



MEMORANDUM

TO: Baldwin Township Planning Commission

FROM: D. Daniel Licht

DATE: 16 August 2024

RE: Baldwin Township – Comprehensive Plan

TPC FILE: 269.02

BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission began discussion the Comprehensive Plan at their meeting on 17 July 2024.

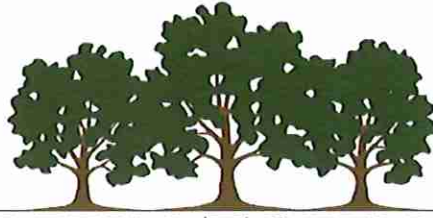
Following this meeting, we considered that the report prepared by our office provides information that could be easily adapted into a community profile of the existing community as a chapter of an update of the Comprehensive Plan. This information would constitute “Part 1” of the Comprehensive Plan as contemplated by the Planning Commission.

We recommend that the Planning Commission review the annexation report at their meeting on 21 August 2024. Our expectation is that this discussion will assist in identify existing issues and opportunities that can be incorporated as part of the process of developing goals, policies, and plans for an updated Comprehensive Plan.

Exhibits:

- Incorporation Planning Report dated February 29, 2023

c. Joah Heinen, Town Clerk/Treasurer



BALDWIN TOWNSHIP

30239 128th Street, Princeton MN 55371

INCORPORATION PLANNING REPORT

February 29, 2024



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CONTENTS

I. Executive Summary	1
II. General Background for Incorporation	4
III. Incorporation Factors	7
A. Demographic Characteristics	8
B. Land and Geographic Characteristics	9
C. Existing Land Use and Physical Development	12
D. Existing Transportation Network	27
E. Land Use Controls	30
F. Existing Government Services	33
G. Existing or Potential Environmental Problems	35
H. Fiscal Impact	36
I. Affected and Adjacent School Districts and Communities	36
J. Delivery of Services by Existing Government	38
K. Whether Services are Best Provided by Existing Government	38
L. Degree of Contiguity of Boundaries	40
M. Applicability of the State Building Code	40
IV. Conclusions	41

TABLES

Table 1 – Population	8
Table 2 – Households	8
Table 3 – Subject Area Forecast at 10-Year and 5-Year Growth Rates	9
Table 4 – Existing Land Use	14
Table 5 – Future Land Use	17
Table 6 – Comparison. of Government Services; Baldwin Township/City of Princeton	39

MAPS

Map 1 – Area Location	6
Map 2 – Public Waters	11
Map 3 – Watershed Map	13
Map 4 – Existing Land Use	15
Map 5 – Map of Parcels ≤ 10 Acres	16
Map 6 - Sherburne County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use	18
Map 7 – Baldwin Township Zoning Map	19
Map 8 – City of Princeton Future Land Use	23
Map 9 – Mille Lacs County Zoning Map.....	24
Map 10 – Isanti County Comprehensive Plan Map	25
Map 11 – Sherburne County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use	26
Map 12 – Roadway Jurisdiction	28
Map 13 – Roadway Classification	29
Map 14 – Baldwin Township Zoning Map	32
Map 15 – School Districts	37

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Princeton Annexation Analysis

Appendix F: Resume of D. Daniel Licht

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Planning Report is to provide data, analysis, and conclusions on behalf of Baldwin Township and its petition for incorporation. The following executive summary outlines the basis for incorporation of Baldwin Township as the City of Baldwin.

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 414 establishes the procedures and criteria for municipal incorporation. Minnesota Statute § 414.02, Subdivision 3(b) states that incorporation may be ordered if at least one of the following findings is made:

- (1) *the property to be incorporated is now, or is about to become, urban or suburban in character.*

The planning analysis and conclusions of this report document that Baldwin Township is now or is about to become urban or suburban in character, based on the following findings:

- Baldwin Township was organized in 1850.
- Baldwin Township's current population is estimated as 7,043 persons, which is an increase of more than 50 percent since 2000.
- Baldwin Township currently has 2,495 households, which is an increase of more than 60 percent since 2000.
- There are 1,779 townships in Minnesota and only two have populations greater than Baldwin Township placing it in the upper 99th percentile.
- Baldwin Township has a larger population than 721 of the 855 cities in Minnesota, including the Cities of Princeton and Zimmerman, which would place the City of Baldwin in the 84th percentile of all cities in Minnesota.
- Baldwin Township has added an annual average of 30 new residential dwellings over the prior ten years and an annual average of 34 new residential dwellings over the prior five years.
- Incorporation is a natural progression in governance within areas experiencing high rates of growth such as Baldwin Township. Other townships experiencing high rates of growth and development recently incorporated include St. Augusta (2000), Columbus (2006), Scandia (2006), Nowthen (2008), Credit River (2021), and Empire (2023).
- Baldwin Township is experiencing a high rate of growth similar to other communities northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The 2022 population of Baldwin Township would be the fourth largest city in Sherburne County after St. Cloud (part), Elk River, Big Lake and would be the third largest city in Stearns County, second largest in Morrison County, third largest in Isanti County, and sixth largest in Wright County.

Conclusion: The sustained rate of growth of residential dwellings and the total number of households and resident population demonstrate that Baldwin Township is currently urban or suburban in character.

- (2) *that the existing township form of government is not adequate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; or*

The analysis conducted in this report finds that the Township form of government is no longer adequate to fully protect the health, safety and welfare of Baldwin Township's residents:

- Baldwin Township exercises municipal powers, including comprehensive planning; zoning; subdivision; building permits; septic permitting, inspection, and monitoring; administration; fire protection; parks; and public works.
- Incorporation will strengthen the position of the proposed City to exercise all the powers of a municipal authority to protect public health, safety, and welfare and provide for an environment consistent with the goals desired by the community.
- The annual tax levy for Baldwin Township is subject to approval by those members of the electorate that attend the annual meeting, which typically consists of less than 1 percent of the Township residents. Given Baldwin's large population and the scope of its operations, major operational issues such as long-term financing for capital improvements for facilities and infrastructure, equipment purchases, and government operations may be significantly impacted by a very small number of residents who show up at the annual meeting. As a City, Baldwin's City Council would determine the amount of the tax levy, which typically will be consistent with the proposed budget approved by the City Council.
- Townships are not eligible for Municipal State Aid highway funding. Incorporation will allow the proposed City to become immediately eligible for Municipal State Aid funding based on the current population, which is greater than 5,000 persons. Access to Municipal State Aid funding will enhance self-sufficiency, aid in maintenance and improvement of the existing roadway network, and serve to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Townships cannot utilize tax increment financing as a tool to promote the economic development goals of the community to improve infrastructure, create employment, or expand tax base. For most cities the size of Baldwin, tax increment financing is their primary economic development tool. Incorporation will allow the City of Baldwin to utilize tax increment financing to accomplish its economic development objectives.
- The existing township form of government is inadequate to protect public health, safety, and welfare within the community.

(3) *the proposed incorporation would be in the best interests of the area under consideration.*

- Baldwin Township currently provides all necessary public services within the Subject Area effectively and efficiently.
- Incorporation will expand municipal powers not allowed to townships, increasing the newly-incorporated City's capacity to deliver public services to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Baldwin Township provides for long-range planning within the entire community and incorporation protects and promotes continued long-range planning in the entire community.
- The stability of borders created by incorporation will allow the proposed City to better implement long-range plans already in place and better allow long-range planning for land use, transportation, infrastructure, community facilities and financing consistent with the goals of the entire community without the disruption caused by unanticipated annexations.
- Incorporation is in the best interests of the residents and properties of Baldwin Township.

Minnesota Statutes § 414.02, Subdivision 3(c) provides that a petition for incorporation may be denied *“if the area, or a part thereof, would be better served by annexation to an adjacent municipality.”* Baldwin Township is currently providing all necessary services within the entire community. There is no evidence that any part of Baldwin Township *“would be better served by annexation.”* The Statutes governing the process of incorporation require that the incorporation factors outlined by Minnesota Statutes § 414.02, Subdivision 3(a) must be the basis for any decision that an adjacent municipality could *“better serve”* all or a portion of Baldwin Township. Baldwin Township has comprehensively demonstrated that it currently provides all necessary services to the entire community effectively and efficiently to protect public health, safety, and welfare and to provide for the environment desired by the community. Moreover, Baldwin Township has been strategically planning to maintain and expand public services and infrastructure necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare in anticipation of continued growth, while preserving the desired character of the community. To be *“better served”* requires evidence that an adjacent municipality can or will provide services more effectively and efficiently. There is no such evidence that an adjacent municipality can better serve Baldwin Township.

In summary, the planning analysis and conclusions of this Planning Report support the following findings for incorporation of Baldwin Township:

- Baldwin Township is now, or is about to become, urban or suburban.
- The existing township form of government is not adequate to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Incorporation will provide for the capability to use all municipal authority to provide for effective and efficient delivery of public services and infrastructure; protect public health, safety, and welfare; and to preserve the desired character of the entire community.
- The proposed incorporation is in the best interests of the entirety of Baldwin Township.
- There is no evidence that Baldwin Township, or any portion thereof, would be better served by annexation to an adjacent municipality or any other boundary configuration.
- The existing contiguity of jurisdictional boundaries will be preserved by incorporation.
- Incorporation of Baldwin Township is consistent with all statutory criteria and requirements.

Based upon the planning analysis of this report of the factors outlined by Minnesota Statute § 414.02, Subdivision 3(a) for consideration of incorporation and conclusions of this report with regards to Minnesota Statute § 414.02, Subdivision 3(b), Baldwin Township should be granted incorporation as the City of Baldwin.

II. GENERAL BACKGROUND FOR INCORPORATION

Baldwin Township is situated in the northeast corner of Sherburne County, Minnesota. Baldwin Township is adjacent to the City of Princeton in its northeast portion; Princeton Township and Greenbush Township in Mille Lacs County; Blue Hill Township and Lavonia Township in Sherburne County; and Spencer Brook Township in Isanti County, as shown on Map 1.

The Township was organized on September 13, 1850 including all of the territory that is now Baldwin Township, Blue Hill Township, and Santiago Township. In 1877, Baldwin Township was reorganized and reduced to its present geographic boundaries. Settlement of Baldwin Township began in the 1850's focused on agricultural activities surrounding regional overland, river, and rail transportation routes. The character of development has evolved as agriculture has declined replacing farming with residential dwellings. The current development pattern consists of primarily of suburban residential parcels with commercial and industrial uses within a defined area adjacent to US Highway 169.

The Baldwin Township Board of Supervisors on March 7, 2011 adopted Ordinance 200 (Appendix A) establishing a Planning Commission. The Planning Commission consists of seven members charged with advising the Town Board on growth and development. The Planning Commission developed a Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the Town Board by Resolution 14-15 (Appendix B) on August 4, 2014. Baldwin Township on April 18, 2022 adopted a Zoning Ordinance (Appendix C), Subdivision Ordinance (Appendix D), and Building Ordinance (Appendix E) regulating land use, subdivision, and building activities. These ordinances became effective on June 20, 2023 in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding approved by Sherburne County and Baldwin Township (Appendix F). The responsibilities assumed by Baldwin Township include the establishment of land use policy; adoption and administration of zoning regulations regarding land use and development; consideration of applications for subdivision of property; and receipt, review, and inspection of requests for building permits for construction and subsurface sewage treatment system permits for new or replacement individual private septic systems.

However, although Baldwin Township is now responsible for administering planning and zoning in the Township, the Township does not have full planning and zoning authority. Under Minn. Stat. 394.33, the Township's zoning must be consistent with and at least as restrictive as Sherburne County's Official controls that apply to Baldwin Township. This would include Sherburne County's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance. As a result, the Township has no ability to rezone a property within the Township from agricultural to industrial or commercial zoning, no ability to rezone a property to a Planned Unit Development classification that would allow for flexibility in uses within a single development, and no ability to plan for and implement an addition to the Township's industrial park.

Most cities of Baldwin's size, particularly those on the outskirts of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, will ensure that they have vacant land that is zoned industrial to complement the City's economic development efforts in attracting industry to their city to better spread the tax burden among a more diverse tax base and to promote job creation in the city. Without the ability to control its own zoning, Baldwin Township cannot make the investments that are necessary to attract additional industrial tax

base as it has no certainty that Sherburne County will zone property in accordance with the Township's industrial marketing efforts. This split-zoning situation will put Baldwin Township at a disadvantage compared to neighboring cities in terms of growing the community's industrial and commercial tax base and creating local employment jobs opportunities. Incorporation will eliminate the requirement that the City of Baldwin must maintain its zoning ordinance in a manner that is consistent with and at least as restrictive as Sherburne County's ordinance, as Minnesota Statutes § 394.33 does not apply to city zoning ordinances. As a result, incorporation will allow the City of Baldwin to unify its planning and economic development efforts in the goal of attracting new industrial tax base and jobs into the City.

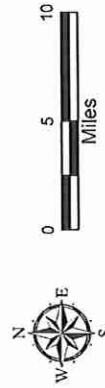
Baldwin Township has considered the merits of incorporation for several years. The basis for these discussions has been a desire for greater autonomy in land use planning and decision making in response to increasing interest for development by both land owners and developers. Incorporation will also address Baldwin Township's need to administer and finance public services and infrastructure, including fire protection by the Baldwin Township Fire Department, under financial powers granted a municipality versus a township form of government.

The topic of incorporation has been addressed at the Township's Annual Meetings for several years, with broad support for the effort and a Township study of incorporation for approximately 20 years. Baldwin Township also conducted a special Incorporation Questions and Answers meeting on December 20, 2023. Attendees were provided an opportunity to ask questions about the incorporation process and changes incorporation would mean for the community. Those who attended the special meeting were generally supportive of incorporation.

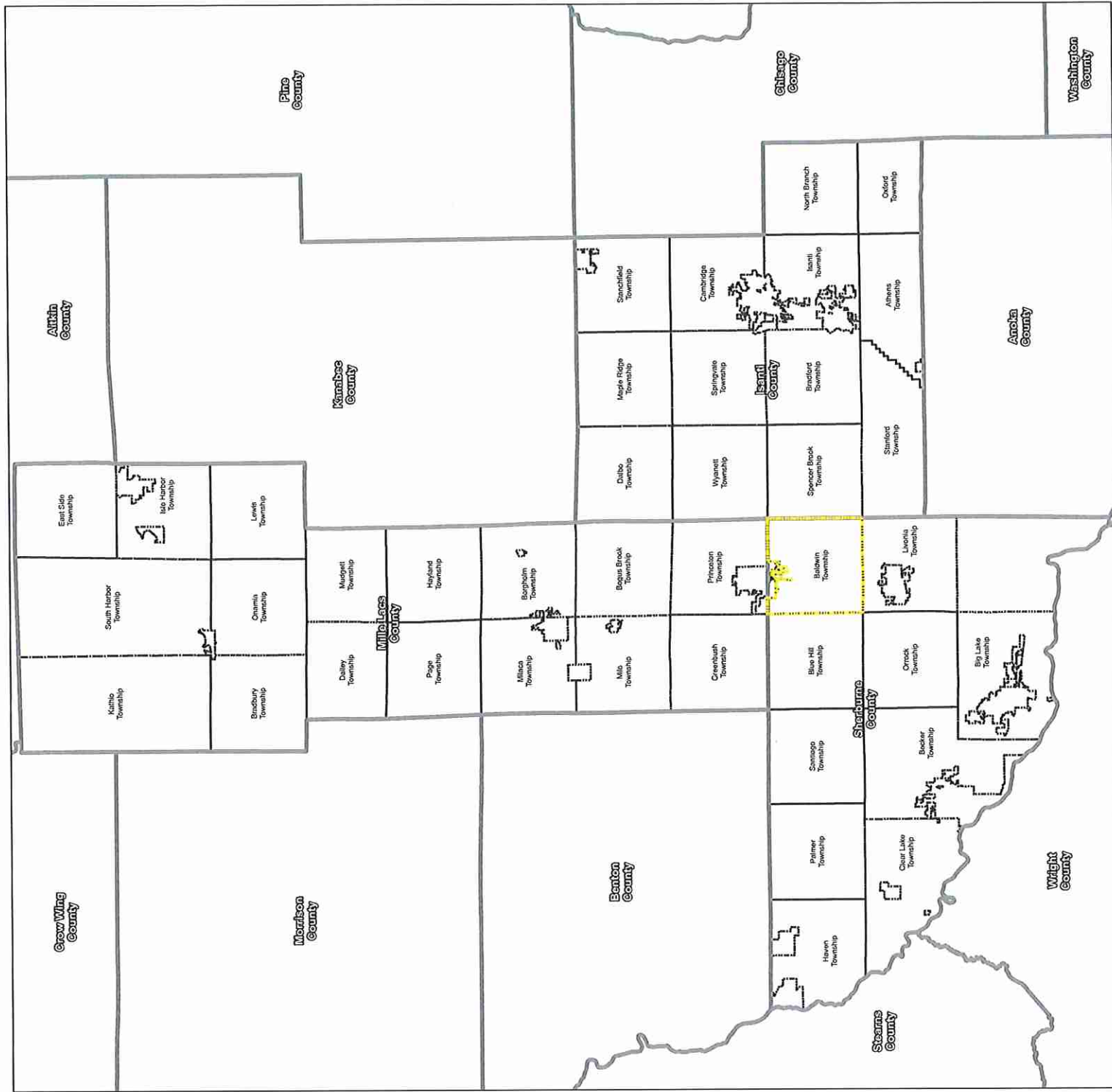
MAP 1

Legend

-  Baldwin Township
 County Boundary
 Township Boundaries



DISCLAIMER: Baldwin Township does not warrant the accuracy nor the correctness of the information contained in this map. It is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of this information. In no event will Sherburne County be liable for any damages, including loss of business, lost profits, business interruption, loss of business information or other pecuniary loss that might arise from the use of this map or the information it contains. Map information is believed to be accurate but accuracy is not guaranteed.



III. INCORPORATION FACTORS

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 414.02 establishes the exclusive method for municipal incorporation, including the specific relevant factors that must be considered in any decision for incorporation set forth in Minnesota Statutes § 414.02, Subdivision 3. This section of the Planning Report provides summary information and analysis of 12 of the 13 factors for incorporation. All references to and information related to the "Subject Area" is in regards to all of Baldwin Township.

A. Demographic Characteristics (Incorporation Factor 1)

The first factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Present population and number of households, past population, and projected population growth for the Subject Area.

Population

Table 1 below presents population data for the Subject Area, surrounding jurisdictions, and Sherburne County from the US Decennial Census in 2000, 2010, and 2020. Baldwin Township has experienced a significant increase in population over the past 20 years. The Minnesota State Demographic Center estimates the 2022 population of the Subject Area as 7,043 persons. Baldwin's population would have been 7,283 in 2022, but approximately 240 residents were annexed in December 2021 when the KAW Parks LLC mobile home park was annexed to the City of Princeton.

There are 1,779 townships in Minnesota and the State Demographers Office estimates there to be only two other townships in Minnesota with 2022 population larger than that of the Subject Area, which are Big Lake Township and White Bear Township, placing Baldwin Township in the 99th population percentile of all townships in Minnesota. The population of Baldwin Township has a larger 2022 population than 721 of the 855 cities in Minnesota, including the Cities of Princeton and Zimmerman, which places it in the upper 84th percentile of all cities in Minnesota.

The 2022 population of Baldwin Township would be the fourth largest city in Sherburne County after St. Cloud (part), Elk River, Big Lake and would be the third largest city in Stearns County, second largest in Morrison County, third largest in Isanti County, and sixth largest in Wright County. The 2022 population of Baldwin Township would also be the third largest city in Stearns County, second largest in Morrison County, third largest in Isanti County, and sixth largest in Wright County.

