

CITY OF FIFTY LAKES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Plan Adoption:
October 9, 2018



CITY OF FIFTY LAKES

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

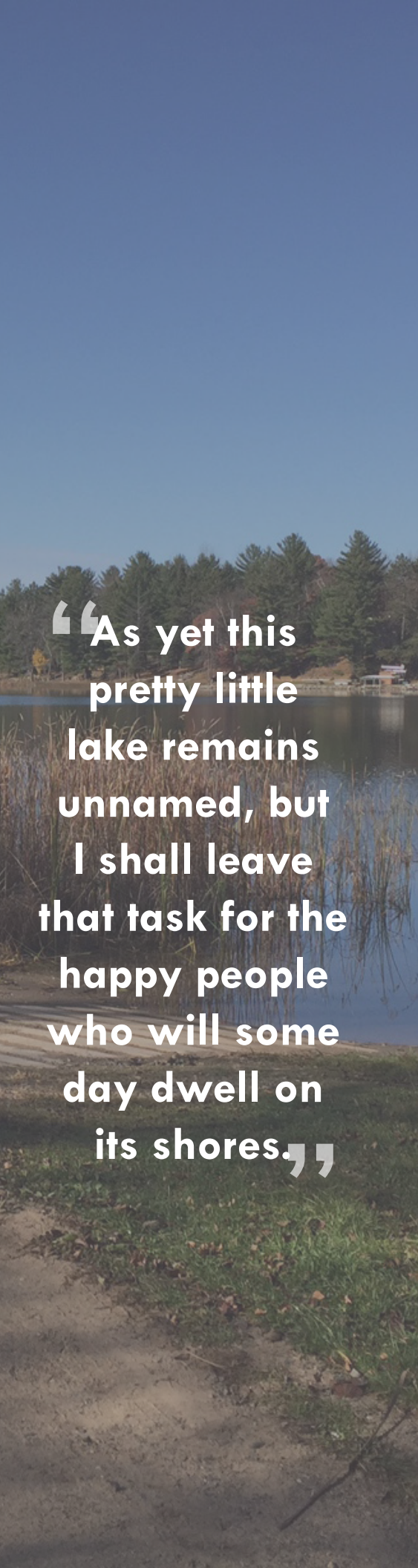
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Introduction





“As yet this pretty little lake remains unnamed, but I shall leave that task for the happy people who will some day dwell on its shores.”

Introduction

City of Fifty Lakes Comprehensive Plan

It is the purpose of this comprehensive plan to provide a guide for future land use decisions made by the City of Fifty Lakes. Goals and recommendations for Residential and Rural Residential Development, Agriculture/Commercial Forestry, Commercial Development and Local Infrastructure, Lakeshore Development, Miscellaneous Issues and a future land use map are developed as tools to accomplish this mission.

HISTORY OF THE CITY OF FIFTY LAKES:

This section briefly summarizes the history of the City of Fifty Lakes. The story told here along with the factual information was collected during a September 9, 1998 interview with a Fifty Lakes resident and local historian, Ron Manger. Manger is currently in the process of writing a book about the history of Fifty Lakes. He has been researching the topic extensively for many years and was an excellent source of information.

THE EARLY YEARS:

On August 14, 1836 Joseph Nicollet passed through Fifty Lakes as he mapped the northern part of Minnesota. Nicollet used instruments that accurately plotted latitude and longitude on a grid to create maps rather than developing maps using older methods that resulted in distortion in the proportions of some land forms in relation to others. The mapping expedition traveled up the Mississippi River from Fort Snelling and through the Whitefish Chain of Lakes, then through Little Pine Lake, Daggett Brook, Eagle and Mitchell Lakes. Nicollet wrote of his time in the Fifty Lakes area in a journal and commented, at this early date, that there had been fire damage on the shores of Mitchell Lake. Nicollet named many of the lakes on his route but when he came to Mitchell Lake he stated in his journal that, “as yet this pretty little lake remains unnamed, but I shall leave that task for the happy people who will some day dwell on its shores.”

The Sioux Indians lived throughout the state prior to approximately 1730 when the Ojibwe – Chippewa pushed this group to the Dakotas. There is not a lot of information published on the earlier history specific to the Fifty Lakes area, however, there are Indian mounds located along the south shore of Eagle Lake. Other archeological sites may have existed but were destroyed through time by development. Today archeological sites are protected but years ago there were no regulations protecting them.



EARLY DEVELOPMENTS:

The Township, that is now the City of Fifty Lakes, was platted into one mile square sections in 1863. Surveyors came through a little earlier than that and divided up land into six mile squares. After land was divided up the government began offering property to the public. One of the first people to move to the area was W. W. Allen in the 1870s. Later in 1905 the township was named after this man. Nathan Corwith is shown on land records as purchasing land in the 1860s but he did not live there. His land purchases were probably for timber interests. Another man, Charles Sanborn also bought up land around this time. Sanborn probably purchased land for the railroad industry, as he was involved in the 1870 Mississippi River crossing in Brainerd and he wrote in his purchase agreements for the land “selected for the railroad”.

Early homesteaders, people who had moved to the area and stayed for awhile, included Freeman Doane, a man from out East who was married to an Indian woman. According to the Federal Census, Doane may have actually been the first man to live in Fifty Lakes, around 1881. John and Nellie Stees were other homesteaders who moved to the area in 1884. John Stees cooked for workers of the Cross Lake Lumber Company. Horrace G. Butterfield was yet another early homesteader moving to a site on Butterfield Lake in 1894. Butterfield had a daughter named Ivy who was born in 1896 and was credited with being the first white child born in Fifty Lakes. The Doane children were actually older than Ivy but may not have been counted as they were half Indian.

“The main center of settlement in the Fifty Lakes area in the early years was at the south shore of Eagle Lake, near the dam. The dam was made of earth and logs. The settlement was then called and referred to by people as “Eagle Lake, Minnesota.”

In 1905 a Township government was formed. At that time residents wanted to name the township “Eagle Lake Township” but they could not because the name was already taken by another community in the state. Since Allen was known by the people of the time as being an early settler to the area, his name was chosen and the township was named “Allen Township.”

In 1922 Robert Dudley, a musician, bought the corner grocery store in Fifty Lakes. The store burned down in that year and then was rebuilt the following year. He opened a post office in 1926 in the store and referred to it as the Fifty Lakes Post Office. He called it Fifty Lakes because he said that he could count 50 lakes within a radius of five miles. The building he constructed was removed in 2015 to accommodate the County Road 3 project

In 1949 Allen Township decided to switch to a municipal form of government. Residents named this new government the Village of Fifty Lakes. This name remained until around the 1970s when the state got rid of the “Village” and termed all incorporated areas as “City,” bringing us to the current name of the City of Fifty Lakes.

EAGLE LAKE SCHOOL:

The Eagle Lake School was constructed in 1897 out of Norway pine logs by Albert Neiderer. It was originally built in the far northwest

corner of section 25, close to the base of Eagle Lake. In the early 1900s the school was moved to Mitchell Lake Road on land donated by the Stees’, just a few hundred feet north of Section 25. In 1914 the school was moved again by snow sled to the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of section 25, near the present downtown Fifty Lakes. It was used as a school there for only two years then a new school was built next to it. The old school was then used for a town hall for several years until the Sportsman’s Club (now called the Fifty Lakes Conservation Foundation) was built in 1953. This building was not a public building but was a community gathering place and was used for most public events, including polling.

The old school house sat vacant for several years until the early 1990s when a local resident purchased the old school house and moved it to the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of section 25. The building eventually became dilapidated and was removed in 2017.

LAND USE TRENDS:

In the 1860s the timber industry purchased property in the Fifty Lakes area. The hey day for logging was during the 1880s. The logging company was headquartered in Cross Lake. A small gauge railroad went from there to Longville and had spurs reaching out to the East and to the West. This company was in business between the 1880s to 1910.

From Fifty Lakes logs went down the water system to Brainerd and to the Twin Cities.

Eventually Weyerhaeuser bought out the original owners of the company. By 1910 the area was logged out. Logs were originally hauled out by oxen then by horses. Traces of these activities can still be found in some areas.

