

Brainerd Comprehensive Plan

Goals and Policies

PARKS AND RECREATION

- 1. Brainerd will maintain a quality parks system that meets the recreational needs of a variety of users.**
 - a. Add green space and public plazas in a manner that makes them conveniently accessible to all residents and prioritizes function and aesthetics.
 - b. Enhance the natural environment throughout the community.
 - c. Collaborate with land owners, developers, and other partners to link parks, neighborhoods, and public spaces with a network of greenways and multi-use trails.

- 2. Brainerd will collaborate with local community partners to maximize the value and impact of the park system.**
 - a. Provide opportunities to partner with public and private entities to enrich the lives of residents, visitors, and students.
 - b. Provide opportunities to partner with wellness providers to utilize the park system and encourage active living to improve community health.

- 3. Seek ways to expand event programming for each park in order to highlight the unique qualities of each neighborhood.**
 - a. Enhance and expand sports facilities and/or programming.
 - b. Enhance and expand year-round recreation activities including active and passive options for all ages and abilities.
 - c. Seek ways to enhance or expand health and wellness initiatives for families and residents of all ages.

HOUSING

- 1. Provide a diverse mix of housing choices for all stages of life, income ranges, and ownership/rental preferences**
 - a. Compliment Brainerd's entry level and affordable housing options by encouraging other move up and, mid to upper-end, market rate housing options.
 - b. Expand home ownership and rental opportunities through rehabilitation and new construction.
 - c. Rehabilitate and/or replace substandard housing with units that are decent, safe, healthy and affordable and of appropriate size to meet the city's current and future housing needs.
 - d. Facilitate the maintenance of existing housing and rental units to ensure they are in decent, safe, and healthy condition.
 - e. Ensure an adequate supply of quality and affordable housing units for current and future residents.

- 2. Encourage the preservation and historical significance of existing neighborhoods.**

- a. Identify the historic neighborhoods and homes throughout the city.
- b. Encourage the creation of neighborhood associations.
- c. Encourage energy efficiency and sustainability in home renovation and new construction.
- d. Support development and infrastructure improvements that complement the unique architectural styles and development patterns that define individual neighborhoods.
- e. Develop friendly, safe, and welcoming neighborhoods that encourage interaction through all stages of life.
- f. Seek ways to encourage mixed-use development/redevelopment in and around the downtown area.

3. Ensure quality living conditions for all residents.

- a. Encourage continued and timely enforcement of all maintenance codes and continue to monitor and inspect all properties.
- b. Promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of all properties.
- c. Monitor properties in foreclosure and keep an inventory of tax forfeited parcels.
- d. Engage residents (owners and renters) to become engaged in their neighborhood which can lead to retention.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Maintain, develop, and adapt a dynamic multimodal transportation system within Brainerd that seamlessly accommodates all users.

- a. Balance the competing needs and safety of local traffic, bicycles and pedestrians, and ensure the efficient transfer of freight through the City of Brainerd.
- b. Consider innovative designs, signage, technologies, and access management to ensure mobility and reduce congestion.
- c. Continue to maintain and celebrate Brainerd’s expansive trail network and consider opportunities to expand the network through logical local, regional, or statewide connections.
- d. Utilize the airport to provide a convenient global gateway that safely and efficiently generates economic vitality in a sustainable and responsible manner.

2. Continue to work collaboratively with MnDOT, Federal and State agencies, neighboring cities, the private sector, residents, and other agency partners to improve the mobility network in the region.

- a. Expand the local road system thoughtfully, strategically, and sustainably where growth and demand dictates.
- b. In consideration of fiscal constraints and long-term maintenance, prioritize the maintenance of the existing transportation network, and only expand thoughtfully and strategically.

3. Increase the prioritization of the needs of all modes such as public transit, bicyclists and pedestrians to the same level of automobile users.

- a. Recognize, respond to, and prioritize the increased demand for public transit.
- b. Implement the top 2-3 goals and strategies of the 5-year Transit Plan.
- c. Consider ways to leverage the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) to maximize ridership and efficiency.
- d. Identify the most pressing challenges facing Brainerd/Crow Wing Public Transit and take steps to address them.

