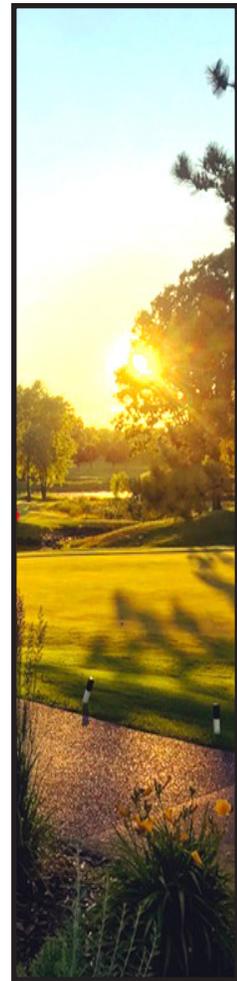


1. PLANNING FOR ANOKA

Comprehensive Planning
History of Anoka
Anoka Today
Resident Survey
Major Trends in Anoka
Vision & Guiding Principles



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

WHAT IS COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

A Comprehensive Plan guides the overall growth and development of the city. The Plan is the umbrella document guiding future land use management decisions to encourage vitality, fulfill responsibilities, and reach community goals in the near future. It includes goals and policies for land use, transportation, water supply, sanitary and stormwater systems, parks and open space, solar access protection, housing, the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, and wetlands protection. Goals and policies for the City's electric utility, economic development, historic preservation, recycling, and additional community information are also contained in this Plan.

Comprehensive planning is mandated in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area in Minnesota. Prior to 1976, local comprehensive planning efforts were the result of local initiative alone and were often uncoordinated, inefficient, and even conflicting at times. Problems of urbanization and development transcend local governmental boundaries. In 1976, the Minnesota State Legislature passed the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA), which required all municipalities in the Twin Cities area to prepare new comprehensive plans, or revise existing ones. Guided by the Metropolitan Council's requirements, each city reviews the plans of adjacent cities in order to minimize conflicts and maximize mutual benefits. Anoka's last comprehensive plan was published in 2008. In conjunction with the Met Council's regional comprehensive plan *Thrive MSP 2040*, the City of Anoka has released this updated plan.



THE ANOKA 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

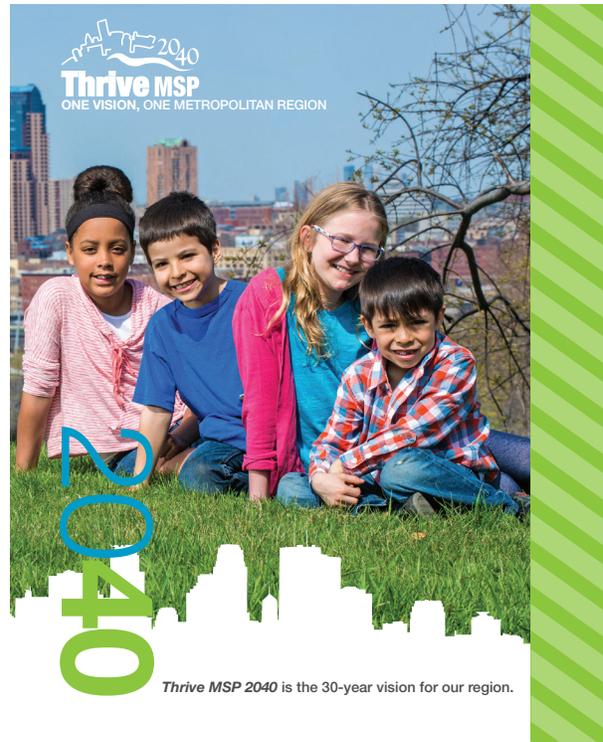
Navigating the Future: Anoka 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the City’s 2018 updated plan in accordance with Metropolitan Council and State of Minnesota rules. It is a guide for elected and appointed officials, staff, developers, and the citizens of Anoka in making development and redevelopment decisions, updating ordinances and regulations, and allocating funds. Additionally, it documents the values, principles, assets, challenges, and policies that affect land use and resource allocation decisions.

The goals and policies identified throughout this plan resulted from an open dialogue among elected officials, Anoka citizens, and City staff about the future of the community. Citizen involvement is very important in the successful creation and implementation of the plan. Also considered were multiple economic and demographic studies, regional projections, viewpoints from key stakeholders, and expert opinions.

RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL CONTROLS AND PROJECTS

The Comprehensive Plan provides a legal basis for establishing local controls. Local controls include, but may not be limited to: the zoning ordinance; the subdivision ordinance; and flood plain or shoreland management ordinances. The capital improvement program, while not a “local control,” is also an invaluable tool for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is important to note that local controls should be revised following the update of the Comprehensive Plan so as to assure consistency between the measures. Other types of activities and/or projects may also require evaluation for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. For example, prior to the City Council approving a tax increment finance plan, the



Thrive MSP 2040, the Metropolitan Council’s regional comprehensive plan.

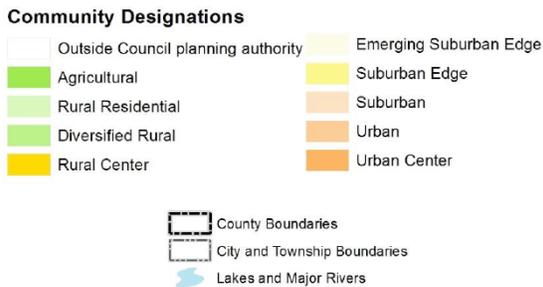
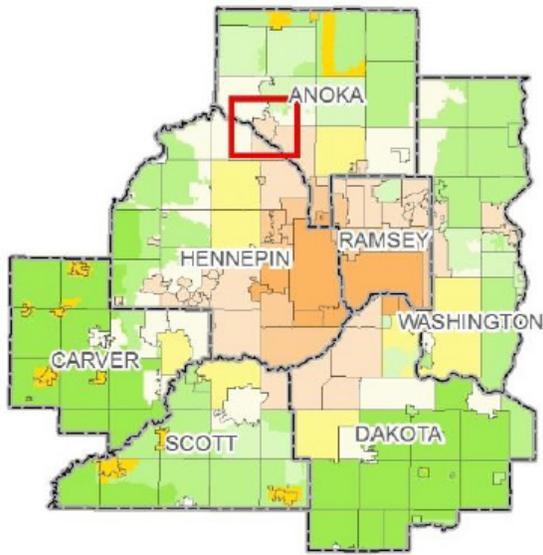
Planning Commission must approve a resolution certifying the proposed project complies with the Comprehensive Plan. If a proposed project is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, it may be revised so as to attain consistency.

ANOKA AND THE SEVEN-COUNTY METRO

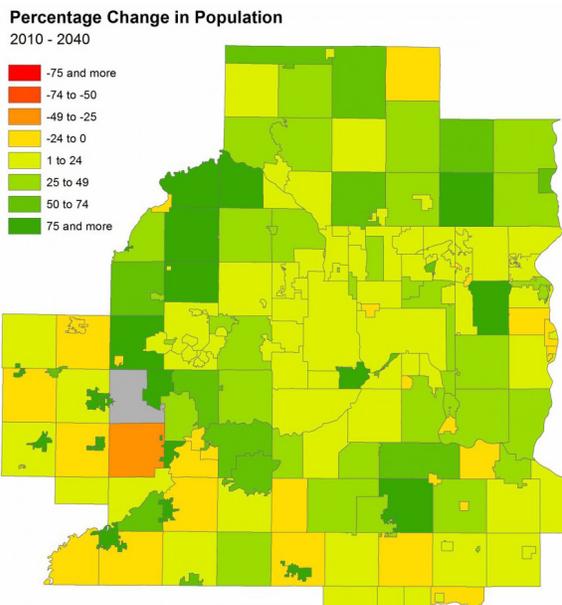
The City of Anoka exists in the larger contexts of Anoka County, the seven-county Metro region, and the State of Minnesota. As society grows and changes over time, Anoka also grows and changes in its own unique way. The Metropolitan Council supports communities in the Metro through data-gathering, analysis, and coordination with adjacent municipalities.

Anoka has been designated by the Metropolitan Council as a “Suburban” community:

Suburban communities experienced



Map from the Metropolitan Council Community Pages



Map from Streets.mn // Data from Thrive MSP 2040

continued growth and expansion during the 1980s and early 1990s, and typically have automobile-oriented development patterns at significantly lower densities than in previous eras. Suburban communities are expected to plan for forecasted population and household growth at average densities of at least 5 units per acre for new development and redevelopment. In addition, Suburban communities are expected to target opportunities for more intensive development near regional transit investments at densities and in a manner articulated in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. (Thrive MSP 2040)

As a part of the Metropolitan Council’s regular analysis of Anoka they have provided estimates for population, household, and employment for the years 2020, 2030 and 2040.