Alfred Hardy, a local resident, remembers tearing up the small gauge railroad tracks in 1912, the same year the Titanic sank. Logging continued after this but was much slower. Hardy said that the last log drive through Mitchell Lake was in 1920. Logging continues today but is of a different type, now trucks haul the product and most companies are much smaller.

The first settlers to the Fifty Lakes area were associated with the logging industry. Most settlers came after the logging industry had cleared out the trees. The area was being marketed as the “huge cut over region.” The land was considered to be very fertile because it grew so many trees. At the time Prairie land was thought of as sub-standard as only grass grew there.

Farming was the next big land use in the area. Homesteaders were able to improve up to 160 acres and then get a patent (title) for the land. Attempts were made all over the City of Fifty Lakes to farm.



Lands proved to be productive in the southern part of the City and unproductive in the northern part. Many farmers in the north were starved out. Today the only farms left are located in southern Fifty Lakes. The farming industry remained strong into the 1950s and 1960s. Dairy farming and pastureland was promoted as being good for the area as well as hay growing.

After World War I people began visiting the Fifty Lakes area for hunting and fishing purposes. The first resort was started in 1918 by Mae Delaney and was called Fox Heights Resort on Fox Lake. Mr. Dudley, the musician/store owner mentioned above, performed at this resort. More resorts followed. During the 1950s Howard Hogle owned and operated the store. In the late 1960s he developed the golf course. He was a big promoter of tourism to the area. Hogle had a pet bear in a cage, named "Smokey the Bear." The bear would entertain tourists by drinking bottles of soda pop. The city has since adopted a bear mascot named "Nifty." Nifty tries his best to attend all the local festivities.

The resort industry was doing great in the 1920s through the 1950s. By the 1960s and 1970s the resorts began to have trouble. Now resorts are almost non-existent.

Currently the land use of the Fifty Lakes area is used for seasonal rural residential and is changing gradually to year-round residential.

PLANNING PROCESS:

In April, 1998, the City of Fifty Lakes appointed a Planning Task Force Committee to develop a new comprehensive plan and to revise the existing city zoning ordinance. The committee consulted help from the outside by planning professionals. Landecker & Associates was hired to assist in the development of the plan and to advise on ordinance changes. J. T. Smedberg and Associates was also hired to perform a design charrette concerning downtown commercial development within the City. Charrette findings will be included in this plan in the Commercial Development section.

The design charrette consisted of a community survey, a series of presentations from professionals in the development field and meetings with citizens to develop visions for future commercial development in Fifty Lakes. The charrette process was conducted in one long weekend. After the charrette, Landecker & Associates began their part of the planning process.

In 2011 a city-wide survey was conducted to determine major factors in residents' decision to locate and continue to live in Fifty Lakes. The survey also gave residents an opportunity to provide input on local issues and various other topics. The survey results were used as the basis for comprehensive plan update that was conducted in 2016. At that time, the city also reviewed and updated the factual information included in the comprehensive plan. There was general consensus the underlying principles of the plan remained applicable:

PRESERVE
THE RURAL
CHARACTER OF
THE COMMUNITY

CONTINUE
TO SUPPORT
COMMERCIAL
FORESTRY
MANAGEMENT
AND ENCOURAGE
THE PRESERVATION
OF AGRICULTURAL
USES WITHIN THE
CITY

MAINTAIN
EXISTING PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE
TO HIGH
STANDARDS IN
ORDER TO REDUCE
THE LONG-TERM
MAINTENANCE
COSTS TO THE CITY.

PROTECT WATER
RESOURCES,
FOREST LAND, AND
FARM LAND

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

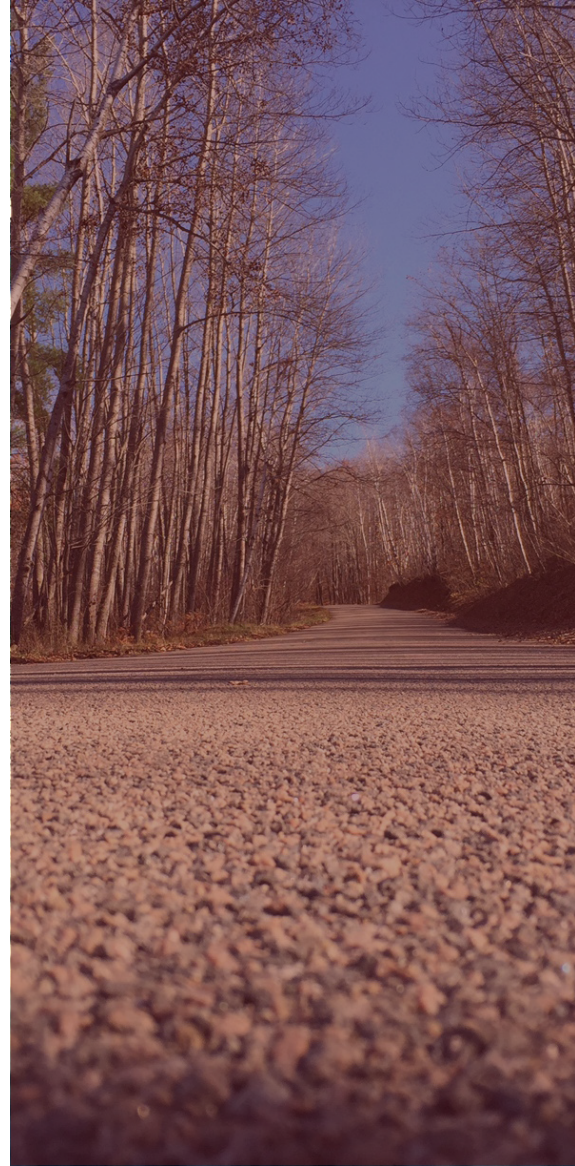
A comprehensive plan is long-range in nature and is intended to guide growth and development of a community. Comprehensive plans “typically include inventory and analytic sections leading to recommendations for the community’s future economic development, housing, recreation and open space, transportation, community facilities, and land use, all related to the community’s goals and objectives for these elements.”

WHY IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPORTANT?

Planning for the future is important to ensure that new growth and development is compatible with existing development patterns and that adequate infrastructure and public facilities are provided, while the natural environment is protected, and the quality of life in a community is maintained or improved. A comprehensive plan should act as a guide to attain these goals.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING ACT

The legislature finds that municipalities are faced with mounting problems in providing means of guiding future development of land so as to insure a safer, more pleasant and more economical environment for residential, commercial, industrial and public activities, to preserve agricultural and other open lands, and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. Municipalities can prepare for anticipated changes and by such preparations bring about significant savings in both private and public expenditures. Municipal planning, by providing public guides to future municipal action, enables other public and private agencies to plan their activities in harmony with the municipality's plans. Municipal planning will assist in developing lands more wisely to serve citizens more effectively, will make the provision of public services less costly, and will achieve a more secure tax base. It is the purpose of sections 462.351 to 462.364 to provide municipalities, in a single body of law, with the necessary powers and a uniform procedure for adequately conducting and implementing municipal planning.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The Long Range Vision and guide for the future growth of a community that may include a Listing of the Goals and Policies.

A Plan is a guide for elected or appointed officials to use when making a land use decision.

LAND USE ORDINANCE:

One of the tools that a community may use to implement the Comprehensive Plan, moving the community towards its goals and vision.

A land use ordinance is a detailed document that outlines the procedures and performance standards for public or private development within the city.

GENERALLY INCLUDES:

Demographics, community history, analysis of existing physical features, review of current land uses, identification of community goals, and a work program for the community

GENERALLY INCLUDES:

Language that is defensible in Court, definitions, performance standards, zoning districts



Demographics

Content found in this chapter:

- Population trends and projections
- Age cohorts
- Housing
- Education
- Median household income

Demographics

Sources of Data

The following pages contain demographic data obtained by a variety of local, state, and national sources for the City of Fifty Lakes and Crow Wing County. At the time of the comprehensive plan update period, the U.S. Census Bureau and Minnesota State Demographer's Office had released basic demographic estimates for the years 2014 and 2015. However, these are annual estimates limited to basic counts such as population and household levels.

