

CITY OF HARMONY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Adopted December 12th, 2023.

TITLE PAGE
City of Harmony
Comprehensive Plan

Adopted this 12th day in the month of December 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Harmony Comprehensive Plan was created with input from various community members and residents, the Planning Commission and City Council. The following is a list of participants who participated in the update to the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Harmony.

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**THANK YOU TO THE CITIZENS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OF THE
CITY OF HARMONY WHO PARTICIPATED AND WERE ENGAGED
IN THE PROCESS TO MAKE THIS
YOUR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**

VISION STATEMENT

To be southeast Minnesota's leading City in quality of life, sustainability, business growth, tourism, and small-town livability.

MISSION STATEMENT

***The mission of the Harmony
Comprehensive Plan is to maintain and
promote the health, safety, and general
welfare of all residents,
businesses, and its environment by
implementing adopted policies, goals,
and objectives.***

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

A Guide for Decision Makers

A comprehensive plan is a long-term policy that acts as a manual to guide decision makers about the growth of a community. The plan acts as both an expression of the community's vision for future growth but also as a strategic map to reach that vision.

This vision is informed by many sources including zoning and land use, census data, economic development, housing data, transportation, sustainability, and community input. With this information, the plan can help communities in several ways, including:

- Identifying and preserving important natural resources and lands.

- Providing an opportunity for community input towards the future of the community.
- Identifying issues and opportunities.
- Ensuring the city grows in a beneficial and sustainable manner.

The plan is a guidance document. This means that its recommendations are ultimately implemented through other policies, programs, and ordinances to address current and future concerns and objectives. Part of the document is an implementation plan that helps define how city officials will help accomplish the goals of the community.

A Legal Basis for Land Use and Regulations

The State of Minnesota guides the development of comprehensive plans and requires certain elements to be included. These statutes ensure that comprehensive plans are relatively consistent in content and can be used as legal documents to ensure zoning regulations are in compliance with the plans.

While not all cities are required to develop a comprehensive plan, a plan is still considered best practice. For one, the plan guides and informs local officials in the decision-making process. Another reason is that a comprehensive plan is useful in supporting future zoning ordinances by providing the rational basis that these ordinances legally require.

Planning Process

This is an amendment to the City of Harmony's Comprehensive Plan. The original was a Comprehensive Strategic Plan adopted in September of 1997 as a Capital Improvement Program strategy for implementation of identified priority project and with a vision by community leaders.

There were multiple community engagement sessions over a one-year period as well as a global pandemic, known as COVID 19, which no one had heard of but became a common term very quickly. The people and leaders of the City of Harmony forged on to create a policy document.

The input and ideas from these community engagement sessions were incorporated into the context of the Plan, which was then reviewed by Harmony's Planning and Zoning Board and a public hearing. As a referral by the Planning Board, the Plan was forwarded to the Harmony City Council for full adoption.

After adoption, the Plan became the policy foundation from which zoning and other land use regulations, programs, education efforts, and public expenditures transformed the community's adopted vision into reality.

Relationship to Other Plans

In addition to documenting historic and future trends, this plan creates a foundation for a coordinated action by public and private entities including a predictable environment

for both public and private investment, creating support among neighboring counties and townships through a shared and understood vision.

Community Profile

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Regional Context

Harmony is located within Fillmore County of Southeast Minnesota and is situated at the intersection of Minnesota Highways 52 and 139. The largest nearby city with significant population is Rochester, MN located

approximately 50 miles to the northwest on Highway 52. Harmony is just under 4 miles from the border with Iowa and about 25 miles from Decorah, IA with a population of 7,730 in 2020.

Figure 1: Regional Map. Source: Google Earth (2023)

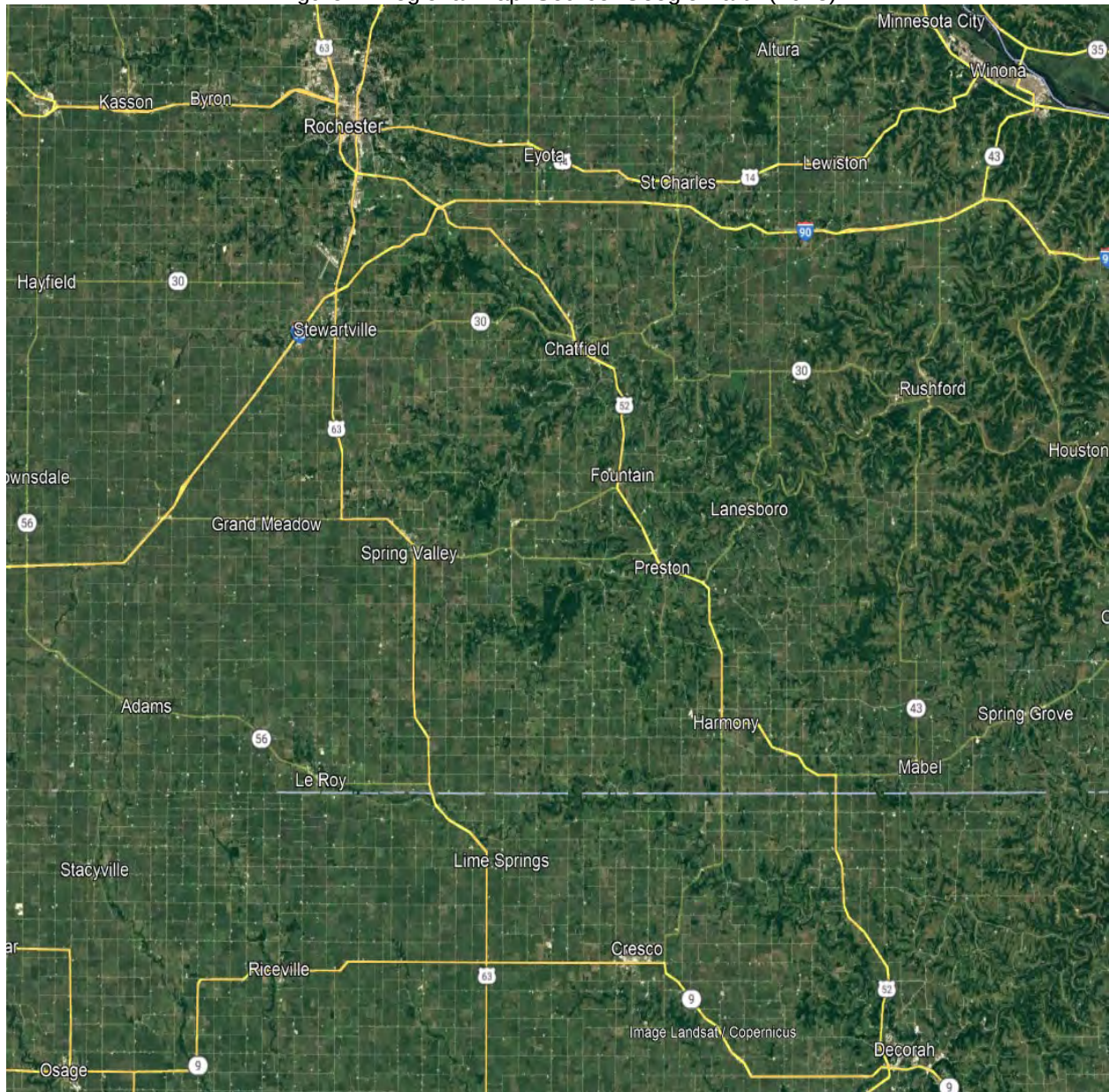


Figure 1: Regional Map. Source: Google Earth (2023)