The rate of growth between 2000 and 2020 within the Subject Area is consistent with that of the City of Zimmerman and Livonia Township to the south, as well as Sherburne County overall, indicating the influence of US Highway 169 as a major growth corridor to the northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The much slower rate of population increases over the same period for the City of Princeton and Princeton Township farther north on the US Highway 169 corridor suggest that the market for growth to the north of the Subject Area has less demand.

Table 1 – Population

	2000	2010	2020	Change 2000-2020	
				#	%
Baldwin Township	4,623	6,734	7,104	2,481	53.7%
Princeton	3,933	4,698	4,819	886	22.5%
Princeton Township	1,947	2,256	2,228	281	14.4%
Blue Hill Township	762	2,176	2,507	1,745	229.0%
Livonia Township	3,917	5,951	6,174	2,257	57.6%
Zimmerman	2,851	5,228	6,189	3,338	117.2%
Spencer Brook Twp.	1,495	1,589	1,670	175	11.7%
Sherburne County	64,417	86,325	97,183	32,766	50.8%

Source: US Census Bureau

Households

Table 2 presents household counts for the Subject Area, surrounding jurisdictions, and Sherburne County from the US Decennial Census in 2000, 2010, and 2020. The trends for household growth within the Subject Area and surrounding communities parallels the trends in population growth outlined above with Baldwin Township growing by over 60%

Table 2 – Households

	2000	2010	2020	Change 2000-2020	
				#	%
Baldwin Township	1,556	2,334	2,531	975	62.7%
Princeton	1,624	1,926	2,104	480	29.6%
Princeton Township	693	837	839	146	21.1%
Blue Hill Township	257	714	830	573	223.0%
Livonia Township	1,222	1,900	2,079	857	70.1%
Zimmerman	963	1,802	2,177	1,214	126.1%
Spencer Brook Twp.	532	573	606	74	13.9%
Sherburne County	21,581	30,212	34,035	12,454	57.7%

Source: US Census Bureau

Forecasts

Baldwin Township has developed projections of growth for the Subject Area forecasting population and households for 2030 and 2040. There were 299 new residential dwellings constructed in the Subject Area between 2014 and 2023. Building permit data from Sherburne County and Baldwin Township illustrate the lingering effects of the Great Recession during the initial years of this period, with an increase to a consistent level of new construction occurring within the last five to six years of the period. The average annual rate of new home construction within the Subject Area for the 10-year period is 28 new dwellings per year with average annual rate increasing to 34 new dwellings for the most recent five-year period.

Table 3 – Subject Area Forecast at 10-Year and 5-Year Growth Rates

	2020 Actual	Household and Population Estimates				
		2022	10yr. Estimates		5yr. Estimates	
			2030	2040	2030	2040
Population	7,104	7,042	7,668	8,660	7,780	8,762
Households	2,531	2,495	2,791	2,071	2,767	3,107

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center; The Planning Company LLC

As noted above, the 2020 and 2022 within the Subject Area can be attributed to annexation of a mobile home park to the City of Princeton. The forecasts for population and households within the Subject Area should be considered conservative. The growth trends for communities south of the Subject Area within the US Highway 169 corridor demonstrate strong growth. This growth is likely to continue and move farther north with completion of improvement of US Highway 169 to an expressway within the City of Elk River in 2024 that will increase the convenience of regional access to the Subject Area.

The last remaining traffic signal on US Highway 169 between US Highway 10 and the Subject Area will be at the Intersection of US Highway 169 and CSAH 4 in Zimmerman. Sherburne County secured State funding in 2021 for project design and development and as of September 2023 has an approved design layout. The Minnesota Department of Transportation and Sherburne County have yet to secure funding for construction of the interchange.

B. Land and Geographic Characteristics (Incorporation Factor 2)

The second factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Quality of land within the subject area; the natural terrain including recognizable physical features, general topography, major watersheds, soil conditions, and such natural features as rivers, lakes, and major bluffs.

The general character in terms of land and geology is moderately rolling in the southern portion of the Subject Area with more flat topography in the north portion. Elevations range from 950 feet to 1,050 feet across the Subject Area, with lands adjacent to the Rum River being some of the larger tracts of low areas.

Soils

The soil in a particular area will determine the type and extent of suburban development that can occur within the Subject Area. Factors such as soil strength, drainage, and frost characteristics may serve to limit buildings and structures that can be developed or the provision of subsurface sewage treatment systems. The primary soil type within the Subject Area is Zimmerman fine sand consisting of very deep, excessively drained soils that formed in sandy glacial outwash or eolian sediments on glacial outwash plains, stream terraces, deltas, lake terraces, dunes, beach deposits, and valley trains. These soils have rapid permeability with

slopes ranging from zero to 25 percent. In the area along the Rum River, there are soils that are also very deep and well drained with slopes up to three percent. The area adjacent to the north segment of the US Highway 169 corridor include Seelyville and Bowstring soils that are poorly drained soils on glacial outwash plains, valley trains, flood plains, glacial lake plains and glacial moraines with slopes of 0 to 15 percent. The soils within the Subject Area generally support continued suburban development.

Public Waters

There are extensive public waters within the Subject Area including the Rum River and many lakes and streams, as well as wetlands, as shown on Map 2.

Public waters are protected through the standards of the Shoreland Overlay District within the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance. The Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance also establishes a Wild and Scenic Overlay District to protect and preserve the scenic, recreational, natural, historical, and scientific values of the Rum River within the Subject Area. The greatest potential impact for development is from floods adjacent to public waters. Baldwin Township has adopted floodplain management standards as part of the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance to minimize potential for property damage and protect public health, safety, and welfare. These environmental protection zoning districts have been certified by the Department of Natural Resources and Sherburne County as consistent with State rules to protect the public waters within the Subject Area.

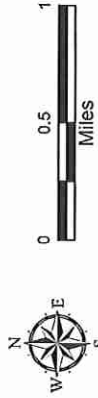
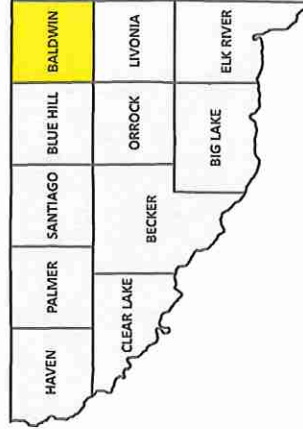
Wetlands within the Subject Area are protected by the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991. Administration of the Wetland Conservation Act remains within the jurisdiction of Sherburne County in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding approved by Baldwin Township and Sherburne County related to planning and zoning responsibilities.

Baldwin Township provides for necessary protection of public waters within the Subject Area.

Baldwin Township

MAP 2

Public Waters

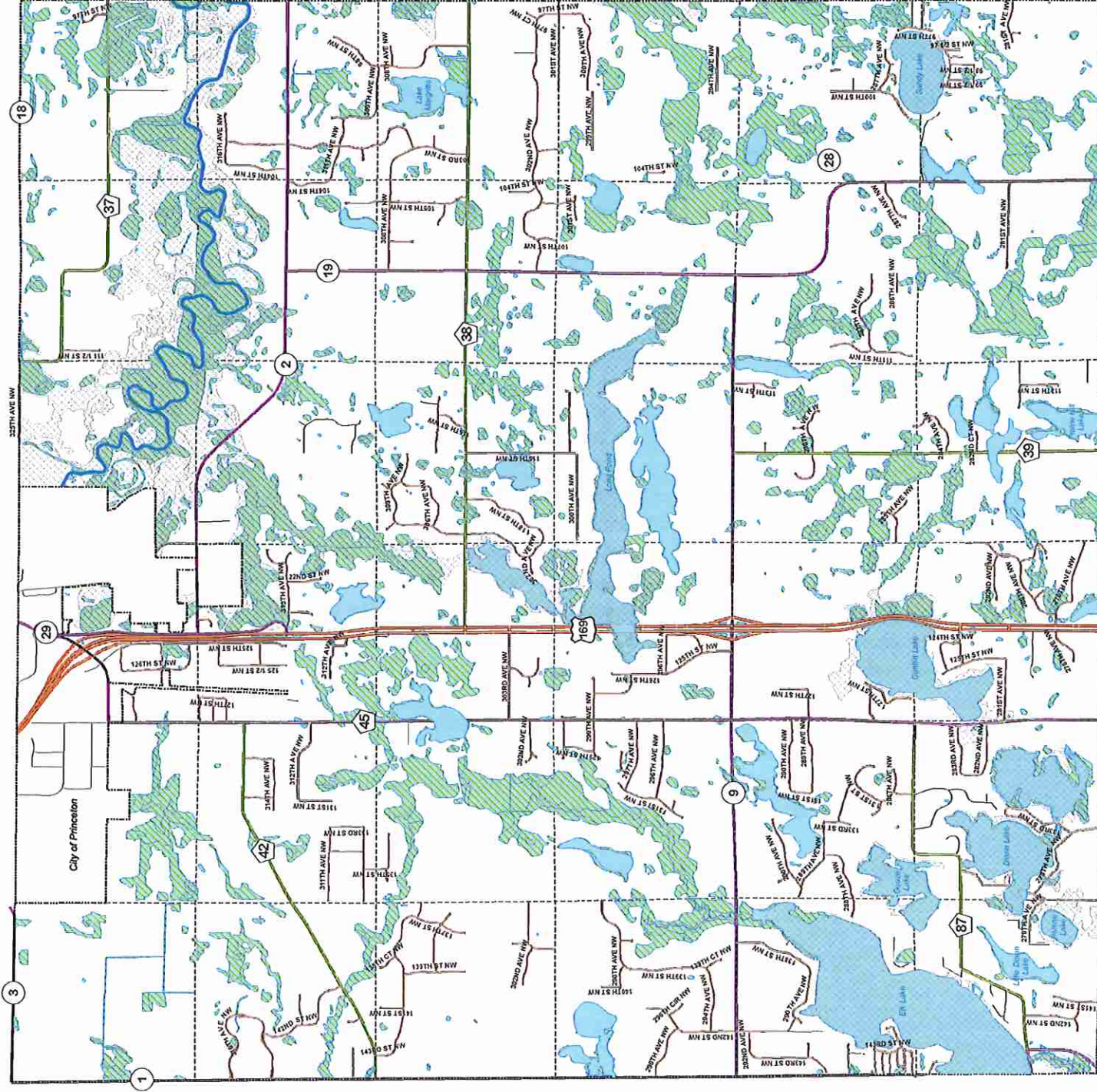


Legend

- Rum River
- DNR Public Waters
- Wetlands
- Flood Plain
- Township Boundary



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Watersheds/Stormwater Management

In 1985, the State of Minnesota passed Minnesota Statutes § 103B.301–103B.335, referred to as the Comprehensive Local Water Management Act. This act encourages counties to work with local and state agencies to develop and implement water management plans for their region. The current plan is the sixth-generation local water management plan and it identifies the goals of the watershed, performs an assessment of the issues, determines priority concerns, and contains an implementation plan.

The Subject Area is located within the Sherburne County Watershed and is subject to the 2018-2028 Sherburne Local Water Management Plan. A portion of the Subject Area is within the Rum River Watershed (HUC 07010207) and the remaining area is within the Mississippi River-St. Cloud Watershed (HUC 07010203).

The stormwater drainage system has been identified and is graphically depicted on Map 3. The stormwater in Baldwin Township is primarily managed with open ditches and roadway culverts. Stormwater basins provide water quality treatment, rate control, and flood protection before being discharged into the natural drainage system. Baldwin Township, through its zoning ordinances, requires all new developments to control surface or stormwater runoff to equal to or less than predevelopment conditions.

C. Existing Land Use and Physical Development (Incorporation Factor 3)

The third factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Present pattern of physical development, planning, and intended land uses in the Subject Area, including residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and institutional land uses and the impact of the proposed action on those uses.

Present Pattern of Development

There are a variety of existing land uses within the Subject Area characteristic of a suburban community including agriculture, single family residential neighborhoods, single family dwellings on small acreage, commercial and industrial business, quasi-public uses such as religious facilities, and public uses and essential services. The existing land uses within the Subject Area are summarized in Table 4 and depicted on Map 4.

Baldwin Township Watershed Map

MAP 3

HAVEN	PALMER	SANTIAGO	BLUE HILL	BALDWIN
CLEAR LAKE	BECKER	ORROCK	LIVONIA	ELK RIVER
			BIG LAKE	



Watershed Flow Paths

Watershed Boundary

DNR Public Waters

Township Boundary

Roads

US Highway

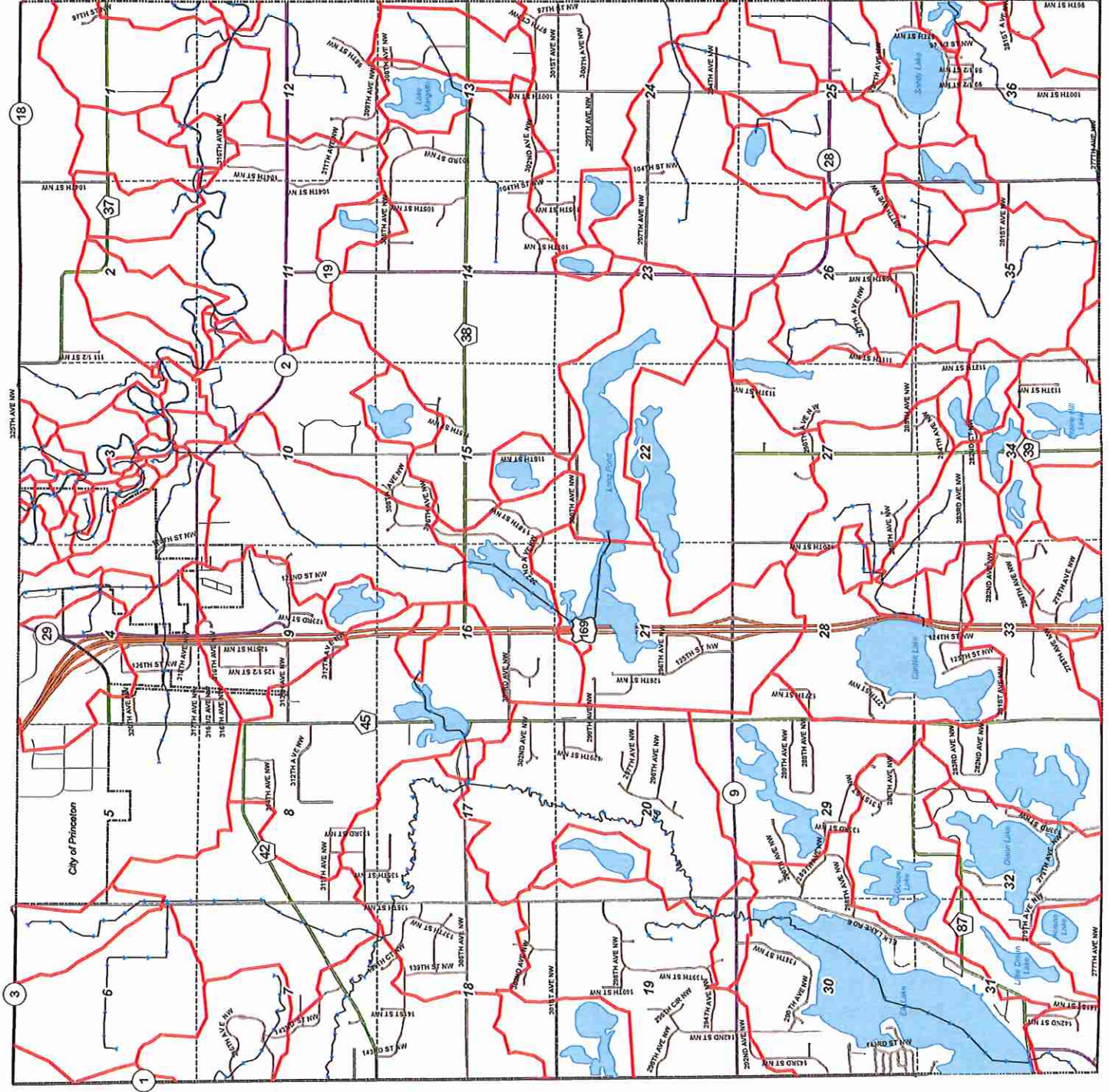
County-State Aid Highway (CSAH)

County Road

Township Road

Private Road

City Road



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Table 4 - Existing Land Use

	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	9,026ac.	41.1%
Residential	11,187ac.	50.4%
Commercial	116ac.	0.5%
Industrial	17ac.	0.1%
Pubic/Quasi-Public	291ac.	1.3%
Water/ROW	1,368ac.	6.2%
TOTAL	21,887ac.	100.0%

Source: Sherburne County; The Planning Company LLC

The pattern of development within the Subject Area has resulted in scattered residential subdivisions that fragment large contiguous tracts of agricultural land as depicted on Map 5. Parcels that are ten acres in area or less are problematic to further develop in that the potential number of lots that can be subdivided is limited by natural and physical conditions of the parcel and the small area of the existing parcel unless multiple parcels are assembled by a developer. The placement of existing homes and large detached accessory buildings typical of development in the Subject Area without consideration for future resubdivision options further constrain subdivision design options. The limited number of potential lots that can be subdivided from existing developed areas with parcels 10 acres in area or less does not allow for costs for infrastructure to be allocated across the new development in a financially viable manner.

This pattern of development precludes physical practicality and financial feasibility of future extension of municipal sanitary sewer and water utilities. The existing pattern of development creates barriers for extension of municipal trunk sanitary sewer and potable water pipes to serve remaining large tracts of undeveloped parcels, many of which are not contiguous to each other. At the same time, the larger lot size and lack of density of the existing suburban residential plats coupled with the costs of retrofitting sanitary sewer services to these properties makes connection of existing platted properties and the installation of a traditional municipal sanitary sewer and water system within Baldwin Township cost prohibitive.

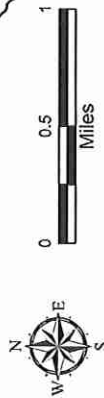
The feasibility of development within the Subject Area served by municipal sanitary sewer utilities is further addressed by Appendix A.

This factor will be further addressed by the engineering analysis prepared by Hakanson Anderson, Inc.