For more detailed demographic variables, the 2010 Census is viewed as the most reliable data source. The Census is the most accurate source for demographic characteristics; it provides more limited data than in the past. To supplement the decennial Census, the Census Bureau created the American Community Survey (ACS), which provides an annual sampling of socio-economic data.

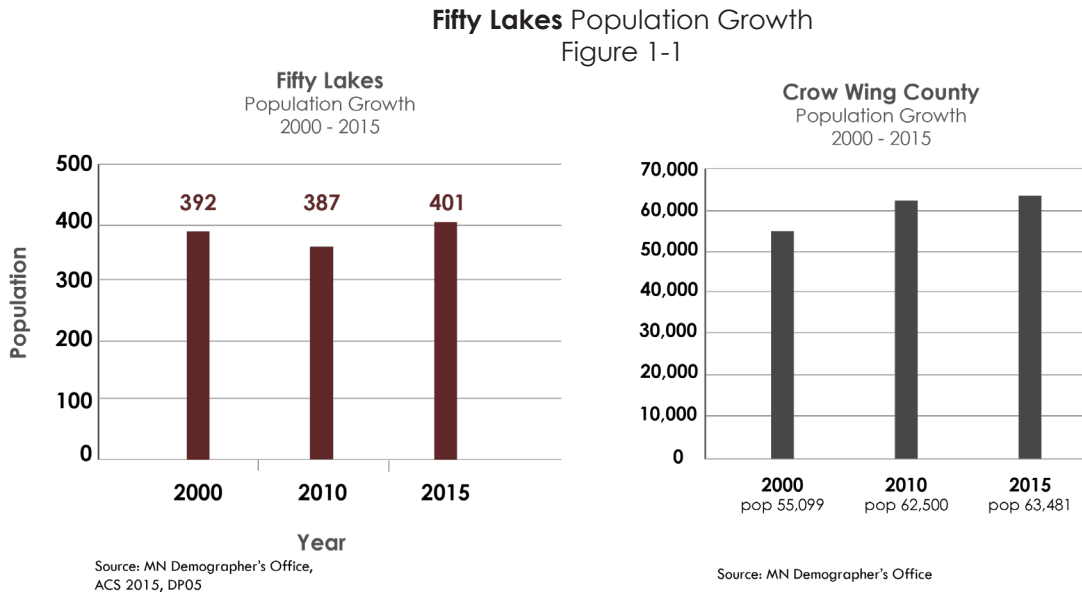
The American Community Survey (ACS) provides detailed demographic characteristics. However, because the ACS is an estimate based on sampling data, a margin of error exists, and the frequency of estimates varies depending on the size of jurisdiction. For the City of Fifty Lakes Comprehensive Plan Update, the 2015 estimates were the most current for this study. They were derived from sampling completed for a five-year period, between the years of 2010 and 2015.

The following demographic data incorporates the 2010 U.S. Census data, when available, or the ACS data, 2014 ACS five-year estimates when viewed as appropriate.

“Demographics depict the “make-up” of the community, both in the past and present. Demographics can capture a “snapshot” of the people who live in the community and illustrate important community trends.”

POPULATION GROWTH

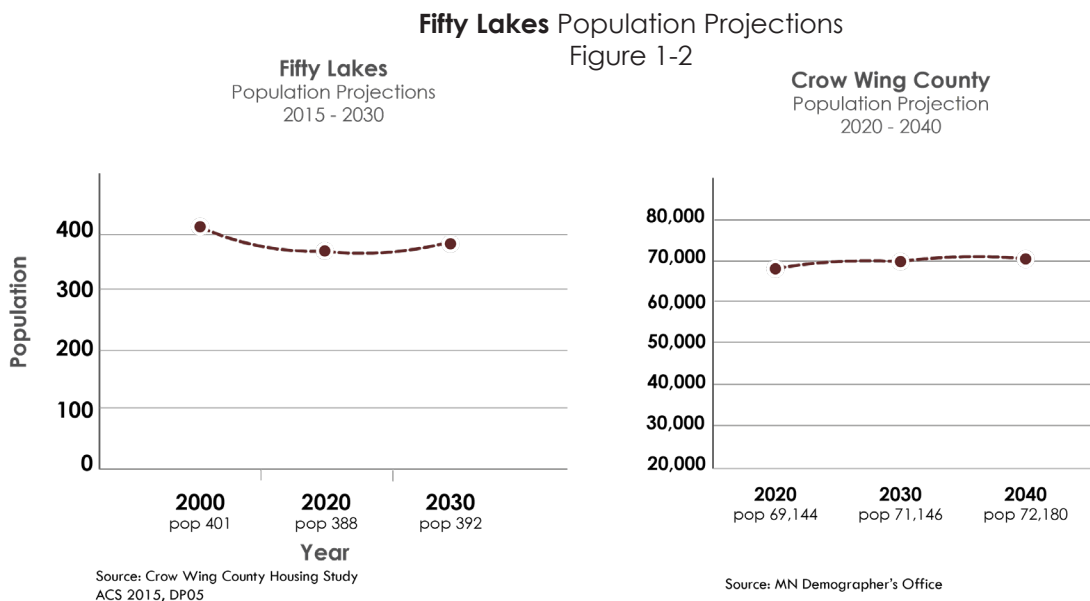
Figure 1-1 compares the population growth for the City of Fifty Lakes and Crow Wing County between 2000 and 2015. The following figure uses data from the Minnesota Demographer’s Office. As of 2015, the population in the City of Fifty Lakes was 401. In general, there has been a minimal increase of 2.29 percent since 2000. The City of Fifty Lakes has remained stagnant and has shown minimal growth between 2000 and 2015, with an increase of nine residents in 15 years. An increase of 3.6 percent was experienced in Fifty Lakes between 2010 and 2015. Crow Wing County has seen a steady increase of 13.4 percent in population from 2000 to 2015. Minimal growth was experienced in the county between 2010 and 2015 (1.57%).



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

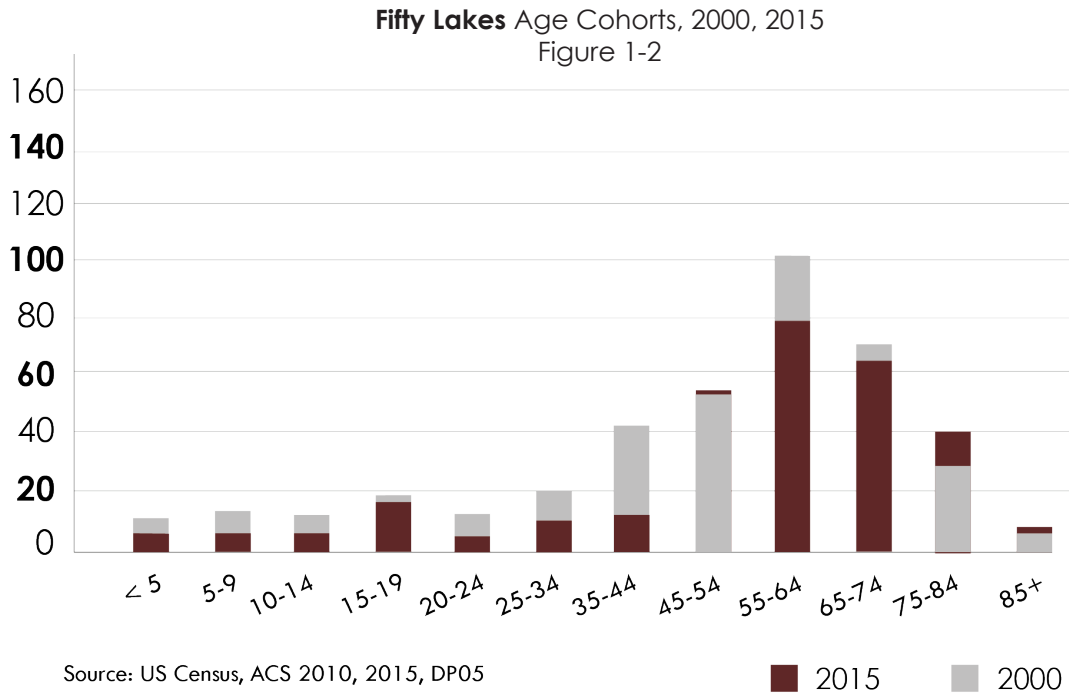
Figure 1-2 illustrates the population projection for the City of Fifty Lakes and Crow Wing County. Using the statistics located in the Crow Wing County Housing Study, projections indicate a decrease in population in 2020; down 3.3 percent. The report estimates a decrease in population between 2015 and 2020, with a population of 388.