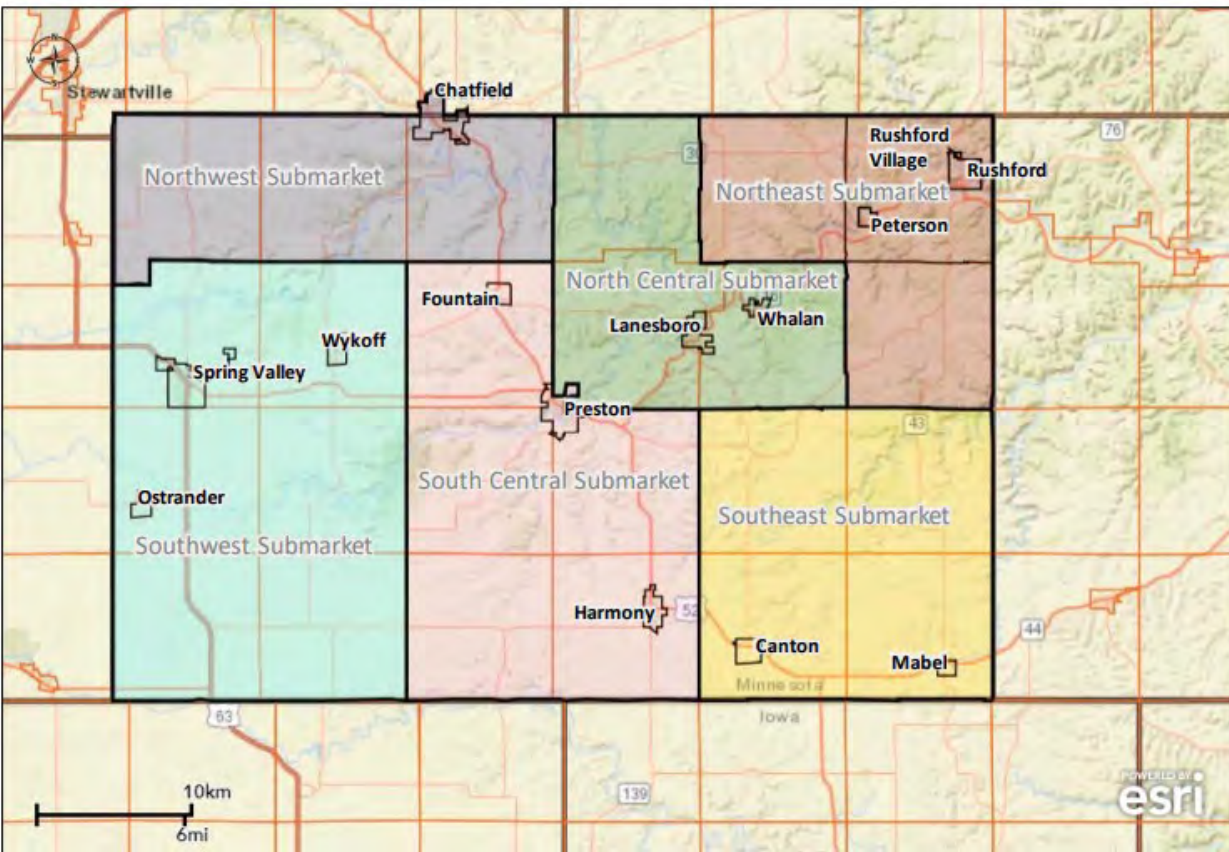


Figure 2: Harmony's Market Area. Source: Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis (2019)

Demographics

Harmony's demographic trends help to identify and shape future development, economics, transportation, environmental and cultural resource management. Identified and projected demographic trends serve as indicators for future needs and demands of public services, open space, traffic, and infrastructure. The data comes from a variety of sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, ACS (American Community Survey), MN State Demographer, ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute), and the Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis (2019).

Market Area Definition

To better analyze the City of Harmony's regional context, an understanding of a larger market area, as identified in the Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis (2019), is an important tool. The South-

Central Submarket Area, as defined, includes the Cities of Harmony, Preston, and Fountain. The remainder of Fillmore County is divided into four additional submarkets including southwest, northwest, north central, northeast, and southeast. Harmony is nearest to the southeast submarket area which includes Canton and Mabel.

Market Area Population

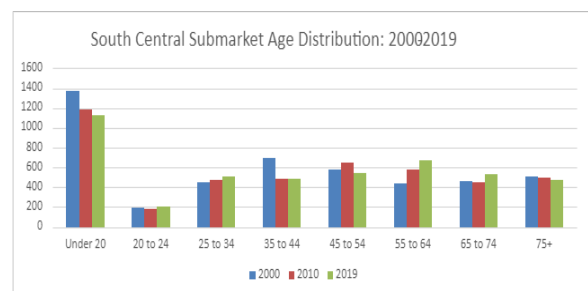


Figure 3: Age Distribution 2000 to 2019 Source: Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis (2019)

According to the Housing Needs Analysis, this market area's overall population increased 28 people from 2010 to 2019, a positive reversal of the 198 people lost between 2000 and 2010. Harmony contributed half the population increase during this period.

Market Area Population by Age

As of 2019, the market area population trends from the Fillmore County Housing

Needs Analysis show the age-based estimates age-progression of the “under 20 years old” cohort as the largest share of the population, however declining by 191 people since 2000. The Study also showed a slight increase in the 55- to 64-year-old cohort, as the baby boomer age migration shifted. The South-Central Market Area, if grouped into larger aggregations, added 107 people aged 55 or older, but lost 315 people aged 54 or younger since 2000.

Population

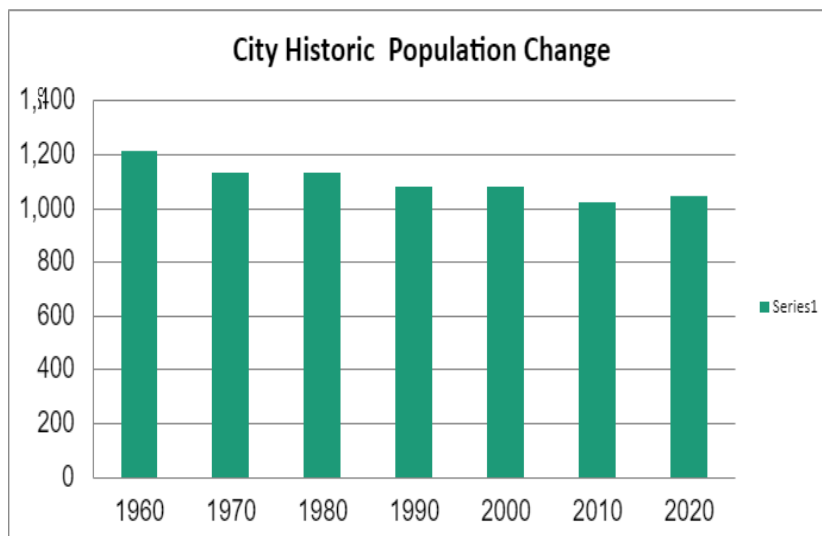


Figure 4: Population 1960 to 2020. Source: 2020 Decennial Census Data

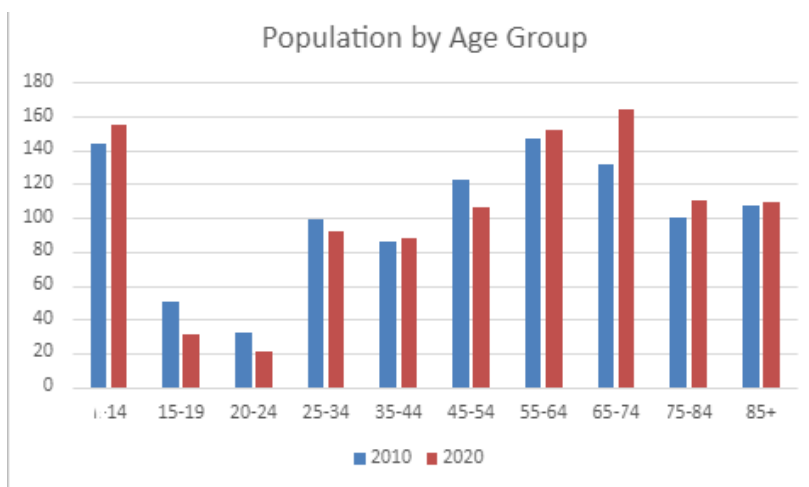


Figure 5: Population by Age Group 2010 and 2020. Source: 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

The current population of the City of Harmony as of the 2020 Census is 1,043. The overall population trend declined slightly between 2000 and 2010 but subsequently climbed through 2020 to its current population.

Between 2010 and 2020, no cohort of people stood out for growth, except the 65- to 74-year-olds. In 2010 this cohort accounted for just 13% of the population and by 2019 they made up 16% of the population. The younger cohorts of 15-19 and 20-24 declined by 38 and 34 percent respectively while the mid-age cohorts of 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 remained nearly unchanged. This follows the Market Area trends identified previously.

Population by Race and Ethnicity

Harmony's racial composition is predominantly White as it accounts for 96% of the population. Black or African American Alone and Some Other Race Alone each accounted for half a percent of the population. The remaining 3% of the population is a mix of races. According to the 2020 ACS estimates, 99.5 percent are native to the United States and 58.5 percent were born in the State of Minnesota.

