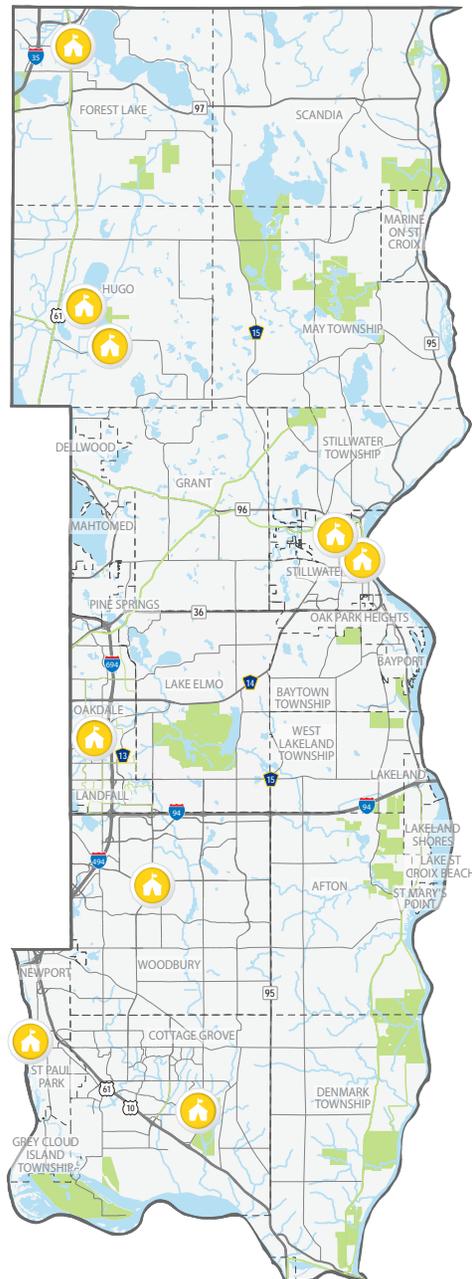


# **Appendix A: 2040 Comprehensive Plan Phase 1 Public Engagement Results**

# Washington County, Today & Tomorrow

Phase 1 Public Engagement - Discovery Phase

## Phase 1 Public Engagement Result Summary



### Phase 1 Pop-Up Events

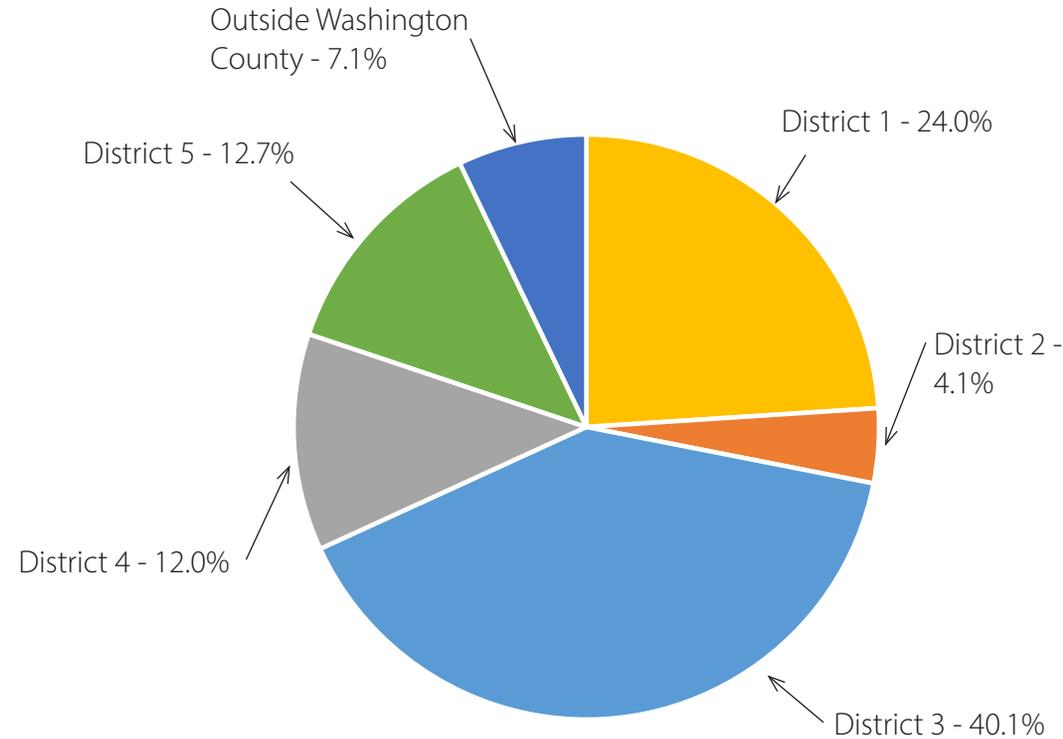
- 🏠 Stillwater Chamber Community Showcase, Stillwater - March 25<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Hugo - April 22<sup>nd</sup>
- 🏠 Friends in Need Shopping Hours, St. Paul Park - April 25<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 WIC Clinic, Cottage Grove - April 25<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 Washington County License Center, Woodbury - April 28<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 Historic Courthouse 150th Anniversary, Stillwater - June 3<sup>rd</sup>
- 🏠 Hugo Good Neighbor Days, Hugo - June 8<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 Kids Night at Arts in the Park, Forest Lake - June 20<sup>th</sup>
- 🏠 Oakdale Summerfest, Oakdale - June 24<sup>th</sup>



# Who have we heard from?

## What is your Zip Code?

Zip Code	City	Response Count	Response Percent
55001	Afton	3	1.1%
55003	Bayport	2	0.7%
55016	Cottage Grove	17	6.4%
55025	Forest Lake	11	4.1%
55038	Hugo	49	18.4%
55042	Lake Elmo	13	4.9%
55043	Lakeland	7	2.6%
55115	Mahtomedi	7	2.6%
55047	Marine on Saint Croix	1	0.4%
55055	Newport	7	2.6%
55128	Oakdale	4	1.5%
55073	Scandia	2	0.7%
55079	Stacy	1	0.4%
55071	St. Paul Park	8	3.0%
55082	Stillwater	82	30.7%
55125 55129	Woodbury	34	12.7%
	Outside Washington County	19	7.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>267</b>	<b>100%</b>



District	Response Count	Response Percent
District 1	64	24.0%
District 2	11	4.1%
District 3	107	40.1%
District 4	32	12.0%
District 5	34	12.7%
Outside Washington County	19	7.1%

