

2008 Township Board

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**This Comprehensive Plan was developed with input from Town of
Ford community participants in 2005-2008.**

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Vision for the Town of Ford

The vision of the Town of Ford is to proactively preserve, develop, and maintain a safe, thriving, and respectful community that sustains its historic integrity, rural character and natural and recreational amenities.

I. Historical Welcome to the Town of Ford

Kanabec County was organized in 1858 with officials actually taking office on June 10, 1859. Kanabec is the Chippewa name for snake, given by them for the Snake River. The name has a heavy accent on the second syllable, the “a” in that syllable having the long sound, as in “day”. Many people mispronounce it as if it were spelled Kennebeck. The 1860 census listed the county population at 30! With settlers came the need for roads, schools, mail routes and, of course, county and township government.

The northern part of the county was originally classified as “Unorganized Territory” but that was split into Hillman and Knife Lake Townships in 1894. Kroschel was organized in 1899, Peace in 1900, and Pomroy in 1903. In 1915 Haybrook split from Hillman and in 1916 the Town of Ford split off from Peace. Ford was the last township established in Kanabec County and was organized on May 16, 1916.

In the first days of the township, meetings were held in the Board members’ homes. The official papers were kept at the home of the clerk, Mrs. Hedwig Gylling. Unfortunately her home burned during the winter of 1919 and those first 3 years of records were lost. Another fire in the late 1960s destroyed the Treasurer’s records when the home of E. M. Peterson burned. As a safeguard, in 2002, all of the old township records were placed in storage at the Kanabec History Center, Mora, and, therefore, may be accessed for research by any interested party.

II. Comprehensive Planning Overview

A. Township Governance

The term “township” has multiple meanings. It can refer to a geographic area established by government survey that is a six mile by six mile square area and it can also be a form of local government. The Minnesota Constitution forms the basis for the establishment of township government. Under Article XII, Sec. 3 of the Minnesota Constitution “the legislature may provide by law for the creation, organization, administration, consolidation, division and dissolution of local government units and their functions.” The most notable feature of town government is the town meeting. The strength of town government is that it gives the residents a voice through direct input into the operation of the town through town meetings. Every town is required to hold an annual town meeting the second Tuesday in March. At this meeting, township residents have the opportunity to raise items of business to the floor for discussion and possible action. This concept of giving the residents a voice was carried over into the creation and development of the Comprehensive Plan. Local residents and landowners were involved from the very beginning of the planning process to ensure that they had a voice in the future of the Town of Ford.

B. Comprehensive Planning Process

To preserve the history and rural nature of the township, the town board of supervisors has chosen to develop a Comprehensive Plan to guide future development. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to take into consideration what the community desires to be developed relative to the physical environment. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to set forth guidelines as to how these preferences are to be achieved. This plan outlines goals, objectives, and strategies as well as maps that will form the basis upon which plans, programs and actions can be formulated and initiated by both the public and private sector.

The Town of Ford Comprehensive Plan was developed in accordance with Minnesota Chapter 462, the Municipal Planning Enabling Act that provides general authority for local units of government for planning and zoning. Subdivision one of Minnesota Statute 462.353 provides that

“a municipality may carry on comprehensive municipal planning activities for guiding the future development and improvement of the municipality and may prepare, adopt and amend a comprehensive municipal plan and implement such plan by ordinance and other official actions in accordance with the provisions of sections 462.351 to 462.364.”

Once adopted, this plan will serve as the foundation for the establishment of related ordinances including the zoning and subdivision ordinances.

The development of the Comprehensive Plan began in March 2005 by

authorizing \$2,000 to begin the planning process. In 2006 \$4,000 was authorized and additional funds were allocated to continue the process into 2007.

Community participation played a large role in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. On October 21, 2005, a survey was sent out to all residents, landowners, and public land stewards in the township. The survey respondents were asked to provide input about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and additional concerns or comments about life in Ford Township. Residents and landowners were given until November 4, 2005 to respond to the survey. To achieve a maximum response rate, respondents were given the option of mailing or e-mailing their responses to an e-mail address created for the purpose of this planning process. A copy of the cover letter and survey are attachments to this document and can be found in Appendix B.