Crow Wing County’s population increased from 55,099 in 2000 to 62,500 in 2010. Previous projections from the Minnesota Demographer’s office projected a 2020 population for Crow Wing County of 73,360.



AGE COHORTS

Demographic information pulled from the American Community Survey (ACS) allows for further analysis of the change in age patterns within the City of Fifty Lakes. Figure 2-1 illustrates the age composition of Fifty Lakes between 2000 and 2015.



	<5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
2015	6	6	6	16	6	13	16	56	78	66	40	9
2000	9	12	11	19	12	20	43	55	102	70	31	8

Between the years of 2000 and 2015, a significant loss in the 35-44 age cohort was experienced with a change of 64%. Additional losses were experienced in the 55-64 age group with a change of 24%. In contrast, an increase of nine residents was experienced in the 75-84 age cohort, and an increase of one resident in the 45-54 age cohort. Further analysis of the age cohorts reveals that 46.9% (149 people) of the population are over the age of 62, and 36.2% (115 people) are over the age of 65. The median age of residents in the City of Fifty Lakes is 60.5.

Typically, the 25-34 age cohort are first-time homebuyers, with or without children. Traditionally the 20-24 age cohorts are renters. The following chart illustrates Persons Per Household (PPH) in the City of Fifty Lakes and Crow Wing County between the years 2000 – 2015.

Fifty Lakes Persons Per Household (PPH)

Table 2-1

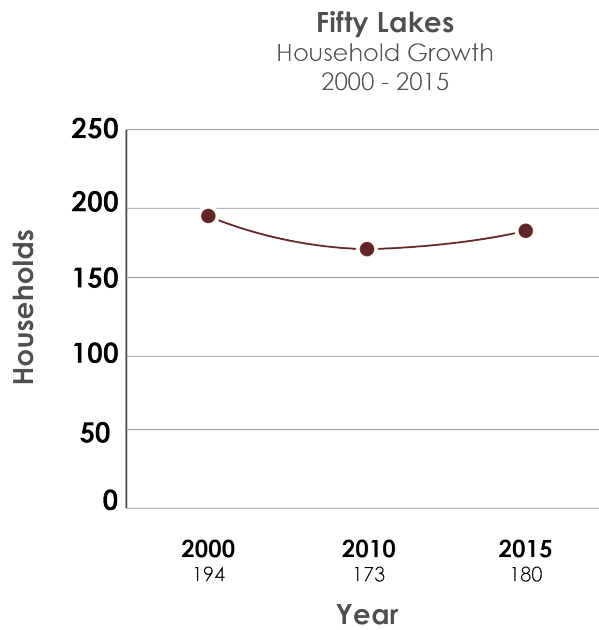
	2000	2010	2015
City of Fifty Lakes	2.01	2.23	2.23
Crow Wing County	2.42	2.37	2.36

State of Minnesota Demographer's Office

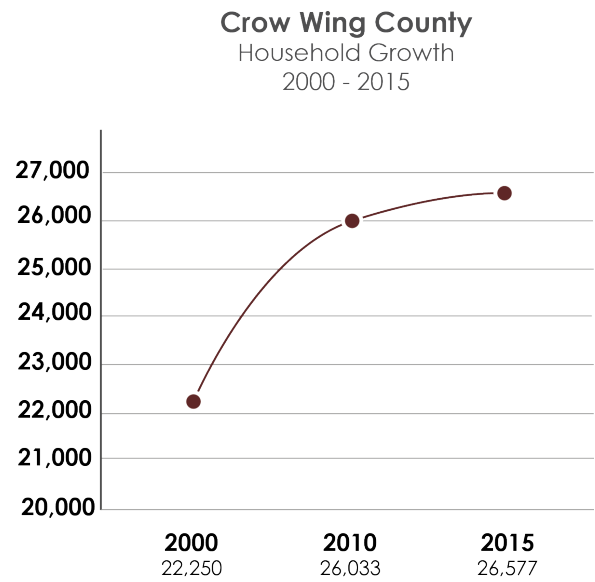
HOUSING

Figure 4-1 illustrates the existing housing until in the City of Fifty Lakes and Crow Wing County. A household refers to all people who occupy a housing unit. The Minnesota Demographer's Office reported that there were 180 housing units in city limits. An increase in housing units was experienced between 2010 and 2015 with seven units (4.0%). Fifty Lakes has experienced a general decrease in housing units since 2000 (7.7%).

Figure 4-1



Source: MN Demographer's Office



Source: MN Demographer's Office

Table 5-1 illustrates the total types of housing units in the City of Fifty Lakes as published by the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS reports 611 housing units (occupied and unoccupied). Predominately the city contains nearly 93% of single family homes and 6% of mobile home units. A detailed overview of the types are listed below:

Type of Unit	Estimate	Percent
1 unit	571	93%
2 unit	-	0
3 or 4 units	-	0
5 to 9 units	-	0
10 to 19 units	-	0
20 or more units	-	5.7%
Mobile home	0	0

US Census, ACS 2015 DP04

The American Community Survey reports 611 total housing units. The ACS estimates the value of owner occupied units (156 occupied units) Of those owner occupied units, 18 units are valued, 11.5%, are valued at under \$99,999.00. 49 percent of those owner occupied units are valued at \$300,000 or more. Median price of a home in Fifty Lakes is estimated at \$297,100.

Value	No.	Percentage
< \$50,000	5	3.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	13	8.3%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	10	6.4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	28	17.9%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	23	14.7%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	45	28.8%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	28	17.9%
\$1 million or more	4	2.6%

US Census, ACS 2015 DP04

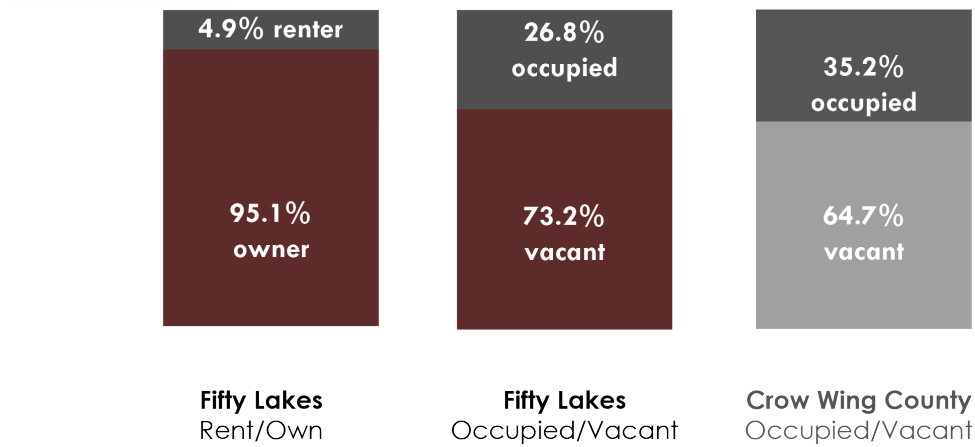
The majority of the housing units were built between the years 2000 – 2009 with 110 units built, equaling 18 percent of the total units. The second largest grouping was built between 1990-1999, equaling 17.3% of the total housing units. Table 5-3 indicated the age of housing structures within the city:

Year Built	Estimate	Percent
Total Housing Units	611	
2014 or later	0	-
2010 to 2013	8	1.3
2000 to 2009	110	18
1990 to 1999	106	17.3
1980 to 1989	102	16.7
1970 to 1979	84	13.7
1960 to 1969	65	10.6
1950 to 1959	51	8.3
1940 to 1949	34	5.6
1939 or earlier	51	8.3

US Census, ACS 2015 DP04

Per the 2015 ACS, Fifty Lakes has 611 housing units. Of those housing units, 164 (26.8%) are occupied units and 447 (73.2%) are vacant. Figure 5-1 illustrates a comparison of the total owner-occupied units and total vacant units. The figure also illustrates further the owner-occupied units and rented units. Nearly 95% of the units in the city are owned and nearly 5% are rented units.