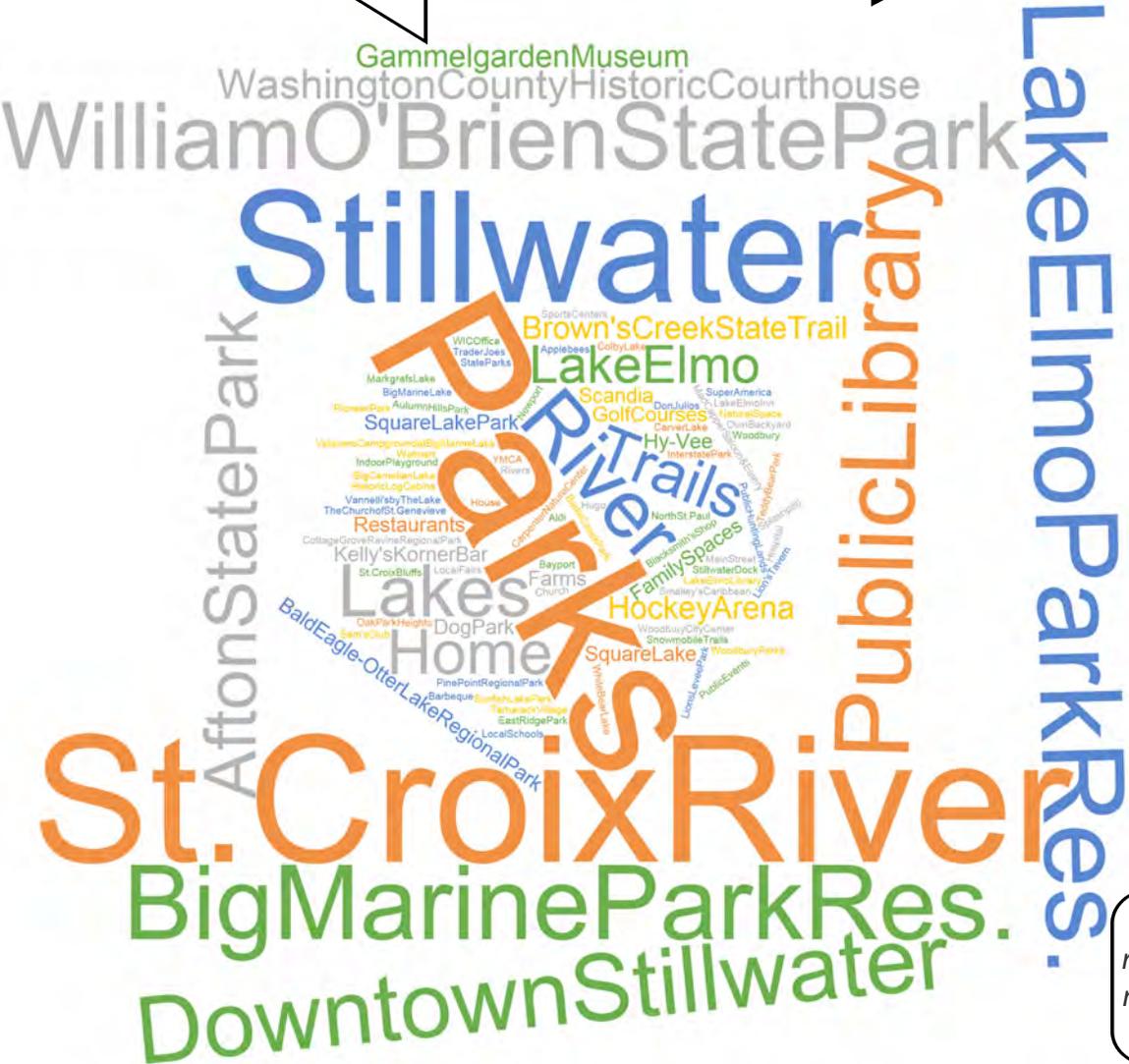
# What have we heard?

## What is your favorite place to visit in Washington County?

TOP RESPONSES	
Location	Response Count
Parks	31
Stillwater	18
St. Croix River	18
Lake Elmo Park Res.	14
Big Marine Park Res.	10
Public Libraries	10
Downtown Stillwater	9
William O'Brien Park	9
River	8
Afton State Park	7
Lakes	7
Home	6
Trails	6

Recreation facilities including parks, trails, indoor facilities, and sports facilities are enjoyed by residents.

Destinations and services provided by Washington County and Local Municipalities were highlighted within the responses.



Respondents enjoy the variety of parks throughout the county, including the variety of amenities provided at each location.

Proximity to residents' favorite recreation, shopping and entertainment destinations is valued.

Responses highlighted residents' connection to the natural resources and open spaces of the county





# Who have we heard from?

## What is a needed amenity in Washington County?

Connectivity between services, destinations, and residential areas should continue to be improved throughout Washington County.

Residents are concerned about continued access to affordable housing.

Proper planning for rapid growth throughout the county is a concern for respondents.



Access to public transportation and improved connections were highlighted in responses. Many residents noted the lack of connections affects their ability to utilize the service.

Current programs aimed at the youth and senior populations are valued, however, additional programs are desired by respondents, particularly for the teen and young adult populations.

TOP RESPONSES	
Needed Amenities	Response Count
Public Transportation	17
Trails	13
Improved Roadways & Bridges	12
Rapid Growth	7
Libraries	4
Roads	4
Senior Transportation	4
Traffic Congestion	4
Bike Trails	3
Land Preservation	3
Parks	3
Public Services	3
Restaurants	3
Senior Housing	3

# What have we heard?

## How do you travel within Washington County?



Car - 82.9%



Biking - 5.5%



Walking - 5.0%



Other - 3.9%



Transit - 2.8%

Many respondents enjoy walking and biking within Washington County as a form of recreation.

## How easy is it to move within Washington County?

**Good Transit**

2 responses

**Need Additional Transit**

8 responses

**Infrastructure Improvements**

5 responses

**Walkable**

6 responses

**Need Additional Bike Infrastructure**

3 responses

**Pedestrian Infrastructure**

1 response

**Poor Road Conditions**

1 response

**Traffic Congestion**

18 responses

The ease of traveling by car was highlighted by many respondents. The need for additional transit service and improved connections was also discussed.