Included in the cover letter was an invitation for residents and landowners to attend an open house that was held on November 17, 2005, at Ford Town hall. This open house was the first meeting in a series of three public meetings held to gain public input as to what the goals and objectives of Town of Ford should be. There were 35 in attendance at the first meeting and their views as well as the input from 16 surveys returned (13 by mail and 3 by e-mail) were discussed. The second meeting was held on December 15, 2005 with 12 people continuing to work on the process. A second letter was sent out January 12, 2006 to residents and landowners informing them of the five comprehensive plan areas and the goals developed for each area (Appendix B). On January 17, 2007 the final meeting drew 17 participants who discussed objectives and strategies in small groups and then came together to finalize their objectives. The Board of Supervisors took the information gathered through these meetings and continued to meet and draft the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the first cover letter, survey and second letter, all public meetings were published and posted in accordance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Laws.

C. Legal Authority

The authority to develop and execute a comprehensive municipal plan for the Township of Ford by the Board of Supervisors is granted in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 462.351 through 462.356.

III. Township Background

A. Location

The township is located in north-central Kanabec County, fourteen miles north of the city of Mora, which is the county seat. Although the township is in close proximity to three metropolitan areas of Minneapolis-Saint Paul (eighty-five miles south) Duluth (ninety miles northeast), and Saint Cloud (sixty miles southwest), the township remains very rural.

B. Climate/Precipitation

The climate of Kanabec County is continental, characterized by severe winters and warm summers. Average rainfall is 30 inches, with 41 inches of total snowfall occurring on average. Kanabec County will have an average of 110 days per year with at least 1 inch of snow cover. The ground freezes about the first week in December and thaws during mid-April. Minnesota's climate, in conjunction with the lakes and forests, produce an ideal environment for recreational activities. The summer season during May-August with its warm days and cool nights attracts vacationers. The winter season with sufficient snowfall and low temps provides ideal conditions for snowmobiling and ice fishing to name a few activities.

Precipitation is measured and recorded by rainfall observers of the Minnesota Climatological Network. Administered by the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), observers are required to record daily precipitation readings which are submitted to the Kanabec County SWCD on a monthly basis. Rainfall records developed by the rainfall observers are entered into a statewide database which provides information on precipitation amounts and precipitation patterns. As of 2006, there were 14 official rainfall observers in Kanabec County with one observer in the township. Detailed records for the township are available from the Kanabec County SWCD and are also available online at www.climate.umn.edu.

C. Geology *

Kanabec County has two primary aquifers, a surficial sand-plain aquifer and a bedrock sandstone aquifer (Mount Simon-Hinckley). The surficial sand-plain aquifer is not located in the Township. The sandstone bedrock aquifer bisects the Township running north-north east from County Road 82 on the southern border to just east of Cowen Brook on the north. The bedrock geology consists of the Hinckley sandstone and the Fond Du Lac formation. There is little data pertaining to the Mount Simon-Hinckley aquifer in Kanabec County. Depth to the sandstone formation generally ranges from 0 to 100 feet below the land surface. The sandstones generally are highly fractured and loosely cemented, providing for storage of large quantities of water.

The surficial geology of the Township consists of till, which is an unsorted mixture of rock, silt, and clay and yields low quantities of water. The bedrock west of the Mount Simon-Hinckley Aquifer (the west half of the Town of Ford) consists of granite, which may yield small amounts of water adequate for domestic wells. Areas of exposed granite bedrock and bedrock overlain with till have the lowest potential for ground-water yield in the Town of Ford.

Ground water flow is predominately north to south in the County. The Snake River drains all of the groundwater in the Town of Ford.

Regionally, the surficial sand-plain and bedrock sandstones are poorly connected hydraulically, except in a small area near Quamba. On a county-wide basis, the risk of contamination of the Mount Simon-Hinckley aquifer from the sand-plain is reduced because of the poor connections. However, at specific connected sites and areas of surface bedrock exposure, there is the potential for bedrock aquifer contamination.

Land use decisions within the sand-plain and in areas of bedrock exposure should consider the potential adverse impact on the aquifer. Because no sand-plain aquifer exists in the Township, there is no authority for monitoring and controlling of aquifer contamination¹. Additional Ford Township soil information is available on line at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>.