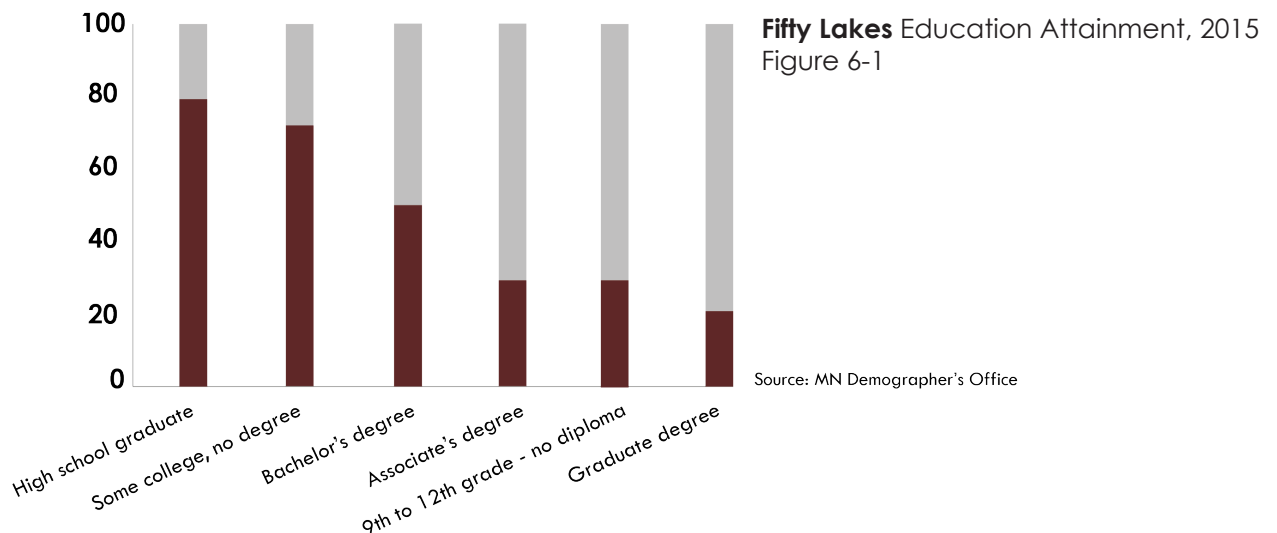
Fifty Lakes Housing Occupancy, 2015
Figure 5-1



Source: US Census, 2015, DP04

EDUCATION

Education attainment is an indicator of the level of skills and training the residents in the study area possess. 28% of Fifty Lakes residents, age 25 and over, have at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Nearly 26% of the population have obtained an associate’s degree, with 25% having a bachelor’s degree or higher. Figure 6-1 outlines the educational attainment of Fifty Lakes residents:

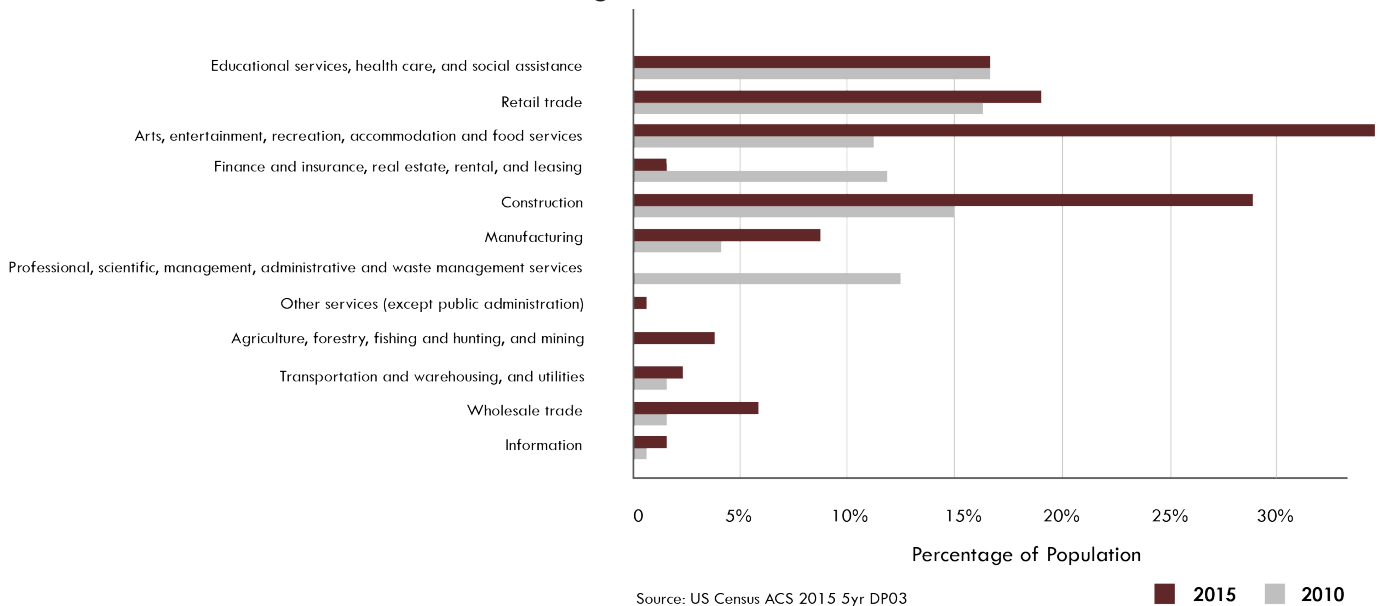


Source: MN Demographer's Office

EMPLOYMENT

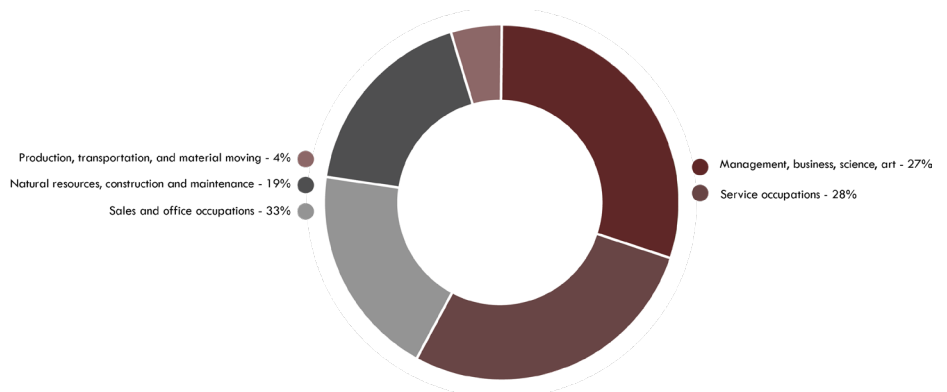
Types of employment and occupations is also considered when analyzing the demographic makeup of a community. Figure 7-1 illustrates the categories of industry of persons over the age of sixteen between the years of 2010 and 2015. The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that there are 127 employed in the City of Fifty Lakes. Of those, nearly 30% are employed in the Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services industry. The second leading industry is the construction industry employing 22% of the population. Significant losses were experienced in the Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services industry with a loss of 13 people. The second largest industry category loss was experienced in the Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing industry with a loss of ten residents.