**Good Travel by Car**

131 responses

**Good Bike Travel**

8 responses

**Good Trail Network**

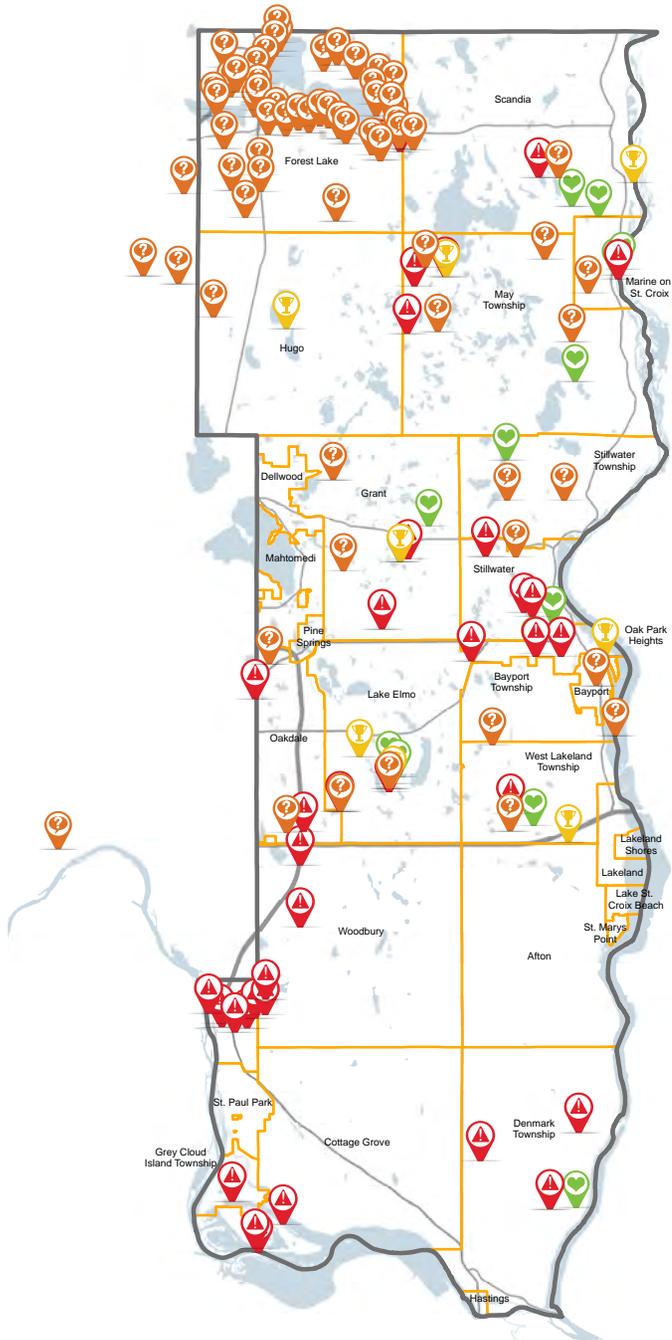
3 responses

**Dangerous Roundabouts**

2 responses

# What have we heard?

## Online Engagement Tool



### Legend



Best Characteristic



Favorite Place



Valued or Needed Amenity



Biggest Concern

*"Parks, park reserves, trails, the St. Croix waterway, and other significant public open space and outdoor recreational opportunities, while still being close to the Twin Cities, are a primary draw to Washington County."*

*"Lake Elmo Park Reserve is a wonderful place to get away and experience nature! Love the trail systems, play area, swimming and picnicking, and nature center!"*

*"We need access to trails in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Oakdale from the Parkview Estates neighborhood. Connecting roads are too dangerous in this area to walk or bike on the shoulder to trail systems."*

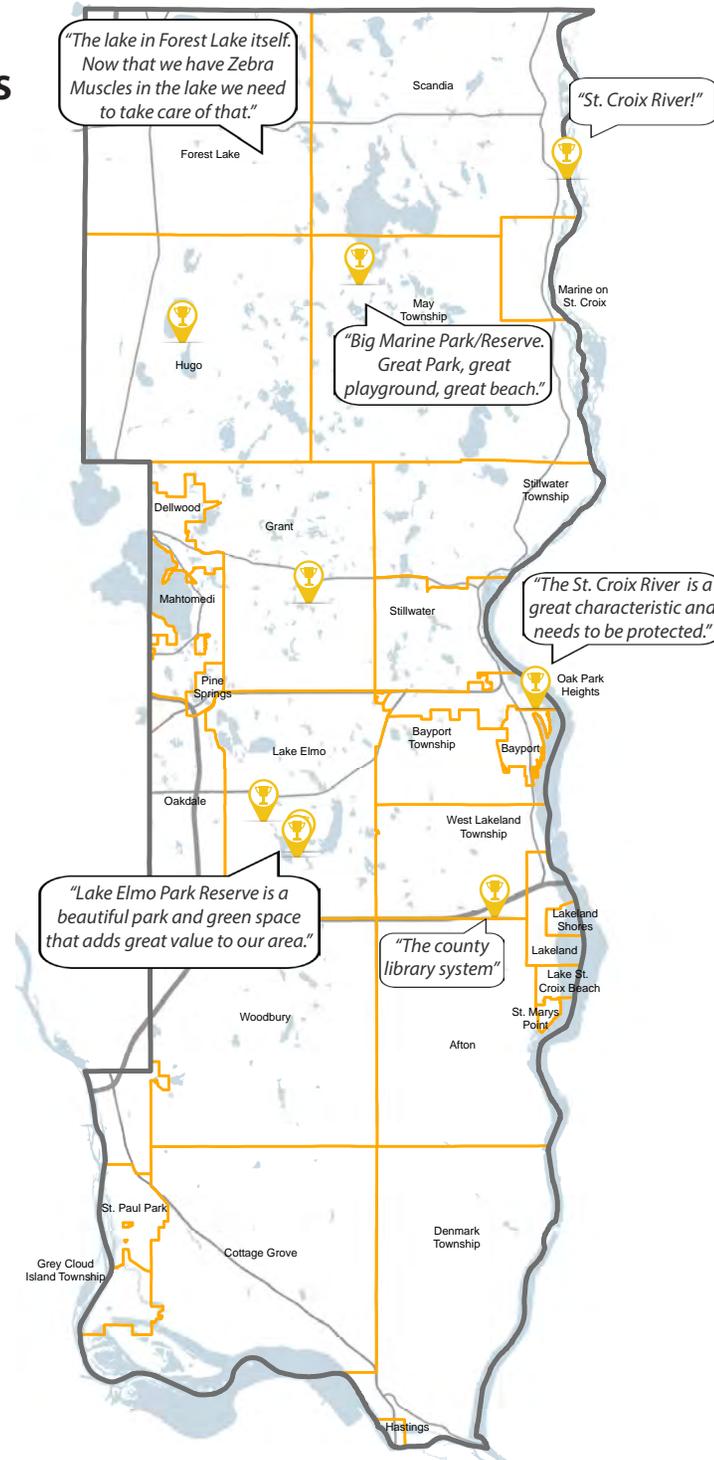
*"The I-494/694 and I-94 interchange can be quite dangerous at times with high traffic levels. If the population growth levels continue, especially in Woodbury, it will not be feasible to keep the current interchange in place."*

# What have we heard?

## Online Engagement Results



Identify  
Washington  
County's Best  
Characteristic



COMMONLY USED WORDS	
Response	Count
Lake	5
Park	5
Great	4
St Croix	3
Open Space	2