Education

From 2010 to 2020 Harmony's population trended towards higher levels of education attainment. The categories of "some college" and "associates degrees" saw the largest growth in this period which directly corresponded to sharp drops in the lower education categories. Evidence of this is with the "Did not graduate high school" category which saw a decrease from 6.5 percent that didn't graduate high school in 2010 compared to 2 percent in 2020.

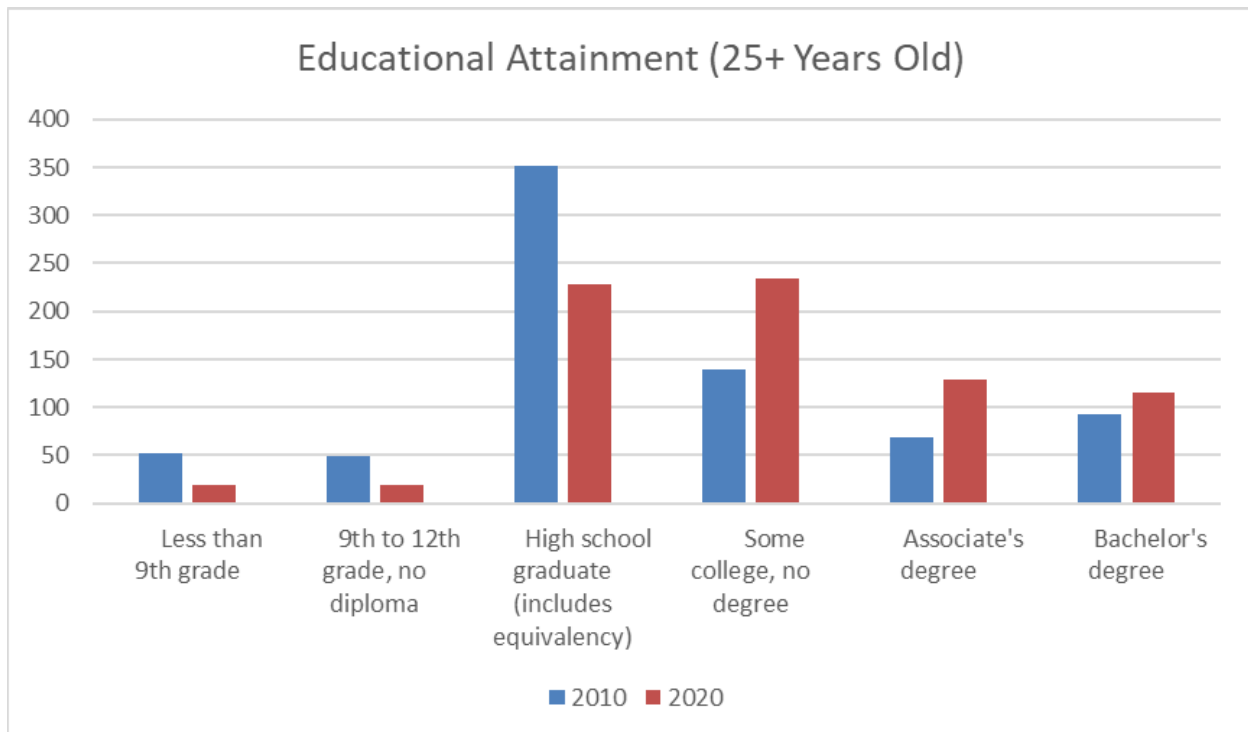


Figure 6: Educational Attainment Source: 2020 ACS Data

Households

The City of Harmony has 522 total households (2020 ACS 5 Year Estimate). The average household size is 2.19 with an average family size of 1.85. Of the total population one year old and over (1,016), 81 percent lived in the same house from the previous year.

Veteran Status

As of 2020, according to the 5 Year ACS Estimates, the Civilian Population 18 years and over accounts for 857 people. Civilian Veterans account for 10.3 percent of the population, which represents 88 people. The National percentage is 7.1 percent.

Population Trends and Projections

According to the 2020 Decennial Census data, the population of the City of Harmony was approximately 1,043 people (this varies from the 2020 ACS 5-year estimates which is a rough figure of 1,028 people and is used when specific data is not available from the more concise Decennial data). Using the Linear Curve Projection Method, historical population data is used to predict the population change into 2040. This method assumes that the future population will change by the same absolute number over a given period of time, as occurred during the base period. The average change in population per year based on the absolute population change between 1960 to 2020 was calculated using the Growth Rate formula to solve for "r" and then by inserting the "r" value into the Future Population formula a projection can be determined.

$$\text{Growth Rate} = r = (PL - PF) / (YL - YF)$$

$$\text{Future Population} = PL + r * yp$$

(Where: PL= Population in last year of the period; PF = Population in first year of the period; YL = Last year of the period; YF = First year of the period; yp = number of years projecting forward.)

PL = 2020 pop. or, 1,043
PF = 1960 pop. or, 1,214
YL = 2020 and YF = 1960
r = -2.85

Using the above formulas, the 2040 Harmony population is projected to decrease by 5.5% from 2020 to 2040 for a total of 986 people.

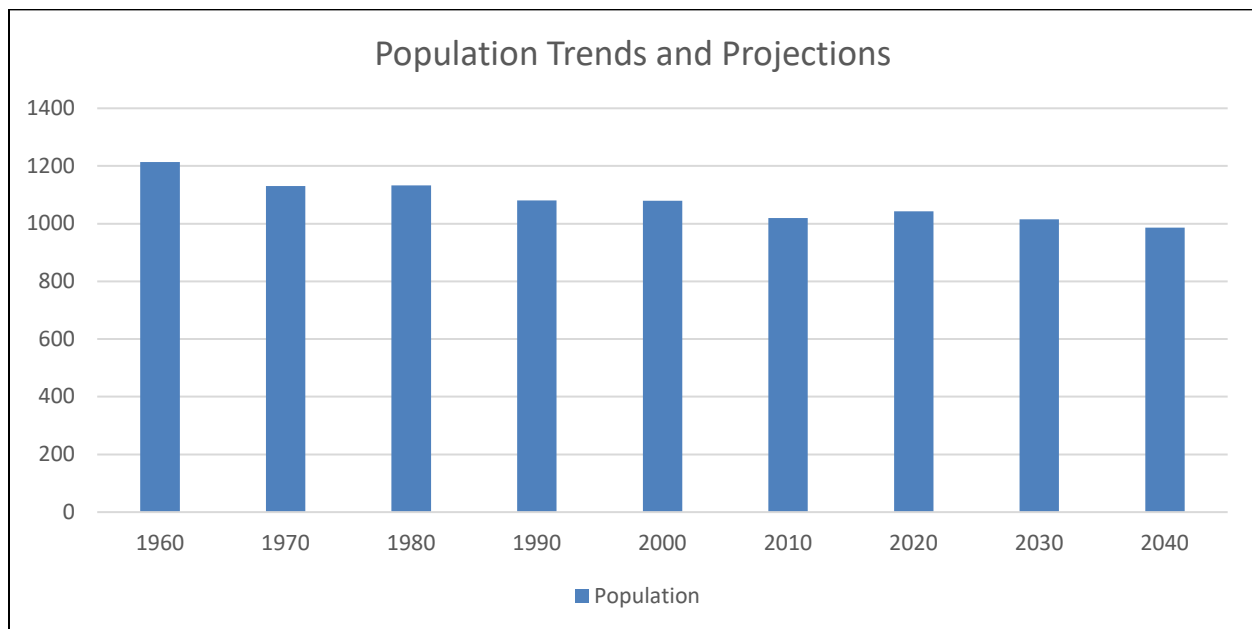


Figure 6: Population Trends and Projections 1960 through 2040

Economic Competitiveness

In order for a community to be sustainable, understanding economic competitiveness is a key element to understanding future needs and growth of a community. Economic Competitiveness has many definitions but

generally compares one community to another based on a desire to live in one community over another (sense of place). The economic competitiveness area is different than the market area previously described. In

this instance, the economic competitiveness area encompasses cities and towns that have similar geographic and urban characteristics

Workforce

One of the best ways to understand economic competitiveness is to look at the work force of a community and what types of jobs are held and where they work. As the table indicates below, there are a total of 36 firms and 495 employees in the City of Harmony. Education and Health Services have the highest number of employees; however, the Trade, Transportation and Utilities industry has the largest number of firms.

but have a different pull, or draw, due to jobs or some other measurable means.