This growth is a part of larger regional growth in population, employment, and housing across the Metro (also known as the Twin Cities Region).

By 2040, the region is set to gain 824,000 residents, two thirds of which will come from births, with the remaining third being migrants from outside the state and country. The region is projected to add 550,000 new jobs to the 1.6 million existing jobs, with a Gross Metropolitan Product of \$400 billion. Transportation, infrastructure, environment, and social implications of this growth spill over into Anoka County and the City of Anoka. The Met Council has also paid special attention to Anoka’s transportation, water resources, and parks activity within the regional framework. Each of these elements provides an opportunity to work in tandem with adjacent communities.

HISTORY OF ANOKA

Located at the confluence of the Mississippi and Rum Rivers, “Anoka” - a combination of Dakotah and Ojibway words meaning “both sides of the river” and “working on the water” - is aptly named. From its early Township days of small immigrant homesteads to the logging days of the mid and late 1800’s, Anoka has been well served by the rivers. Now, the river’s use has changed to recreational activities and the rivers serve the City in a different, but no less important, manner.

Initially, the Rum and Mississippi Rivers served as highways of transport for Native American hunting parties, explorers of the river tributaries, steamboats bearing settlers and immigrants and log drives guiding their harvest to market at the mills in Anoka and St. Anthony. Later, these rivers became barriers as overland travel became the predominant mode of transportation.

With the discovery of vast stands of white pine on the upper Rum River, Anoka became a logical place for investment by New England timber interests. Timber mills established in the 1850’s and 1860’s fueled Anoka’s economic growth for nearly four decades. The surrounding sand plain area also provided appropriate soil for the production of potatoes, creating a major industry in Anoka after the turn of the century.

Anoka’s development was also enhanced by its location along early transportation routes, including the Red River Trail and Military Road, which later became U.S. Highway 10. In addition, one of the first extensions of railroad from St. Anthony reached Anoka in 1864 and was later extended westerly. Today, this route is a main line for the Burlington Northern Railroad.

Construction of a bridge over the Rum River in 1853 made it possible to develop commercial property on both sides of the Rum River. The first bridge and



Early pioneers demonstrating the girth of the trees in the area during the 19th Century.

many others were washed away, but were always reconstructed. In 1884, a bridge was constructed over the Mississippi River to provide access to Anoka from Hennepin County. Replacement and expansion of these river crossings and related access roads have been key elements in the economic development of the City.

Like many other midwestern communities, immigrants migrating westward settled the town. New England lumber barons established the early basic industry of lumber milling, followed by Scandinavian immigrants who worked in the logging camps and lumber mills. From 1860 to 1885, the City grew dramatically, from 600 people to 4,600. Rapid industrial growth fueled residential construction and commercial development in the Central Business District. When the lumbering industry declined due to exhausted forest resources,



Main Street Anoka, 1909



Anoka's new street car line circa 1913



Early swimmers at Rice Street Beach, circa 1940



Cottage Grove Motel, 1950s

the City population fell below 3,800 people and forty years passed before the population again exceeded 4,600.

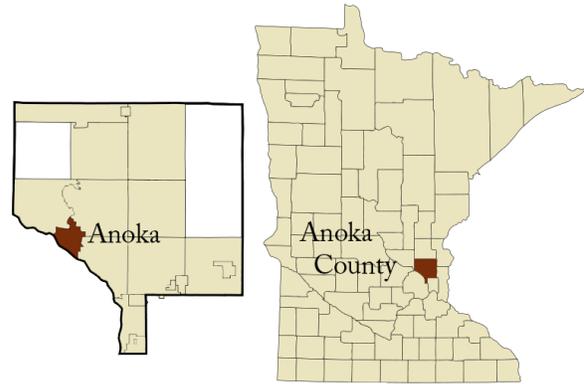
Anoka's early neighborhoods portrayed the different ethnic and social identities of the City. The east side of the Rum River was known as Christian Hill and contained several churches and homes of the original New England settlers. North of Main Street, between Fourth and Seventh Avenue, was Swede Town - home of Scandinavian immigrants. The smaller neighborhoods of Wet Flats and Cutterville Flats were along the banks of the Rum River. On the north end of the City, near the railroad tracks, was Northtown (also known as Uppertown), which included both residential and commercial development near the railroad depot. On the west side of the City was Slab Town - Inhabited by workers in the lumber mills and Frog Town - a French settlement. Residents near Main and Ferry Streets considered themselves to live in Rum River, which was the original settlement area of the community. South of Rum River was Fireman's grove and the Point. West of Rum River was the area known as Whiskey Flats - adjacent to the ferry docks and known for early brewing of whiskey. These neighborhoods retained their identity through the 1940's.