Baldwin Township

Existing Land Use

HAVEN	PALMER	SANTIAGO	BLUE HILL	BALDWIN
CLEAR LAKE	BECKER	ORROCK	LIVONIA	
		BIG LAKE	ELK RIVER	



Township Boundary

City Limits

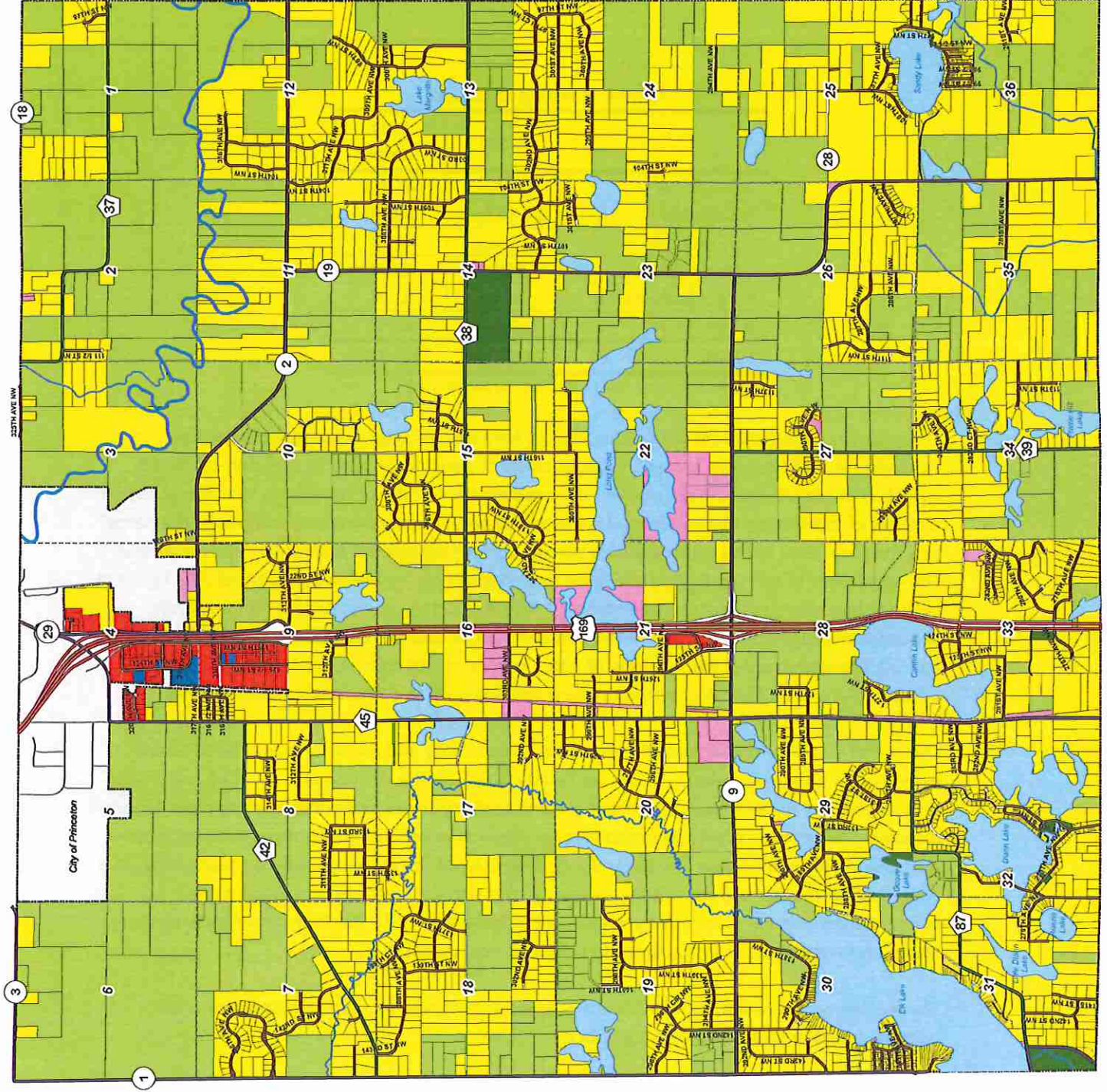
Existing Land Use

	Agriculture - 9026ac (40.6%)
	Residential - 11,187ac (50.4%)
	Commercial - 116ac (0.5%)
	Industrial - 17ac (0.1%)
	Park/Open Space - 163ac (0.7%)
	Public/Quasi Public - 291ac (1.5%)
	ROW - 1368ac (6.2%)



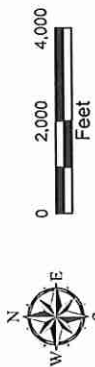
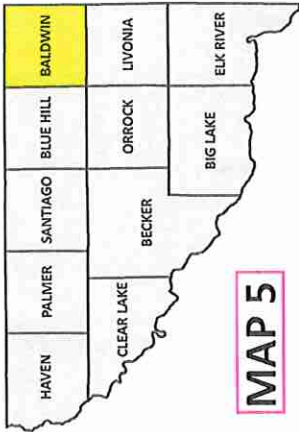
Source: Sherburne County, TPC

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Baldwin Township

Map of Parcels ≤ 10 Acres



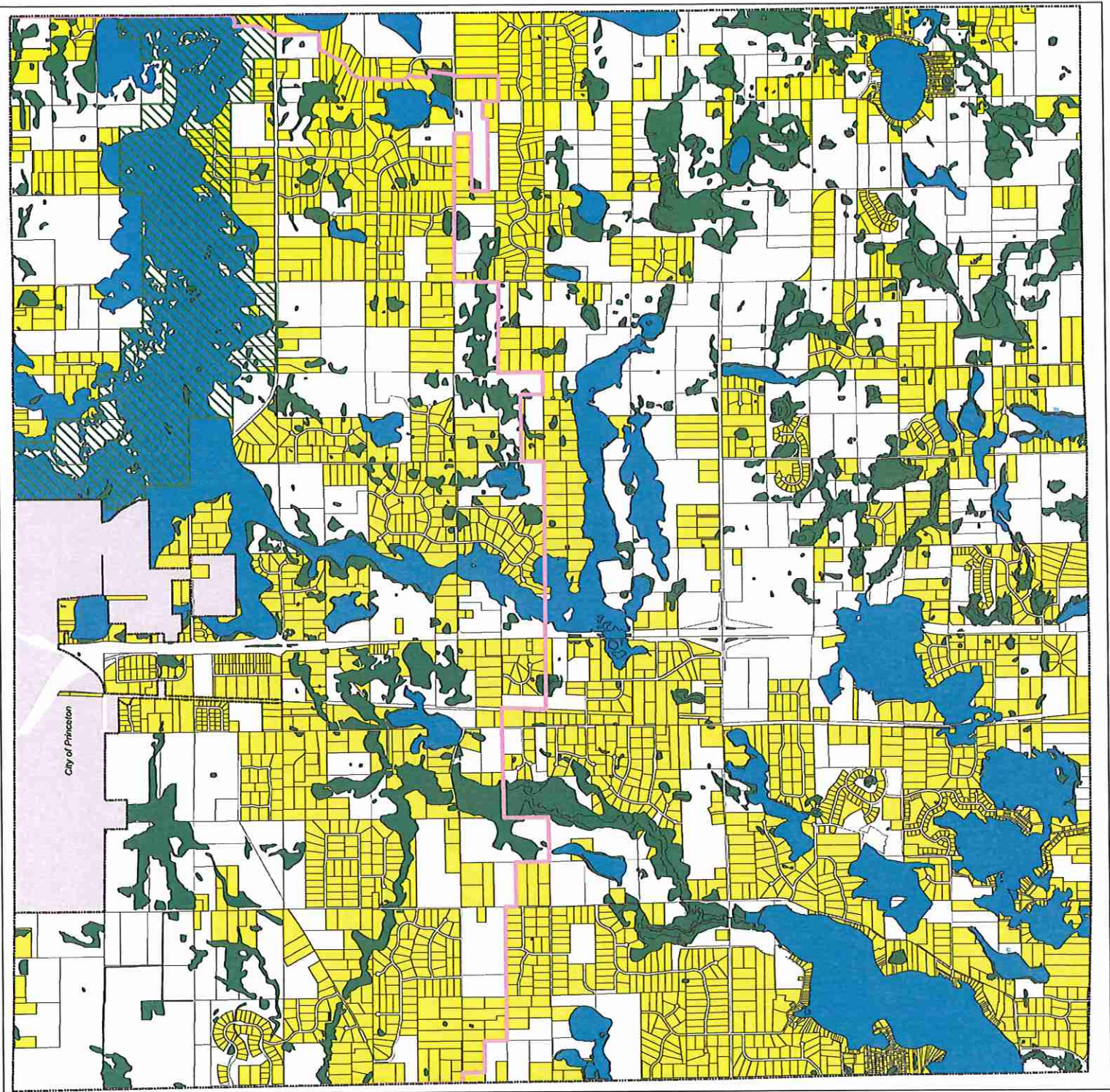
Legend

- Princeton Sewer Area Boundary
- Rum River WS District - 1222 Acres
- Floodplain - 2935 Acres
- NWI - 4894 Acres
- Parcels 10ac or Less - 8916 Acres
- Total Future Service Area - 9173 Acres
- City of Princeton



SOURCE: Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan (Figure 6-1)

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Planned and Intended Land Use

A Comprehensive Plan serves as the guide for future growth and development outlining the vision of the community for future land use; parks, trails, and open space; transportation; and community facilities. Within these broad overall topic areas, a Comprehensive Plan provides guidance concerning various other issues, including the protection of the natural environment, economic development strategies, historic preservation, and a variety of other topics. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is, therefore, to communicate the community vision to residents, property owners, businesses, and developers and simultaneously function as a decision-making tool for government officials.

Baldwin Township has been proactive in planning for anticipated growth and development that is occurring within the Subject Area. Baldwin Township adopted Resolution 14-15 approving the Baldwin Township Community Comprehensive Plan on August 4, 2014 addressing the social profile of the community, natural environment, existing and future land uses, economic development, transportation, community facilities, parks and recreation, and inter-government relations. The Baldwin Township Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for continued growth and development within the Subject Area.

Sherburne County adopted a 2040 Comprehensive Plan on November 7, 2023. With Baldwin Township assuming responsibility for planning and zoning functions from Sherburne County on June 20, 2022 in accordance with a Joint Powers Agreement, Sherburne County did not plan future land uses within the Subject Area. The Baldwin Township Community Comprehensive Plan has been used by the Town to guide land use and development within the Subject Area to better reflect local goals since assuming local responsibility for planning and zoning functions.

Future land uses guided by the Baldwin Township Community Comprehensive Plan and implemented through its Zoning Ordinance (and Zoning Map included as Map 7) are summarized by Table 5. The majority of the Subject Area is to be future residential land uses consisting single family dwellings on small acreage and suburban residential neighborhoods within platted subdivisions. Commercial and industrial development is to be located in proximity to the US Highway 169 corridor to utilize available access and visibility to serve both regional and local markets. Ancillary public and quasi-public uses will be developed in support of continued suburban development as the need arises.

Table 5 - Future Land Use

	Zoning District	Acres	% of Total
Residential	R1 District	21,588ac.	97.3%
Commercial	C1 District	163ac.	0.8%
Industrial	I1 District	426ac.	1.9%
TOTAL		22,177ac.	100%

Source: Sherburne County; The Planning Company LLC

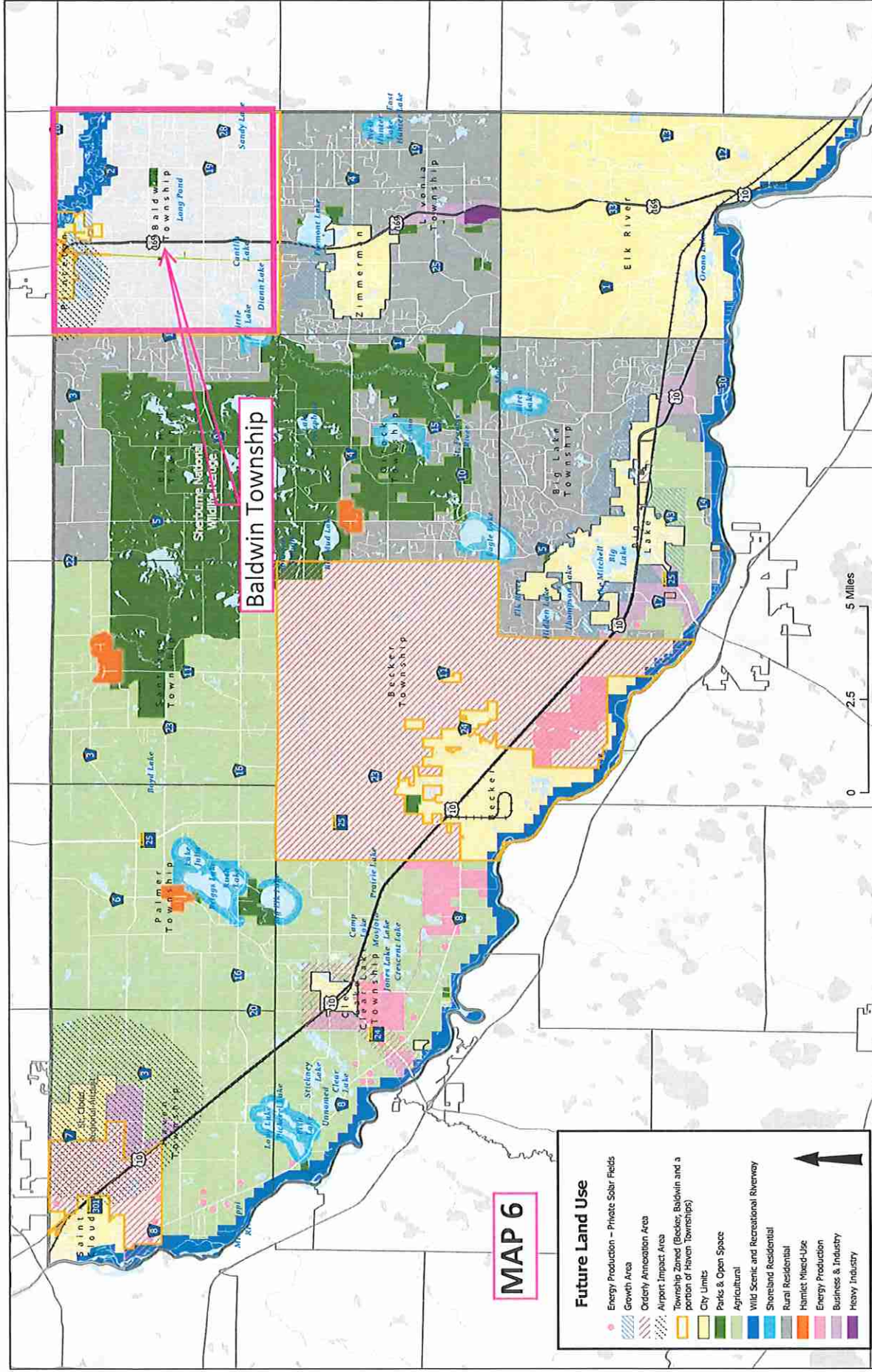
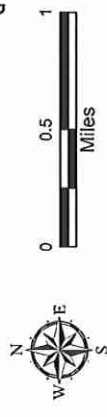
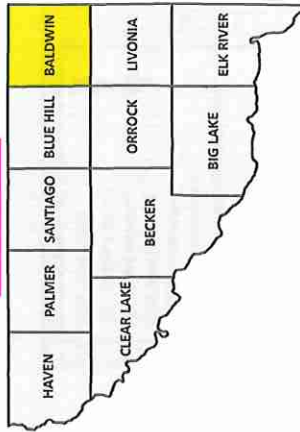


Figure 4.1 Sherburne County 2040 Land Use Plan Map

Baldwin Township Zoning Map

MAP 7



Township Boundary

City Limits

Zoning

- R1, General Rural - 21,558ac (97.3%)
- C1, General Commercial - 163ac (0.8%)
- I1, General Industrial - 426ac (1.9%)
- S, Shoreland - 5231ac (23.6%)
- WS, Wild and Scenic - 1339ac (6%)

Roads

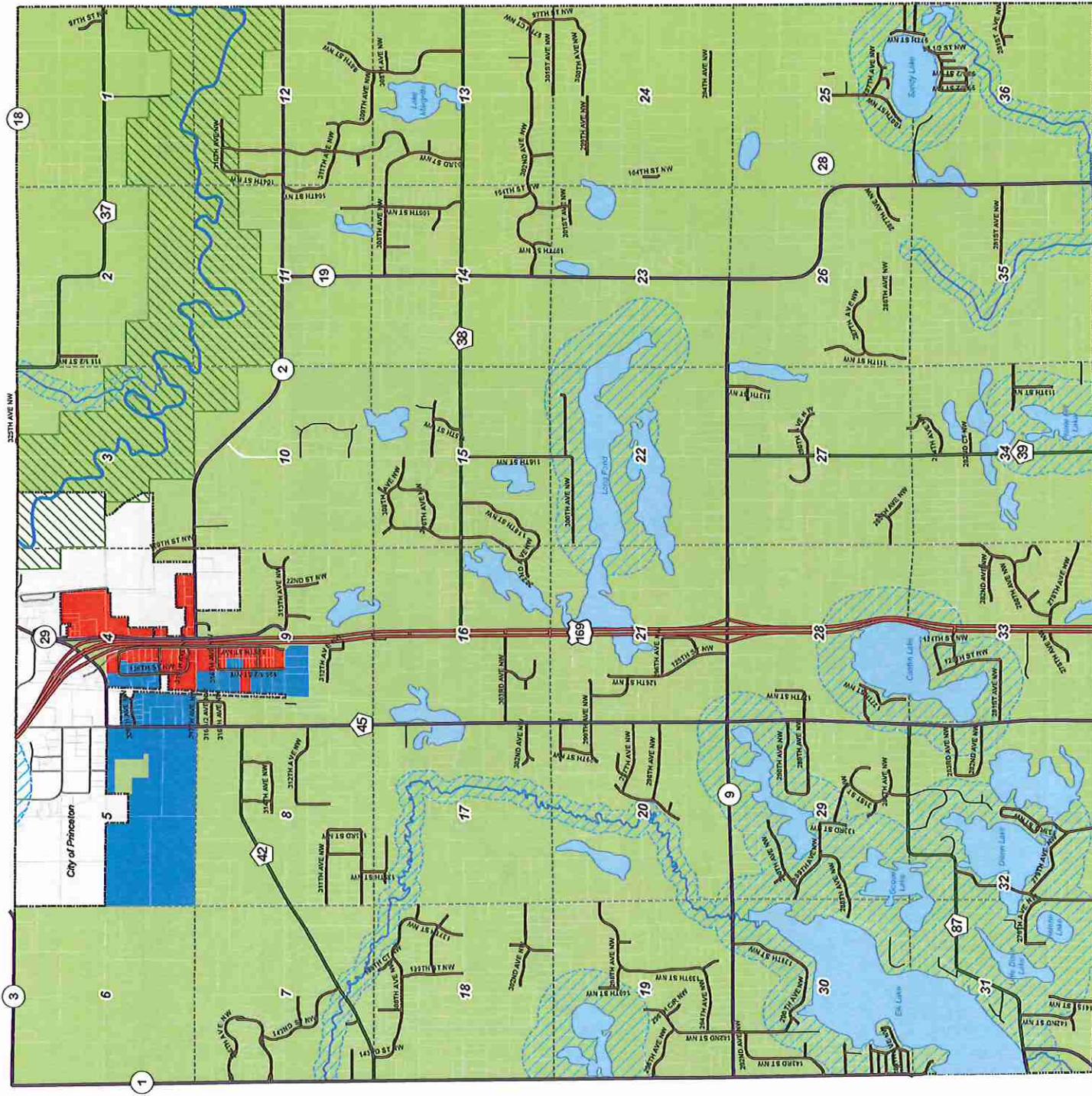
- US Highway
- County-State Aid Highway (CSAH)
- County Road
- Township Road
- Private Road
- City Street

TPC
The Planning Company



**Hakanson
Anderson**

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In accordance with Minnesota Statutes § 394.33, the Zoning Ordinance adopted by Baldwin Township must be consistent with or at least as restrictive as the provisions of the Sherburne County Zoning Ordinance. This limitation on authority to adopt zoning provisions, including designation of zoning districts different than those established by Sherburne County precludes the Baldwin Township from adapting its development regulations to the needs specific to the Subject Area. Baldwin Township is suburban in character and continuing to develop as such, but the regulations adopted by Sherburne County on a County-wide basis are oriented to more agricultural and rural land use activities, which are inadequate to address the more intense land uses occurring in the Subject Area. Incorporation will allow the proposed City to adopt development regulations independent from those enacted by Sherburne County to better meet the needs and challenges that accompany continued suburbanization of the Subject Area. This independence will include the authority to zone additional lands for commercial and industrial development for economic development purposes for which the City of Baldwin would also be able to exercise Tax Increment Finance powers to expand the tax base and provide employment opportunities within the Subject Area.