Fifty Lakes Industry Profile, 2010, 2015
Figure 7-1



An occupation profile provides a deeper level of review and assessment of the employment categories for the City of Fifty Lakes. 33% of Fifty Lakes residents are employed in the sales and office occupation. The second leading occupation is the service occupation with 28% of residents reporting, closely followed by the management, business, science, and art occupation with 27% of residents. Figure 7-2 outlines the occupation profile of Fifty Lakes:

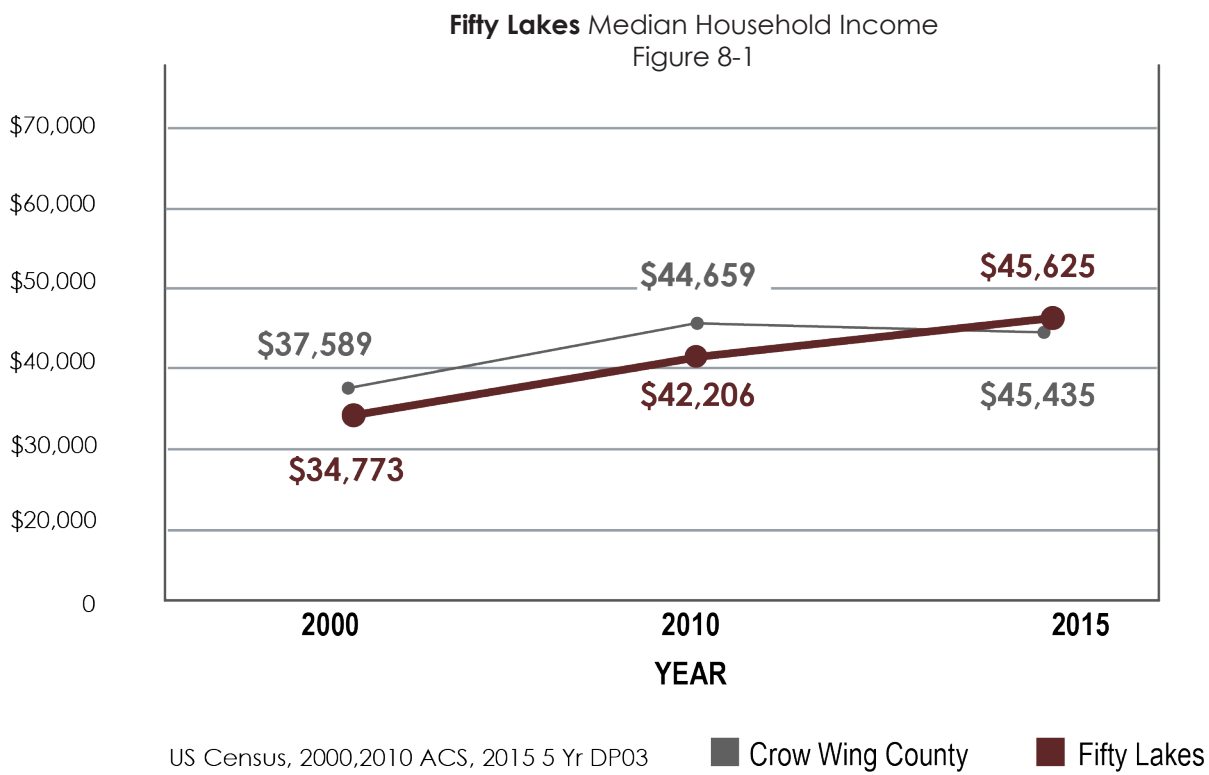
Fifty Lakes Occupation Profile, 2015
Figure 7-2



*Civilian employed population 16 years and over
US Census ACS 2015 5yr DP03

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Figure 8-1 illustrates the median household income of households in the study area. If incomes of all the households were listed from lowest to highest, this median figure is the income for the middle of all households. In the City of Fifty Lakes, the median household income in 2015 (ACS estimates) is \$45,625. An increase in household income was experienced between the years of 2010 – 2015 with an increase in 8%. Crow Wing County has a MHI of \$45,435, which is a slight increase from 2010 (1.7%).



Land Use Characteristics



TREND OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF FIFTY LAKES

Until recently, the permanent population of Fifty Lakes was small and stable with no significant population trends emerging. In contrast, the seasonal population of Fifty Lakes swells during the summer months and has since the first cabins were built early in the twentieth century. Recent years, however, have seen an increase in the year-round resident population. The recent growth trend can be traced to several factors:

01

THE AGING OF THE BABY BOOMER POPULATION

As the baby boomer generation nears retirement age, there is an instinctive desire by most Minnesotans to have a place "Up North." The Brainerd Lakes area is the closest lakes region to the Twin Cities with an abundance of pine and oak forests making this area one of the most popular retirement communities.

02

THE CONVERSION OF SEASONAL CABIN TO YEAR ROUND HOUSING

Much of the historic lake shore development has been for smaller second homes that provide the needed escape to the lake. In conjunction with the retirement migration, many of the seasonal cabins have been or are planned for conversion to a year round home for area residents (seasonal or otherwise). No longer are the homes simply a 24' by 24' three season place, they are now more likely to be a three bedroom or larger year-round resident.

03

THE ADVANCEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

The advent of reliable cellular phone service, high-speed internet and personal computers has allowed small businesses to be managed from anywhere where these services are available. Business is now being conducted not only from a board room, but also from a golf cart or a pontoon boat. This allows communities miles from the twin cities to experience economic growth. Industrial parks were the economic development tool of the 1960s and 1970s, whereas reliable high-speed internet and cellular phone service is the economic development tool of today.

THREE FACTORS that will influence future population growth within Fifty Lakes 1) the aging of the baby boomer population 2) the conversion of seasonal cabins to year-round housing 3) the advancement of technology.



PINE RIDGE
HUNTER-HIKING TRAIL
CROW WING COUNTY
LAND DEPT

Comprehensive Plan Goals

Content found in this chapter:

- Residential and rural development
- Agriculture/commercial forestry
- Commercial development
- Local infrastructure
- Commercial development
- Lakeshore development
- Miscellaneous issues and recommendations

Residential and Rural Residential Development Goal



The City of Fifty Lakes should support the development of residential developments that preserve the rural character of the community.

Issues:

- Throughout the current planning process there has been overwhelming support for protecting and preserving the rural character of the community. “Rural character” is defined as, “woodlands and lakes,” “gravel roads,” and “open spaces” commonly found throughout the city.
- There has been a slight increase in the number of new residences over the past twenty years. Building activity has generally remained consistent. Building projects typically consist of new single-family dwellings, expansion of pre-existing dwellings, new accessory structures and the addition of guest quarters/cottages.
- Approximately two-thirds of the City is Tax Forfeited or under County or State management. This dramatically decreases the land area available for residential development. The public lands create a permanent open space or park like setting for the northern half of the City.
- Land factors that impact the desirability of the City include proximity to lakes, forests and open space and rolling terrain. A significant part of the city has all or many of these features.
- The current land use ordinance allows the use of Planned Unit Developments within the shoreland area (within 1000 feet of Public waters). It encourages them by granting density increases if performance standards are met by the proposal.
- Simply increasing lot sizes will not produce a “Rural” character. Setbacks, screening and road standards should be considered when reviewing future developments.

Residential and Rural Residential Development Recommendations

Recommendation 1	Development should be encouraged that protects open space, agricultural uses and woodlands.
Recommendation 2	The City shall not support residential developments that do not meet the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources standards for lot size and area for riparian lots.
Recommendation 3	In order to manage future road maintenance costs, the City should continue to require that new public roads are constructed to city standards within residential new developments.

Recommendation 4	Cluster sewage treatment systems and wells should be encouraged for large residential developments.
Recommendation 5	The City should support road designs that reduce the overall impact of grading on the rural landscape. Road designs should utilize the existing contours of the property as much as possible.
Recommendation 6	When reviewing plats and residential developments, the City should consider the following recommendations: Source: "Preserving Rural Character" by Fred Heyer

A	Minimize Visual Impact Do not place structures in open fields. Locate residences near edge of woods. Encourage greater setbacks and tree preservation along the shoreline. Limit clearing along shore.
B	Retail Rural Features Preserve tree buffers. Encourage property owners to maintain farm structure.
C	Minimize Land Disturbance Use existing contours where possible. Limit dirt moving for roads or structures. Stormwater areas should use natural shapes and features.
D	Retail Woodland Features Maintain trees on ridge line. Discourage large lawn areas. Building envelopes should not include steep slopes or bluffs.

Recommendation 7	Encourage buffer areas (natural vegetation, swales, berms, etc.) on lakeshore properties to properly manage stormwater runoff and to protect/improve water quality.
Recommendation 8	Allow home occupations and home based businesses in residential areas that are compatible with the existing neighborhood.

Agriculture and Commercial Forestry Goals



GOAL 1: The City of Fifty Lakes should continue to support commercial forestry management efforts that provide a sustainable forest products industry.