*Kanabec County Comprehensive Local Water Plan 2001

D. Soils

The soils of Kanabec County have been formed on extensive deposits of glacial till. Most of the County is composed of till and outwash plain, presenting relatively level surfaces for soil formation. However, certain parts of the County, especially in Ford Township, are steeper slopes. Of the major environmental factors which influence soil formation (topography, bedrock, time and biological agents), topography is viewed as the most significant in Kanabec County and Ford Township.

The till over most of the County was deposited by the Patrician Ice Sheet, and is a red to reddish brown, loose-textured sandy or gravelly material. Chemically, it ranges from slightly acid to moderately alkaline, and contains fragments of basalt, granite and sandstone. *

*Kanabec County Comprehensive Plan 2002

Kanabec County has six major soil types, three of which are found in Ford Township. Much of the township's soils consist of the Dalbo-Brickton Association, soils which are nearly level, moderately well-drained and sometimes, somewhat poorly drained. These soils have an underlying stratum of calcium carbonate or limestone.

Other sections of the township's soils are made up of the Milaca-Ronneby Association, which are nearly level to gently rolling and somewhat poorly

drained. These soils have a friable brownish upper subsoil and dense reddish fine loam subsoil. Also dispersed throughout the township are soils made up of the Greenwood Loxley-Boseman Association which are nearly level and poorly drained peat and muck soils.

As of 2001, data on erosion prone soils was limited to information provided by the Land Management Information Center (LMIC). High priority areas for water erosion are, as defined by the LMIC, primarily shore lands with significant potential soil loss. In the Township these erosion prone soils occur along the Snake River and present a significant potential for sediment and sediment pollutants to the Watershed. Human intervention along the Snake River and its tributaries, especially in the riparian zone, should follow shore land zoning guidelines and DNR management practices to minimize risk of soil erosion and related sedimentation and pollution.

The soil characteristics of the township often influence the land use patterns and level of development. Of the soils found in Town of Ford, certain series have physical properties not conducive to structural development. These soils may be subject to flooding, have low strength, poor percolation, frost action or other characteristics which make them hazardous to buildings or roads constructed upon them. Soils in Town of Ford where development should be discouraged include peat, alluvial, Freon, Warman and Adolph series. Any land development needs to include soil borings to determine what type and extent of development is appropriate. *

*Kanabec County Comprehensive Local Water Plan 2001

E. Waters/Dams

Shore land as defined in Minnesota Statutes is the area 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a lake and 300 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a river. The Minnesota Shore Lands Management Act determines minimum lot sizes, building setbacks, and establishes other provisions to protect the quality of the waters and adjacent lands. In addition, Kanabec County Ordinance No. 5, Ordinance for the Management of Shore lands Areas of Kanabec County, Minnesota, was adopted in May 2002. As a result of this ordinance, all the shore land areas of the township are identified as environmentally sensitive areas requiring special management under the County Ordinance.

The major shore land areas in the township exist as a result of the presence of the Snake River. These areas are identified on the map in Appendix A. The DNR has designated certain waters in the State as protected waters under M.S. 103G.201. A state (DNR) permit is required for any change in their course, current, or cross-section. The underlying philosophy is that the state not only has an interest in protecting the amount of water contained in these lakes, marshes, and streams, but also has an interest in protecting the container (i.e. lake, marsh, or stream) which confines these waters.

Protected waters include all of the following:

1. All water basins assigned a shore land management classification, except wetlands less than 80 acres classified as natural environment lakes.
2. All waters which have been determined to be public waters or navigable waters by a court of law.
3. All meandering lakes, except those which have been legally drained.
4. All water basins previously designated by the Commissioner of Natural Resource for specific management purposes such as trout lakes or game lakes.
5. All water basins previously designated as scientific and natural areas.
6. All water basins located within and totally surrounded by publicly owned lands.
7. All water basins where the State of Minnesota or the federal government holds title to any of the beds or shores, unless the owner declares that the water is not necessary for the purpose of public ownership.
8. All water basins where there is a publicly owned and controlled access which is intended to provide for public access to the water basin.
9. All natural and altered natural watercourses with a total drainage area greater than two square miles and all designated trout streams regardless of the size of their drainage area.