Potential Annexation

There are no prior or current orderly annexation agreements in place for the Subject Area between Baldwin Township and adjacent jurisdictions. Princeton on March 26, 2020 adopted a 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update (Map 8), which addresses potential annexation of land from the Subject Area:

- The Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update indicates the population of Princeton grew at an annual rate of seven percent from 1990 to 2015. The City forecast a population of 4,831 in 2020 (4,819 actual) and 5,026 in 2030. The Minnesota State Demographic Center estimates the 2022 population of the Princeton as 5,425 persons.
- The Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update does not provide a summary of acres for land uses shown on the Existing Land Use map. The Housing Chapter of the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan update identifies 82 acres of vacant land within the City guided for residential uses that could accommodate between 154 to 205 dwelling units. As of this date, both properties remain undeveloped. The Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan also identifies three blocks within the Downtown Area for potential redevelopment with high density housing or mixed land uses, which has also not been realized as of this date.
- The version of the Princeton Future Land Use Plan map from the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan included as Map 7 illustrates an overly optimistic vision for expansion of Princeton in all directions to a total area of 29,500 acres encompassing approximately 14,200 acres of Princeton Township and Greenbush Township in Mille Lacs County and in Sherburne County approximately 2,100 acres in Blue Hill Township and approximately 9,200 acres within the Subject Area.

This projected future expansion constitutes an additional 27,800 acres of land, 16 times more than the 1,700 acres of land within the current City of Princeton boundary identified by the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. The 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update does not explain the rationale for such expansion of Princeton in terms of projected development and land absorption, nor does it indicate how the City proposes to serve all of this additional acreage with needed municipal services.

- The Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan included a public engagement survey that asked if the City should approach existing businesses within the Subject Area about their interest in connecting to municipal sanitary sewer and water utilities. The survey responses include 28.4 percent indicating that the City should only engage the businesses if existing subsurface sewage treatment systems fail and 21.1 percent that responded that the City should engage with Baldwin Township before contacting businesses. Since the survey was taken, there have been no failures of the private sewage treatment systems for these business properties and the City has not engaged with Baldwin Township to discuss extension of municipal sanitary sewer services.

A more detailed analysis of the proposed Princeton Future Sanitary Sewer Service Boundary of the Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan is provided as Appendix A, with conclusions summarized as follows:

- The area designated for future expansion of Princeton by the City's 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan would take millennia to develop the land uses guided by the Princeton Future Land Use map.
- The phasing plan adopted with the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan is such that extension of municipal sanitary sewer service to areas of the Princeton Future Development Area in Baldwin Township would not occur until after the available land in Mille Lacs County is developed, which would not be for up to 6,200 years based on Princeton's current growth rates.
- The ability to provide municipal sanitary sewer service to the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township would necessitate not only capital expenditures for trunk sewer collection facilities but expansion of the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- The need to expand the Princeton Waste Water Treatment Plant concurrent with extension of municipal trunk sanitary sewer collection facilities into the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township indicates that these areas cannot be served by Princeton's existing municipal sanitary sewer system capacity.

- The natural characteristics and existing development pattern of the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is such that the physical practicality and financial feasibility of subdivision of undeveloped or resubdivision of existing developed properties to be served by municipal sanitary sewer is extremely challenging.

The conclusion of the analysis of Princeton's planning for its potential expansion is that the present pattern of physical development, planning, and intended land uses in the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township and the impact of the annexation to Princeton on those uses is best addressed by the proposed City of Baldwin. The land use and phasing plans for the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan are not justified in that realization of the development forecast would take thousands of years to occur at current growth rates making them unreliable as to the likelihood of ever occurring.

Comprehensive planning for Princeton Township, Blue Hill Township, and Spencer Brook Township is addressed under the jurisdictions of their applicable counties.

- Land use policy for Princeton Township is implemented through the Mille Lacs County Zoning Map (Map 9).
- Development in Spencer Brook Township is guided by the Land Use Plan map of the Isanti Comprehensive Plan (Map 10).
- Land Use Plans for Blue Hill Township and Livonia Township are shown on the Sherburne County 2040 Future Land Use Plan map (Map 11),

The comprehensive planning for Princeton Township, Spencer Brook Township, Blue Hill Township, and Livonia Township do not contemplate attachment of land within the Subject Area to their jurisdictions.

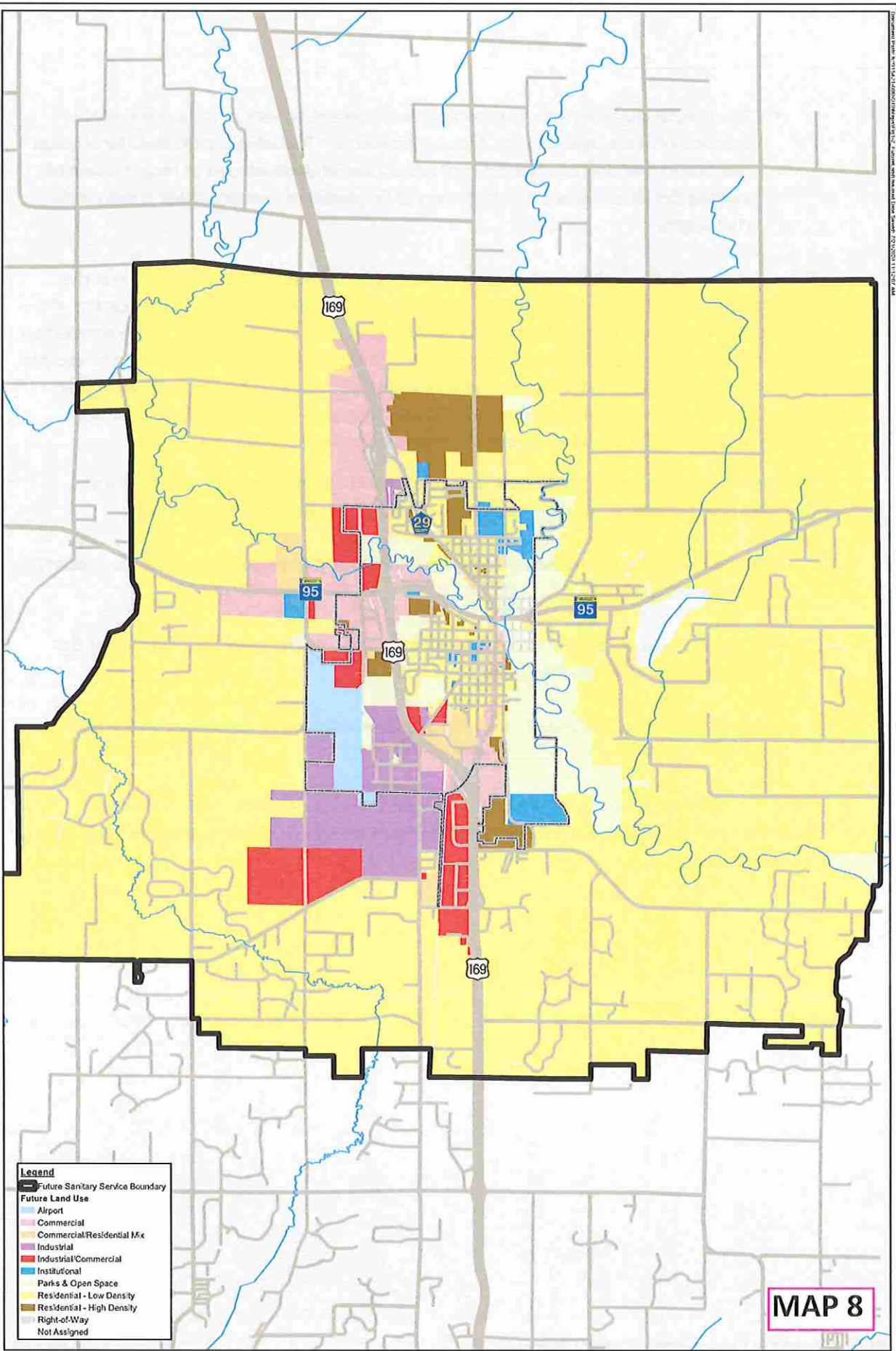
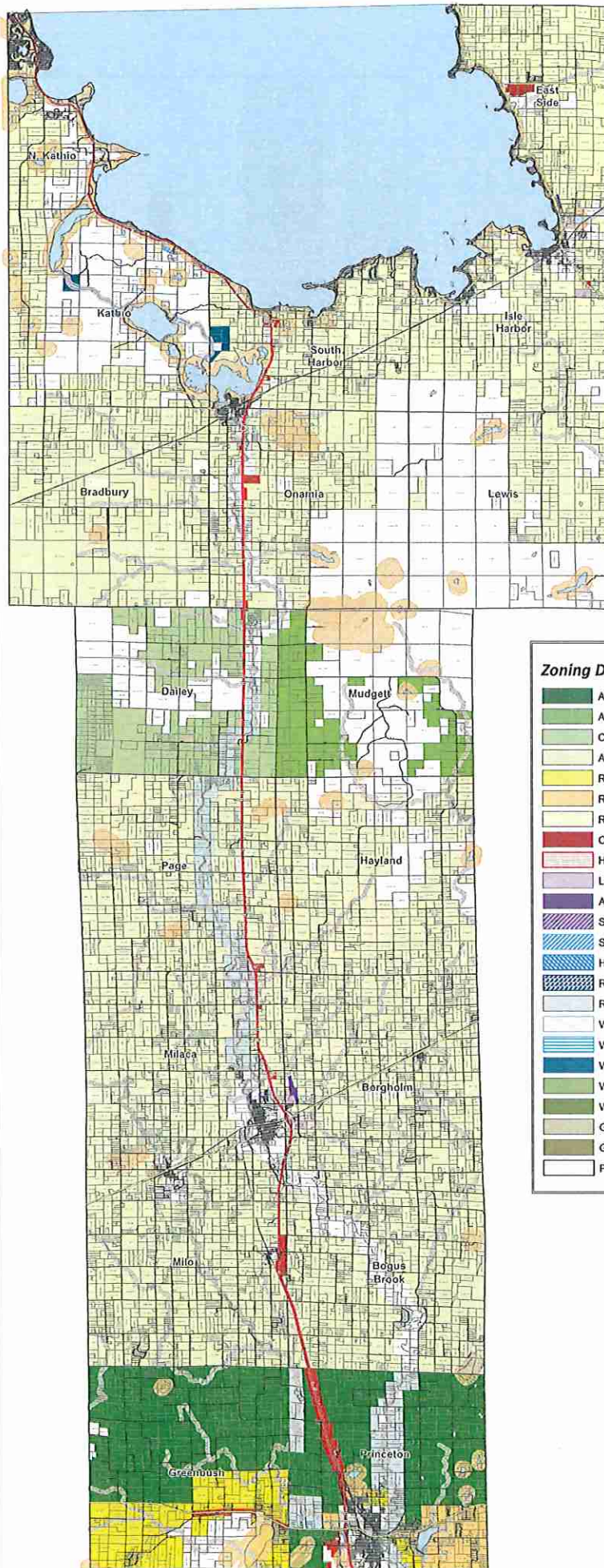
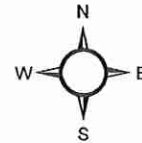


Figure 3-2. Future Land Use
 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan
 City of Princeton, MN

Mille Lacs County Minnesota

Zoning Map

MAP 9



Zoning District

- Agricultural, A-1
- Agricultural, AG
- Conservation Agriculture, C
- Agricultural Residential, A-R
- Residential, R-1
- Rural Residential
- Residential Medium Density, R-2
- Commercial, C-1
- Highway Commercial, C-2
- Light Industrial
- Airport
- Shoreland - Airport
- Special Protection Shoreland, S-1
- High Density Residential/Surface Water, S-2
- Residential Subdivision - Recreational Shoreland
- River Conservation
- Wild and Scenic River - Recreational
- Wild and Scenic River - Scenic
- Wild and Scenic River - Wild
- West Branch of Rum River - Agricultural
- West Branch of Rum River - Transition
- Groundhouse River - Recreational River
- Groundhouse River - Forested
- Public Lands/Government Ownership

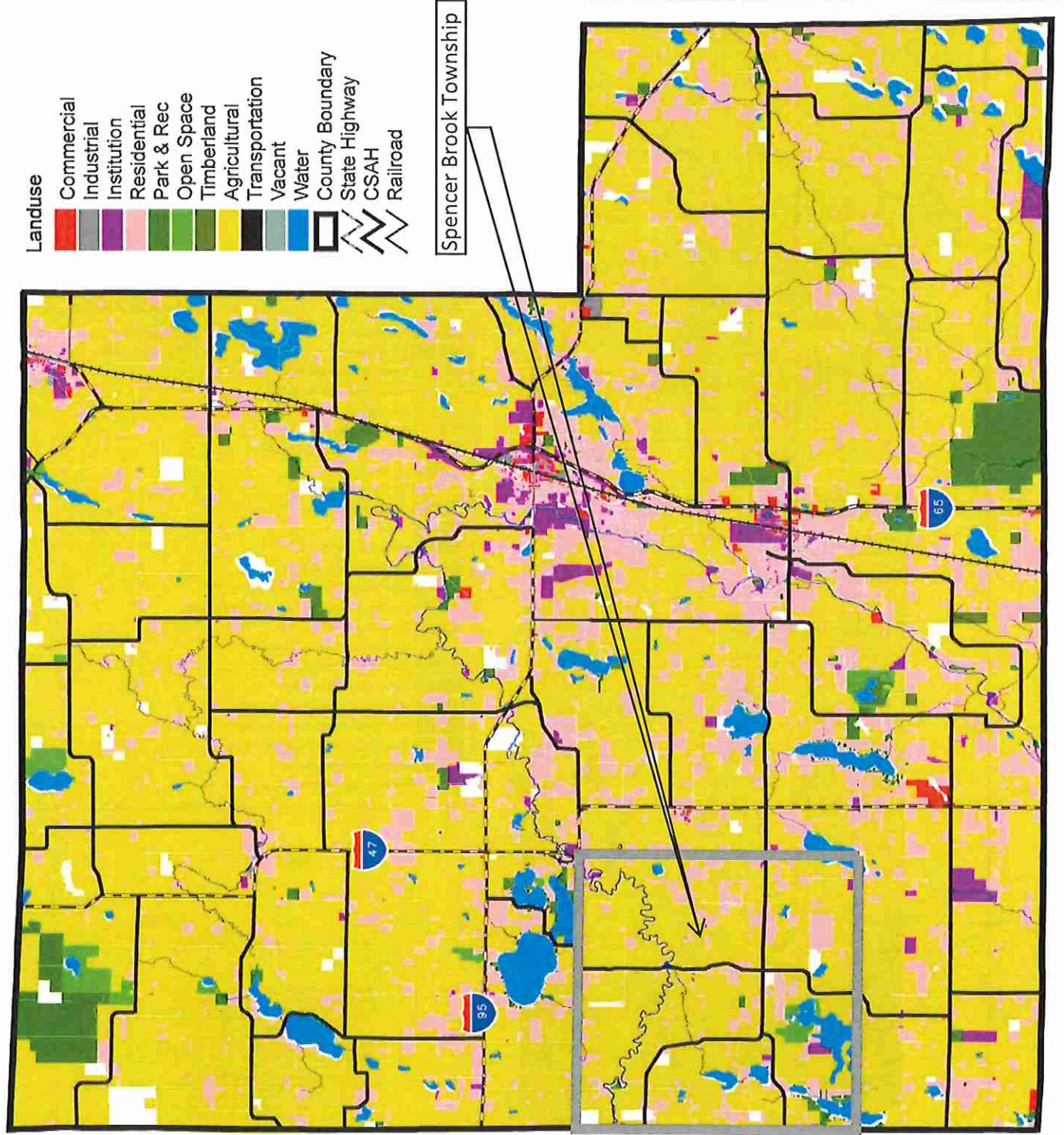
Overlay District

- 300 ft
- 1000 ft

May 1, 2015

0 3 6 Miles

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D. Existing Transportation Network (Incorporation Factor 4)

The fourth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

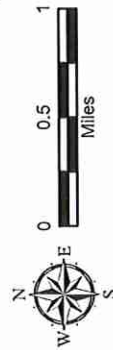
The present transportation network and potential transportation issues, including proposed highway development.

The Subject Area is served by an existing network of Federal, County, and Township roads shown on Map 12. US Highway 169 bisects the Subject Area north/south between the City of Zimmerman and the City of Princeton providing regional access to Baldwin Township. Roadways under Sherburne County jurisdiction including County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 1, CSAH 2, CSAH 3, and CSAH 9 and County Road (CR) 37, CR 38, CR 39, CR 42, CR 45, and CR 87 form a system of minor arterial and collector roadways within Baldwin Township shown on Map 13 that allow movement within the community and to destinations outside of the Subject Area, including the City of Princeton, City of Zimmerman, City of Big Lake, City of Cambridge, and City of Isanti.

Baldwin Township, through its Town Engineer and Town Maintenance staff, is undertaking an evaluation of existing town roads within the Subject Area to establish a rating of existing conditions. This condition index will form the basis of a Pavement Management Plan to provide for programming on-going maintenance and improvement of the existing Town road system. New town roads added to the system through development are to be designed and constructed to Town standards based on the recommendations of the Town Engineer, with access management provisions to collector and arterial roads adopted as part of the Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance to provide for efficient travel.

The present transportation network is well maintained by the State, County, and Baldwin Township to serve the Subject Area. Incorporation of the Subject Area will allow for Baldwin Township to continue management of its transportation network through budgeting, capital improvement planning, and preventive maintenance as part of providing government services to protect public, health, safety, and welfare. Incorporation will also make the Subject Area immediately eligible for Municipal State Aid highway funding based on its existing population of more than 5,000 persons.