One of the best ways to understand economic competitiveness is to look at the work force of a community and what types of jobs are held and where they work. As the table indicates below, there are a total of 36 firms and 495 employees in the City of Harmony. Education and Health Services have the highest number of employees; however, the Trade, Transportation and Utilities industry has the largest number of firms.

Harmony Industry Employment Statistics, 2021 Annual				
Industry	Number of Firms	Number of Employees	Total Annual Wages	Avg. Weekly Wage
Total, All Industries	36	495	\$18,531,228	NA
Education and Health Services	12	289	\$9,559,323	\$694
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	19	161	\$6,890,342	\$825
Public Administration	1	10	\$365,953	\$638
Financial Activities	4	35	\$1,715,610	\$957

Figure 7: Harmony Industry Employment Statistics, 2021 Annual.

Commute

According to Census and MN Employment and Economic Data, Harmony's population is largely employed close to their residence with an average commute to work of 21.7 minutes. About 44% of the population has a commute under 10 miles and only 25% have a commute greater than 25 miles.

The vast majority of Harmony's workforce is car dependent with 91 percent of workers relying on a car, truck, or van to get to work. Of those, only 4 percent of the workforce carpools for their commute. The rest of the workforce either walks or bikes to work, or they work from home.

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Land Use and Growth

LAND USE AND GROWTH

Existing Land Use (Zoning 2020)

The existing land use is represented by the Zoning Map (see the Zoning Map on the following page) and is intended to illustrate the location and distribution of a variety of land uses. The map includes general categories in order to group certain uses together and still understand the nature of such uses without specifically stating the exact type of use by its common description or name. It should be the goal of the City to have the zoning map consistent with the future land use map as much as possible to eliminate as many non-conforming uses as possible.

The City of Harmony consists of five existing land use categories.

- COMM (Commercial District)
- AG (Agricultural District)
- IND (Industrial District)
- RES 1 (Residential 1 – District)
- RES 2 (Residential 2 – District)

Future Land Use

Future land uses are elements that address the specific land uses within the City limits, desired future conditions within the urban growth boundary, and policies addressing support for and preservation of agricultural, forest, wildlife and open space.

As part of this plan, a future growth boundary was determined based on public input from public engagement meetings. The location of current and future sewer and water facilities and location of other vital infrastructure plays an important role in determining future growth boundaries as well and may affect this boundary as the City develops.

Some criteria requiring adjusting the boundary may include the following:

1. Urban Service Availability: a defined geographic area that could be identified as part of the watershed area that could be serviced with sewer and water lines within the next 5 – 25 years.
2. Development Patterns: Existing and near future projected growth patterns in housing, commerce, transportation, schools, etc.
3. Prime Industrial / Commercial Land: These are areas that are well suited now or in the near future for development due to their current or future location near new interchanges, State, County, or local road systems.
4. Development Suitability: Engineering and site-specific criteria as each area is being serviced with infrastructure and/or unique topography, floodplain, wetland, and other environmental limitations are identified.
5. Location and distribution of appropriate soil types and prime agricultural land.

The Future Land Use Map identifies different land uses in the City and has the following categories, descriptions and permitted uses.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

- Up to six dwelling units per gross acre for single family dwellings.
- Up to three dwelling units per gross acre for two family dwellings.
- May incorporate a mix of housing types including single-family detached (plus accessory dwelling units), two family dwelling (townhomes and row houses).
- Civic uses and places of worship may be allowed if zoning regulation standards are met.
- Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): RES 1 (Residential 1 - Zoning District).

Medium/High Density Residential (M/HDR)

- Up to three dwelling units per gross acre with increases allowed per zoning regulations.
- May incorporate a mix of housing types including single-family detached (plus accessory dwelling units), two family dwelling (townhomes and row houses), multi-family (condos and apartments), congregate and senior living facilities.
- Businesses that primarily serve residents may be incorporated if compatibility standards are met through a conditional use permit review.
- Civic uses and places of worship may be allowed if zoning regulation standards are met.
- Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): RES 2 (Residential 2 - Zoning District).

Highway Commercial (HC)

- Intended to provide areas of the City where land may be used for a variety of uses including retail, office, restaurants, bars, personal and business services, automobile-oriented and marine-oriented uses, overnight and transient accommodations, and similar commercial uses, generally of a large scale.
 - May incorporate multi-family residential uses up to three dwelling units per gross acre if compatibility standards are met through zoning regulation standards.
 - Civic uses and places of worship may be allowed if zoning regulation standards are met.
 - Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): COMM (Commercial Zoning District), IND (Industrial Zoning District), AG (Agricultural Zoning District).

Downtown Commercial (DC)

- Includes retail, office, restaurants, bars, personal and business services, and similar commercial uses, necessarily of a small scale. (Small to medium retail, food establishments, offices, and other service oriented businesses should be encouraged to locate in the Downtown Business District).
- Includes residential uses on second floors or above (single family dwelling, two family dwellings, multi-family, congregate and senior living facilities).
 - Civic uses and places of worship may be allowed if zoning regulation standards are met.
 - Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Measures should be taken to increase pedestrian traffic in the Downtown Business District and should be included in future city-wide bicycle trail system designs.

- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): COMM (Commercial Zoning District), RES 2 (Residential 2 - Zoning District).

Public/Semi – Public (GOV)

- Civic and government uses and places of worship may be allowed if zoning regulation standards are met.
- Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): RES 1 (Residential 1 - Zoning District), RES 2 (Residential 2 - Zoning District).

Industrial (I):

- Includes all office / warehouse buildings, assembly plants, bottling and distribution, manufacturing, and other industrial uses, generally of a large scale.

- Accessory uses that support the primary use.
- Parks, open spaces, and trails.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): IND (Industrial Zoning District)

Parks and Open Space (P):

- Includes all public and semi-public land, parks and open space, RV parks and campgrounds.
- Could also include shoreland, floodplain, wetland, unique topography, and other environmentally significant areas.
- Corresponding Zoning District Designation(s): AG (Agricultural Zoning District).

The Future Land Use map classifications are the land uses that are proposed to guide Harmony's future growth. Each of the proposed land use classifications should have a corresponding zoning district designation which contains the regulatory tools to implement the policies, goals, and objectives of this plan.

Minnesota Law requires the development of a Future Land Use Plan as a basis to regulate zoning. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to provide general guidelines. Land use boundaries are conceptual in nature with an emphasis on the relationship between adjoining land uses and physical features.

Existing Land Use Plan Map (Zoning)

Figure 8: Existing Land Use Map (Zoning Map). Source: Widseth

Future Land Use Plan Map

Figure 9: Future Land Use Plan Map. Source: Widseth

Water Main Basemap

Figure 10: Future Land Use Plan Map. Source: Widseth

Sanitary Sewer Basemap

Figure 11: City Utilities Map - Sanitary Sewer. Source: Widseth

Storm Sewer Basemap

Figure 12: City Utilities Map - Stormwater. Source: Widseth:

Public Feedback and Best Practices

Community engagement involved multiple in-person meetings. The primary focus of these meetings was to present data and gather feedback. Most importantly, a public survey was taken of the Committee participants to answer, “Why they choose to live in Harmony?”. The survey responses revealed a variety of reasons including proximity to family and work, access to daily needs, affordability, and a variety of activities available. By reviewing all the survey data, a vision statement was developed which identifies the City of Harmony to be southeast Minnesota’s leading City in quality of life, sustainability, business growth, tourism, and small-town livability. This vision is obtained, in part, by land use and growth management practices.

Land use best practices call for directing development toward downtown through

revitalization rather than greenfield development. Downtown revitalization through adaptive reuse are best practices that are a priority in Harmony. Cities should be designed to encourage residents to be healthy, active, engaged, and able to age in place. By developing mixed-use, mixed-density, and mixed-income neighborhoods so that daily needs can be met by walking or biking to schools, parks, shopping and employment centers, residents of the City of Harmony can achieve a high quality of life that is beneficial, not only to the residents, but leads to an attraction and retention of businesses.

The following chapters of the Comprehensive Plan set forth the goals and objectives to fulfill the City’s vision for the future. Specific action steps are added in the Implementation Plan.