Any work done below the ordinary high water mark (OHWL) of protected waters and wetlands requires a permit from the DNR. Generally, alternatives should be considered which avoid or minimize impacts to protected waters, but if the impacts are unavoidable, particularly to wetlands, they must be mitigated in accordance with state laws and regulations. Typical examples of projects requiring a permit include: draining, filling, dredging, channeling, constructing dams, harbors or permanent offshore structures, placement of bridges and culverts, and marinas.

According to the Federal Clean Water Act, private citizens and federal, state and local agencies who want to discharge dredged or fill material into US waters, including all wetlands, must obtain a Section 404 permit from the US Army Corp of Engineers and a Section 401 water quality certification from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The Section 401 permit must be obtained first. Some activities requiring both permits include construction of boat ramps, riprap, placing fill in a wetland, building in a wetland, dams or dikes, stream channelization and stream diversion.

Exemptions from Section 404 for the discharge of dredged or fill materials include farming activities; emergency reconstruction of levees, dikes or dams; construction or maintenance of farm ponds; construction or maintenance of farm roads; forest roads; or temporary roads for moving mining equipment.

As of July 1, 2000, the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act of 1991 generally prohibits the draining or filling of wetlands unless they are replaced.

The following list shows all the protected waters in the Township:

<u>Natural Environment Lakes</u>	<u>Remote Rivers</u>	<u>Tributary Streams</u>
Snowshoe Peace	Snake	Snowshoe Brook Hay Creek Bergman Brook Cowan Brook Chelsey Brook

There is only one dam in the Township. It is classified as a Hazard 3 Dam:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Chelsey Brook	State—Wildlife

The Chelsey Brook dam is typical of the small dams that exist throughout Kanabec County. Like most, the Chelsey Brook dam was built over 20 years ago, is well beyond its life expectancy, and has failed. As of 2001, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources had proposed a permanent rule relating to Dam Inspections. Since the Chelsey Brook Dam has failed it is unlikely that any on-going inspection or maintenance would be required. *

*Kanabec County Comprehensive Local Water Plan 2001

F. Land Use

The Town of Ford occupies a 36.19 square mile area in Kanabec County. County maps show that the majority of the Town of Ford is forested, primarily with Deciduous Forest, with small patches of Coniferous Forest and Grassland/Grassland-Shrub Tree in the southern part of the area. Land use data interpretation based on a 1990 study done by the International Coalition of Land Use/Land Cover found little evidence of Farmsteads and minimal Transitional Agricultural Land. Wetlands are seen in the northern and west central portions of the Town of Ford. Rural Residential Development is seen, but density is very low.

In 2006 the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Ameregis published a report entitled *Growth Pressures on Sensitive Natural Areas in DNR's Central Region*. As part of Central Minnesota's 6-County Non-Metropolitan area, Ford Township was mapped to have over 75% of its area designated as sensitive natural areas—the highest designation in the region. The report notes that while there are some areas of public land that offer protection from development, unprotected sensitive natural resources appear to be in the

path of future growth and development, largely in the form of resort/recreational development and housing development for retirement.

Table 1 below shows the amount of land in each tax classification of ownership as designated by the Kanabec County Assessor’s Office as of October 2005. Note that total acreage is more than the area of the Town of Ford due to some parcels that have dual classification:

TABLE 1

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Private—Seasonal	7,669	31%
Agricultural	6,356	26%
Exempt (County/State)	5,826	24%
Residential	3,974	16%
Timber—Private	695	3%
Commercial	<u>70</u>	<u><1%</u>
Total	24,590	100%

The percentage of land in Ford Township that is public is 24%, and 76% is privately held. Due to the large amount of public land, and the expected increase in demand for recreational use of these lands, the need for Township and other governmental resources will also increase. These resources will include enforcement of safety, hunting and fishing regulations; maintenance and repair of roads and trails; and development of parking, accesses, and public facilities to service the increase pressure for recreation. Due to the fragile nature of riparian zones and the erosion-prone steep slopes along the upper Snake River, Township, County and State officials will need vigilant monitoring of the public’s use of the public land and must have plans to limit or prohibit uses that damage the environment.