Roadway Jurisdiction



US Highway
 County-State Aid
 Highway (CSAH)
 County Road
 Township Road
 City Street
 Private Road

Section Lines
City Limits

TPC
The Planning Company

**Hakanson
Anderson**

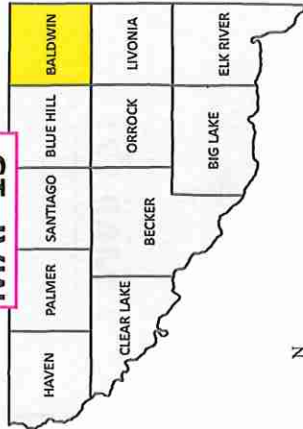
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Map: 1000000
 Date: 10/01/2012
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Baldwin Township

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

MAP 13



DNR Public Waters

Township Boundary

Roads

Principal Arterial (Federal/State)

County Major Collector

County Minor Collector

County Local

Town Collector

Town Road

City Street

Private Road

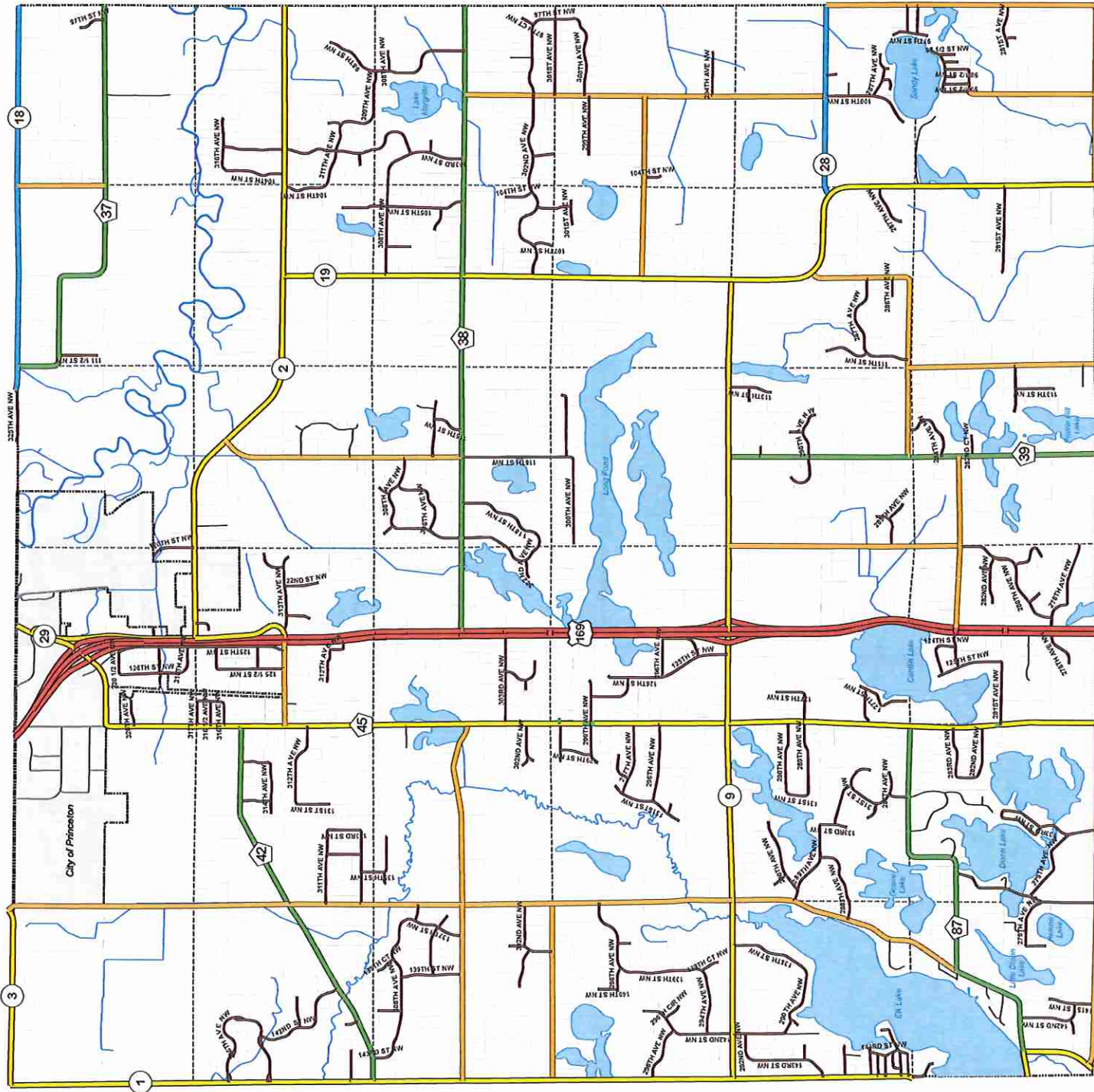
City_of_Princlon_Parcel



Hakanson
Anderson

Source:
Sherburne County 2040 Transportation Plan
Baldwin Township

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E. **Land Use Controls (Incorporation Factor 5)**

The fifth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

land use controls and planning presently being utilized in the Subject Area, including comprehensive plans, policies of the Metropolitan Council; and whether there are inconsistencies between proposed development and existing land use controls.

The Subject Area is not within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and is, therefore, not subject to the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council.

Baldwin Township adopted a Comprehensive Plan on August 4, 2014 addressing the social profile of the community, natural environment, existing and future land uses, economic development, transportation, community facilities, parks and recreation, and inter-government relations. The Baldwin Township Community Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for continued growth and development within the Subject Area.

Ordinance 900 adopting the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance 910 adopting the Baldwin Township Subdivision Ordinance, and Ordinance 920 adopting the Baldwin Township Building Ordinance were approved by the Town Board on April 18, 2022. Baldwin Township assumed responsibility for planning and zoning functions within the Subject Area on June 20, 2022 in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with Sherburne County. The responsibilities exercised by Baldwin Township include comprehensive planning; administration of the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance for site and building plans, conditional use permits, and interim use permits, including for shoreland and floodplain areas; administration of the Baldwin Township Subdivision Ordinance for land division and platting with criteria for premature development, standards for public improvements, financial provisions assigning costs to subdividers, and requirements for securities for completion of improvements; and administration of the Baldwin Building Ordinance for application of the State Building Code and permitting for subsurface sewage treatment systems.

The Baldwin Zoning Ordinance includes the following zoning districts designated on the Zoning Map (Map 14) to implement the goals and policies of the Baldwin Township Community Comprehensive Plan:

- **R1, General Rural District.** The purpose of the R1 district is to provide for locations for agriculture, agriculturally related development, and housing on lots without public sewer or water utilities.
- **C1, General Commercial District.** The purpose of the C1 District is to provide locations for retail and service businesses adjacent to a State or Federal highway, County state-aid highway, County road, or other arterial or major collector road defined by the Baldwin Township Comprehensive Plan.

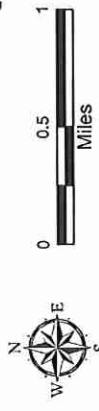
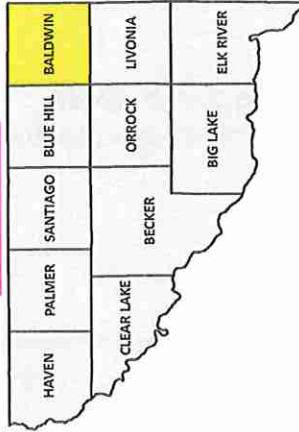
- **I1, General Industrial District.** The purpose of the I1 District is to provide locations for industrial development adjacent to existing industrial development and along Federal, State, County, or town roads.
- **S, Shoreland Overlay District.** The purpose of the S District is to manage the effect of shoreland and water surface crowding, to prevent pollution of surface and ground waters of Baldwin Township, to provide ample space on lots for sewage treatment systems, to minimize flood damages, and to maintain natural characteristics of shorelands and adjacent water areas via shoreland controls that regulate lot sizes, placement of structures, and alterations of shoreland areas.
- **WS, Wild and Scenic Overlay District.** The purpose of the WS District is to designate land use overlay districts along the bluff land and shoreline of the Rum River; regulate the area of a lot, and the length of the bluff land and water frontage suitable for building sites; regulate the setback of structures and sanitary waste treatment facilities from bluff lines and shorelines to protect the existing and/or natural scenic values, vegetation, soils, water quality, floodplain areas, and bedrock from disruption by man-made structures or facilities; regulate alterations of the natural vegetation and topography; prevent poorly planned development; and conserve and protect the natural scenic values and resources of the Rum River and maintain a high standard of environmental quality.
- **F, Floodplain Overlay District.** The F District is adopted in the public interest to promote sound land use practices, and floodplains are a land resource to be developed in a manner which will result in minimum loss of life and threat to health, and reduction of private and public economic loss caused by flooding; to maintain eligibility in the national flood insurance rate program; and to preserve the natural characteristics and functions of watercourses and floodplains in order to moderate flood and stormwater impacts, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, protect aquatic and riparian habitat, provide recreational opportunities, provide aesthetic benefits and enhance community and economic development.

The Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum of 2.5 acres of land for any lot for single family residential use, which must include a minimum of 40,000 square feet of buildable land for the structures and subsurface sewage treatment system. Under the Baldwin Township Building Ordinance, a Certificate of Compliance is required for an existing subsurface sewage treatment system any time a building permit is issued for a property or if there is a property sale. These land use controls over the Subject Area allow for development consistent with the desired suburban character while protecting the natural environment and public, health, safety, and welfare.

There are not inconsistencies between the uses planned by the Baldwin Township Comprehensive Plan and its land use controls. Incorporation will not impact Baldwin Township's existing land use controls, instead will increase the authority to independently engage in long-range planning and development control within the Subject Area.

Baldwin Township Zoning Map

MAP 14



Township Boundary

City Limits

Zoning

- R1, General Rural - 21,558ac (97.3%)
- C1, General Commercial - 163ac (0.8%)
- I1, General Industrial - 426ac (1.9%)
- S, Shoreland - 5231ac (23.6%)
- WS, Wild and Scenic - 1339ac (6%)

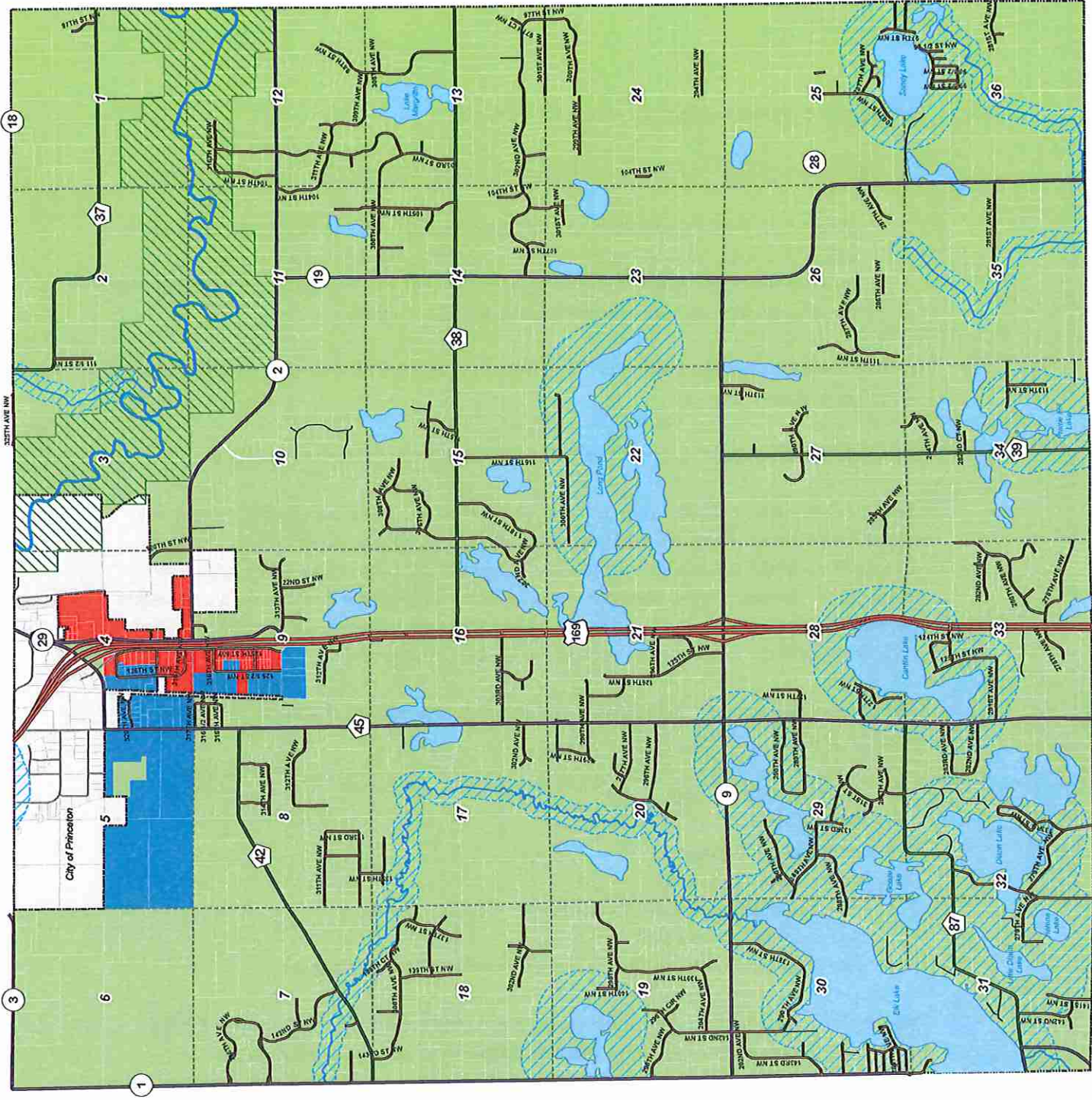
Roads

- US Highway
- County-State Aid Highway (CSAH)
- County Road
- Township Road
- Private Road
- City Street



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F. Existing Government Services (Incorporation Factor 6)

The sixth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Existing levels of governmental services being provided to the Subject Area, including water and sewer service, fire rating and protection, law enforcement, street improvements and maintenance, administrative services, and recreational facilities and the impact of the proposed action on the delivery of services.

This factor will be addressed with additional testimony by Baldwin Township officials and staff, as well as Ehlers Public Finance.

Baldwin Township adopted Urban Town Powers under Minnesota Statute 368.01 in 1991.

Baldwin Township is governed by an elected five-member Board of Supervisors serving the Subject Area at-large, which would not change with incorporation. Township elections are currently held on the second Tuesday of March each year. Incorporation will result in the election cycle shifting to November in even years. The Subject Area is also served by a seven-member Planning Commission and a five-member Park Committee appointed by the Town Board to advise on land use and park and open space matters, respectively.

Baldwin Township employs the following full- and part-time staff to provide all necessary municipal services within the Subject Area:

- Town Clerk/Treasurer
- Deputy Clerk
- Administrative Assistant
- Public Works Supervisor
- Public Works Maintenance Technician
- Seasonal staff (as needed)
- Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief and a full complement of fire fighters.

Other professional services supplementing the Town staff are provided on a contract basis including legal, planning, engineering, building inspections, finance, property assessor, wastewater system operation, and information technology. Use of consultants for provision of these services is typical for government units the size of Baldwin Township and is not expected to require changes until such time as the Subject Area grows at a rate to warrant the hiring of additional full-time staff.

All official government business, including administration, public meetings, and elections is conducted at the Town Hall and Public Works Building located at 30239 128th Street within the Subject Area. The property also includes the Fire Hall.

Baldwin Township has acquired 30 acres at the northwest quadrant of 293rd Avenue and 128th Street within the Subject Area and undertook an architectural space needs study to evaluate plans for a future administrative and fire hall building. If Baldwin Township proceeds with construction of the proposed administration/fire hall building, Public Works could eventually expand to occupy the existing Town Hall and Fire Hall spaces. The acquisition and planning for future facility space needs ensures that Baldwin Township will continue to provide efficient and effective governmental services to the entire Subject Area. Moving forward with construction of a new administration and fire hall building requires certainty as to the boundaries of the service area and financing.

Baldwin Township operates its own Fire Department that provides fire protection services within the Subject Area, as well as service to adjacent Blue Hill Township and mutual aid response to Fire Departments in the region. Baldwin Fire Department staff includes a full-time Chief, Assistant Chief, three Captains and 32 paid-on-call volunteer fire fighter positions. The Baldwin Fire Department is staged in a separate building on the same property as the Town Hall and Public Works Building. The ISO Public Protection Rating for the Subject Area is 06/10. The Fire Chief will provide additional testimony regarding fire protection for the Subject Area.

Police protection is provided by the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office. The Sherburne County Sheriff will describe public safety considerations in separate testimony.

There are two public parks within the Subject Area owned and maintained by Baldwin Township that provide a full range of recreational opportunities, as well as beaches, boat launches, and rain gardens. There are 30 acres of the 30,700 acre Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge in the southeast corner of the Subject Area. There is also a 100 acre private game farm within the Subject Area. Recreation programming is available within the Subject Area through Sherburne County, youth organizations, and area school districts.

Baldwin Township has since 2016 maintained and operated a Community Sewage Treatment System approved by Sherburne County for the Frontier Trails plat through a subordinate service district. The wastewater facility is operated on a contract basis on behalf of Baldwin Township and is operated as a municipal utility.

There will be no unusual administrative or service demands as a result of the Subject Area incorporating. Incorporation will eliminate overlapping jurisdiction of Sherburne County for comprehensive planning, zoning, and subdivision controls. Incorporation will also make available additional financial tools that cannot be used by townships. No portion of the Subject Area can be better served by another government jurisdiction and no boundary adjustment is necessary for municipal service delivery or to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

G. Existing or Potential Environmental Problems (Incorporation Factor 7)

The seventh factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Existing or potential environmental problems and whether the proposed action is likely to improve or resolve these problems.

As of June 20, 2022, Baldwin Township provides for permitting, inspections, and monitoring of subsurface sewage treatment systems previously administered by Sherburne County. The Baldwin Township Building Ordinance includes a chapter establishing regulations for subsurface sewage treatment systems consistent with Sherburne County regulations, which are consistent with and more stringent than Minnesota Pollution Control Agency standards under Minnesota rules chapters 7080 through 7083 as follows:

- A certificate of compliance is required at time of property transfer when filing a certificate of real estate value at the point of sale of a property.
- A certificate of compliance is required to obtain a building permit unless such a certificate has been issued within the previous 10 years for the subsurface sewage treatment system serving the property.
- A five foot separation between distribution media and seasonal high water or a limiting layer in lieu of pressure distribution or multiple trenches using serial distribution is not accepted.

There are six subdivisions within the Subject Area that are served with Community Sewage Treatment Systems that were approved by Sherburne County before the Township enacted its own planning and zoning regulations. Five of these systems are privately operated by the applicable Homeowner's Association, and one of the systems (Frontier Trails) is operated by Baldwin Township via a contracted Wastewater Facility Operator. Baldwin Township no longer allows for Community Sewage Treatment Systems through its Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance.

Other performance standards included in the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance and Baldwin Township Subdivision Ordinance regulate stormwater management, erosion control, shoreland development, and land uses allowed within the floodplain. Administration of the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991 remains within the jurisdiction of Sherburne County in accordance with the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance and Memorandum of Understanding approved by Baldwin Township and Sherburne County. A Sherburne County Wetland Conservation Land Use Permit is required for the issuance of a building permit or any land disturbing activities regulated by the Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinance. In addition, a wetland delineation must be approved by Sherburne County for any land division or plat application regulated by the Baldwin Township Subdivision Ordinance.

Incorporation of the Subject Area will only strengthen Baldwin Township's protection and stewardship of sensitive natural environmental resources, which in turn furthers the public health, safety, and welfare.

H. Fiscal Impact (Incorporation Factor 8)

The eighth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Fiscal impact on the Subject Area and adjacent units of local government, including present bonded indebtedness; local tax rates of the county, school district(s), and other governmental units, including where applicable, the net tax capacity of platted and unplatted lands and the division of homestead and non-homestead property; and other tax and governmental aid issues.

This factor is addressed in detail in the fiscal analysis prepared by Ehlers Public Finance, which concludes that incorporation is in the best interests of the Subject Area.

I. Affected and Adjacent School Districts and Communities (Incorporation Factor 9)

The ninth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Relationship and effect of the proposed action on affected and adjacent school districts and communities.

Almost all of the Subject Area is within the Princeton Public School District (ISD 477). There are four properties along the south boundary of the Subject Area that are within the ISD 728 Elk River-Otsego-Rogers-Zimmerman School District. School district boundaries are independent of and transcend municipal boundaries. Incorporation will not impact either School District.