As the county seat and the agricultural market center in the area, Anoka was a free standing community until the 1940's. As St. Anthony and the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul became the economic center of the state in the 1950's and 1960's, Anoka became a distant suburb. During the 1970's and 1980's, Anoka was considered a free standing growth center. In the 1990's Anoka was reclassified as a developing area based on the rapid growth of surrounding bedroom communities. Currently, Anoka is essentially fully developed and is entering an era of redevelopment.

ANOKA TODAY

Location

The City of Anoka is located at the confluence of the Rum and Mississippi Rivers, about 18 miles north of Minneapolis and 25 miles northwest of St. Paul. Anoka is seven square miles in size with a population of approximately 17,586 (2014 estimates). The City of Anoka serves as the county seat for Anoka County, which is one of the fastest growing counties in Minnesota.



City Structure

The Anoka City Council is comprised of four council members and a Mayor, all of whom are elected at-large. Two Council members and the Mayor are elected at each City election held every even numbered year. Council members' terms are four years; the Mayor's term is two years. The Mayor presides at City Council meetings and has equal voting rights with the Council members. The Mayor does not have veto power. The Mayor also serves as the City's representative for civic occasions.

The City Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is responsible for the day to day operations of the City and carrying out Council policies. The City Manager serves at the discretion of the City Council for an indefinite term.



City Hall at 2015 First Avenue North.

A number of appointed citizen boards and commissions serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council. The boards and commissions include: Charter Commission, Economic Development Commission, Heritage Preservation Commission, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Human Rights Commission, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, Parking Advisory Board, Planning Commission, Utility Advisory Board, and Waste Reduction and Recycling Board. As vacancies occur on the various boards and commissions, new members are sought through advertisement in the local newspaper. All members serve without compensation.

Cable TV

Anoka is served by Quad Cities Community Television system. A Quad Cities Cable Commission, comprised of two members, each, from Anoka, Champlin, Andover, and Ramsey administers the franchise ordinance that governs the system.

City-Operated Facilities

Anoka operates its own golf course (Greenhaven), two municipal liquor stores, and two cemeteries. The largest enterprise run by the City is the electric utility. Anoka has been operating its own electric utility - Anoka Municipal Utility (AMU) - since 1909. The City purchases electricity from the "Minnesota Municipal Power Agency", of which it



Art by Young Artists of Anoka in the pedestrian tunnel.

is a member. AMU then supplies that energy to about 11,500 customers in Anoka and surrounding areas. This system provides competitive electric rates for residents and also contributes to government capital and operating funds which reduces overall general property tax needs.

Water and Sewer

Anoka draws its water from six municipal wells and three storage tanks with a capacity of 2.4 million gallons. Anoka’s sewage is treated by the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services at Pigs Eye Treatment Plant in St. Paul.

Fire Department

The Anoka Fire Department was first organized in 1854. In March of 1985, a combined fire department was formed with Champlin, known as the Anoka-Champlin Fire Department. The department is also a member of the North Suburban Mutual Aid Association and Anoka County Protection

Mutual Aid. It is eligible to receive or provide mutual aid services per agreement with eighteen other area communities. The Anoka-Champlin Fire Department operates under a Joint Powers Agreement between the two communities. The Department has two fire stations. The headquarter station is located in Anoka and the satellite station is located in Champlin. Currently, there are 41 paid-on-call firefighters between the two stations. The Anoka station staffs a full-time Fire Chief and three Duty Inspectors on rotating 24-hour shifts. The Anoka station is staffed 24 hours a day.

Police Department

The Anoka Police Department provides a full range of law enforcement services. Communications for the service area are provided by a Anoka County Central Dispatch system that includes enhanced computer aided 911 dispatching. Police emergency response and criminal investigations are handled by the Anoka Police Department. Follow-up investigations regarding all death, sexual assault, and felony child abuse incidents and detentions are handled by the Anoka County Sheriff’s Office.