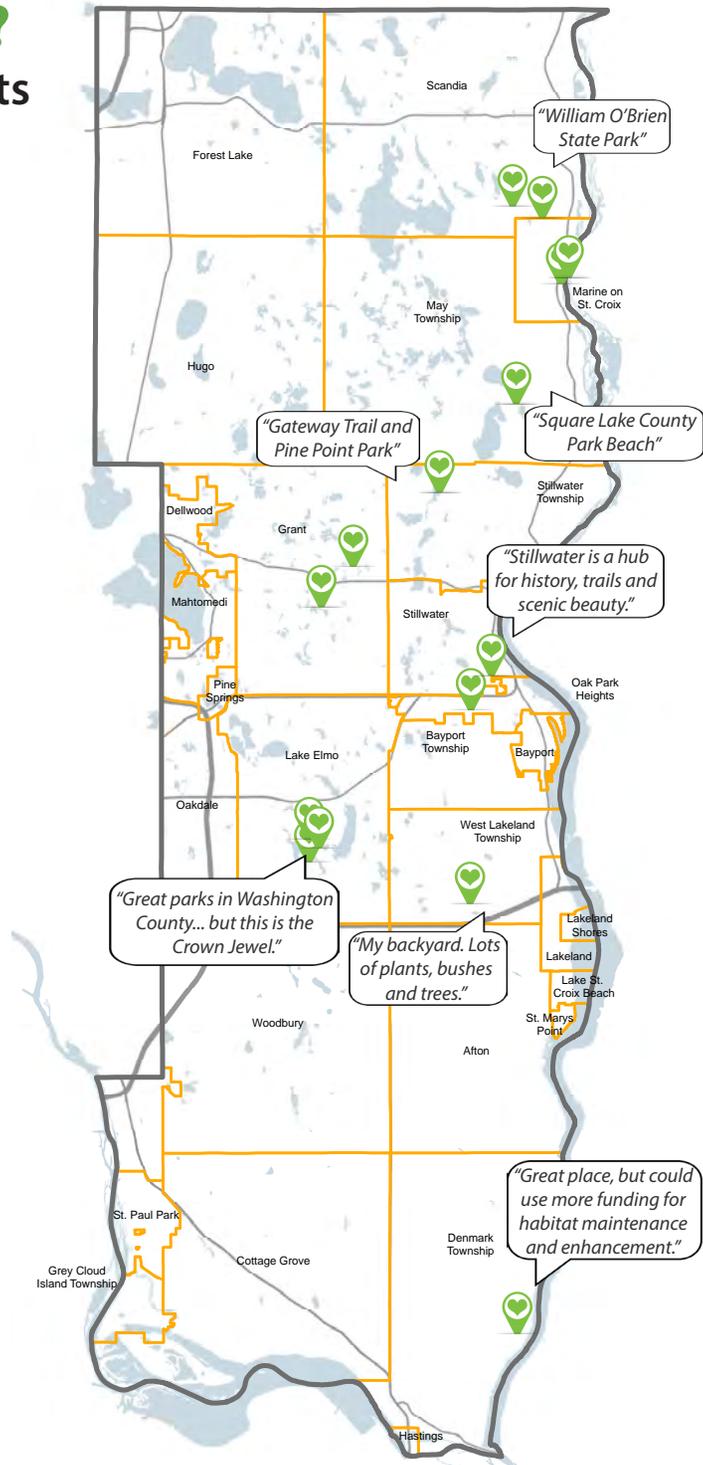


# What have we heard?

## Online Engagement Results



Identify your favorite place to live, work, and/or play in Washington County?



Square Lake County Park



Stillwater



Gateway State Trail



St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park

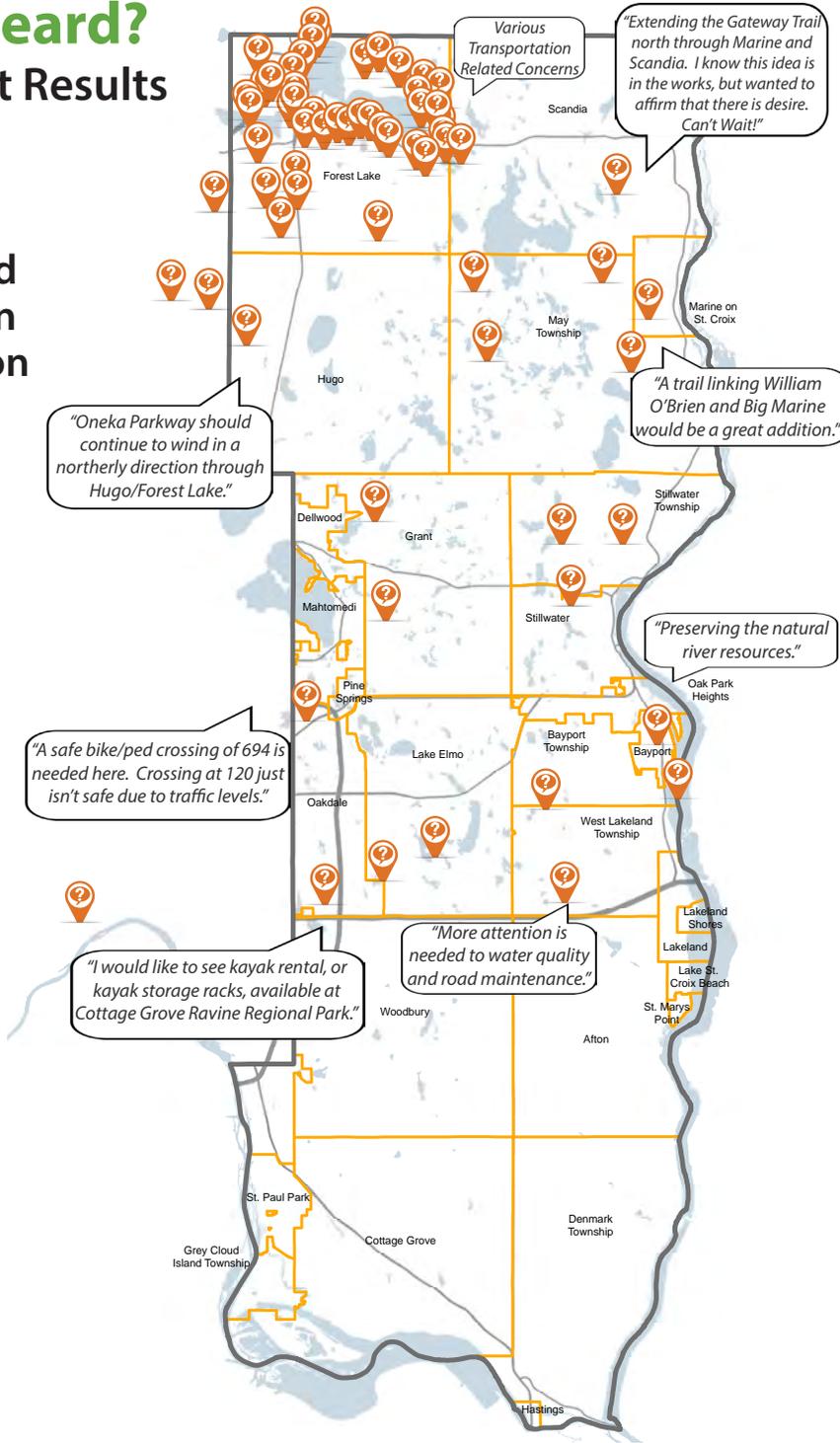
COMMONLY USED WORDS	
Response	Count
Trails	6
Park	6
Gateway	5
Lake	4
Stillwater	2
Reserve	2
Nature	2
St Croix	2

# What have we heard?

## Online Engagement Results



Identify a valued or needed amenity in Washington County



COMMONLY USED WORDS	
Response	Count
Trail	38
Area	25
Highway	14
Access	13
Lake	13
Dangerous	12
Intersection	10
Connect	9
Dedicated	9
Connection	7