G. Population/Demographics

An important factor in planning for future land uses and services are the demographics of the Township. An analysis of past population trends and the projection of future populations can provide an insight into factors which have influenced past growth and those which will impact future growth.

The past and projected population for the Town of Ford, Kanabec County, and the region known as East Central Minnesota or “Region 7E” shown below in Table 2, has generally experienced a steady growth rate for the last fifty years. From 1990 to 2000 the population of the Township grew from 150 to 177, an increase of 27 or 18%. The growth rate of the Township is 18%, higher than the County average of 17.14%. The total population of Kanabec County in 2000 was 14,996 persons. The Town of Ford then represents only 1% of the County’s population and has the lowest density of persons per square mile in the entire County.

TABLE 2

Year	Ford Township	Kanabec County	Region 7E (Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs & Pine Counties)
1970	131	9,775	76,351
1980	137	12,161	99,779
1990	150	12,802	109,178
2000	177 (18% increase from 1990-2000)	14,996 (17.14% increase from 1990-2000)	136,244 (25% increase from 1990-2000)
2004 Estimate	193	16054	154079

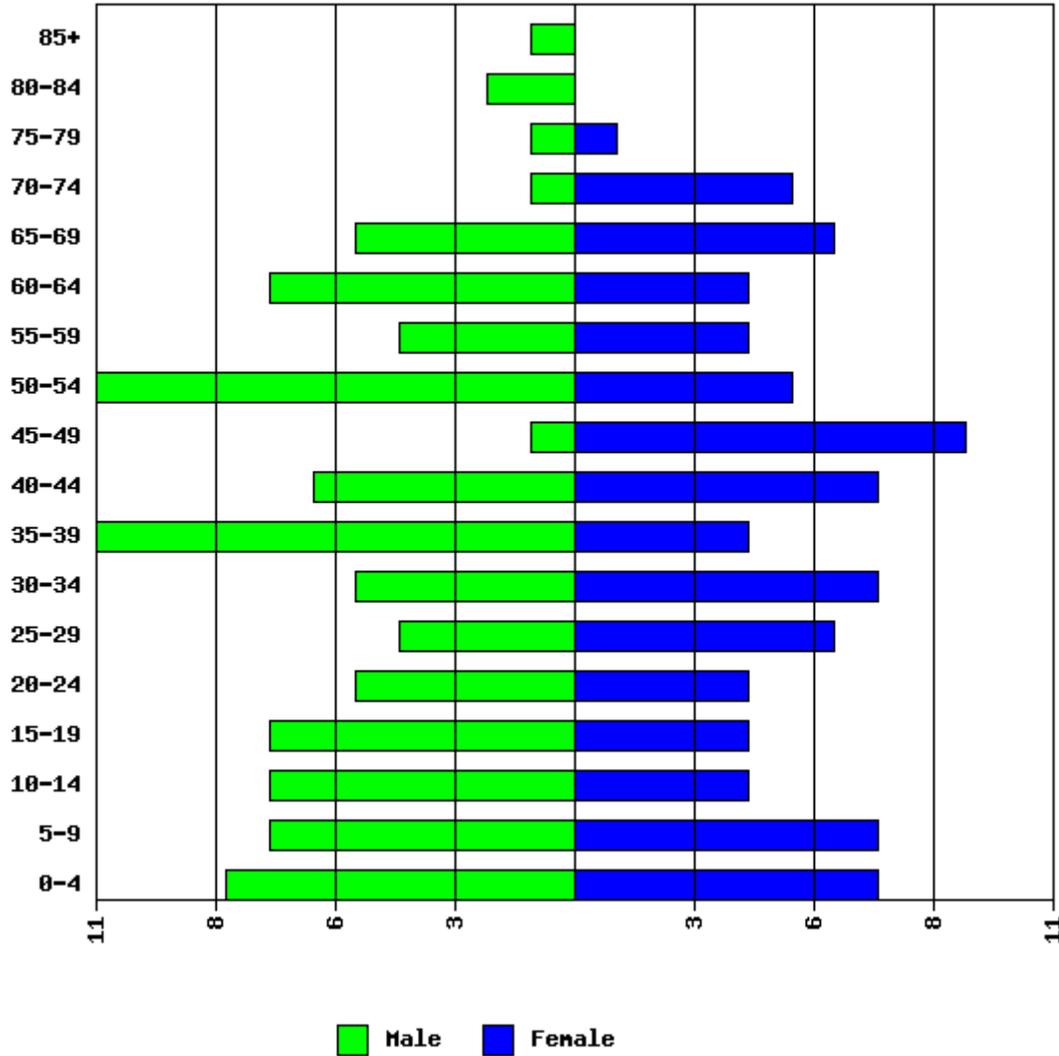
Generally, non-metropolitan areas of Minnesota grew between 1970-1980, especially those close to larger metropolitan areas. This growth was fueled primarily by individuals and families who chose to live in a rural setting close to the amenities available in most metropolitan areas; and, by the aging of baby boomers (persons born between 1946 and 1964) into their household formation years.