Economic Development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Sustaining a strong, healthy business community is crucial to the long-term health of the City of Harmony. Business is one of the key factors in improving the quality of life experienced either by the jobs it generates for the residents, or the tax base created to support necessary city services. The City makes every effort to create a positive business climate by attracting and retaining a diversity of business and entrepreneurs. The City should continue implementing economic and redevelopment strategies that are continually reviewed and modified to

reflect changes in the market conditions, service demands, and future opportunities.

A strong business climate also correlates to a strong sense of place. Locally owned businesses are often the sponsors for community events, cultural celebrations, and community enhancement efforts. Thriving businesses are more apt to give back to a community, enhance curb appeal and be a valuable resource to local groups and organizations.

Downtown Economy

The Downtown plays a crucial role in establishing community character and a sense of place. Harmony has a well-preserved collection of century old buildings downtown, creating a charming character that supports tourism. In 2021, the City Council and Harmony Economic Development Authority established a major renovation grant program to help protect the character of downtown. Like other Harmony initiatives, this unique program underscores the commitment of the city to be proactive, assist small businesses, and enhance the livability of the community.

Other supporting economic development programs operated by Harmony include the Revolving Loan Fund which provides low-



interest loans to locally owned businesses for a variety of projects and uses. The Commercial Rehabilitation Loan Program is similar to the targeted downtown program offering small loans to assist businesses with exterior improvements to their business properties citywide.

Community Character

A Community's character can be defined by the unique qualities of that particular community. Harmony, like many other communities, gives credit to its early development to the railroad. A small settlement of Norwegian immigrants moved their businesses towards the rumored location of the railroad. The town continued to grow and thrive, with a minor setback in 1935 following a devastating fire at Main and Center that destroyed many buildings. Many historic buildings survive today, including the Toggery building on West Main Street, one of the earliest retail building in Harmony.

Natural features are key to Harmony's quality of life. The Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail is a beautiful 18-mile multipurpose trail connecting Harmony to Preston to the north

and on to Lanesboro. In 2018, the EDA helped secure \$1.75 million to extend the Harmony State Bike Trail to Niagara Cave with a connection to future northeast Iowa trails to Cresco and Decorah. Additional funding has been received for the bike trail from local, State, and federal sources for a total of a little over \$6 million for acquisition and construction.

Other defining civic elements are the annual Fourth of July celebration, Root River Trail events, concerts, holiday festivals, and the Tree Lighting Ceremony in Selvig Park. These special events and places in combination with the city's parks and recreation, the downtown, schools and the people make Harmony a desirable place to live.

Public Feedback and Best Practices

In the community engagement sessions, Economic Development was chosen as one of the most important areas for the City to focus their attention. There was strong support for existing local and small businesses as well as the need to attract new businesses.

Community events and growth management to preserve the small town feel and culture were also supported. Many of the comments were related to the need to improve the vitality of downtown and create more opportunities.

The idea of retaining a “small-town” feel was by far the most important area to everyone. Encouraging innovation, new-comers and

growth was also identified as being important. Generally, participants agreed that there needs to be a balance between maintaining the small-town character with accommodating new growth and innovation.

Economic best practices relate to occupational diversity and promoting education, training, and access to employment areas. When revitalizing areas, such as downtowns, cities should promote walkability, protect historic resources, and integrate different compatible uses. The reuse of existing properties is generally preferred over new construction for both sustainability and preservation of historical character.

Economic Development Goals

Goal #1: Attract, Retain, and Expand Commercial Opportunities.

Objectives:

- Enhance the business-friendly environment.
- Encourage new start-up businesses that will diversify and strengthen the local economy.

Goal #2: Encourage and Support Local Business.

Objectives:

- Use marketing to promote tourism and local business.
- Encourage entrepreneurship and support local business development.

Goal #3: Make the Downtown a Vibrant and Active Node.

Objectives:

- Continue to create a downtown identity and unique sense of place.
- Continue to develop the downtown in a way that matches the existing streetscape.
- Continue with special civic events to draw people downtown.

Housing

HOUSING

Introduction

In addition to population trends, a housing analysis provides information to direct growth management strategies. With implications in land use and infrastructure decisions,

housing trends and needs should be studied to establish adequate growth types and areas best suited for future development.

Current Housing Analysis

Occupancy Income

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of housing units in Harmony are owner-occupied with the remaining 23% being renter-occupied. Throughout Harmony renter-occupied households average 1.15 people and owner-occupied households average 2.05 people.

Household Income

The median household income in Harmony is \$58,125, which is below the median household income of \$64,375 in Fillmore County. The poverty rate in Harmony is lower at 6% compared to 9.1% across Fillmore County according to 2020 ACS 5-year estimates.

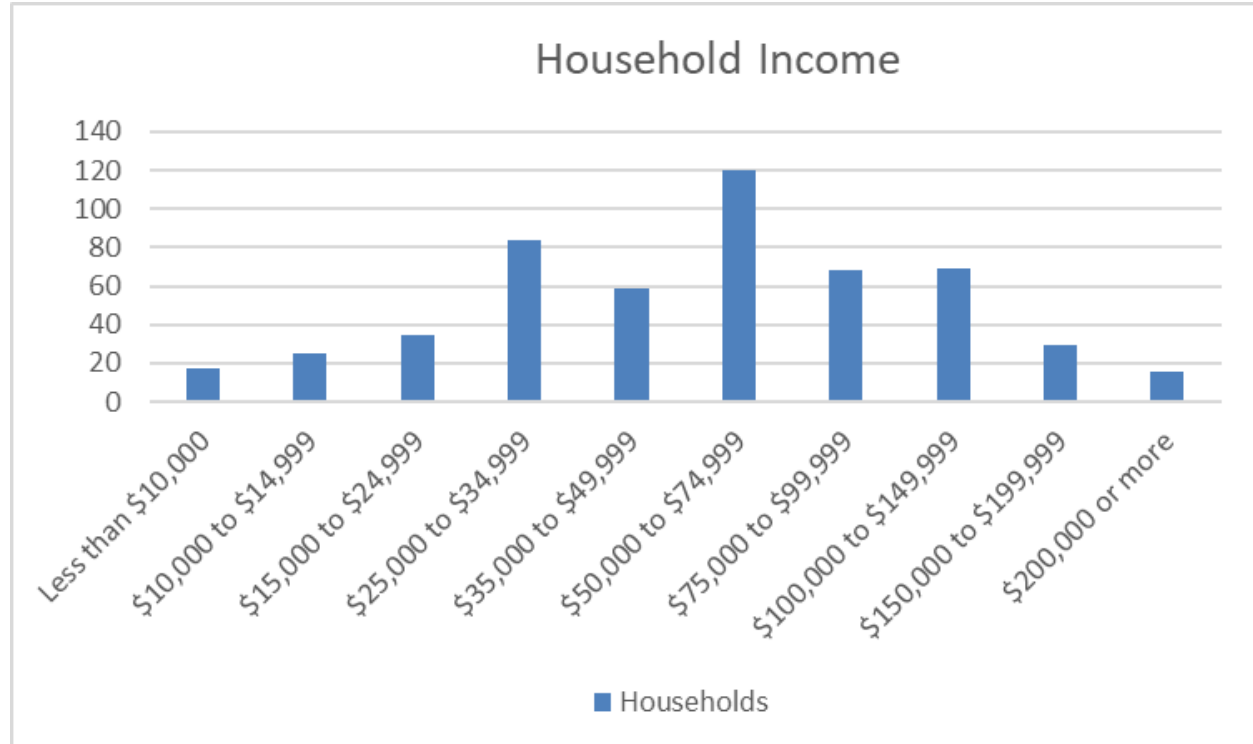


Figure 13: Household Income Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates

