need to deal with this;
- need for County to address rural growth initiatives and affordable housing issues; and
- development proposals on the boundaries of Mankato should address the need or requirement for city utility extension and annexation.

E. Social Issues that also impact Land Use:

- job requirements for persons on welfare; need for affordable housing for those in low paying jobs;
- reliable low cost transportation for those persons required to work; and
- Elderly health care, home based service delivery; child care needs for working parents is needed. How can County help facilitate this need?

F. Other Coordination Issues:

- coordination between Zoning Office and Recorder's Office during lot creation process;
- how does Land Use Planning impact emergency management issues and planning?
- need to attend Township Officers meeting in April to review issues identification during the regional meetings;
- identify the impacts of County planning efforts as they impact fire districts, utility areas, and school districts; and
- is there a need to solicit information from the region's major employers and any future plans they may have for expansion?