During the 1980s, the rural resurgence of the 1970s ended and the loss of population accelerated in most rural areas. However, recent growth in the last census decade can be attributable to the region as a whole, which experienced a 36.5% growth since 1980. Much of this growth can be attributed to the proximity of the Twin Cities Metro area, as well as the significant increase in job commuting and the lack of available housing in the metro region. The spillover effect is being felt throughout Region 7E. The 2000 population for all races is shown below in Graph 1:

GRAPH 1

**2000 Census: Ford township (Kanabec County)
Population Pyramids**

2000 Population for all races:
Ford township (Kanabec County)



	Male	Female	All Persons
Median Age	35.9	38.5	37.5

<http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/datanetweb/php/census2000/PopReport.php?year=2000&fi nal=1&area=M&subtop=P02&mcd=21644&cntyname=&cnty=33&McdName=>

Population projections for Kanabec County by 2030 are detailed in Table 3. Projections are only available on a county-wide basis; however, using county-wide data the Township can expect a growth rate of 43% between 2000 and 2030. The DNR/Ameregis Report, *Growth Pressures on Sensitive Natural Areas*

in DNR's Central Region, confirms this and estimates that the Township will experience a 40-59.9% population change by the year 2030.

Kanabec County is expected to have some growth in all three age groups, with significant growth occurring in the over 50 age group, similar to the national trends. Region 7E is one of only two regions in the state expected to experience growth in the 0-19 age group.

Taken together, current and future population growths indicate significant growth for all of Region 7E, especially those over the age of 50. This trend will have a tremendous impact on local planning.

TABLE 3

Population Projections – 2030

Year 2030	Kanabec County	% Growth	Region 7E	% Growth
Ages 0-19	5,210	15.5%	53,100	26.9%
Ages 20-49	7,640	29.4%	73,100	28.8%
Ages 50+	8,660	89.1%	79,300	101.6%

Source: U.S. 2000 Census

Table 4 details family and household incomes of Town of Ford. 1999 per capita income was \$17,102; 1999 household median income was \$ 38,125 and 1999 average household income was \$44,157.

TABLE 4

All Races

SF3-P82: Per Capita Income in 1999	SF3-P52, P53, P54, P76, P77, P78: Median and Average Income in 1999	
	Households	Families
Per Capita Income		
\$17,102		
	Median Income	
	\$38,125	\$50,625
	Average Income	
	\$44,157	\$54,287

<http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/datanetweb/php/census2000/IncReport.php>

H. Housing

Population growth within Town of Ford is dependent, in part, on the availability and affordability of housing. Knowledge of housing characteristics, costs, and occupancy rates helps to guide a community's future development. Region 7E has experienced rapid growth in the number and cost of homes being built. The lack of affordable housing in the metro region along with the increased willingness to commute greater distances and a strong economy has caused a rapid inflation of housing construction.

Table 5 indicates the year that the year-round housing units were built.