The Anoka Police Department employs 34 full time employees, consisting of 27 sworn peace officers and 7 civilian support positions. The agency has a trained volunteer Police Reserve Unit and Police Explorer Unit. The agency provides animal control services and maintains an animal pound facility. The agency has two trained police canine units as well as an actively trained S.W.A.T. Team.

The Department is organized into three components that report to the Captain, who in turn reports to the Chief of Police. The Patrol Section is the largest unit within the APD and is supervised by three Watch Commanders (Sergeants). The Criminal Investigations Section Sergeant supervises the investigators and school liaison officers. The Support Services Section Sergeant supervises all of the non-sworn (civilian) support staff that includes;

Community Service Officers, Police Technicians and Security Officers.

Schools

Anoka is in Anoka-Hennepin School District 11, which is the largest school district in Minnesota. Within the City of Anoka there are three elementary schools, one middle school, a parochial school, a Montessori school, a senior high school, a Secondary Technical Education High School (STEP), the Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, and the Anoka-Hennepin Learning/District Complex.

Recreation

Anoka has a total of 802 acres of publicly-owned recreational property, with over 300 acres yet undeveloped. There are 35 parks and playgrounds (including four major park complexes). The system includes 27 ballfields, 14 tennis courts, 11 municipal buildings, two swimming pools, an 18-hole golf course, a band shelter, a senior citizens activity center, and a bikeway connecting the central business district with historic sites and the Anoka County Fairgrounds. The Anoka Area Ice Arena and Greenhaven Country Club are also located in Anoka.

The Mississippi River Corridor

“Ol’ Man River” forms the southwestern border of Anoka, providing a priceless resource for recreation, health, access to nature, scenic views, community

events, and more. From the city’s conception, the Mississippi River has brought a wealth of opportunity to Anokans; in turn, Anoka takes its stewardship of the river seriously, cooperating with surround communities in preserving its ecosystem, beauty, and pristine shoreline.

Halloween Capital of the World

It is believed that Anoka is the first city in the United States to hold a Halloween celebration. In early 1923, Anoka merchants and other interested citizens joined together in a move to stop Halloween pranks. The group decided to hold a big Halloween party for all the children. The party included free candy and a variety of entertainment. The concept rapidly caught on and in October of 1923, Anoka had its first Halloween celebration.

The celebration has been held every year since, with the exception of two years during World War II. Anoka considers itself to be the “Halloween Capital of the World.” Anoka celebrates Halloween with such festivities as a Kiddie Parade, a Grande Day Parade, a Coronation, a Pumpkin Bowl Football Game, block parties, the Grey Ghost 5K run, and costume parties. Anoka merchants also participate in the celebration by putting colorful paintings of Halloween scenes on their store front windows.



RESIDENT SURVEY

From July to September 2017, the City of Anoka conducted a survey on the City website. The goal was to get public input on issues like physical improvements, community affairs, and neighborhood concerns to incorporate into the City’s planning efforts. About 180 community members responded to the survey questions.

Key Points from the Survey

- Over half of the respondents chose the character of the city as one of the reasons they live in Anoka, followed by parks, open space, recreation and rivers, and the downtown area.
- Other reasons people reported enjoying living in Anoka:
 - Housing affordability
 - Friendly people
 - The restaurants
 - Opportunities for an active lifestyle
- Top goals for the future include:
 - Protection of the rivers, open space, and recreation areas;
 - Expanding/enhancing the park system;
 - Preserving historic buildings; and
 - Decreasing traffic congestion.
 - Bring in more small businesses.
- The most commonly listed issues facing Anoka were:
 - The large amount of rental housing;
 - The unkempt character of many properties;



Volunteers at the 2017 Tree Lighting

- Vacant commercial buildings;
- Perception of crime and drug activity;
- Traffic congestion;
- The most common responses to the question: “If you could change one thing about Anoka, what would it be?”
 - Clean up the appearance of Downtown;
 - Address traffic issues;
 - Address the homeless and transient populations;
 - Limit or reduce the amount of rental housing;
- The kinds of buildings or businesses needed:
 - Upscale restaurants;
 - A grocery store;
 - Mom and Pop shops;
 - Community center;