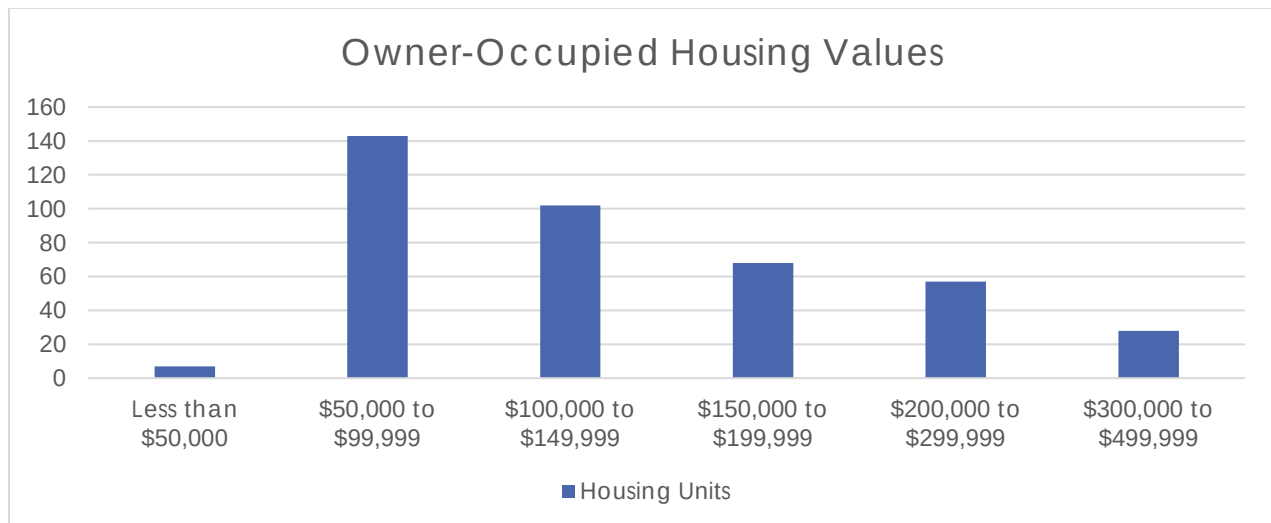


Figure 14: 2020 Home values Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates

Property Values

As of 2020, the median home value of Owner-occupied units in Harmony was \$120,200. This is a fairly large jump from 2010 which was \$94,500. The median for

Fillmore County in 2010 was \$133,900 which also gained value into 2020 at an estimated value of \$159,500.

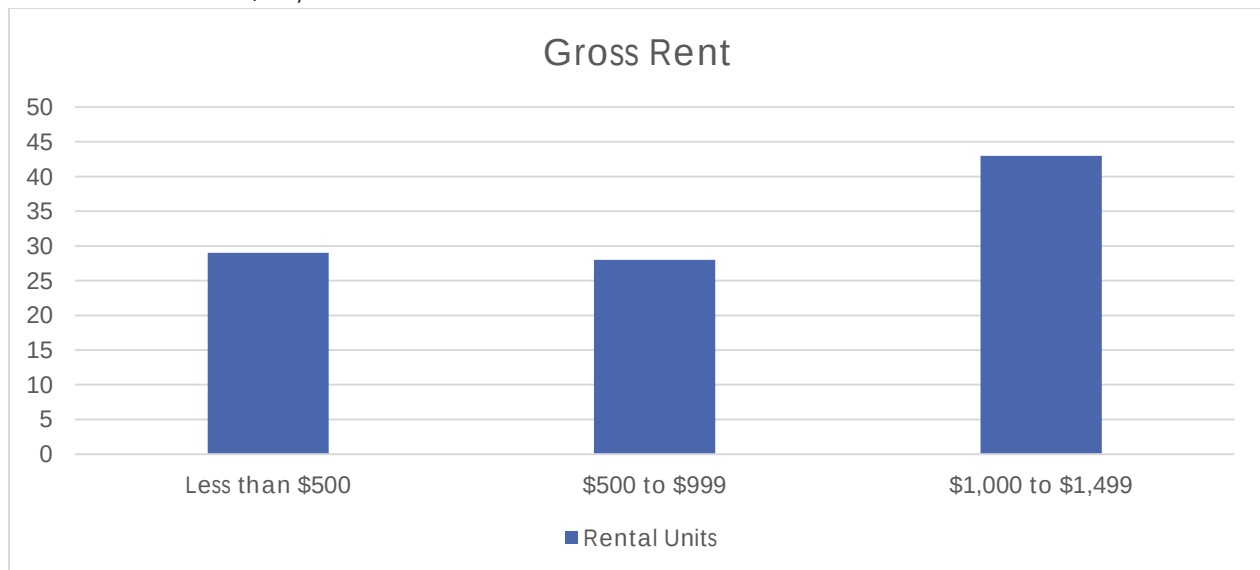


Figure 15: 2020 Gross Rent Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates

The US Census Bureau's ACS 2020 Five Year Survey indicates there are 100 occupied units paying rent in the City of Harmony. Of those 100 units, just under one-third (29%) pay less than \$500 per month with a median rent of \$746 per month. In 2010, Harmony reported 95 occupied rental units with 44% of the rental units paying \$500 or less per month (per 2010 census data) with a median rent of \$564.

Affordability

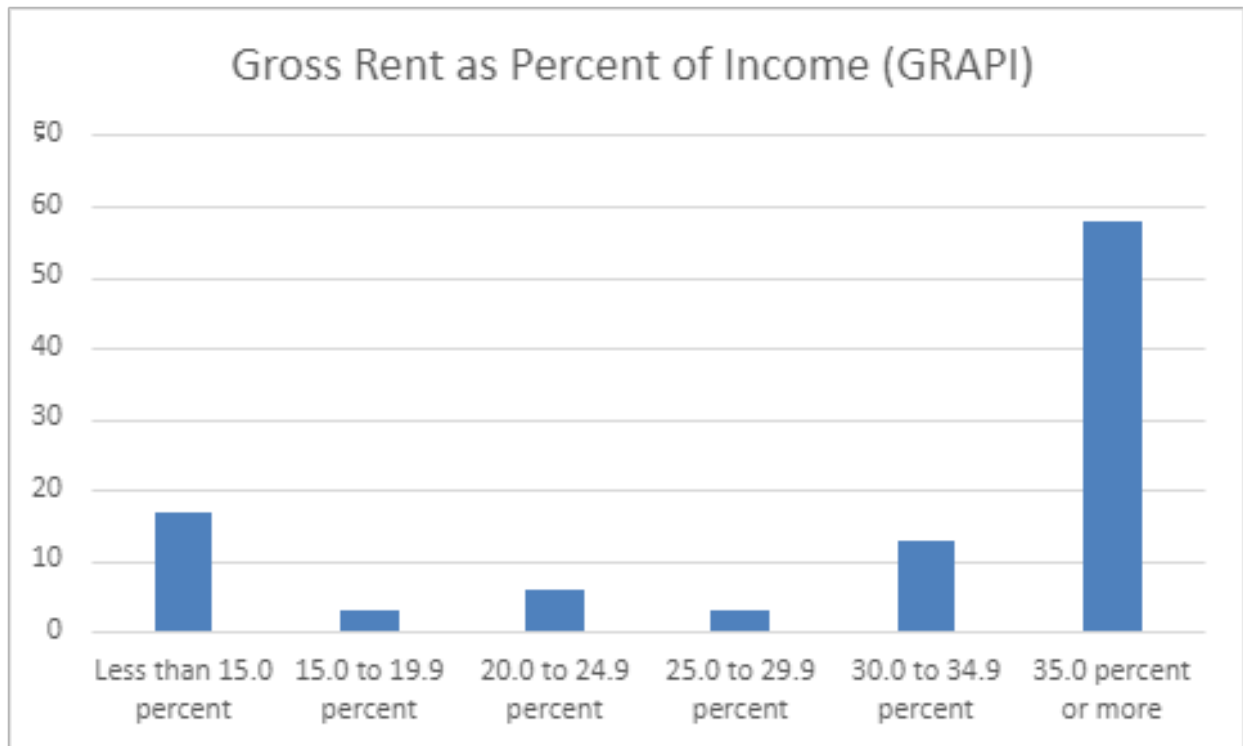


Figure 16: 2020 Gross Rent as a Percent of Income Source: 2020 ACS 5 Year Estimates

The Gross Rent as a Percentage of Income for Harmony from Census Data in 2020 indicated that despite the range of rents available, 58% of renters are spending 35% or more of their household income on rent. According to the 2019 Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis, 34% of renters in the South-Central submarket area were paying 30% or more of their income for rent.

Federal standards for rent subsidy programs generally identify 30% of household income as the maximum household contribution for rent. When more than 30% of a household income is required for rent, this is often called a “rent burden”. When more than 35% is required, this is considered a “severe rent burden”.

Housing Goals and Trends

The Fillmore County Housing Needs Analysis (2019) did not identify specific goals or actions for Harmony but identified the following for the South-Central submarket which includes Harmony, Fountain, and

Preston: 1) A need for 187 new housing units by 2030 including 127 owner-occupied and 60 rental units. 2) A demand of 175 senior housing units exists.

TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

Transportation is a term that covers a broad array of subjects, but Harmony residents depend on individual vehicles as the major form of transportation. Therefore, specific

attention should be given to the road system that supports the use of individual vehicles. Other forms of transportation include walking and biking.

Regional and Local Network

In order to provide improved planning for maintenance and improvements on existing roads, each street or road should be designated under a defined hierarchy that ranks roads as to the traffic volume. Within cities, roadways can typically be divided into four categories: arterials, collectors, local and frontage streets. Arterials are defined as urban streets designed to carry large volumes of traffic long distances with few

interruptions. Collectors are streets carrying traffic from local streets to the arterials and providing access to the abutting properties. Local streets provide access to residential properties and should not carry high volumes of traffic or permit high speeds. Frontage roads are local roads that run parallel to highways, expressways, or freeways that allows local traffic to gain access to property.

Transportation Goals

The City of Harmony is unique with two highways. US Highway 52 runs both north south and east and west and divides the City between the more residential areas and highway oriented development. Additionally, Minnesota State Highway 139 is a 3.9-mile-long State highway that runs north and south from Harmony to the State of Iowa. County Roads 22 and 44 run east and west as well and connect to the City of Harmony on the north and south sides of town. The rest of the roads are local roads that connect to these highways and county roads. Maintaining these roads as connection points to these major roadways are very important to the vibrancy and viability of the City of Harmony.

Additionally focus should be placed promoting the walkability & bike accessibility

of downtown Harmony more than the drivability.

Transportation Map

Figure 17: Transportation Map. Source: Widseth

Community Services

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City of Harmony is well served by public facilities and services. The facilities include a fire station, ambulance service, medical clinic and care center, public library, visitor center, school, churches, and city parks. Additionally, there are many services like a strong Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Authority, Harmony Arts Board, Harmony Area Community Foundation, Lions Club, Area Historical Society, and Golden Happenings (a community organization focused on the quality of life for seniors).

The City of Harmony provides many of the utility services for residents including water, sewer, electricity, and garbage. Harmony Telephone provides local phone and internet service, while Minnesota Energy Resources provides gas service.

The map on the following page shows the community facilities locations in Harmony.

Fire Department – The Harmony Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency response services to the community. The Department's mission is to prevent the loss of life and property. In addition to responding to fires, the fire department also responds to medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, rescue calls, and incidents involving hazardous waste.

Gunderson Harmony Clinic and Care Center – Located at 805 Main Avenue South, the Gunderson Harmony Clinic and Care Center are a medical clinic and a 43 bed nursing home all under one roof.

Public Library - The Harmony Public Library provides a welcoming oasis where community, recreation, information and education all come together. The library offers traditional, new, children books, eBooks, movies, children's programs and helpful resources.

Visitor Center - The Harmony Visitor & Information Center is a great resource to the traveler or the local resident who might have questions about our area.



The Visitor Center is staffed and open to the public April through October. An excellent place to cool off after a bike ride on a hot summer day, check out menus from local restaurants, pick up your official Harmony Guide Book, or ask for information about local events, Amish tours, Niagara Cave, and other local attractions and services.

School – The Fillmore Central School, grades 7 - 12, is located in Harmony just south of Selvig Park and the core of downtown.

Churches – There are three churches in the Harmony City Limits:

Harmony United Methodist Church (60 County Rd 44)

Greenfield Lutheran Church (234 Co Rd 44)

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Catholic Church (640 1st Ave SW).

City Parks

Selvig Park

Located on Main Street and boasts playground equipment, picnic shelter and gazebo.

North Park

The Golf Course Park is located near the 9-Hole golf course and offers another playground and picnic shelter. Also located here is the Fillmore Central High School football field, along with tennis courts.

Trailhead Park

The Trailhead Park offers a larger playground, a disc golf course, splash pad, picnic area, plenty of room to run and is near the Visitor Center. As its name implies, it's located at the trailhead of the Harmony-Preston Valley Trail.

Community Gardens

The Harmony Community Gardens consist of (20) wooden raised beds that are 4' x 6' and (8) free standing beds. The plots hold vegetables as well as flowers.

Cardinal Park – baseball field, playground, and shelter

Area Cave Exploration



Located just south of Harmony is one of the most fascinating and distinctive geological attractions. Niagara Cave has been rated one of the top-ten caves in the United States.

At Niagara Cave you can take a one-hour guided tour, where you will hike a mile underground, discover fossils around 450 million years old, see cave formations, both delicate and massive, and view an

Adopted December 12th, 2023

underground stream as it flows over a waterfall. Niagara Cave is 48 degrees year-



round, so wear a jacket and don't forget to pack your sneakers!

While at Niagara Cave you can also enjoy 18-hole mini golf, pan for gemstones and fossils, and enjoy a picnic within their 10 acres of picnic grounds.

Community Services Map

Figure 18: Community Services Map. Source: Widseth:

Environment and Sustainability

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Introduction

Never covered by ice during the last ice age, Southeast Minnesota lacks the characteristic glacial deposits known as drift. Its landscape is characterized by steep hills, forested ridges, deeply carved river valleys, and karst geology with spring-fed waterfalls and cold-water trout streams. Ecologically, the Driftless Area's flora and fauna are more closely related to those of the Great Lakes region and New England than those of the broader Midwest and central Plains regions. The steep riverine landscape of both the Driftless Area proper and the surrounding Driftless-like region are the result of early glacial advances that forced preglacial rivers that flowed into the Great Lakes southward, causing them to carve a gorge across bedrock cuestas, thereby forming the modern incised upper Mississippi River valley. The region has elevations ranging from 603 to 1,719 feet (184 to 524 m) at Blue Mound State Park, and together with the Driftless-like region, covers 24,000 square miles (62,200 km²).

Harmony lies within this Driftless Region where much of Harmony's bedrock is limestone. The soluble characteristics of limestone produce the unique geology known as karst topography. Common features of karst regions are sinkholes, springs, disappearing streams, bluffs, and cave systems. The limestone visible just below the surface in some caves is that of the Ordovician period. Present within these layers of limestone are the 450-million-year-old fossils of aquatic lifeforms (cephalopods, fisherites, gastropods, horn corals, or even trilobite fossils) that lived in the shallow seas that once covered this region.

Some caves were formed millions of years ago, as water found its way into cracks and crevices in the limestone and slowly widened them, creating passageways that now give us a look into the geology below our feet in this Driftless Region.

Sustainability Goals

It is the goal and objective of the City of Harmony to protect the Driftless Region and to be consistent with Minn. Stat. 462.357 subd. 1h, and Minn. Stat. 462.355 subd. 1: President Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bill

to Preserve Agricultural, Forest, Wildlife and Open Space.

Other Sustainability goals include protecting the drinking water supply, electric vehicle charging stations, and encouraging renewable energy like wind and solar.