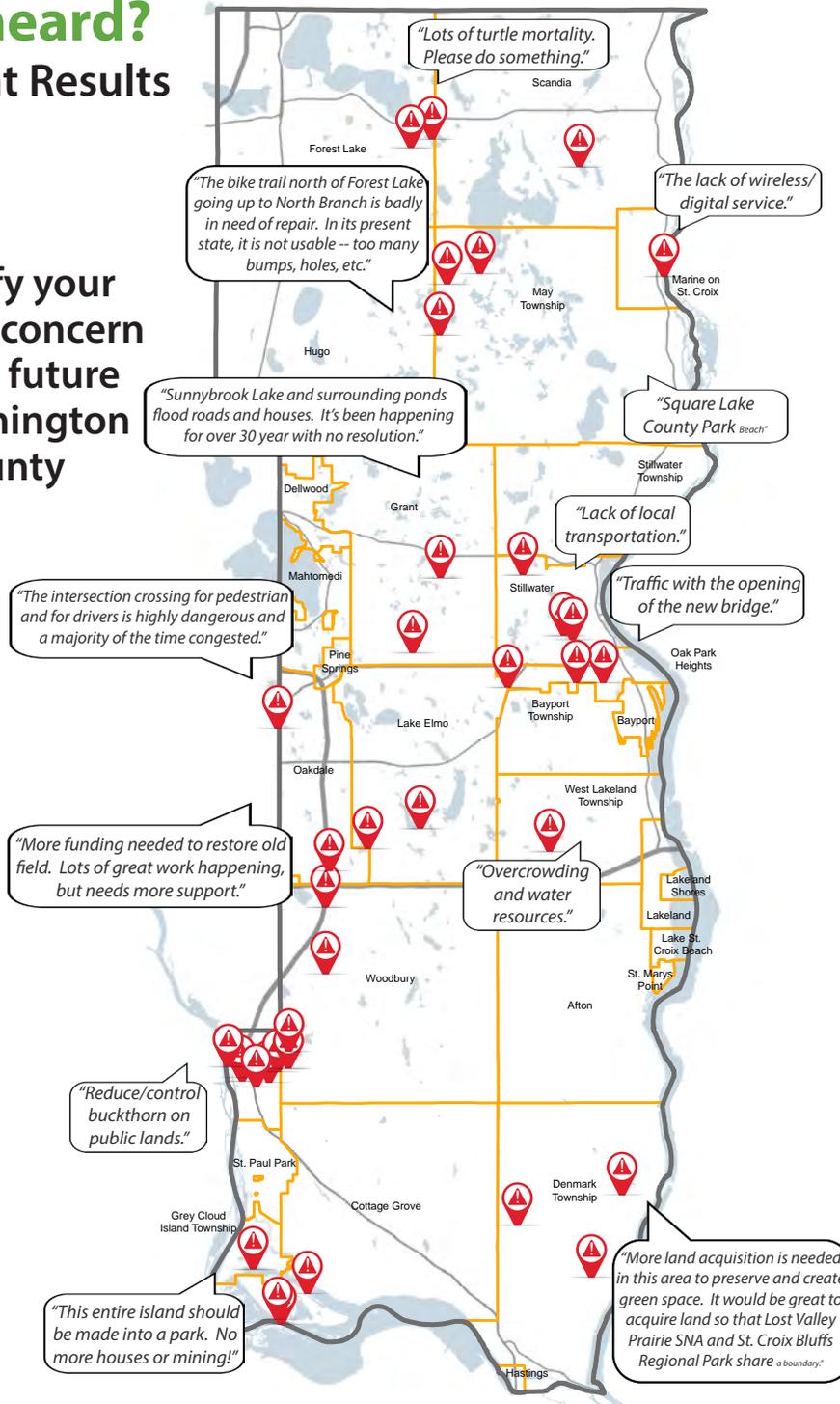


# What have we heard?

## Online Engagement Results



Identify your biggest concern for the future of Washington County



### COMMONLY USED WORDS

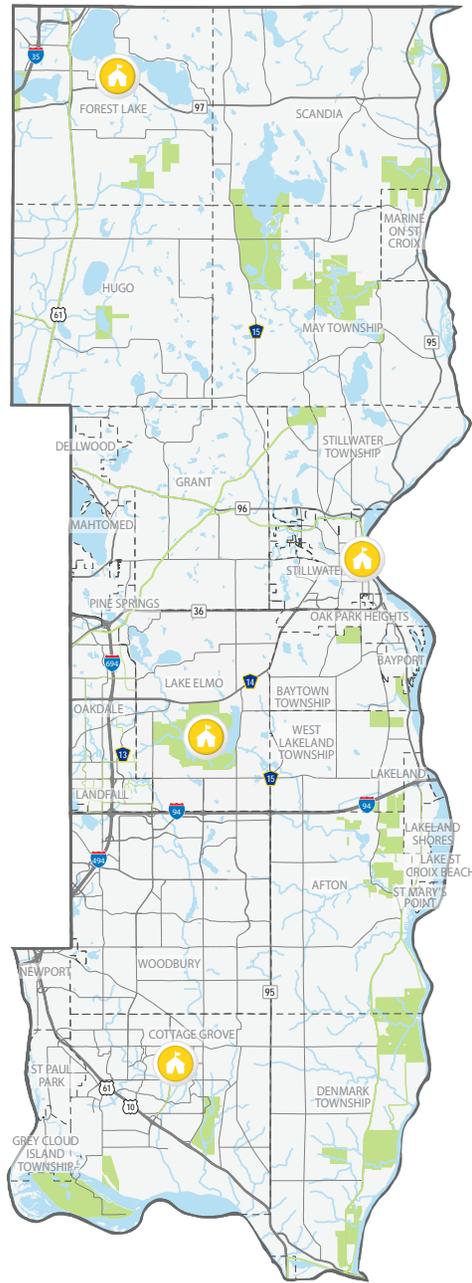
Response	Count
County	13
Land	11
Need	7
Traffic	6
Turtle	5
Intersection	4
Houses	4
Trail	4



# Washington County, Today & Tomorrow

Phase 2 Public Engagement - Element Review

## Phase 2 Public Engagement Result Summary



### Phase 2 Events

- 🏠 Local Government Unit Forum, Stillwater - June 15th, 2017
- 🏠 Headwaters Service Center, Forest Lake - October 9th, 2017
- 🏠 Nordic Center, Lake Elmo Park Reserve - October 10th, 2017
- 🏠 Cottage Grove Service Center, Cottage Grove - October 16th, 2017
- 🏠 Local Government Unit (LGU) Forum, Stillwater - January 11th, 2018



Washington County Comprehensive Plan **2040** Washington County

## WE WANT YOUR INPUT

Washington County is updating their Comprehensive Plan which guides future development decisions within the county. Join us to explore and discuss the various elements of the plan including transportation, parks and trails, housing, land use, and more. Your input is key for planning the future of Washington County.

**Washington County**  
Open House locations

### JOIN US

- **Monday, October 9th**  
Headwaters Service Center  
Forest Lake
- **Tuesday, October 10th**  
Government Center  
Stillwater
- **Monday, October 16th**  
Cottage Grove Service Center  
Cottage Grove

3 open houses will be held throughout the county to discuss the comprehensive plan. The same information will be shared at each location, so join us for the date and location that works best for you!

For more information visit <http://www.co.washington.mn.us> or contact Colin Kelly, Senior Planner at 651.430.6011 or [colin.kelly@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:colin.kelly@co.washington.mn.us)

# Phase 2 Engagement Results

## Open House Events





### Early Engagement Findings

**What Has Occurred Over the Past Few Months?**

Washington County hosted multiple “pop-up events” throughout the County last spring and early summer to interact with County residents. A pop-up event differs from a typical planning meeting in that it is smaller in scale, shorter in length, and focuses on gaining feedback from more condensed groups of residents. Additionally, an online mapping tool was available. This was an opportunity for residents to provide input on what makes the County a great place to live, work, play, and express any areas of concern.

**What Did Residents Say?**

Input received during the early engagement activities were compiled to better understand emerging trends among residents. This considered both issues and opportunities perceived by residents throughout the County.

The graphic below shows responses from an online forum using Wikimaps. Residents were asked to place points on a map of the County under one of the four categories listed in the legend below.