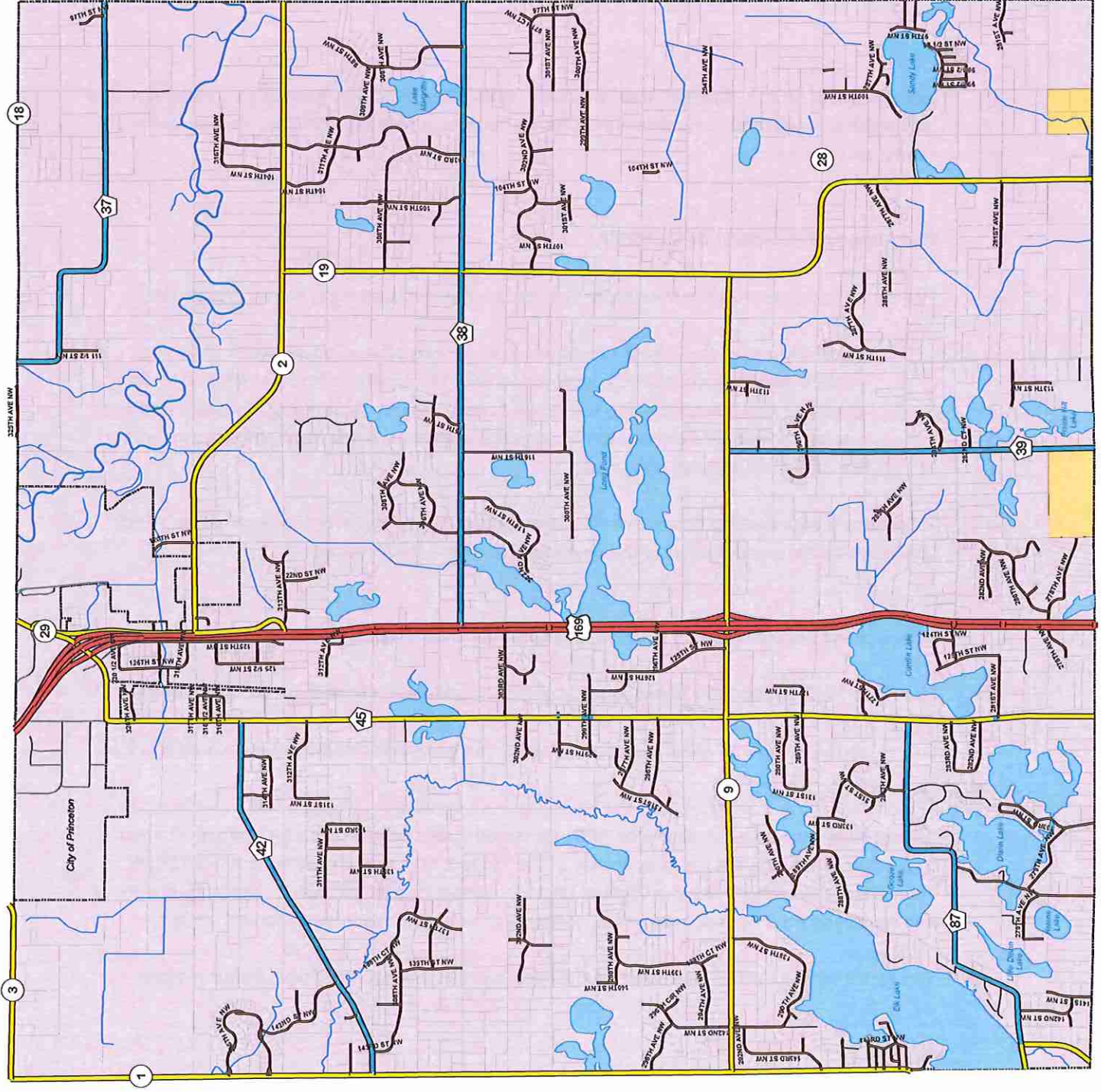
This factor will be further addressed by the fiscal analysis prepared by Ehlers Public Finance.

MAP 15

	Elk River Area ISD 728
	Princeton ISD 477



DISCLAIMER: Baldwin Township does not warrant the accuracy nor the correctness of the information contained in this map. It is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of this information. In no event will Sherburne County be liable for any damages, including loss of business, lost profits, business interruption, loss of business information or other pecuniary loss that might arise from the use of this map or the information it contains. Map information is believed to be accurate but accuracy is not guaranteed.



J. Delivery of Services by Existing Government (Incorporation Factor 10)

The tenth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Whether delivery of services to the Subject Area can be adequately and economically delivered by the existing government.

Baldwin Township currently provides all levels of required public services within the Subject Area as economically and efficiently as possible. An annual audit is prepared in a form and with content similar to that required for cities with a population greater than 2,500 persons. However, the Subject Area has outgrown the township form of government.

Planning, financing, and delivery of suburban levels of services is too complex and lacks certainty in terms of budgeting and financing required under a township versus city form of organization for Baldwin Township's current and anticipated level of expenditures. Moreover, incorporation will make the Subject Area immediately eligible for Municipal State Aid highway funding based on its existing population of more than 5,000 persons. Incorporation will also allow for use of tax increment financing for economic development purposes, a tool not available to Townships.

Incorporation will allow for the proposed city to provide for the most efficient and economical delivery of services that will be needed for the existing and anticipated growth that is to occur within the Subject Area.

K. Whether Services are Best Provided by Existing Government (Incorporation Factor 11)

The eleventh factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Analysis of whether necessary governmental services can best be provided through the proposed action or another type of boundary adjustment.

Baldwin Township is providing for delivery of suburban levels of municipal services to the Subject Area and the community has invested greatly in the establishment and maintenance of the present community structure. Adoption of the Baldwin Township Comprehensive Plan outlines goals and policies for growth management to preserve desired community character and to protect the natural environment, and promoting new businesses development and expansion of existing businesses at appropriate locations within the Subject Area. Future growth within the Subject Area is directed within this framework to follow an orderly pattern of development capitalizing on existing infrastructure to allow for efficient delivery governmental services to protect public health, safety, and welfare while also avoiding a premature need for investment in additional services or infrastructure.

Appendix A outlines an analysis of potential annexation of a 9,200 acre area of Baldwin Township to Princeton as part of a Future Development Area designated by the City's 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. Beyond land use and utilities, the potential for Princeton to seek annexation of such a large area of Baldwin Township as to delivery of governmental services to within the Princeton Future Development Area. The table below provides a summary of governmental services provided by Baldwin Township and the City of Princeton:

**Table 6 – Comparison of Government Services;
Baldwin Township/City of Princeton**

	Baldwin Township	Princeton
Administration	•	•
Finance	•	•
Planning & Zoning	•	•
Building Inspection	•	•
Parks & Recreation	•	•
Engineering	•	•
Road/Street Maintenance	•	•
Police Protection	•	•
Fire Protection	•	•
Sewer and Water Utilities		•

Source: The Planning Company LLC

Baldwin Township currently provides government services consistent with that of a suburban community necessary for the entire Subject Area, including that portion of Baldwin Township that Princeton may propose to annex based on the City's 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. These services meet the expectations of residents and businesses within the community considered as part of the levy approved at the Township's annual meeting.

The only service not provided by Baldwin Township within the Subject Area is sanitary sewer and water utilities (notwithstanding the Frontier Trails Subordinate Service District). As addressed by Appendix A, the natural environment conditions and pattern of existing development within the Subject Area make municipal sanitary sewer and utilities not practical from a physical and financial standpoint.

The extent and level of government services provided within the Subject Area is currently and best provided by Baldwin Township. Princeton cannot better serve the properties in Baldwin Township included within its proposed Future Development Area.

This factor will be further addressed by the testimony of other Town staff, the Sherburne County Sheriff, and Ehlers Public Finance.

L. Degree of Contiguity of Boundaries (Incorporation Factor 12)

The twelfth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Degree of contiguity of the boundaries of the Subject Area and adjacent units of local government.

Baldwin Township was organized on September 13, 1850 including all of the territory that is now Baldwin Township, Blue Hill Township and Santiago Township. In 1877, Baldwin Township was reorganized and reduced its area to its present boundaries to the west, south, and east, all within Sherburne County. The City of Princeton exists adjacent to the north boundary of the Subject Area and there have been annexations of land from Baldwin Township to the City of Princeton from time-to-time that have altered the north boundary of the Subject Area.

There are no orderly annexation agreements involving the Subject Area in place with the City of Princeton or other abutting townships.

There is no boundary adjustment possible that will improve the contiguity of the current boundaries of the Subject Area and adjacent government units. Rather, incorporation of the Subject Area will serve to preserve the current contiguity of Baldwin, which is in the best interest of the Subject Area and will further protect public health, safety, and welfare.

M. Applicability of State Building Code (Incorporation Factor 13)

The thirteenth factor set forth in Minnesota Statutes for consideration regarding incorporation is:

Analysis of the applicability of the State Building Code.

Baldwin Township adopted Ordinance 920 adopting the State Building Code on April 18, 2022 by reference. The Township contracts with Rum River Construction Consultants as the Town Building Official to administer the State Building Code throughout the Subject Area. No other boundary adjustments will improve upon the administration and enforcement of the State Building Code services currently provided by Baldwin Township.

Furthermore, Minnesota Statutes 362B.121 requires municipalities with a population greater than 2,500 persons to administer and enforce the State Building Code, which does not apply to townships. Incorporation will, therefore, strengthen application of the State Building Code within the Subject Area as the city will be required to continue its administration and enforcement.

Incorporation is in the best interests of the Subject Area for continued public health, safety, and, welfare protection through application of the State Building Code.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis provided by this Planning Report supports the following conclusions for incorporation of Baldwin Township:

- Baldwin Township is already suburban in character. Existing land use within the Subject Area includes 2,495 households within single family dwellings on mostly large-lot platted parcels within single family residential neighborhoods, numerous commercial and industrial business, and public and quasi-public uses. Continued growth of the Subject Area is projected to occur as the market for development expands north along the US Highway 169 corridor to the northwest of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.
- Baldwin Township already exercises many municipal powers, including comprehensive planning; zoning; subdivision; building permits; septic permitting, inspection, and monitoring; administration; fire protection; parks; and public works.
- The existing township form of government is not adequate to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- Incorporation will provide for the capability to use all municipal authorities to provide for effective and efficient delivery of public services and infrastructure; protect public health, safety, and welfare; and to preserve the desired character of the entire community.
- The community has invested greatly in the establishment and preservation of the present character of the Subject Area; incorporation is in the best interests of the entirety of Baldwin Township.
- There is no evidence that Baldwin Township, or any portion thereof, would be “*better served*” by annexation to an adjacent municipality or any other boundary configuration.
- The existing contiguity of jurisdictional boundaries will be preserved by incorporation.
- Incorporation of Baldwin Township is consistent with all statutory criteria and requirements.

Based upon the analysis of the factors outlined by Minnesota Statute § 414.02, Subdivision 3(a) for consideration of incorporation provided by this Planning Report and the conclusions of this Planning Report with regards to Minnesota Statute § 414.02, Subdivision 3(b) outlined herein, Baldwin Township should be granted incorporation as the City of Baldwin.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Princeton Annexation Analysis

Appendix B: Resume of D. Daniel Licht



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APPENDIX A

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michael Couri/Robert Ruppe

FROM: D. Daniel Licht

DATE: 29 February 2024

RE: Baldwin Township; Princeton Annexation Analysis

TPC FILE: 169.01

BACKGROUND

Baldwin Township has filed a petition for incorporation as a city pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 414. Representatives of the City of Princeton, in correspondence with the Town Attorney regarding the Town incorporation petition, indicated that Princeton is likely to request annexation of that portion of Baldwin Township identified for future municipal sanitary sewer service by the City of Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan dated December 17, 2020. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an analysis of the planning feasibility for implementation of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan for serving areas of Baldwin Township that the Town proposes to incorporate as part of the City of Baldwin in the context of factors that must be considered in any decision for incorporation set forth in Minnesota Statutes § 414.02, Subd. 3.

Exhibits:

- A1 Area Location Map
- A2 Princeton Future Sanitary Sewer Service Districts Map
- A3 Princeton Future Trunk System Phasing Map
- A4 Princeton Existing Land Use Map
- A5 Princeton Future Land Use Map
- A6 Princeton Future Development Area; Baldwin Township Map
- A7 Princeton Future Development Area; Mille Lacs County Map

ANALYSIS

Geography. Princeton is located to the north of Baldwin Township on the US Highway 169 corridor. Part of Princeton is located in Sherburne County and part is located in Mille Lacs County. In addition to Baldwin Township, Princeton abuts Princeton Township and Greenbush Township, both in Mille Lacs County (Exhibit A1).

Table A - City of Princeton Area

	Acres	%
Sherburne County	814ac.	24.1%
Mille Lacs County	2,560ac.	75.9%
Total Acres	3,374ac.	100.0%

Source: Hakanson Anderson, Inc.

Population. The table below summarizes population change in Baldwin Township and Princeton between 2000 and 2020. The growth in Baldwin Township was almost three times greater than that of Princeton during this period.

Table B – Population 2000-2020

	2000	2010	2020	Change 2000-2020	
				#	%
Baldwin Township	4,623	6,734	7,104	2,481	53.7%
Princeton (Sherburne)	7	50	53	46	657.1%
Princeton (Mille Lacs)	3,926	4,648	4,766	840	21.4%
Princeton (Total)	3,933	4,698	4,819	886	22.5%

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

The Minnesota State Demographic Center identifies the 2022 population of Baldwin Township and Princeton as 7,043 and 5,425 persons, respectively. The change in the population of Baldwin Township and Princeton between 2020 and 2022 reflects, in part, the annexation of approximately 240 residents in December 2021 when a mobile home park was annexed from Baldwin Township to Princeton.

In 2000, only 0.2 percent of Princeton's population was located in Sherburne County and only 1.1 percent of Princeton's population was located in Sherburne County in 2020. While the percentage increase in Princeton's Sherburne County population is very high between 2000 and 2020, on an annual basis that increase amounts to only 2.3 residents per year. The 2022 population estimate for Princeton has only 351 persons or 6.5 percent of Princeton's total population located in Sherburne County. The annexation of the approximately 240 mobile home park residents from Baldwin Township to Princeton accounts for 68.4 percent of Princeton's population in Sherburne County.

The changes in population between 2000 and 2022 indicate first that Baldwin Township is growing at a much faster rate than is Princeton. The data further indicates that to the extent that Princeton's population is increasing, the growth is occurring in Mille Lacs County, except when related to annexation.

Households. The table below summarizes the change in number of households in Baldwin Township and Princeton between 2000 and 2020. Consistent with the comparison of population change between 2000 and 2020, the household growth in Baldwin Township has been more than double than that of Princeton during this period.

Table C – Households 2000 – 2020

	2000	2010	2020	Change 2000-2020	
				#	%
Baldwin Township	1,556	2,334	2,531	975	62.7%
Princeton (Sherburne)	4	36	39	35	875.0%
Princeton (Mille Lacs)	1,620	1,890	2,065	445	27.5%
Princeton (Total)	1,624	1,926	2,104	480	29.6%

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

The Minnesota State Demographic Center identifies the number of households in 2022 in Baldwin Township and Princeton as 2,495 and 2,338, respectively. As with population, only 0.2 percent of Princeton's households in 2000 were located in Sherburne County, only 1.9 percent of Princeton's households in 2020 were located in Sherburne County and 6.2 percent of Princeton's households in 2022 were located in Sherburne County. From 2000 to 2020, Princeton averaged only 1.5 new households in Sherburne County per year. After annexation of the mobile home park from Baldwin Township to Princeton Township between 2020 and 2022, the number of located in Sherburne County in 2022 is 144 or 6.2 percent of Princeton's total number of households.

This information supports the conclusion that most new residential growth in Princeton has occurred in Mille Lacs County over time, particularly when you consider that the 240 households annexed from Baldwin had existed for many years prior to their annexation.

Building Permit Data. Information presented in Table D summarizes building permit data for new residential single family, two family, and townhouse dwelling units issued by Baldwin Township (single family dwellings only) and Princeton between 2014 and 2023. The data for Princeton was obtained through Department of Labor and Industry reports, which also indicated that no building permits for new residential dwellings had been issued in Princeton from 2008 to 2016, a period that extends well beyond the Great Recession of the 2000s.

Table D – Single Family, Two Family & Townhouse Building Permit Data 2014-2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	Mean/Y ear
Baldwin Township	16	10	25	40	39	43	31	42	29	24	299	29.9 du.
Princeton	0	0	0	3	15	16	10	18	8	2	72	7.2 du.

Source: Department of Labor and Industry; Sherburne County; Baldwin Township

New single family residential construction in Baldwin Township for the last 10 years is four times greater than that in Princeton during this period, which also included two-family and townhouse dwelling units. Review of aerial maps suggests that many of the new homes constructed in Princeton has been infill development within existing platted subdivisions and not undeveloped land being absorbed.

This information suggests that given both jurisdictions being located the same geographically relative to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and US Highway 169 corridor that, from a market perspective, a new home in Baldwin Township is more in demand for homebuyers than one located in Princeton. This trend has been sustained consistently for the last 10-year period since the housing market emerged from the effects of the Great Recession during the 2000s.

Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan guides future development and expansion of the City's municipal sanitary sewer system. The City's Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan lists the existing sewer wastewater flows at 390,000 gallons per day with a total plant capacity of 1,635,000 gallons per day. This leaves 1,245,000 gallons per day of capacity as of 2020 that is available for new users.

The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan indicates that the existing municipal sanitary sewer service area is approximately 1,700 acres. The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan designates a Princeton Future Sanitary Sewer Service Area (Exhibit A2) that is approximately 29,500 acres or 46 square miles in area. Of the 27,800 acres within the Princeton Future Development Area, defined as the difference between the future municipal sanitary sewer service area boundary and the existing service area, the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan estimates that approximately 6,800 acres is undevelopable right-of-way, airport, conservation land, floodplain, and parks.

The gross area of the Princeton Future Development Area is more than 16 times larger than the current service area. For context, annexation of the 27,800 acres of the Princeton Future Development Area would make Princeton the seventh largest city in Minnesota by area whereas its population ranks 151st out of 855 cities in Minnesota. Adoption of a plan indicating potential future municipal sanitary service to an area does not portend development of that area occurring if such development is not based on realistic growth assumptions. The City of Hibbing is the largest city in Minnesota with an area of 119,300 acres, but there is no expectation that it would ever grow from the 72nd most populous city in Minnesota to be the largest by population simply because of its area.

The Princeton Future Development Area is further divided into Sewer Districts. These Sewer Districts reflect areas planned to be served by municipal trunk sewer collection pipes programed by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. The portion of the Princeton Future Development Area that includes Baldwin Township is divided by three Sewer Districts identified as Southwest, Southeast, and East (Exhibit A2). The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan includes a phasing plan for construction of the required improvements to provide municipal sanitary sewer service for buildout of the Sewer Districts in four phases (Exhibit A3). Development of Phases 1 and 2 of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan consists primarily of the existing 1,700 acre service area (Exhibit A4) and the approximate 14,200 acres of the Princeton Future Development Area located in Mille Lacs County. The portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is all included in Phases 3 and 4 of the improvement program.

The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan estimates that new single family dwellings have an average sewer flow of 180 gallons per day. With 1.215 million gallons per day of capacity available within the existing Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant, Princeton could theoretically serve 6,750 new single family dwellings without allocating municipal sanitary sewer capacity for other uses. It is therefore unlikely that the existing available capacity of the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant is sufficient to serve the entire Princeton Future Development Area.

The phasing plan outlined by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan proposes that the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant would be expanded to 7.0 million gallons per day of capacity with Phase 3, which is also the phase that includes the Sewer Districts encompassing the areas of Baldwin Township within the Princeton Future Development Area. Provision of municipal sanitary sewer utilities to areas of Baldwin Township within the Princeton Future Development Area is not planned to be served by the existing capacity of the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant, but instead is part of a combined Phase 3 and Phase 4 future trunk sewer pipe and Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion that will cost an additional \$104,873,000.

Princeton Future Land Use. Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan includes a Future Land Use map (Exhibit A5) for the existing incorporated limits of Princeton and surrounding township areas anticipated to be served by Princeton municipal sanitary sewer (and water) utilities. Table E provides the future land uses guided for the Princeton Future Development Area as part of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan. The Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan assumes that Low Density Residential uses will develop at 3.5 units per acre (Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Plan, Table 6-1 p.21), which would yield approximately 63,350 dwelling units within the 18,100 acres of Princeton Future Development Area planned for such uses.

**Table E - Princeton Future Development Area
By Guided Land Use**

	Acres	%
Low Density Residential	18,100	87.5%
High Density Residential	385	1.9%
Commercial/Residential Mix	99	0.5%
Commercial	597	2.9%
Industrial	493	2.4%
Industrial/Commercial	568	2.7%
Institutional	64	0.3%
Parks & Open Space	78	0.4%
Right-of-Way	302	1.5%
Total Acres	20,686	100%

Source: City of Princeton

Land Absorption. The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan references growth projections formulated by Princeton as part of its prior 2018 Comprehensive Plan, but does not include projections for future land absorption. Table D above summarizes Princeton's average rate for new single family, two family, and townhouse development at 7.2 dwellings per year for the past 10 years. At the 3.5 dwelling units per acre as set out in the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan and using Princeton's 10 year growth rate of 7.2 Low Density Residential dwellings per year, only 2.1 acres of developable land would be absorbed each year by new growth within the Princeton Future Development Area.