Topography Map

Figure 19: Topography Map. Source: Widseth

Soils Map

Figure 20: Soils Map. Source: Widseth

Geological Overview Map

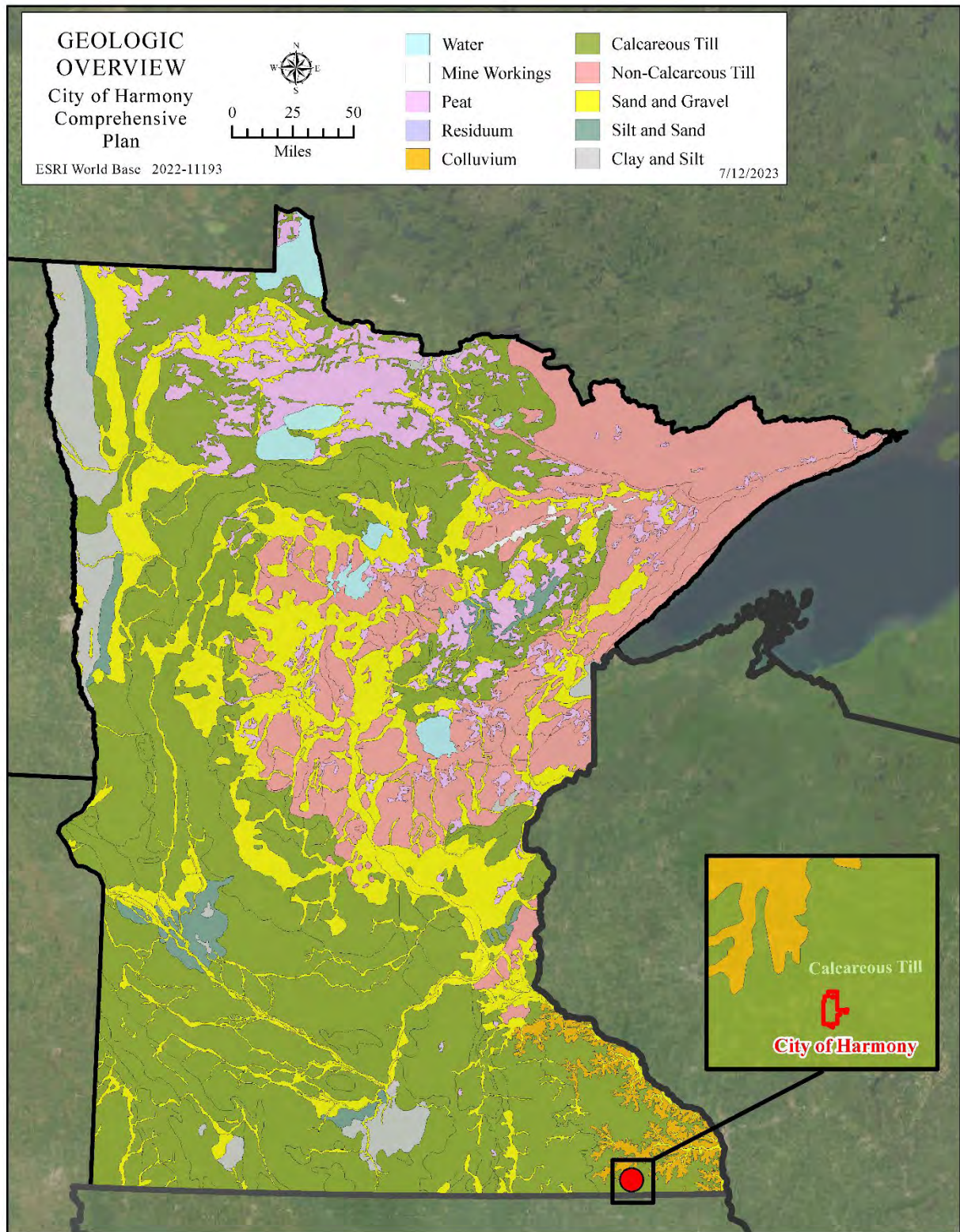


Figure 21: Geological Overview Map. Source: Widseth

Karst Features Map

Figure 212: Karst Features Map. Source: Widseth

Implementation Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Land Use Goals

1. Develop the City of Harmony in a manner which will provide an efficient urban growth pattern while maintaining and improving a high quality of life.
2. Develop zoning and subdivision ordinances, capital improvement programs, orderly annexation agreements, housing plans and programs, an official mapping program and community development programs in a manner consistent with the land use plan.
3. A design standard plan is suggested for the Downtown Business District. This design standard plan should be created by the Harmony Planning and Zoning Commission with input from civic and community leaders, business owners, landowners, and interested citizens alike. Results and findings should be implemented and applied to all new buildings constructed within the district.
4. Land uses within the city should be primarily determined by natural resources and the availability of urban services.
5. Future development within the city should be designed to have a minimal impact on the processes of the natural environment such as seasonal water flow through existing drainage swales and floodplains.
6. Preserve water quality by protecting sensitive karst areas. Specifically, around sinkholes, joints, or vertical fractures, that are known to have direct links to our drinking water.
7. Planning and Zoning Board and City Council decisions should take the full range of planning and environmental considerations into account including preservation of unique natural features, depth to ground water and bedrock elevations, topographic suitability, availability of community facilities and services, and conflict of incompatible uses with adjacent existing or proposed uses.
8. Develop orderly annexation policies that are based on reasonable criteria including: proximity to city boundary, city services needed, and maintenance requirements on existing or proposed facilities.
9. Development should be located adjacent to existing developed areas to reduce unnecessary costs to extend city services, where major roadways do not bisect portions of the City, and environmentally sensitive areas do not exist.
10. Development should occur in conjunction with municipal services and facilities.
11. Floodplain, drainage swales, wetlands, and other land resources should be prohibited for development and dedicated to the City for use as parks, playgrounds or open space.
12. Sites and buildings which exhibit historical, cultural, or architectural heritage should be preserved and considered for public acquisition where necessary.
13. Encourage urban growth to be compatible and coordinated with public services and facilities capacities, development, and extensions.
14. Seek out broad community participation during all policymaking on land use and land use plan implementation decisions. Carefully consider the needs of the individual property owners and the needs of the public at large in the development and implementation of plans and controls relating to land use.

Housing Goals

1. All residential subdivision development will be required to allocate certain resources such as open space, playgrounds, small parks, or money-in-lieu of land.
2. Public services and facilities, especially water and sewer systems, should be provided prior to all residential development in core service areas.
3. Encourage multi-family development that is relatively small and provides a character similar to that of low-density residential areas that are visually compatible with the surrounding structures and site design.
4. Encourage development of multi-family and low- and moderate-income housing by new construction in addition to conversion of existing single-family housing.
5. Encourage and construct a variety of housing types to meet the needs of the projected population of all income levels including single-family, senior housing and assisted living facilities, and apartments.
6. Provide incentives to developers for senior or multi-family housing in the community.
7. Pursue grants and low interest loans available to rehabilitate existing housing stock.

Parks & Recreation and Natural Resource Goals

1. Provide indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the City for all ages.
2. Require strict enforcement of all environmental standards by the MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency) as well as the Fillmore County SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District) to protect natural features.
3. Encourage developers to preserve and enhance the natural amenities of each particular development site, thus protecting these natural amenities for the City and surrounding area.
4. Develop local and regional hike and bike trails.
5. Maintain and continue to develop the City's urban forest.
6. Promote development and display of the fine arts.
7. Consult State and Federal natural resource agencies on proposals where soil, slope, sewage disposal and other environmental concerns exist.
8. Future parks should be evaluated to meet the needs of all residents, including developing more natural and less active parks.

Commercial and Industrial Goals

1. Provide for continued expansion of commercial and industrial activities in an orderly fashion to serve the community and encourage the preservation and improvement of older commercial areas which have a high potential to meet the community needs.
2. Encourage business district(s) improvements through public or private actions that complement the buildings to increase attractiveness, accessibility, and movement within the business district(s).
3. Encourage industrial development which is shown to be beneficial to the City residents' health.
4. Encourage industrial and commercial development which will have a positive local economic impact.
5. Industrial land use demands for city services should not preclude the City from serving demands for residential, commercial, and public sector land uses.
6. Determine the infrastructure needs for new industry including sewer and water capacity and adequate access needs.
7. Expand industrial and commercial uses in the Industrial Park along Highway 52.
8. Sustain the positive impacts the Harmony Area Chamber of Commerce has on the vitality of the city.

Transportation Goals

1. Separate through-traffic from local traffic whenever possible to reduce conflict for all types of traffic.
2. Provide and locate new loading and unloading zones that will not interfere with streets and sidewalks.
3. Additional parking areas should be established where needed.
4. Sidewalks should be constructed within the rights-of-way and should connect businesses, schools, parks, and residential neighborhoods.
5. Map the existing local and regional recreational trails.
6. Promote the walkability & bike accessibility of downtown Harmony more than the drivability.
7. Consideration should be given to aging and disabled residents when designing and improving streets, sidewalks and trails.
8. Access to the high school must remain safe for buses, students, visitors, and faculty.

Appendix

Community Engagement:

Meeting #1 - Kick Off – October 5, 2022

Meeting notes are added in this appendix after this cover page in the order listed.

Meeting #2 - SWOT Analysis – November 10, 2022

Meeting notes are added in this appendix after this cover page in the order listed.

Meeting #3 – Vision Statement - December 7, 2022

Meeting notes are added in this appendix after this cover page in the order listed.

Meeting #4 – Draft Review - May 11, 2023

The Comprehensive Planning Committee reviewed the Draft and made suggested changes.

Meeting #5 – Land Use Map Changes - May 29, 2023

The Comprehensive Planning Committee met and envisioned the future of Harmony which ultimately became the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Community Awareness:

Community Night Out– August 3, 2023