TABLE 5

2000 Census: Ford township (Kanabec County) Housing Profiles: Year Structure Built

SF3 - H034		
	Housing units	
	Data	Pct
Total:	113	100.0
Built 1999 to March 2000	2	1.8
Built 1995 to 1998	13	11.5
Built 1990 to 1994	4	3.5
Built 1980 to 1989	16	14.2
Built 1970 to 1979	46	40.7
Built 1960 to 1969	10	8.8
Built 1950 to 1959	13	11.5
Built 1940 to 1949	0	0
Built 1939 or earlier	9	8.0

<http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/datanetweb/php/census2000/HouReport1.php?&subtop=H23&area=M&Maps=&JBoxV=&cnty=33&cntyname=&mcd=21644&McdName=>

As of 2000 the Town of Ford had 113 total housing units, nearly all of which were family households, owner-occupied, owned by the same family since before 1995, valued between \$50,000 and \$150,000 and built after 1960.

Table 6 shows the change in percent of housing units in the Town of Ford.

TABLE 6

**2000 Census: Ford township (Kanabec County)
Population Profiles: Population in 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2000-2005 change**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	1990-2000 Change	
					Actual	Percent
Population	131	137	150	177	27	18.00
Land Area(sq. mile)	36.30	36.70	36.19	36.19	0.00	0.01
Density (persons per sq. mile)	3.61	3.73	4.14	4.89	0.75	17.99
Housing Units	55	73	88	123	35	39.77
Households	--	50	54	71	17	31.48
Persons Per Household	--	2.74	2.78	2.49	-0.29	-10.36
Persons in Group Quarters	--	0	0	0	0	--

	2000	2001 Estimate	2002 Estimate	2003 Estimate	2004 Estimate	2005 Estimate	2006 Estimate	2000-2006 Change	
								Actual	Percent
Population	177	186	186	185	193	191	191	14	7.91
Households	71	75	76	76	80	80	81	10	14.08
Persons Per Household	2.49	2.48	2.45	2.43	2.41	2.38	2.35	-0.14	-5.62
Persons in Group Quarters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

<http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/datanetweb/php/census2000/PopReport.php>

Table 6 also indicates that between 1970 and 1980 the number of housing units increased substantially with Town of Ford experiencing a growth of 18 housing

units. This growth rate, however, dropped to 15 housing units between 1980 and 1990. By the year 2000 the number of housing units increased by 35. With the projected increase in population over the next 25+ years, the number of housing units can also be expected to increase.

I. Public Facilities/Infrastructure/Transportation

There are no public water or sewer systems within Ford Township. All existing water and sewer systems are on-site systems. Presently, there are no parks or recreational facilities provided by the Township.

The Town Hall is located at 3502 Mahogany Street, one mile east of Minnesota Trunk Highway 65. The Town Hall provides meeting space for the Town Board and Planning Commission, as well as a polling place for elections.

Fire service is provided through a contract with the City of Isle, Minnesota. Law enforcement is provided through the Kanabec County Sheriff Department and State of Minnesota Highway Patrol.

Appendix C shows existing roads within the Township created by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Of the approximate 29 miles of roads within Town of Ford 7 miles are trunk highways; 2.5 miles are county state aid roads; 4 miles are county roads; and 15.5 miles are township roads. Roads in the Township include 9.5 miles that are paved and 19.5 miles that are gravel or soil surface. The town board currently contracts with private contractors for the maintenance of the township roads.

IV. Goals, Objectives and Action Plans

The following sections of the Comprehensive Plan set forth goals, objectives, and action plans which will enable the town board, planning commission and the citizens to review current and future development issues and proposals in light of what has been decided as the most desirable plan for the future physical development and character of the Township. The goals and objectives are broken down into five sections: land use, natural resources, economic development, housing, public facilities and infrastructure, and heritage, recreation, and quality of life.

A goal is “a desired result or purpose”. An objective is “a plan or principle that guides the actions taken by a person or group”. These objectives then become the means to achieve the stated goals along with some specific actions the township will take to accomplish the goals expressed in the following sections.

A. Land Use

The goal of the Town of Ford is to encourage a variety of land uses within the township which enhance the quality of life and environment of the area and facilitate cost effective and efficient provision of public services.

Objective 1: **Maintain** the existing character of the commercial, agricultural, and residential areas of the Township to preserve its rural nature.

Action: Sustain the existing residential areas as viable and desirable living areas and protect them from disruptive land uses and activities.

Action: Create zoning districts consistent with the comprehensive plan and future land use map.