Absorption of all of the 18,100 acres land within the Princeton Future Development Area that is guided for Low Density Residential land uses would take 8,619 years based on Princeton's growth rate for the last 10 years. Development of the estimated 13,000 acres within just the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Sewer Districts within Mille Lacs County programed by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan that are guided for Low Density Residential land uses would take approximately 6,200 years before there would be demand to add land from the Sewer Districts that include Baldwin Township for Low Density residential land uses.

The designation of the Princeton Future Development Area has no basis in the recent growth of Princeton, especially as it relates to planning for future growth in Sherburne County. The majority of Princeton is geographically located in Mille Lacs County, as is its population, households, and the limited extent of any new residential construction that has occurred. Moreover, the acreage within the Princeton Future Development Area would take millennia to develop at the growth rates historically experienced by Princeton or which could be reasonably be projected to occur based on recent trends. To this end, the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan document cannot be relied upon as a basis to justify annexation of areas of Baldwin Township within the Princeton Future Development Area.

Baldwin Township Future Development Area. The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan does not provide a breakdown of the future development area between Sherburne County and Mille Lacs County, but our office estimates that approximately 9,200 acres or 33.1 percent of the Princeton Future Development Area is land within Baldwin Township.

Approximately 7,800 acres of Baldwin Township included in the Princeton Future Development Area is planned for low density residential use at 3.5 dwelling units per acre by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Study consisting of detached single family and two-family dwellings. The Princeton Future Land Use Plan identifies locations in Baldwin Township for High Density Residential land uses east of US Highway 169 north of 317th Avenue (CSAH 2). The Princeton Future Land Use Plan indicates annexation of existing commercial and industrial businesses in Baldwin Township along the west side of US Highway 169 and existing industrial uses and undeveloped areas west of 128th Street (CSAH 45) north of County Road 42. The lands guided for High Density Residential, Commercial, and Industrial land uses could develop at any time based on market conditions. The longest timeframe for development would be for areas guided Low Density Residential. Absorption of the approximate 7,800 acres of land within Baldwin Township included in the Princeton Future Development Area that are guided for Low Density Residential land uses would take an estimated 3,700 years based on the current growth rate being experienced by Princeton.

Town staff has prepared a map (Exhibit A6) illustrating the Princeton Future Development Area in Baldwin Township with information regarding parcels 10 acres or less in area, and which show wetlands, floodplains, and designation of the Wild and Scenic River District that present limitations to the extension of municipal sanitary sewer services planned by Princeton to this area.

- **Wetlands.** There are extensive wetlands identified by the National Wetland Inventory comprising 1,890 acres or 20.6 percent the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township. The Wetland Conservation Act of 1991 protects these areas from impacts of development, including mitigation requirements at a minimum 2:1 ratio for those wetlands that are filled, although the first criteria for evaluation of potential impacts is avoidance.

The required protection of wetlands reduces the development potential of individual parcels due to the need to design building sites, lots and blocks to avoid impacts, locate streets to circumvent wetlands, and plan utilities to support the resulting design pattern or bypass wetland areas. As such, wetlands typically are a significant physical and financial barrier to development served by municipal sanitary sewer (and water) utility expansion.

- **Floodplain.** There are approximately 1,492 acres of land within the 100-Year Floodplain within the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area that includes Baldwin Township or 16.2 percent of this area. These areas are subject to periodic flood inundation, which may result in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base. As a result, floodplain areas are restricted for development purposes as part of the National Flood Insurance Program. Mitigation of the public health and safety issues related to development of 100-Year Floodplain areas either through importation of fill or specialized construction requirements, increases development costs. Therefore, the 100-Year Floodplain is both a physical and financial barrier to expansion of urban development served by municipal sanitary sewer (and water) utilities.
- **Wild and Scenic River.** The Rum River flows south along the east boundary of Princeton through Princeton Township, then through northeast Baldwin Township, and into Spencer Brook Township to the east. The sensitive natural resources of the Rum River, including shorelines, are protected through the Wild and Scenic River program administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The original management plan for the stretch of the Rum River that flows through Baldwin Township was adopted in 1978, and the current rules that govern management of State lands and local land use regulation along the Rum River are contained in Minnesota Rules Chapter 6105.1400 – 6105.1500. The section of the Rum River through Baldwin Township is classified as Scenic and is designated over 1,222 acres or 13.3 percent of the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township. Minnesota Rules 6105.1400, Subp. 1.B provides that if land is annexed to another jurisdiction, the land use regulations applicable to that land are to comply with the provisions of the Management Plan that applied to the land before the transfer.

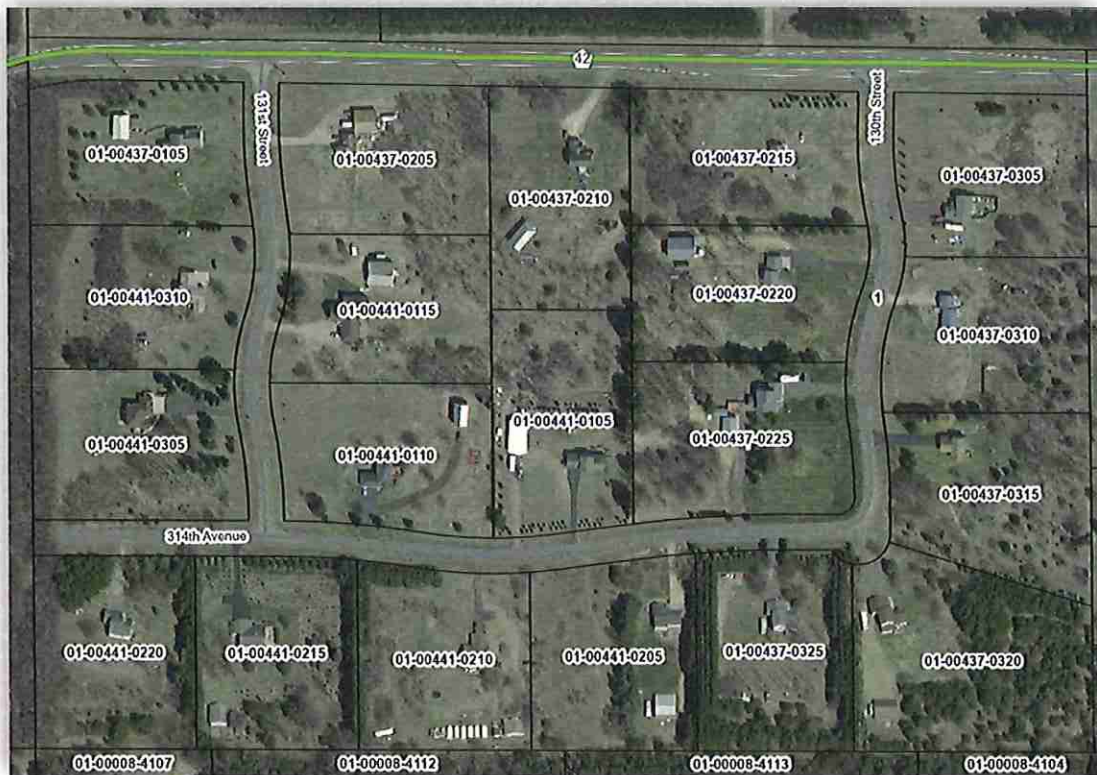
The lower density allowed for residential development within areas subject to the Rum River Wild and Scenic Management Plan is a financial barrier to extension of municipal sanitary sewer utilities.

- **Parcels 10 acres in Area or Less.** Land uses served by municipal sanitary sewer are most efficiently developed through subdivision of large contiguous tracts of undeveloped properties. Developers will seek out these areas because of their greater development potential and ease at which new subdivisions can be constructed and lots sold for the developer to receive their returns on investment as quickly as possible.

Not having areas that have not been previously subdivided results in increased costs if utilities need to be extended past existing development to serve undeveloped properties. Retrofitting existing developments for municipal sanitary sewer service to off-set trunk costs related to extension of municipal sanitary sewer service is also financially burdensome and impractical given the limitations for redevelopment of existing lots based on road, lot, and block layouts,

placement of single family dwellings and detached accessory buildings within lots, sewer connection points to existing buildings, and abandonment of existing septic systems. Resubdivision of existing developed parcels also requires more effort due to the need to assemble multiple properties and potential higher costs due to the need to acquire both land and buildings for which the owners will be seeking value.

The Prairie Pineview plat, shown below, is typical of residential development in Baldwin Township and highlights these issues. The lots within the plat are designed to comply with the requirements of the Sherburne County and Baldwin Township Zoning Ordinances for a minimum lot area of 2.5 acre, minimum lot width of 200 feet, and minimum lot depth of 300 feet.



Placement of homes within the Prairie Pineview plat is generally in the center of the lots, except where off-set to meet front yard setback requirements for a side yard abutting a public right-of-way. The plat also illustrates the allowance of large scale detached accessory structures within Baldwin Township. The Zoning Ordinance allows total detached accessory building area up to three percent of the area of a platted lot (or 3,267 square feet for a 2.5 acre minimum area lot). The area of individual buildings is limited to 1,800 square feet for parcels between 2.5 and 5.0 acres or 5,500 square feet for lots greater than 5.0 acres in area.

The Princeton Zoning Map indicates most of the parcels at the outer limits of the City are zoned R-1, Residential District, which is intended to provide for development of low density one-family detached dwellings along with other residentially-related facilities which serve the residents in the district. The Princeton R-1 District requires a minimum lot area of 12,500 square feet, minimum lot width of 80 feet and side yard setbacks of 10 feet for interior lot lines and 30 feet for side yards of corner lots. While it should be theoretically possible to subdivide a 2.5 acre,

200 foot wide lot into smaller lots that are a minimum of 12,500 square feet in area and 80 feet in width, the layout of the roads, lots, blocks and placement of structures within the Prairie Pineview plat illustrates the difficulties in such resubdivision efforts.

Within the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township, 66.5 percent of the area is parcels that are 10 acres in area or less, many in platted subdivisions similar in character to the Prairie Pineview plat. The limited areas of larger tracts that could be developed as new subdivisions to be served with municipal sanitary sewer services will reduce market attraction of such development because of the overall smaller area available for development and added costs either of leap-frogging existing development or the difficulties associates with serving existing development with municipal sanitary sewer and resubdivision of existing developed properties.

- **Young Park.** Baldwin Township owns 81.56 acres of land at the southwest quadrant of 305th Avenue (CR 38) and 108th Street (CSAH 19), which is within the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township. The parcel has been developed as a community park with a full size baseball field, a basketball court, Gaga pit, a pavilion available for rental, picnic facilities, and playground equipment. There are also four miles of crushed granite trails with boardwalks over wetland areas within the natural areas of the parcel. The Town has plans to expand the facilities at Young Park to continue to serve the recreational needs of Baldwin Township residents.



Mille Lacs County Future Development Area. Town staff prepared the same analysis of the Princeton Future Development Area for the areas within Mille Lacs County in Princeton Township to consider wetlands, floodplain, Rum River Wild and Scenic corridor, and parcels less than 10 acres in area (Exhibit A7).

In contrast with the area of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township, the Future Development Area in Mille Lacs County is much less constrained for future development served by municipal sanitary sewer services. In particular, areas north of Princeton to the east and west of the US Highway 169 corridor have large contiguous tracts unencumbered by wetlands and floodplain areas and mostly removed from the Rum River Wild and Scenic Management Plan area. This fact may explain why the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan has placed Phase 1 and Phase 2 of its expansion within Princeton Township rather than Baldwin Township.

It also must be noted that the pattern of large contiguous tracts of land continue north of the Princeton Future Sanitary Sewer Service Boundary along US Highway 169. It may be more efficient from a physical development and financial cost perspective to continue future growth of Princeton north along US Highway 169 in Mille Lacs than to try and overcome the challenges in Baldwin Township due to the existing land use pattern and more extensive sensitive natural environmental resource areas that are barriers to development served by municipal sanitary sewer utilities.

As noted above, the area guided for Low Density Residential Uses within the Princeton Future Development Area within Mille Lacs County would be projected to take 6,200 years to fully develop based on Princeton's current growth rates.

Population Loss. There are 909 single family homes identified within the potential area that is anticipated Princeton will request be annexed to the City in response to the Town's incorporation petition. Information above from the Minnesota State Demographic Center identifies that Baldwin Township has a 2022 population of 7,043 people and 2,495 households, or a mean of 2.82 people per household. Assuming that the 909 households Princeton will seek to annex have a mean household size of 2.82 consistent with the Town overall, approximately 2,563 people will be annexed to Princeton if the City's expected annexation request is granted. The remaining population for Baldwin Township (or the City of Baldwin) would be 4,479 people. The impact of the population loss as a result of the portion of Baldwin Township within the Princeton Future Development Area will be evaluated further by fiscal analysis prepared by the Town's financial consultant Ehlers Public Finance.

Non-Conforming Structures. The Baldwin Zoning Ordinance allows single family residential properties to have detached accessory building area in one or more buildings up to three percent of the area of a platted lot and four percent of the area of a unplatted parcel. The area of an individual detached accessory building is limited to 1,800 square feet for lots or parcels five acres in area or less and 5,500 square feet for parcels greater than five acres in area. Detached accessory buildings constructed on lots five acres in area or less or within the Shoreland Overlay District or Wild and Scenic Overlay District are allowed to be up to 25 feet in height; detached accessory buildings on lots larger than five acres are allowed to be up to 35 feet in height.

In contrast, the Princeton Zoning Ordinance limits accessory buildings on residential properties to 800 square feet and up to 15 feet in height. Larger building areas are allowed with approval of a conditional use permit. Existing detached accessory buildings on residential properties with Future Development Area that were constructed subject to the requirements in effect for Baldwin Township would become non-conforming upon annexation if they do not also comply with the performance standards adopted by Princeton. The non-conforming status of these structures would be a burden upon the property owners.

CONCLUSION

The City of Princeton is anticipated to request annexation of approximately 9,200 acres of Baldwin Township to Princeton in response to Baldwin Township's petition for incorporation. Princeton is likely to base this request on recommendations included in the City's Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan that proposes expansion of Princeton to an area more than 16 times greater than its current area. The resulting City of Princeton would be the 7th largest city in Minnesota and have potential to add 63,500 additional residents, in addition to at least that many residents within the portion of the Future Development Area located in Mille Lacs County. Analysis of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan and other relevant data identifies:

- More than three-quarters of the geographic area of Princeton is located in Mille Lacs County.
- The majority of Princeton's existing population and households are located in Mille Lacs County.
- Princeton has averaged construction of only 7.2 new single family, two family, and townhouse dwelling units per year for the last 10 years.
- The 10-year rates of average new single family, two family, and townhouse dwelling construction equates to a mean absorption rate of 2.1 acres per year.
- The absorption of the land with Princeton Future Development Area defined by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan based on current growth rates for the City would take:
 - Up to 8,600 years for the 18,100 acres within the Princeton Future Development Area guided for Low Density Residential Land Uses.
 - Up to 6,200 years for the 13,000 acres for the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Mille Lacs County guided for Low Density Residential Land Uses.
 - As many as 3,700 years for the 7,800 acres for the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township guided for Low Density Residential Land Uses.
- The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan includes a phasing plan that divides the Princeton Future Development Area into four phases for construction of sewer infrastructure necessary to extend municipal sanitary sewer service for urban development.
- Fundamental land use and financial planning principles dictate that the capacity of infrastructure constructed to serve the Sewer Districts established by the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan be fully utilized before expanding services and development to other areas within the Future Development Area according to the plan.

- The extension of sanitary sewer and the accompanying development of those portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township included in Phases 3 and 4 of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan would not be initiated for up to 6,200 years based on land absorption projections for the Princeton Future Development Area.
- The Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan phasing plan programs construction of municipal trunk sewer collection facilities and Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion in Phase 3 necessary to serve areas of Baldwin Township within the Princeton Future Development Area.
 - The phasing plan of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan includes expansion of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant treatment capacity from 1.635 million gallons per day currently to 7.0 million gallons per day in Phase 3 and to 15.0 million gallons per day in Phase 4.
 - The expansion of the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity in Phase 3 and Phase 4 coincides with the construction of trunk sewer collection systems programed by the phasing plan for the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township.
- The timing of construction of trunk sewer and Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity in Phase 3 of the Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan indicates that the existing Princeton municipal sanitary sewer system does not presently have capacity to serve areas of Baldwin Township.
- The natural conditions and existing development pattern within the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township will impede the extension of municipal sanitary sewer utilities:
 - Wetlands encumber over 20 percent the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township, the extent of which reduces the area available for development with extension of municipal sanitary sewer service and are a physical and financial barrier to such development.
 - More than 16 percent of the areas of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is identified as being within the 100-Year Floodplain, which is both a physical and financial barrier to development with extension of municipal sanitary sewer services.
 - Approximately 13 percent of the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is subject the Rum River Wild and Scenic Management Plan. The development regulations established in accordance with the Management Plan and Minnesota Rules create limitations for development and is a financial barrier to extension of municipal sanitary sewer utilities.

- Approximately two-thirds of the existing land use pattern within the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is parcels with an area of 10 acres or less, many of which are residential subdivisions with lots not less than 2.5 acres in area that are developed with single family dwellings and detached accessory buildings. The limited areas of larger tracts available for subdivisions to be served with municipal sanitary sewer services will reduce market attraction for such development because of the overall smaller area available for development and added costs either of leap-frogging existing development or the difficulties associated with serving existing development with municipal sanitary sewer and resubdivision of existing developed properties.
- Young Park is an 81.5 acre parcel within the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township that has been developed by the Town as a community park. The parcel serves the recreational needs of Baldwin Township residents, does not require municipal sanitary sewer services, and is not to be considered available for development.
- The Princeton Future Development Area for the areas within Mille Lacs County is much less constrained for future development served by municipal sanitary sewer services with areas north of Princeton to the east and west of the US Highway 169 corridor having large contiguous tracts unencumbered by wetlands and floodplain areas and mostly removed from the Rum River Wild and Scenic Management Plan area.
- It will likely be more efficient from a physical development and financial cost perspective to continue future growth of Princeton north along US Highway 169 in Mille Lacs than to try and overcome the challenges in Baldwin Township due to the existing land use patterns and the extent of sensitive natural environmental resource areas.
- Annexation of the 9,200 acres of Baldwin Township to Princeton would result in a decrease in the Town's population from 7,043 people to 4,479 people based on Minnesota State Demographic Center population and household estimates for 2022.
- Existing detached accessory structures within the Future Development Area that do not comply with performance standards of Princeton would be classified as non-conforming upon annexation creating an undue burden upon property owners.

Annexation of the 9,200 acres of Baldwin Township included within the Princeton Future Development Area to Princeton on the basis of the City's 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan is not justified.

The Princeton Future Development Area designated by the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan would take millennia to develop the land uses guided by the Princeton Future Land Use map. The phasing plan adopted with the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan is such that extension of municipal sanitary sewer service to areas of the Princeton Future Development Area in Baldwin Township would not occur until after the available land in Mille Lacs County is developed, which would not be for up to 6,200 years based on Princeton's current growth rates.

The ability to provide municipal sanitary sewer service to the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area would necessitate not only capital expenditures for trunk sewer collection facilities but expansion of the Princeton Wastewater Treatment Plant. The need to expand the Princeton Waste Water Treatment Plant concurrent with extension of municipal trunk sanitary sewer collection facilities into the portions of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township indicates that these areas cannot be served by Princeton's existing municipal sanitary sewer system capacity.