4. Commit to creating remarkable bike and pedestrian connections from neighborhoods to the downtown that are safe, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing.

- a. Thoughtfully consider opportunities for additional bicycle and pedestrian friendly infrastructure.
- b. Invest in wayfinding (Universally compliant).
- c. Invest in placemaking.

5. Utilize the airport to provide a convenient global gateway that safely and efficiently generates economic vitality in a sustainable and responsible manner.

- a. Determine ways to maximize the customer experience within the Passenger Terminal Building through arts, entertainment, and improved communication devices.
- b. Continue relationships with expanding airlines and seek air service through another hub city.
- c. Work with area economic developers to attract new aeronautical businesses and airport tenants for the development of additional land along the extended taxiway.
- d. Extend a new taxiway from the east end of the general aviation ramp to the intersection of Taxiway A and C.

FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Improve the overall image of the city.

- a. Maintain public infrastructure and facilities to attract and maintain residents.
- b. Increase connectivity to adequate and affordable broadband and other infrastructure development throughout the community.

2. Preserve the history and small-town feel of Brainerd.

- a. Support orderly, efficient growth while protecting historical areas.
- b. Support façade improvements while keeping the historic look of infrastructure.
- c. Preserve, enhance and integrate greenscapes into the built environment.

3. Provide quality water/power and wastewater systems that support new and existing development and redevelopment.

- a. Coordinate infrastructure replacement projects with other road and infrastructure improvement projects.

- b. Encourage the use of stormwater best management practices to improve local and regional water quality.
- c. Promote education and incentive programs to conserve water quantity and quality
- d. Ensure adequate water/power supply to meet the long term needs of the community.

PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Brainerd will protect and provide for the safety of residents and visitors.

- a. Make efficient use of existing facilities to ensure access to emergency services for all residents and visitors.
- b. Strategically plan for and implement maintenance and expansion in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner.
- c. Continuously seek to eradicate crime through innovative and contemporary strategies including preventative, proactive, and responsive measures.
- d. Sustain fire protection through a combination of up-to-date facilities and fleet vehicles, technology, outreach and community engagement initiatives.
- e. Build, secure, and maintain efficient public facilities that enhances the character and priorities of Brainerd and its neighborhoods

2. Evaluate and improve Brainerd's emergency management.

- a. Ensure equal access to emergency services throughout the city.
- b. Seek new or emergent emergency management initiatives or opportunities.
- c. Continuously seek education opportunities for emergency personnel, key city staff, to ensure emergencies are dealt with expertly when (not if) they happen.

3. Continue to seek out and foster partnerships to better prepare the public and city staff for emergencies and natural disasters.

- a. Actively participate in the Crow Wing County Hazard Mitigation 5-year planning process.
- b. Seek resources and opportunities available through Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM).
- c. Seek resources and opportunities available through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Support infill and redevelopment throughout Brainerd as a strategic component of growth.

- a. Drive infill development and redevelopment towards areas where current infrastructure is present, or places where high levels of blight or disinvestment exists.
- b. Invest in community improvements that will spur and support revitalization or redevelopment.
- c. Evaluate the near and long-term fiscal impacts of annexation and development proposals.
- d. Reclaim underutilized infrastructure within the city (industrial sites, rail lines, parking lots, blighted structures, vacant blocks).

2. Support our workforce and help them thrive.

- a. Collaborate with local partners and stakeholders to address industry workforce needs, creating a career and education pathway for residents of all ages.
- b. Encourage access to advanced education or certification programs, workforce development, and job training opportunities.
- c. Support the ability to enable residents to work within close walking and biking distances from where they live.
- d. Expand transit opportunities to the various business clusters, or concentrated areas with high business density, throughout the community.
- e. Support the expansion of transit hours of operation in an effort to support our workforce during all shift times.

3. Help local businesses grow and attract new businesses in our neighborhoods, along our main corridors, and in our downtown.

- a. Support current businesses through a variety of programs, resources, and offerings.
- b. Attract new businesses best suited for the community's assets, increasing local employment options and building the city's tax base.
- c. Encourage entrepreneurs to start their own business.