Objective 2: **Guide** commercial and industrial development along the state trunk highways.

Action: Support commercial development along the state trunk highways and paved county roads.

Action: Work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, North TH 65 Corridor Coalition and developers to ensure proper highway access management along Highway 65 and 27 in order to continue to provide safe and functional roadways.

Objective 3: **Provide** adequate commercial and industrial land to accommodate new businesses and expansion of existing business operations.

Action: Designate areas for appropriate commercial or industrial development as indicated in the future land use map.

Objective 4: **Influence** policy and practices of exempt county or state administered lands by working collaboratively with the DNR and our county.

Objective 5: **Protect** the rural nature of the township

B. Natural Resources and Agriculture

The goal of the Township of Ford is to work to preserve the township's natural sensitive areas

Objective 1: **Safeguard** natural sensitive areas and unique physical features so they are preserved for future generations.

Objective 2: **Protect** soils, agricultural lands, forested areas, floodplains, shore lands, wetlands, water tables, water quality, storm drainage systems, and natural habitats.

Objective 3: **Develop** relationships with state and local officials as well as the DNR and local associations to preserve and protect the natural amenities of the Township.

Objective 4: **Utilize** established statutes, rules, and regulations to prevent damage to roads, sensitive natural areas, and right of ways by ORV (Off Road Vehicles) and other recreational uses.

Action: Develop and propose township ordinances and resolutions related to ORV use.

C. Economic Development

The goal of the Town of Ford is to promote adequate and diverse opportunities for economic development that support controlled growth in the township.

Objective 1: **Promote** diverse economic development that is consistent with the rural character of the township.

Action: The Town of Ford will continue to participate with North TH 65 Corridor Coalition to designate future land use for the development of business and industry that maintains and protects the rural nature of the township while providing for controlled growth.

Objective 2: **Support** opportunities for employment.

Action: Continue to encourage employment opportunities in agriculture and silviculture.

D. Housing

The goal of the Town of Ford is to promote the development and maintenance of adequate housing to support controlled growth in the township.

Objective 1: **Ensure** that complete and accurate data is maintained on the current housing stock in the township.

Action: Update housing data on a routine basis.

Objective 2: **Develop** a system to ensure that the quality of the current housing stock is maintained.

Action: Identify and promote sources of assistance for the landowners to maintain or upgrade the quality of housing.

Objective 3: **Ensure** new housing developments maintain the rural character of the township.

Action: Develop zoning and subdivision ordinances that promote controlled growth while protecting the natural sensitive areas and the rural nature of the

Township.

Objective 4: **Promote** the development of housing that supports a variety of needs for both current and future residents (age, income, physical ability, and family size).

F. Public Facilities/Infrastructure/Transportation

The goal of the Town of Ford is to maintain and continually upgrade township infrastructure without compromising the quality of life.

Objective 1: **Provide** adequate funding for the maintenance and development of roads, bridges and public facilities.

Action: Town of Ford will establish a fund in its annual budget to set aside funds for future repair or maintenance.

Action: The town board will seek new funding sources for the development of public facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 2: **Improve** signage on roads and bridges.

Objective 3: **Promote** a safe and reliable water supply.

Action: Promote water treatment systems that maintain and/or improve water quality.

Objective 4: **Identify** possible land use issues on publicly owned lands in the Township.

G. Heritage, Recreation, and Quality of Life

The goal of the Township of Ford is to promote a quiet and safe environment where people connect through neighborhood interaction while respecting the natural history of the township.

Objective 1: **Help** neighbors connect through social, informational, and township gatherings.

Action: The Township will continue to host potluck picnics and informational speakers at the town hall.

Objective 2: **Promote** the safety of township residents in the township.

Action: Encourage the formation of Neighborhood Watch programs.

Action: Promote and support Kanabec County First Responders programs.

Action: Support Kanabec County Sheriff's Reserve

Action: Develop a strategic plan to post all 911 numbers uniformly.

Objective 3: **Provide** residents with opportunities to be well informed about local and regional issues.

Action: Continue to distribute the Ford Township Newsletter.

Action: Encourage participation at regular Town Board and Planning Commission meetings, as well as the Township Annual Meeting.

Action: Continue to promote www.fordtownship.org