2017 Resident Survey



Top Reasons Residents Love Anoka



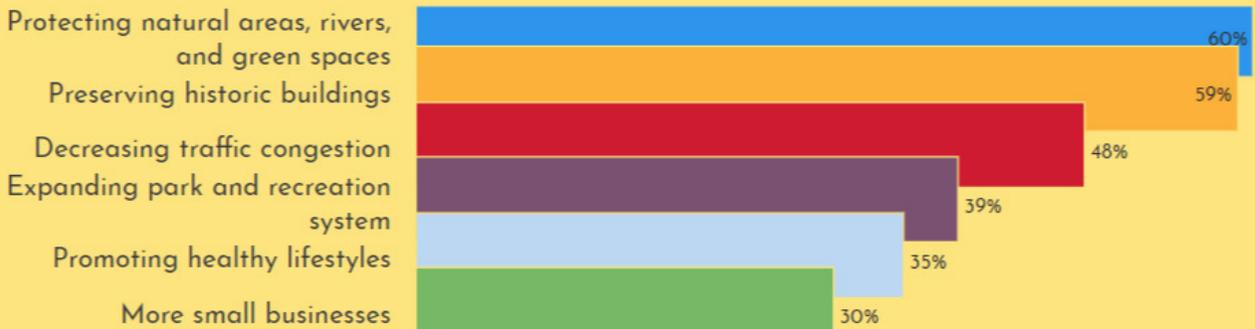
● Character ● Downtown ● Parks

"Short commute" "Great location" "Shopping"
 "Diverse community" "Lots to do" "Active lifestyle opportunities"
 "Safety" "City character" "Family-oriented"
 "Restaurants" "Parks & rivers" "Arts & culture"
 "Housing affordability" "Schools & education"
 "Childhood home" "Friendly people" "Tax affordability"

Most Significant Challenges for Anoka

"Traffic issues"
 "Deteriorating housing stock"
 "Lack of high-quality apartments"
 "Aging population"
 "Behind on retail and restaurants"

Priorities for Anoka through 2040



www.ci.anoka.mn.us

Figure 1-1: 2017 Resident Survey

MAJOR TRENDS IN ANOKA

Aging Housing Stock

More than 63% of Anoka’s housing was constructed prior to 1980, and almost 9% of housing was constructed prior to 1940. Old housing cycles downward and becomes more affordable compared to newer housing. When neglected by owners and landlords, this type of housing can become detrimental to a neighborhood; however, when kept up, this type of housing can be affordable for first-time buyers or renters.

Increasing Population

Anoka is projected to pass 21,000 by 2040, adding approximately 1,600 new households. These households will be living, working, shopping, and playing in the City, requiring updated housing and infrastructure. Table 1-1 demonstrates the projected growth in population, households, and employment in Anoka.

Road Improvements

Small improvements around the City are complemented by major upgrades to major thoroughfares, such as those to Highway 10 at Thurston and Fair Oak Avenues. Although Anoka is a small community, enough traffic passes through on Highway 10, Highway 169, and Main Street,

that the wear and tear on roads is disproportionately increased along with danger to pedestrians.

Redevelopment and Infill

The City is continuing its push to transform areas around the Northstar Rail, the Greenhaven Golf Course, and other vacant or older properties into up-to-date housing, retail, and commercial establishments. As a community that is developed to its edges, the City must be proactive about making the best use of its land.

Aging Community

From the year 2000 to 2015, the median age of Anoka’s population increased from 33.9 years old to 40.5. This follows regional trends, and impacts the type of housing needed in Anoka’s future, as well as what ages of population the City can work to draw.

Changing Retail Trends

While Anoka does not have any large retail chains or malls, smaller retailers still have to deal with the arrival of online shopping. Anoka is encouraging the combination of activities and community life with retail and commercial establishments to create unique shopping experiences that the regional customer base cannot find anywhere else.



TABLE 1-1: POPULATION, HOUSEHOLD, AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS FOR ANOKA, 2018

Year	Population	Households	Employment
2010 (actual)	17,142	7,060	12,840
2014 (est.)	17,586	7,252	13,910
2020	18,700	7,900	13,800
2030	20,000	8,400	14,200
2040	21,200	8,900	14,400

Source: Metropolitan Council 2015 Systems Statement - Anoka

The recently built CityView Senior Apartments at Plaza just off of downtown and the Rum River.

VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Building on the public visioning activities carried through previous Comprehensive Plans, our vision for Anoka in the year 2040 guides the City’s growth and change through community priorities and consistent guiding principles.

VISION COMPONENTS

1. Lasting Community Character

Anokans recognize and appreciate the distinctive character of their community and take pride in their neighborhoods, families, and enduring friendships. In the future, Anoka...

- has a unique downtown that preserves the “Main Street” image, blending merchants, professionals, residents, and visitors in an active trade and service center.
- recognizes its heritage, and plans for a future that preserves and celebrates its history, culture and distinctive physical features.
- is clean and takes pride in the appearance and condition of buildings, parks, streets, and natural features.

2. Civic Vitality

Anokans recognize the importance of their human resources, the character provided by each generation, and the power of human networks to provide for the needs of all citizens. Anoka will continue to be a community that:

- encourages cooperation with and



Greenhaven Golf Course at sunset

support for the cities that make up the “Community of Anoka,” combining energy and resources when possible to create the best situation for all cities involved.

- deters drugs, crime, and violence, with a Police Department working together with citizens to maintain a peaceful and secure environment.
- values and encourages “volunteerism,” enabling citizens to enjoy rewards and see the results of giving their energies to the improvement of their community
- responds to the needs of youth with a variety of entertainment options
- provides personal development opportunities, and social activities.
- views persons of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, physical and mental abilities, age, and economic conditions as valuable members of the community.

- recognizes the importance of leisure time and fun for well-balanced living by promoting diverse and exciting entertainment and activities for all ages.

3. Sound Development

Anokans recognize the importance of an economy which provides opportunities for all residents. Anoka will continue to be a community that:

- realizes the economic benefits of riverfront development.
- is open minded and aggressive in exploring options for development that will not only benefit business but also address the long-range needs of the community.
- encourages and promotes business enterprises which provide needed products and services not only to the people of the area but also to populations and businesses throughout the world.
- provides a variety of rewarding



Over 300 veterans rode north to Anoka from Kansas for the American Legion Legacy Run 2018.



Yoga at the Woodbury House.

employment opportunities for the people of the area.

- promotes and supports the efforts of businesses to maintain viability to change, expand, or improve services and products; to improve efficiency and competitiveness; and to operate in an environmentally sensitive manner.

4. Environmental Responsibility

Anokans value the environment, recognize the unique resources represent by their rivers, and enjoy the many opportunities that such resources offer. Anoka will continue to be a community that:

- appreciates the economic and recreational value of rivers, lakes, and wetlands while respecting and protecting native wildlife and valuable habitat areas.
- strives to operate with a minimum of pollution and waste, encouraging residents and businesses to participate in waste management programs that are both effective and convenient.

5. Strong Services

Anokans recognize the importance of many services in maintaining their quality of life. These services will continue to be important to them; today and in the future Anoka will be a community that:

- has transportation systems that are modern, well-maintained, low-polluting, and energy efficient.
- has a road and bridges system which supports development opportunities.
- recognizes the importance of parks and recreational facilities which are clean, safe, well-managed, and accessible, and develops properties with consideration for such facilities.
- is committed to a high-quality educational system which makes the most of its physical, financial, and human resources to provide educational opportunities for all citizens.
- promotes the physical and mental health of all its residents, and supports the industries, professionals, and agencies which provide such services.



Scene from the 2018 Food Truck Festival in downtown Anoka.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Several guiding principles have been identified by community members in past visioning meetings as vital for a fair, responsible, resilient City. These principles, listed below, continue to be used as the basis for all that the City of Anoka does.

Invoke a sense of place.

Establish a physical setting for development that says, “This is Anoka.”

Invest in the public realm.

Create a network of streets, trails, sidewalks and parks that are safe and vibrant

Amplify the mix of uses.

Create and restore a downtown that allows people to work, live, and play.

Ameliorate connectivity.

Provide people with ways to move between their neighborhoods and downtown that are safe and convenient.

Insure that buildings support broader city building goals.

Design and restore Anoka’s historic architecture.

Amplify existing strengths.

As the city rebuilds, cherish what we already treasure - our historic buildings, parks, and the Rum an Mississippi Rivers.

Sustain and strengthen heritage resources.

Preserve historic buildings and public spaces

Promote the use of public spaces.

Increase the number of people in our public spaces, downtown, along the riverfront, and in our neighborhoods.