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Protect and preserve our waterways, wetlands, and wooded areas within and around the city.

- a. Identify corridors along the Mississippi river and other streams or wetlands that could accommodate low impact developments such as trails or greenspaces, in order to preserve these natural resources for future generations.
- b. Utilize greenways to connect residents and neighborhoods to open spaces and natural areas.
- c. Preserve natural open spaces for habitat and scenic recreational qualities of the city.

2. Protect and enhance water quality.

- a. Encourage best management practices for managing runoff.

3. Increase access to open space.

- a. In concert with surrounding communities and county government, become a world-class destination by connecting trails, the Mississippi River, history, and culture.
- b. Provide access for residents and visitors to walk and enjoy a variety of open and natural spaces found within Brainerd.
- c. Engage in partnerships with local stakeholders and champions that build on the value of the natural resource system.
- d. Develop education and outreach programs that teaches residents the importance of preserving our natural resources.

- e. Collaborate with all layers of government on the restoration and management of natural resources.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

1. Preserve and repurpose historic assets.

- a. Seek small-scale opportunities to reinforce local history and identity through incentives and programs.
- b. Develop local preservation initiatives.
- c. Make downtown a destination within the community.
- d. Transform historic sites to serve today's contemporary needs through adaptive re-use.
- e. Support the transition of businesses in the community and provide new business owners the tools and programs necessary to rehabilitate old structures.
- f. Strike a balance between preserving historic structures and building new within all land uses.

2. Enliven the community through intentional community design.

- a. Provide flexible spaces for programming and events.
- b. Transform downtown as the social hub of the community and the region.
- c. Enhance community connections making Brainerd the hub of the region.
- d. Become a year-round, 24/7 community; a place where you can live, work, play, stay, and learn.
- e. Become the hub for cultural events, experiences, public art, and music.

3. Enhance the city's unique identity where the appropriate blend of historic and modern structures co-exists.

- a. Communicate a design vision through guidelines or standards for the built form, site design, building materials, and other requirements meant to accentuate the community image.
- b. Collaborate with developers and builders on future development and/or redevelopment proposals to ensure high-quality design.
- c. Identify historic structures and strongly encourage preservation through incentives and programs.
- d. Seek small-scale ways to integrate community identity, fused with local history.
- e. Encourage the adaptation of declining historic sites to serve modern-day contemporary needs.

LAND USE

1. Support mixed-use development that is focused on integration instead of the separation of land uses.

- a. Deploy smart growth principles to achieve economic, environmental, and community aspirations:

- i. Mix land uses.
 - ii. Take advantage of compact design.
 - iii. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
 - iv. Create walkable and bikeable communities.
 - v. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
 - vi. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
 - vii. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities.
 - viii. Provide a variety of transportation options.
 - ix. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
 - x. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.
- b. Develop complete neighborhoods that meet the needs of all people within a comfortable walking or bicycling distance.
 - c. Allow a mix of land uses in appropriate locations, leading to lively neighborhoods.

2. Through thoughtful planning, maintain the unique identity of the city and all the appropriate land uses that support it.

- a. Support development that enhances the identity and community character of Brainerd.
- b. Ensure appropriate transitions between rural and urban areas through appropriate land use practices.
- c. Promote reinvestment in the city's main highway corridors and downtown.
- d. Help existing places thrive.
- e. Encourage mixed-use neighborhoods that are walkable and bikeable, ones that provide the daily services that residents need within walking distances of their homes.
- f. Maintain the appropriate blend of historical and modern structures.
- g. Encourage development proposals that seek to rehabilitate historic structures through adaptive re-use.

3. Support and invest in the incremental enhancements of quality of life.

- a. Endorse a vibrant downtown and support investment within our corridors.
- b. Encourage and attract stores and services for the daily needs of our community.
- c. Ensure a wide range of housing types for all income levels.
- d. Provide equitable access to parks, open spaces, and recreation opportunities.
- e. Take strides to become a pedestrian friendly community.
- f. Preserve our natural resources and spaces, specifically the Mississippi River.