GOAL 2: The City of Fifty Lakes should encourage the preservation of agricultural uses within the community.

Issues:

- > A significant portion of the City is forested - most deciduous with several small areas of coniferous stands. The 1997 forestry maps indicate a large number of significant clear cuts that have occurred.
- > There are private loggers working within the City that provide local jobs within this industry.
- > The Crow Wing County Land Office manages a large portion of the city due to the presence of tax forfeited lands. More than 9500 acres are managed by Crow Wing County or the State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. The government is the largest landowner in the City. Within Crow Wing County, only Timothy Township has more county administered lands.
- > The City needs to appoint a citizen to represent the City on the Crow Wing County Lands and Forestry Commission – the committee responsible for the management of the county lands.
- > The presence of the tax-forfeited lands is a significant recreational amenity within Fifty Lakes by providing areas for hunting hiking and trail riding. Numerous real estate ads highlight the presence of the public lands as a good neighbor.
- > Numerous local road maintenance issues that arise, in part, by the presence of the forest harvesting on County Lands. Both North Mitchell Lake Road and a portion of Kego Lake Road are gravel roads. Neighbors complain about noise, traffic and dust from the logging trucks.
- > The County Lands and Forestry Commission has been reviewing the performance of the logging industry and compliance with Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- > The agricultural community has changed dramatically in the area over the past 25 years. Fewer traditional farming operations continue to exist. Some farms are being sold for subdivision or used for rural residences.
- > There are no active feedlots within the City. The city has one pivot irrigation system.
- > Non-traditional farming operations and rural residences are replacing active farms.
- > The generalized soil maps indicate the presence of sandy soils associated with the glacial outwash plains in the western portion of the city. A large portion of the City is generally sandy loam-based soils with small pockets of clay-based soils near Mitchell and Fox Lakes.
- > Farmers need to be protected from nuisance complaints from new incompatible land uses.

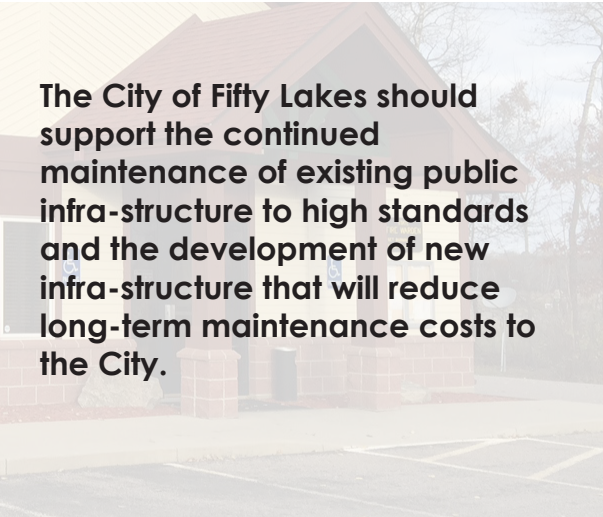
Agriculture and Commercial Forestry Recommendations

Recommendation 1	The City should encourage the preservation of larger tracts of public lands for forest management and public recreation purposes.
Recommendation 2	The City should support the protection of existing riparian (lakeshore) public lands and not support trades for other public lands not within the City of Fifty Lakes.
Recommendation 3	The City should support forest management efforts that are based on the standards created by the Minnesota Forest Resources Council and support stricter enforcement of these standards.

Recommendation 4	The City should support agricultural uses on prime agricultural soils.
Recommendation 5	The City should review sample "right-to-farm" ordinances and determine if they would be beneficial in protecting the family farm from nuisance complaints from new incompatible development. Wording for the ordinance can be taken straight from Minnesota State Statutes Sec. 561.19, 500.24, and 609.74.
Recommendation 6	The City should encourage the use of cluster developments in non-shoreland areas to allow for the protection of prime agricultural or forestry lands and open space.

Recommendation 7	The City should appoint a representative to make a request to the Crow Wing County Board to sit as a member on the County Lands and Forestry Advisory Committee.
Recommendation 8	Representatives from the City should be active members in all committees in the area that the City may have an interest in.
Recommendation 9	Conditional Use Permits should be required for all feedlot operations and center pivot irrigation systems.

Local Infrastructure Goal



The City of Fifty Lakes should support the continued maintenance of existing public infra-structure to high standards and the development of new infra-structure that will reduce long-term maintenance costs to the City.

Information:

- > There are three general classifications of public roads:
 - Arterial – State and Federal Highways
 - Collectors – County State Aid Highways and Municipal State Aid Streets
 - Local Roads – City Streets and Some County Roads
- > Generally, Funding for the different classifications of roads comes from different sources.
- > The City maintenance department currently maintains approximately 20 miles of public roads.
- > Crow Wing County maintains three different roads within the City – County State Aid Highways 1 and 3 and County Road 136. There are no State or Federal highways in the City of Fifty Lakes.

- > Truck and seasonal residential traffic on City and County Roads is increasing. This increase in road usage places higher demands on the transportation system and may be the cause for increasing maintenance costs of these roads.
- > Speed limits on all roads are set by State Statutes and MnDOT Rural Roads 55 MPH; Urban Roads 30 MPH. A Road Speed Study can alter the local speed limits based on the average vehicle speed on a road.
- > The only existing cluster sewers are located at area resorts.
- > There are no known areas where concentrations of failing sewage treatment systems exist in the City, however, measures should be taken to ensure that there are not any in the future.

Information:

- > A City Park with a new playground is located next to City Hall and the Municipal Liquor Store.
- > Crow Wing County and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources manage approximately 10,000 acres of tax forfeited land – this provides a large recreational resource to area residents and visitors.
- > A system of locally managed snowmobile trails run through the City.
- > Public accesses are available on Eagle, Kego, East Fox and Mitchell Lakes. No new access points are planned at this time.
- > Fire Department and first responder services are provided by Fifty Lakes Fire and Rescue. Police and Ambulance services are provided by the Crow Wing County Sheriff and North Ambulance Service.
- > The Emily Telephone Cooperative provides local telephone, cable television and high-speed internet through fiber optic cable. Excel Energy provides natural gas to some areas of the city. Crow Wing Power provides electrical services to the entire city through the use of under-ground and above-ground power lines.
- > Two employees staff city hall. The Fifty Lakes city hall and bar/bottle shop were constructed in 2005. The pavillion was constructed in 2008.
- > The city has a community center available for citizens to use for meetings, gatherings, and other events.
- > The city operates a Municipal Liquor store, the purpose of which is to provide income for the city.
- > The Village Post Office is located inside city hall. It provides limited postal services.
- > The city has numerous privately-owned roads which are maintained entirely by the residents they serve.

Local Infrastructure Recommendations

Recommendation 1	The City should establish a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that prioritizes roads and planned road improvements. The annual CIP should budget for anticipated road improvements, other than normal maintenance.
Recommendation 2	The City should review all road improvement petitions with the established assessment policy. Benefitting property owners should be assessed a fair cost according to the policy.
Recommendation 3	The City should support County road improvement projects that increase the ability of the current county road system to manage anticipated increases in traffic.

Recommendation 4	The City should consider utilizing funds received from the sale of timber on road maintenance for those roads affected by the traffic.
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Recommendation 5	The City should continue to support the systematic upgrading of on-site sewage treatment systems that are not in compliance through enforcement procedures contained in the land use ordinance. The City should continue to require sewage treatment compliance reports when a property is improved through permits, variances, and transfers of land.
Recommendation 6	The City should also consider establishing a system of periodic sewage treatment system inspections. Funding options should also be provided for those who cannot afford to replace non-conforming systems. A City inspector may be one option that can help to lower the cost.
Recommendation 7	The City should encourage the use of the existing County Tax-forfeited lands for public recreation purposes. The land base is adequately sized to provide both active and passive recreational opportunities.

Local Infrastructure Recommendations

Recommendation 8	The City should review its existing park dedication requirement to ensure that it reflects the future park needs of the community.
Recommendation 9	The City should encourage the improvement of existing public lands.
Recommendation 10	The City should continue to maintain and promote recreational opportunities for its residents.