Furthermore, natural characteristics and existing development pattern of the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township is such that the physical practicality and financial feasibility of subdivision of undeveloped or resubdivision of existing developed properties to be served by municipal sanitary sewer is extremely challenging. Large areas of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township are encumbered by protected wetlands, 100-Year Floodplain, and public waters including the Rum River. These sensitive natural environment resources represent both physical and financial barriers to development. More than two thirds of the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township consists of parcels that are 10 acres in area or less, many within existing platted subdivisions that are fully developed. This existing land use pattern creates its own challenges for future new development served by municipal sanitary sewer services either by creating physical barriers that have to be bypassed with trunk facilities or existing property owners that would be burdened with the enormous cost of retrofitting municipal sanitary sewer service and the impracticalities of redevelopment.

The analysis of the Princeton 2020 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer System Plan is relevant to the factors for consideration of Baldwin Township's petition for incorporation set forth by Minnesota Statutes 414.02, Subdivision 3.B. The conclusion of this analysis is that the present pattern of physical development, planning, and intended land uses in the portion of the Princeton Future Development Area within Baldwin Township can be better served by the incorporated City of Baldwin rather than by annexation of those areas to the City of Princeton.

Baldwin Township

EXHIBIT A1

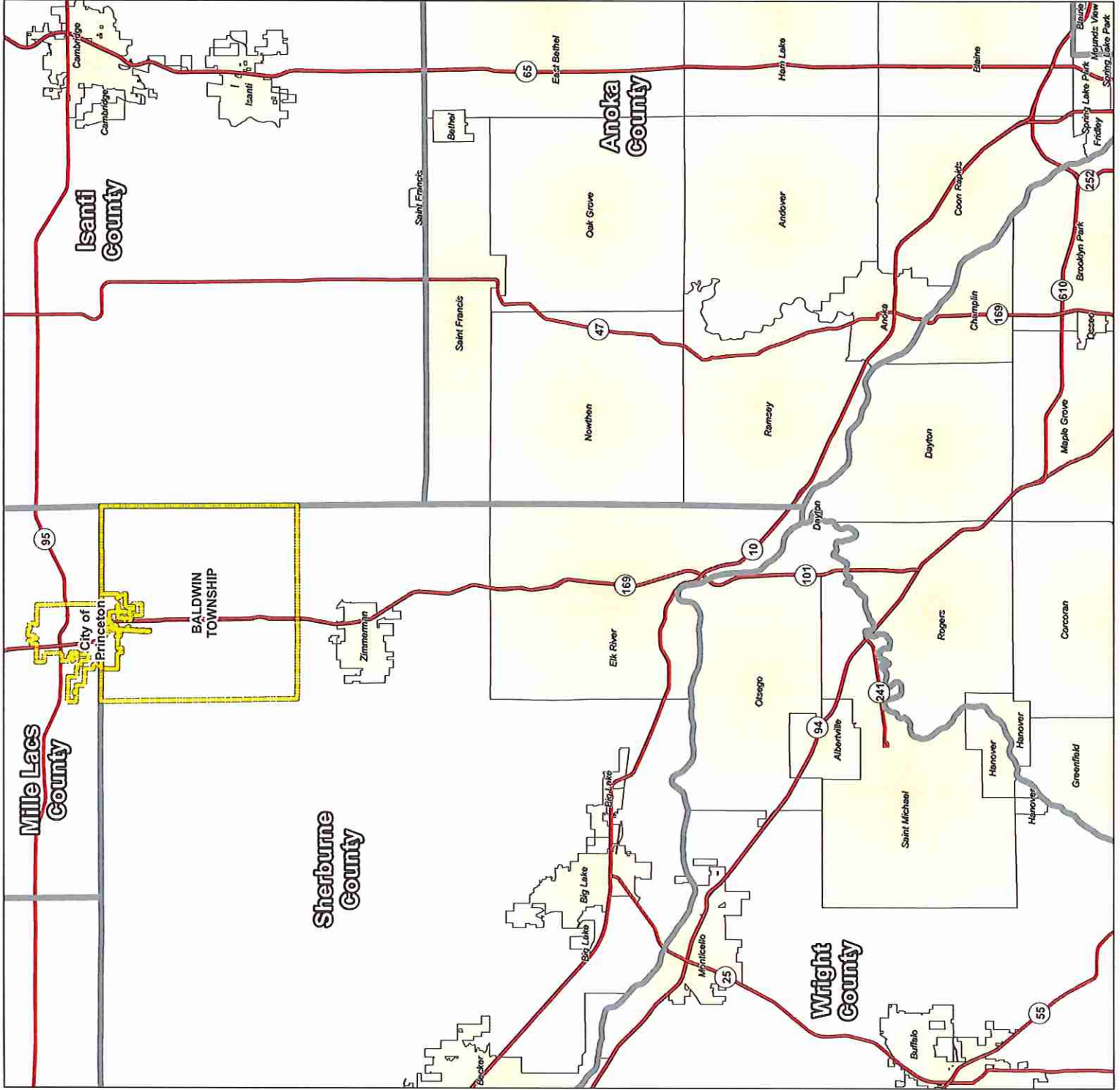
Area Location

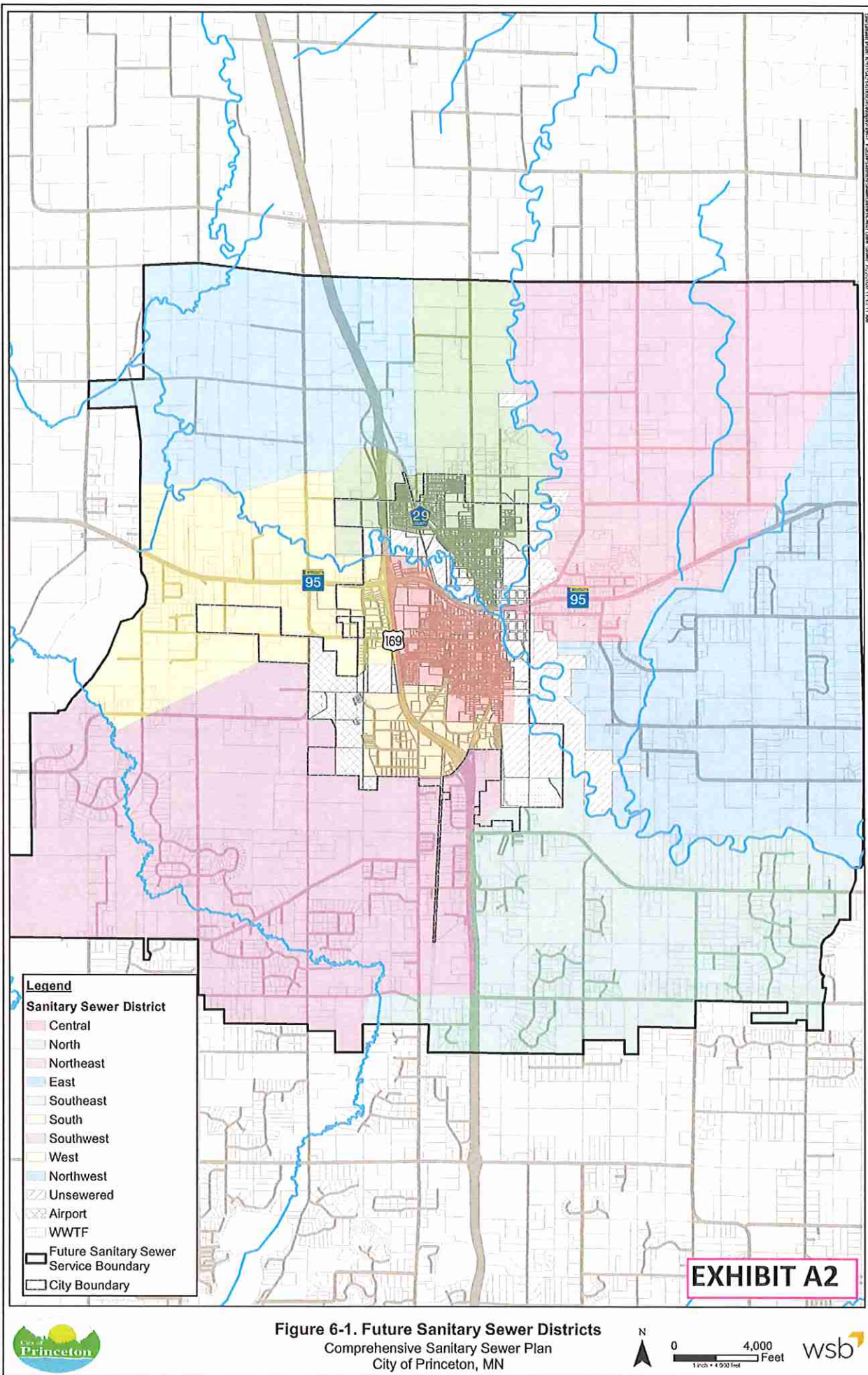
Legend

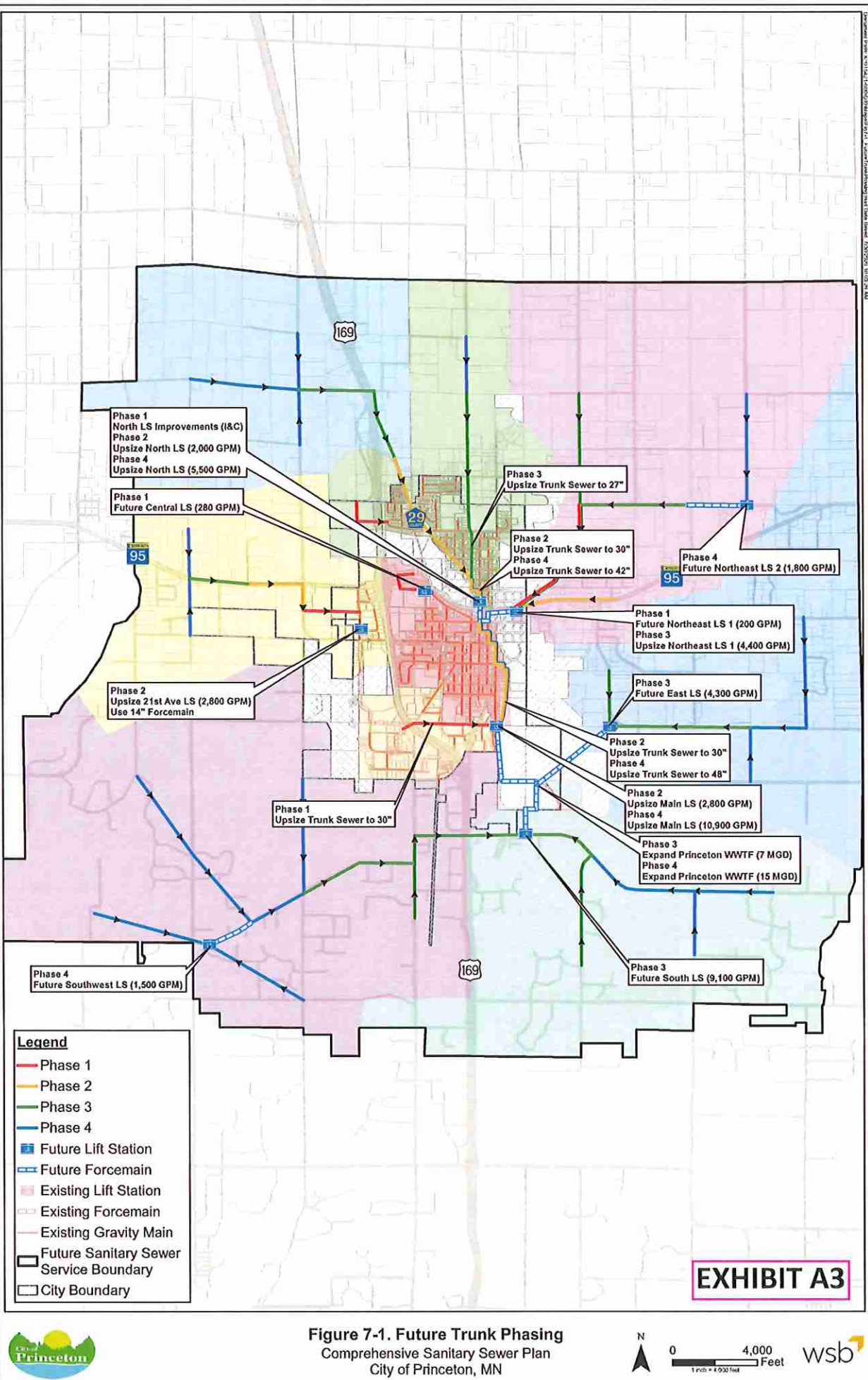
-  Baldwin Township and Princeton
-  County Boundary
-  Highways
-  City Boundary



DISCLAIMER: Baldwin Township does not warrant the accuracy nor the correctness of the information contained in this map. It is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of this information. In no event will Sherburne County be liable for any damages, including loss of business, lost profits, business interruption, loss of business information or other pecuniary loss that might arise from the use of this map or the information it contains. Map information is believed to be accurate but accuracy is not guaranteed.







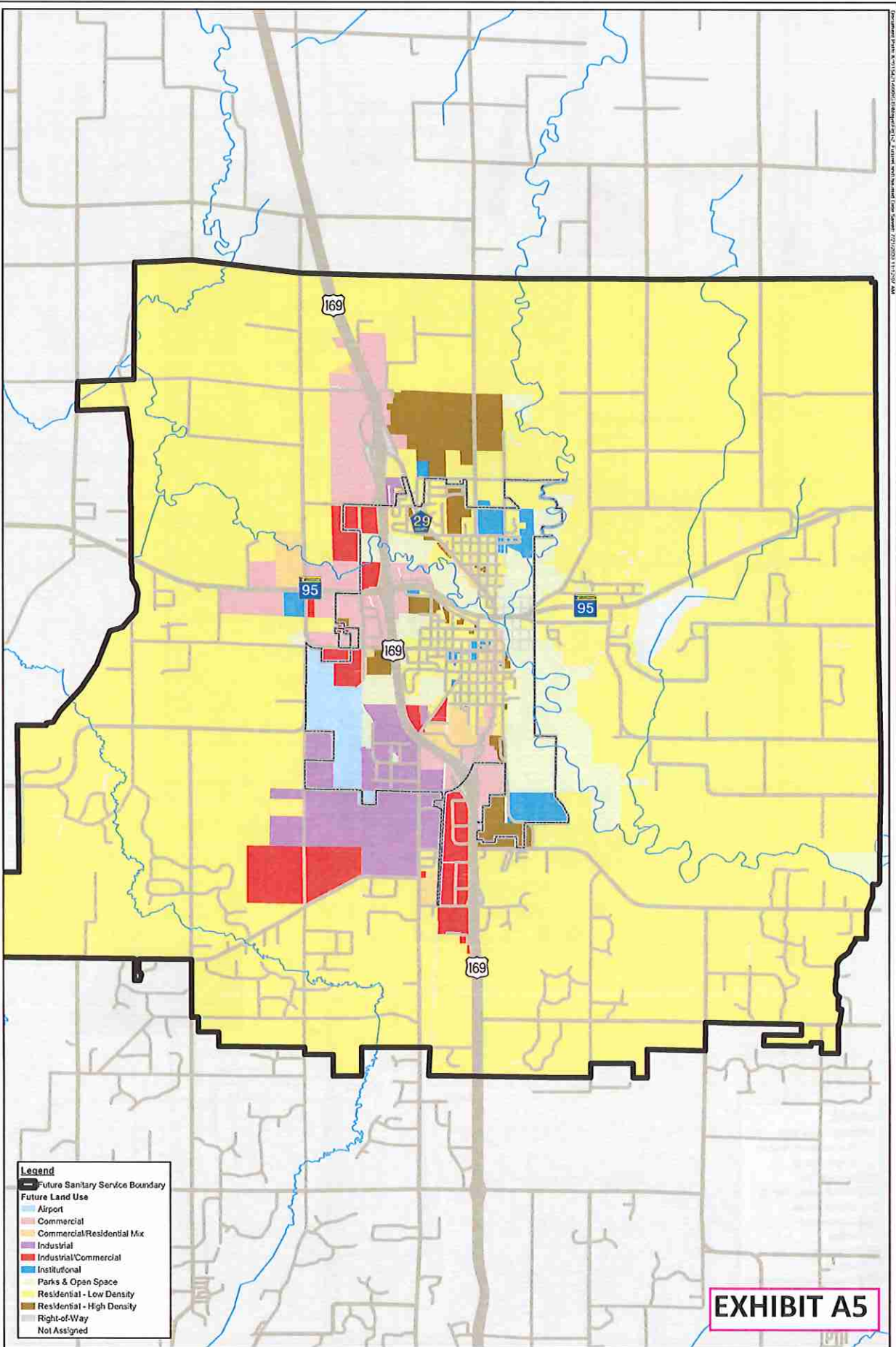


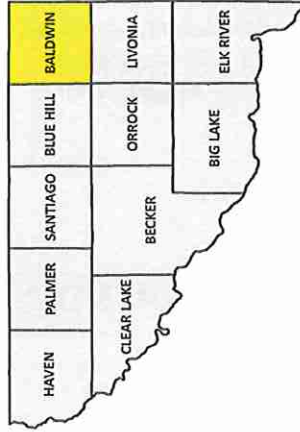
EXHIBIT A5



Figure 3-2. Future Land Use
 Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan
 City of Princeton, MN

Baldwin Township

Princeton Future Development Area Baldwin Township



Legend

- Princeton Sewer Area Boundary
- Total Future Service Area - 9173 Acres
- Parcels 10ac or Less - 3646 Acres
- Rum River WS District - 1222 Acres
- Floodplain - 1492 Acres
- NWI - 1890 Acres
- City of Princeton

EXHIBIT A6



SOURCE: Princeton Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan (Figure 6-1)

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EDUCATION

University of Minnesota

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Minor in Applied Economics

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association

Minnesota Chapter of American Planning Association

Lions International Charter Member

EXPERIENCE

2010 - Present

Chief Manager, The Planning Company LLC

Serving Baldwin Township, MN; Bayport, MN; Foreston, MN; Lakeville, MN; New Richmond, WI; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN

1999-2010

Senior Planner, NAC

1994-1998

Planner, NAC

AREAS OF SPECIALTY

Comprehensive Planning

Consultant services to units of local and regional government on development programming and management of comprehensive plans, policy planning, land use and environmental regulations, economic development programs, and implementation.

Representative projects: Bayport, MN; Lakeville, MN; Nowthen, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN; St. Augusta, MN

Development Regulations, Codes, and Administration

The establishment and/or revision of zoning, subdivision, sign ordinances, housing, licensing, and other land use regulations with special expertise in growth management as well as adult use controls together with development of general code provisions and policies. Additionally, assistance to local governments on the organization as well as implementation of regulations. *Representative projects:* Baldwin Township, MN; Bayport, MN; Foreston, MN; Lakeville, MN; New Richmond, WI; Nowthen, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN; St. Augusta, MN

Development Review

Assistance to local governments on the receiving, review and processing of development applications including pre-application conferences, preparation of technical reports, presentation to advisory committees and governing bodies and implementation and review of project approvals.

Representative projects: Baldwin Township, MN; Bayport, MN; Foreston, MN; Lakeville, MN; New Richmond, WI; Nowthen, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN;

Park, Trail and, Open Space Planning

Planning and design of parks, trails and open space systems, park use and needs analysis, user surveys, park site design. *Representative projects:* Lakeville, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN

Administration

Technical and managerial assistance to local units of government with emphasis on grant-in-aid application, general administration and intergovernmental relations. *Representative projects:* Nowthen, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN

Citizen Participation

Organizing citizen, neighborhood and interest group involvement and participation in the planning and development process. *Representative projects:* Lakeville, MN; Nowthen, MN; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN

Annexation/Incorporation

The preparation of background studies and analysis on annexation and incorporation matters. *Representative projects:* Baldwin Township, MN; New Richmond, WI; Otsego, MN; Rockford, MN; St. Augusta, MN