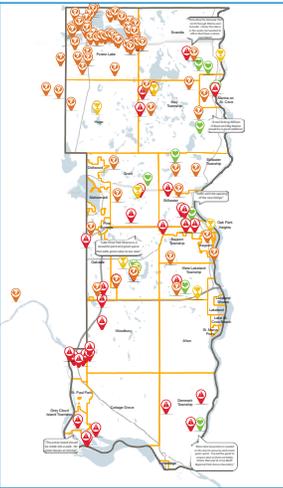
The Wordclouds display the top responses to questions posed to residents during early public engagement efforts.

Favorite Place

Favorite Characteristic

Valued Amenity

Needed Amenity



**Legend**

- Best Characteristic
- Favorite Place
- Valued or Needed Amenity
- Biggest Concern

WASHINGTON COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### What planning topic are you most interested in?

TOP RANKING PLANNING TOPICS	
Topic	Rank
Land Use	6
Transportation	6
Housing	5
Parks, Trails, and Open Space	4

### What interests you most about this topic?

*“I am keenly interested in seeing off-road paved trail connections from 1) Stillwater to Point Douglas County Park and Regional Trail and b) the Central Anoka County Regional Trail/Hardwood Creek Trail and the Gateway State Trail. These connections would enable long, safe, and scenic loop trail opportunities connecting counties, local communities, major riverways, state and regional parks, and other amenities..”*

### Do you have any questions or comments regarding the Washington County Comprehensive Plan?

*“I am interested in more solar and wind-generated power in Washington County. Are there state, county or local incentives for private or public entities to supply and/or install renewable energy sources?”*

*“Why is independent 55+ housing so expensive? How many section 42 rentals are there in Washington County? Where to find funding resources to help first time home buyers?”*

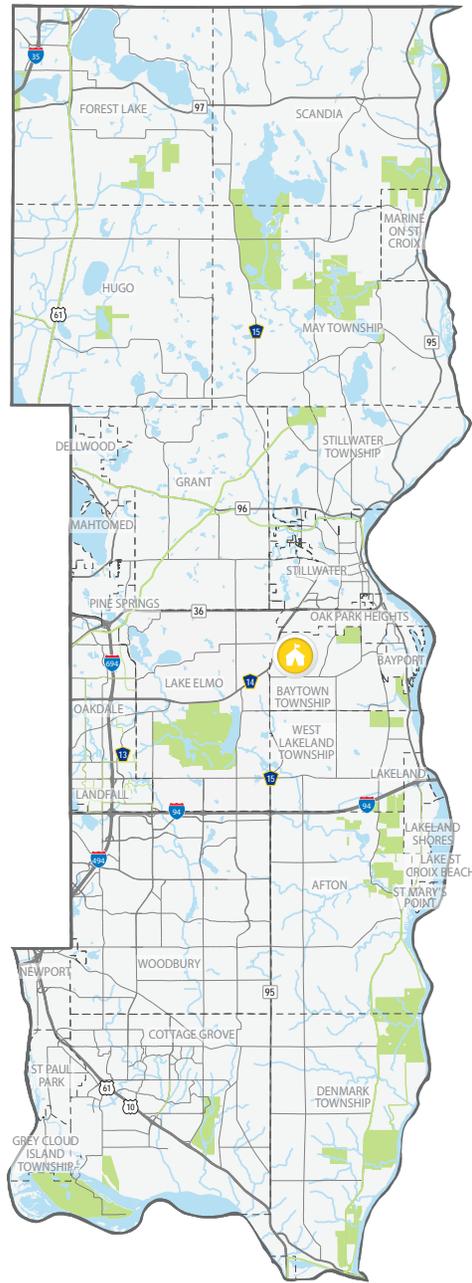
Boards were presented with the preliminary findings of each plan element, providing key information for the public to review and comment on.



# Washington County, Today & Tomorrow

Phase 3 Public Engagement - Plan Review

## Phase 3 Public Engagement Result Summary



### Events

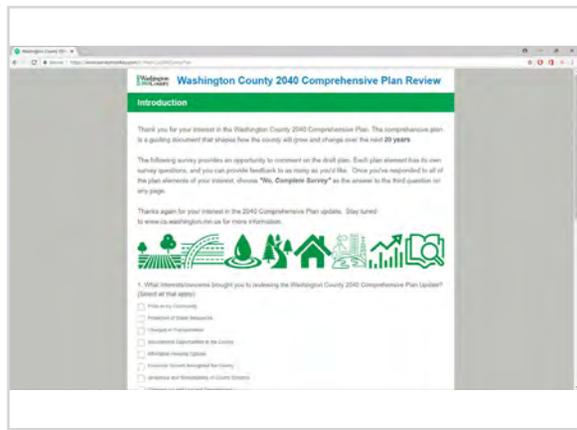
Washington County Fair, Stillwater - August 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>



### Activities

Comprehensive Plan Review Online Survey

Educational Video Series



# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Washington County Fair

Those who passed by the Washington County booth at the County Fair were asked to provide their input on two questions:

### What makes Washington County a great place to live, work and play?



A collection of colorful sticky notes on a light background, each containing a handwritten response to the question. The notes are arranged in a somewhat organized but overlapping manner. The responses include:

- Great State, County and Local Parks!
- ST. CROIX RIVER
- THE PARK SYSTEM
- Love the nature & wildlife
- Gymnastics in the Parks!!
- Close to Minneapolis & St Paul
- OPEN SPACES
- Paddle boarding at Lake Elmo Park Reserve
- Afton Alps
- Walkable neighborhoods
- TRAIL SYSTEM
- IT'S NEXT TO THE RIVER!
- Diverse Development
- THE RIVER
- TEDDY BEAR PARK
- Lake Elmo Park Reserve
- Outdoors and Parks
- EVERYTHING!
- Lake Elmo Park
- TREES!
- Rural Character
- Parks and Trees
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Less population in the North! We are not Eden Prairie!
- RECYCLING CENTER
- St. Croix River
- Clean lakes for swimming
- GREEN SPACE
- THE NATURE
- Great Community
- Parks like Lake Elmo
- Access to lots of Retail
- PARKS
- Parks and Trails
- CLEAN & SAFE
- Good Neighborhood
- PARKS
- Parks
- St. Croix River

### What is your biggest concern about the future of Washington County?



A collection of colorful sticky notes on a light background, each containing a handwritten response to the question. The notes are arranged in a somewhat organized but overlapping manner. The responses include:

- More transit options needed
- Over Development
- CLEAN WATER
- Lack of transit and alternative transportation options
- Sustainability
- Weak Libraries
- Water! Aquifer pollution
- Multimodal transportation options outside of Woodbury - over I-94 and I-494
- Transportation Financing
- Transit in the North- think Hugo!
- Wider shoulder or trail on CR 7 and a safe connection to a trail
- The Indian purchase of land by Oakland Jr. High
- Increased density
- Over-population
- Use of salt on roadways
- Maintaining our vintage, rural character i.e. old barns and buildings
- Over development
- Littering, single-use plastics
- Water quality!
- Fee for parks, Dakota County does not charge
- Infrastructure not keeping up with population growth
- More trail connections
- SM pollution
- Ropes course and zipline!
- Over-development
- Condition of roads- needs more funding
- Challenges moving around the region
- Lack of Transit Options
- Stop developing! Keep our farms!
- Vanishing fields now filled with houses

# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results

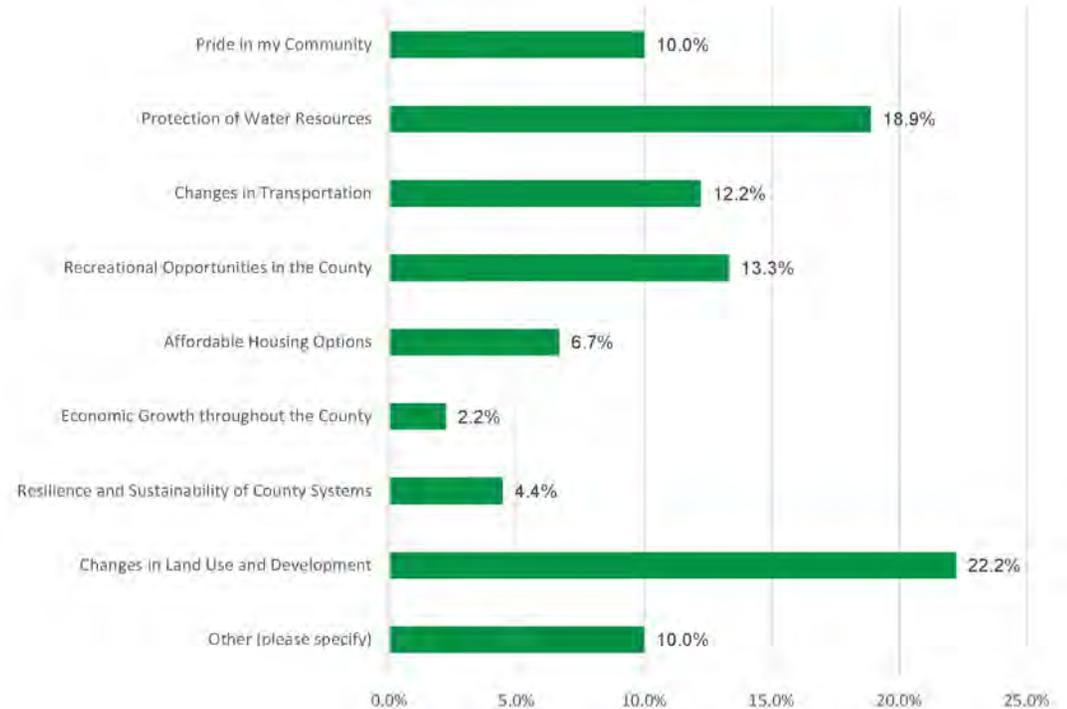
Upon release of the draft plan for public review, an online survey was also made available to collect comments. Respondents were provided an opportunity to provide remarks on the overall plan, followed by specific comments by plan element. A total of 33 individuals participated in the survey and provided the following results:

### 1. What interests/concerns brought you to reviewing the Washington County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update? (Select all that apply)

Interest/Concern	Count
Pride in my Community	9
Protection of Water Resources	17
Changes in Transportation	11
Recreational Opportunities in the County	12
Affordable Housing Options	6
Economic Growth throughout the County	2
Resilience and Sustainability of County Systems	4
Changes in Land Use and Development	20
Other (please specify)	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>

#### Other Responses:

- climate change mitigation - such as fostering more solar panels and becoming a zero carbon release community
- I am just interested overall - no concerns
- Habitat
- Protection of our natural resources
- Lack of diversity
- Preserving large lot sizes and rural character
- Concern on how public money is being used and how much property tax revenue is being taken away by park land being acquired
- concern about parks, trails, river corridors, open spaces
- Cottage Grove Library incorporating a Community Center



# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results

### 2. What is your overall impression of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan?

- Disappointed that it doesn't address climate change mitigation, such as committing ourselves to a zero carbon release community by such things as increasing use of solar power
- Well done! It was very informative.
- The transportation plan is stuck in the automobile era. Washington County contributes \$750,600 to the Met Council for railroads and gets nothing in return. WE NEED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE. Our plan for 2040 cannot be to build more and more lanes of road.
- Easy to read.
- Thorough
- I am not happy with some issues, especially with how the county plans on dealing with flooding
- Well thought out
- Good
- Very concerned about the number of homeowners being displaced. The many boats allowed on our lakes that are brining zebra mussels and milfoil into them.
- I watched the videos - I like all that has been done, and trust the county will continue to make wise choices.
- Too focused on low income housing. I worked hard to get where I am and pay large taxes. I do NOT want more section 8/low income housing in Washington County.
- MET COUNCIL DIRECTED
- MET COUNCIL DIRECTED
- Interested to see how it progresses
- IT'S WAY TO LONG TO READ THE ENTIRE THING, A SHORTER VERSION WITH HIGHLIGHTS WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL
- meh.
- Very detailed; I think it is very important that the new Cottage Grove Library be part of an overall Community Center that is accessible to all; rich or poor, young or old, all religious beliefs, all ethic groups. It's the one place that anyone can go and interact freely with all citizens. It's critical to our community that this be available. Public transportation is important so that people can get to shopping and the library. Would also like to have ability to take organic materials for composting to a central location rather than throwing in the trash.

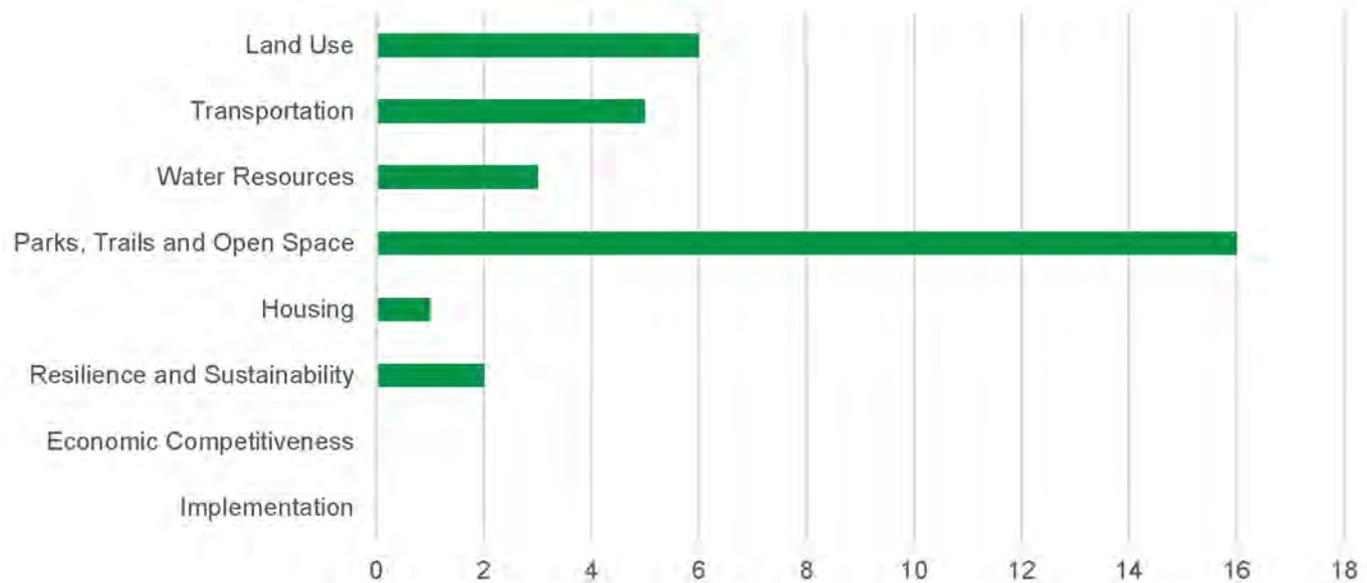
# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results

### 3. Which plan element are you most interested in?

Plan Element	Count
Land Use	6
Transportation	5
Water Resources	3
Parks, Trails and Open Space	16
Housing	1
Resilience and Sustainability	2
Economic Competitiveness	0
Implementation	0
Total	33

Which plan element are you most interested in?



# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results



### What is your overall impression of the Land Use Plan?

- Poor.
- Too much development in the area
- SOUNDS GOOD BUT NOT ENFORCEABLE

### After reviewing the Land Use Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- Does the county want to reduce flooding of farm fields? In some areas of the county (especially Forest Lake and Hugo), there are farm fields that flood each spring that need what some consider “excess” water to keep a balanced ecosystem. They provide vital habitat for migrating birds and other biological indicators. Are there any plans in place to protect these habitats?
- COVERS TOWNSHIPS WHY NOT CITIES
- p. 4-11 and 4-12 Unclear why only Grey Cloud Island Township and Denmark Township are discussed under MRCCA. Does WC have responsibility for them under MRCCA that it doesn’t have for the towns (Cottage Grove, St Paul Park, Newport)?



### What is your overall impression of the Transportation Plan?

- It is almost exclusively focused on the automobile
- A lot of people complain about the round-about, but I do feel that they are safer than 4-way stops. More speed limit signs are needed inside the round-about.

### After reviewing the Transportation Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- What is the plan for passenger trail service?
- No
- I don’t feel that CG can expand and grow its businesses and shopping area unless we have more ways in and out of the area. We need a new bridge where the old SPP railroad bridge was torn down. The Wakota bridge did not answer the transportation problems. If there was another bridge in SPP, it would relieve the Wakota Bridge, and give our youth a close connection the Inver Hills College. It took 30 years to get the Stillwater bridge moved. If we want another bridge across the Mississippi, the plan needs to start now.

# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results



### WATER RESOURCES

#### What is your overall impression of the Water Resources Plan?

- See previous comments
- It seems to flow well and includes necessary components

#### After reviewing the Water Resources Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- No.



### HOUSING

#### What is your overall impression of the Housing Plan?

- It looked good – so much of the plan is interconnected
- I only watched the videos. I don't like that I hear low-income housing is being built and it starts at \$300,000. I don't like that I have homeless youth moving into my home to stay with my granddaughter, because they can't find rental options in CG.
- Bad. Way too much concern about low income housing to be available. It's important to have more senior living but if more Section 8 housing is built/supported here, I do not want to be a Washington County resident anymore! I didn't work to get where I am today to be surrounded by people sucking off of the system.

#### After reviewing the Housing Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- We need decent apartment buildings in CG where people can rent for under \$900 a month. The Legends is great, but only for seniors. What about the youth of the community that non longer get along with parents? Why do so many seniors have adult children and grandchildren moving in with them because they cannot afford rent in CG?

# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results



### PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

#### What is your overall impression of the Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan?

- I'd like to see some restoration planned for the large turf ditches along Radio Drive between 4th St. in Oakdale and Valley Creek road. There is over irrigation amongst businesses. And there are way too many geese that congregate in these areas, which cause accidents on the busy road of Radio Drive. Converting part of the ditches to native plants will reduce geese, filter pollutants and provide pollinator habitat by connecting corridors of Lake Elmo Regional Park with La Lake in Woodbury. The change in land use will also soften traffic noise and enhance aesthetics for business owners. The majority of traffic commutes down Radio Drive. Enhancing the ditches will remind the community and visitors that Woodbury and the County promote water wise landscaping and restorations. I think of Carver County along their highways and main roads. There have native grasses and flowers along the roads. This adds value to the surrounding communities. Thank you.
- More trails feeding into main trails for commuters needed
- need more open space with all of the development
- Acquiring land on a "willing seller" is so false. There is so much hassle that is given to a homeowner that they are forced into selling. What about our counties tax revenue. Who is going to make up for the loss.
- Though there are plans on expanding existing paved/hard trails, I didn't see any mention for developing mountain bike/trailing running systems? With the metro area providing nearly 100 miles of single track trails, I am surprised Washington County doesn't appear to have plans to keep pace with this growing demand.

#### After reviewing the Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- Country trails need to be plowed to allow bikers to ease congestion
- No
- WHY do we need so much park land. Having more people use the land rather than a homeowner who takes care of the land seems better.
- Why not develop mountain bike specific trails?
- p. 7-6 - under suggestions, can you say more about what is meant by focus group members when they say "Address safety". This is likely to be confusing, mis-understood by many readers. p. 7-43 under "Existing Development - text refers to Hardwood Creed Trail rather than Point Douglas. p. 7-49 Discuss how WC's portion of the Mississippi River Trail relates to the national effort that is intended to extended from Itasca headwaters to Louisiana p. 7-65 Different kinds of easements (scenic easements, Purchase of Development Rights, conservation easements) are confusing - can you say more about how these differ - maybe just from different funding sources?

# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results



### RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

#### What is your overall impression of the Resilience and Sustainability Plan?

- Appreciate that it is being considered and included. It needs to be clearer on where and how individual WC citizens need to take responsibility - how what they do is or isn't sustainable.

#### After reviewing the Resilience and Sustainability Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- p. 9-11 The bullet points that include comparisons to all Minnesotans are most meaningful. Can this be done for all bullet points? Also, the 2 bullet points - 7th & 11th - that discuss obesity seem to contradict each other. p. 9-22 Table 1. What % of all business and all residential Xcel customers are these? p. 9-23 I like the optimism, but this might be too rosy. Most of WC citizens are still buying pickup trucks and large SUVs



### ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

#### What is your overall impression of the Economic Competitiveness Plan?

- No comments received.

#### After reviewing the Economic Competitiveness Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- No comments received.



### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What is your overall impression of the Implementation Plan?

- No comments received.

#### After reviewing the Implementation Plan, do you have any unanswered questions?

- No comments received.

# Phase 3 Public Engagement Results

## What we heard? Online Survey Results

### Any additional comments/questions on the Washington County 2040 Comprehensive Plan update?

- We must aggressively address climate change and I do not see that addressed. We could commit ourselves to a zero carbon release community and foster and encourage more solar power throughout our community.
- Thank you for posting it and making residents aware. You all do good work and it is very important!
- There are several typos: Pg 6-20: "withdrawal" misspelled in 3 spot in last paragraph. Pg 6-22: misspelled "collaborating" and "address." Pg 6-25: Under Lake Elmo/Oakdale, missing an "l" in perfluoroalkyl. Under St. Paul Park/Newport, misspelled "several." Pg 6-46: The Water Resource Strategies don't seem to reflect the last Water Resource Policy, "Facilitate the sharing of groundwater... and intergovernmental work," and instead are geared towards education and shared projects.
- Get a bridge built across the Mississippi either at the end of Jamaica or in St Paul Park by the refinery.
- Who is the main audience for the Plan? I suspect public officials and administrators and in that context, I think the Plan is very well done. It is comprehensive, well-written and provides good, informative detail. If the average citizen could be coaxed to read it (I doubt many can), then the level of reading should be simpler, with more examples of what ordinary citizens are doing (or could do) that are part of WC's planning.