Recommendation 11	The City should annually review the need for additional public safety services within the City.
Recommendation 14	The existing Fire Department/Community Center Building should continue to be available for public meetings and private functions.
Recommendation 15	The City should continue to monitor the true profitability of the Municipal Liquor Store.
Recommendation 16	The City should be proactive in working with the County to ensure that County roads running through the City are adequately maintained.

Commercial Development Goals



The City of Fifty Lakes has historically not had a significant commercial development presence in the traditional sense. Over the years, various locally owned businesses have come and gone. The City has embraced the “up north” way of life which primarily includes residentially developed lakeshore properties surrounded by large wooded areas and open space. It does not include a lot of commercial development found in traditional cities (main street, big box stores, etc.). Much of the commercial development in the city includes recreational service businesses including family owned resorts, a golf course, municipal bar/restaurant and homes businesses. The city is a highly desirable destination for those seeking a quite getaway in a natural setting.

1) Encourage commercial development that is compatible with the character of the city.

2) Consider creating an economic development committee to promote development opportunities.

3) Ensure the future land use map is occasionally updated to identify potential commercial areas.

4) Continue to support and promote Fifty Lakes Day.

5) Embrace the “new economy” by exploring the possibility of creating a short-term rental ordinance (vacation rental by owner). The regulations may be created to protect the “up north” character of existing neighborhoods.

Lakeshore Development Goal



To preserve the natural character and environmental quality of the lakeshore and still allow reasonable use for property owners and the public.

Issues:

- > Docks are regulated only within a Subdivision/ Plat, Marina Regulations above six dock slips require approval from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Currently there are no City Regulations on the number of docks per 100-foot lot of lake frontage.
- > Dirt moving and sand blankets in quantities of greater than ten cubic yards are allowed by Conditional Use Permit. Quality of sand used is not specified.
- > No local unit of Government has regulated dock storage units yet. MnDNR is currently developing a position statement and perhaps regulations.

- > The land use ordinance does not allow roads within the lake setbacks. The city does not allow improved private boat accesses.
- > Water oriented accessory structures are allowed in the City with a land use permit. The setback requirement is 20 feet from the lake. The structures shall be no larger than 120 square feet in size and no taller than 12 feet in height.
- > The city adopted a new land use ordinance in 2017 which is consistent with the Minnesota Shoreland Rules.

Lakeshore Development Recommendations

Recommendation 1	Consider adding a maximum number of docks per linear foot of lake frontage as a condition for subdivision plat approval.
Recommendation 2	Encourage the use of clean, washed sand for sand blankets.

Miscellaneous Issues and Recommendations



In this section issues and recommendations for items that were not previously discussed will be identified.

Miscellaneous Recommendations

Recommendation 1	Require stricter Site Development and Restoration Plans and periodic inspections for extractive uses.
Recommendation 2	Establish a working relationship with the County to review potential gravel deposit locations.
Recommendation 3	The City should encourage and monitor the active and passive, motorized and non-motorized, multiple recreational use of existing County Tax Forfeit lands.

Future Land Use Map

The future land use map compasses Fifty Lakes' goals and desires related to how development, preservation, and community investment should be executed in the future. This map does not define the specific implementation process for achieving these land use goals – that is left to the city's leadership to decide in response to the desires and needs of residents as conditions and situations warrant. This future land use map is intended to be used in conjunction with the written content of the plan.

Future Land Use Map Classifications:

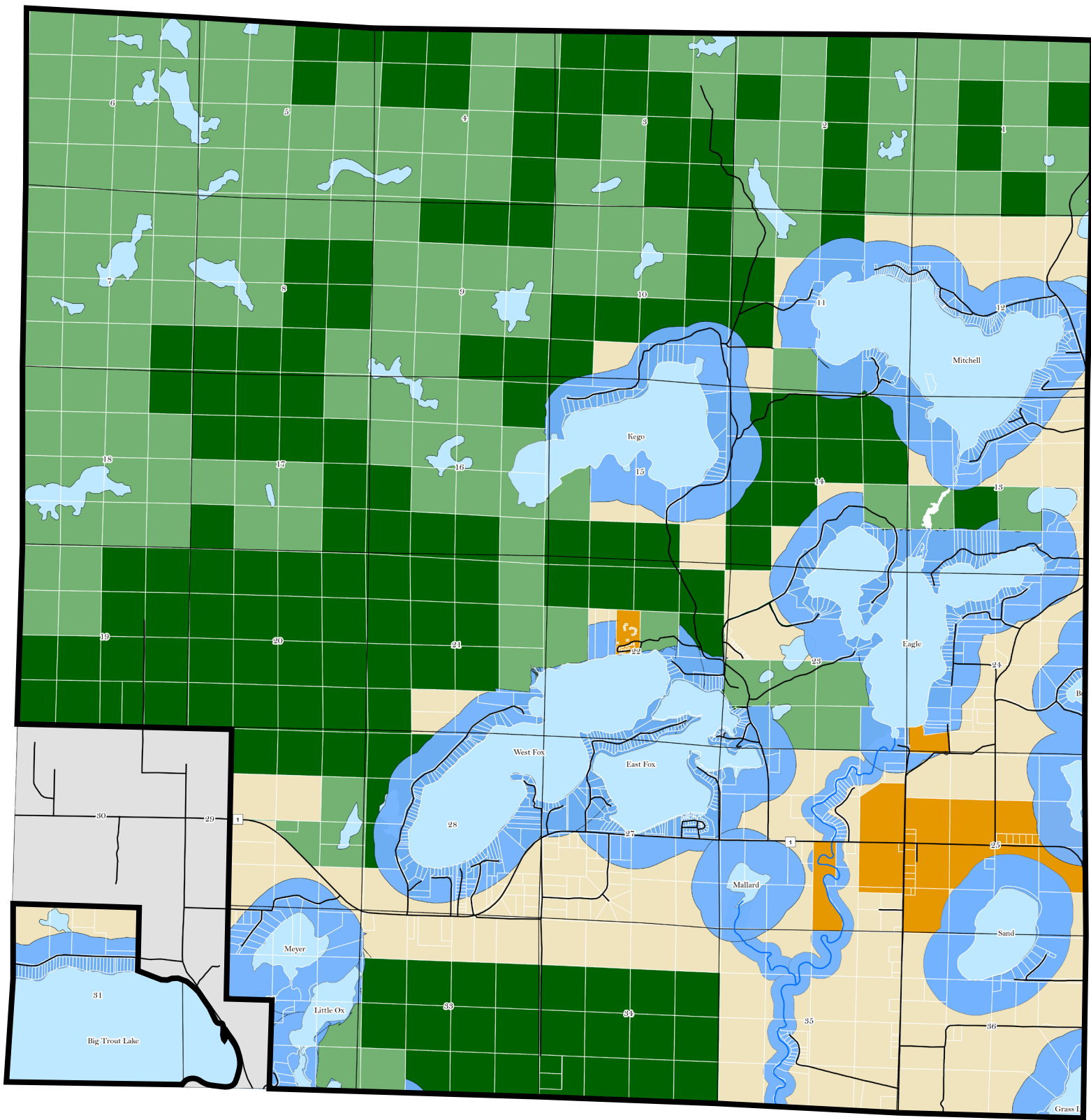
Commercial- A designation for property that is best suited for commercial development.

Shoreline Residential- A designation for riparian property to be developed residentially at a moderate density.

Low Density Residential- A designation for property that is non-riparian and is developed, or is suitable to be developed, to preserve the rural character of the area.

Forest Preservation- The pattern of development provided for in this area is for large lot residential (10-40 acres) tracts within forested land. These areas should be managed to allow for eventual timber harvesting.

Open Space- A designation for the preservation of publicly-owned lands, environmentally sensitive lands, wetlands, unique resources, historic sites, and land set aside and not to be included as part of the development process.



**CITY OF FIFTY LAKES
FUTURE LAND USE MAP**



FUTURE LAND USE

- Open Space
- Forest Preservation
- Shoreline Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Commercial

- Section Boundary
- Parcels
- City of Manhattan Beach
- Lakes (developed)
- River Buffer

- Lakes
- Road Network
- Rivers
- City Boundary

