

Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022

1. Call to Order

2. Agenda Additions or Deletions

3. Minutes

May 23, 2022

June 20, 2022

4. Status of Council Recommendations

Construction Permit Approval

5. Construction Permits

1. Permits approved by City Clerk-Treasurer

a. 1106 E Frazee Avenue - roof repair

2. Permits needing approval

a. 98 Park View Drive

3. Building without permit

Ryan Weibye - 1156 E Frazee Ave - stop work order was sent for steps built in right-of-way (owner continued to build)

6. Old Business

a. Lawrence Lake Project

b. Mark Sand & Gravel

c. Ordinances

1. Snowmobile

2. Dog & Cat

d. Nuisance Properties

7. New Business

1. Developers notice policy.

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3. Agenda Additions or Deletions

Files Attached

- Vergas comp plan 2036.pdf

Vergas

Comprehensive Plan

2036



Acknowledgements

Steering Committee	Mayor Julie Bruhn Michael Dufrane Paul Haarstick Patrick Hollister LeeAnn Felix Robert Jacoby Paul Pinke Joy Summers
City Clerk	Julie Lammers
City Council	Bruce Albright Julie Bruhn Logan Dalgren Natalie Fischer Paul Pinke
Planning Commission	Bruce Albright Van Bruhn Robert Jacoby Paul Pinke Neil Wothe

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This comprehensive plan represents a significant community effort by the residents and leaders of Vergas who worked together to develop a vision and solutions for the community.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the development process of this plan and contributed your local knowledge and guidance. These pieces of wisdom were invaluable in the planning process.



Executive Summary

Overview

In 2021, the City of Vergas launched a process to develop its first comprehensive plan. The plan's creation was intended to develop a clear vision, accompanied by specific strategies driven by community input and previous planning efforts. The City of Vergas, the Planning Commission, and the City Council agreed to facilitate an inclusive and transparent process, providing plenty of opportunities for community involvement.

Key themes of the plan

While the plan covers 6 topics, community input identified the following overarching themes that they would like to focus on in the next fifteen years:

- Transportation and Parking
- Housing
- Business Development

Chapter Structure

Each chapter includes the following sections: Topic overview, the current state, relevant community survey findings, trends, and specific goals, strategies, and actions to guide future growth, conservation, and development of the City of Vergas. The goals, strategies, and actions were developed from direct stakeholder input and refined using feedback from the Steering Committee.

Previous Planning Efforts

This is the first comprehensive plan for the City of Vergas. The 2022 Comprehensive Plan incorporates content from Vergas' 2019 Capital Improvement Plan and 2020 Housing Study, as well as the Otter Tail County Long-Range Strategic Plan.

Implementation

Each planning topic has specific goals and strategies to support implementation. Appendix X outlines specific projects and programs stemming from community input that may not have fit easily into the existing topic sections.



Introduction

Situated in the northwest corner of Otter Tail County in what many Minnesotans know as 'lake country', the City of Vergas comprised about 350 residents as of 2020. Vergas is located approximately 60 miles east of Fargo-Moorhead and makes the center of a 'wheel' of Perham, Detroit Lakes, and Pelican Rapids. The city serves as a bedroom community, with many residents working in surrounding communities, and offers a tight-knit community atmosphere, outdoor recreational opportunities, and public events.

Founded back in 1903, and at the time known as the Village of Altona, Vergas' historical roots lie in the establishment of the Soo Line Railroad, which still has its mark on the town's footprint. Early settlers, mostly veterans of the Civil War and immigrants from Germany, Poland, Russia, and Scandinavian countries, made Vergas their home.

Historically, Vergas was home to a variety of industries and small business owners, ranging anywhere from blacksmithing to meat markets to hotels and lumbering. Today, the three largest employment drivers include

1. construction,
2. retail trade, and
3. arts, entertainment and recreation.

Vergas is the home of the world's largest Loon, a destination for visitors locally and statewide, and speaks to the importance of the creative economy for the community.

The major highways that serve



Satellite image of the City of Vergas

courtesy of Esri: [wcif.maps.arcgis.com](https://www.esri.com/arcgis/storymaps/)

Vergas include Otter Tail County Roads 4, 17, 35 and 60. The closest State Highways are MN TH10 to the east and MN TH59 to the west. The City of Vergas comprises 991 acres, 351 parcels of land, and three parcels of lake. It thrives off the reach it has beyond the city's limit, to the surrounding lake residents, such as Long Lake and Lawrence Lake, as well as the seasonal fluctuations of those residents--often homeowners in the Twin Cities and Fargo-Moorhead.

Vergas is well-known for the community's high level of civic engagement, hosting public events throughout the year for residents (year-round and seasonal) to contribute to the lively spirit of the seasons. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to drive the out-migration of urban dwellers to rural places across the state of Minnesota,

the demand for development in and around Vergas will likely continue, given that certain basic services, such as broadband, are made available. This makes Vergas well-positioned to capitalize on this trend and increase its tax-base, number of local business owners, and civically-engaged residents.

The comprehensive plan is intended to guide the City of Vergas as it continues to make decisions regarding the future of growth and development and will be the first in the city's history. The time taken to ground the vision in the needs and interests of the community will not only allow the City to access funding and grants for development projects but serve as a key foundation and roadmap to help decisionmakers keep the community's values front and center.

A comprehensive plan is an expression of the community's vision for the future and a strategic map to reach that vision. Comprehensive planning is an important tool for cities to guide future development of land to ensure a safe, pleasant, and economical environment for residential, commercial, industrial, and public activities.

A comprehensive plan sets forth a vision and goals for a city's future and provides the overall foundation for all land use regulation in the city. State law encourages all cities to prepare and implement a comprehensive municipal plan. Under state law, a city planning commission or department is tasked with creating the city's comprehensive plan.

The planning process generally follows three key steps:

- 1. *A community takes stock of where it is today.*
- 2. *The community generates a shared vision and goals for what the city will be like in the future.*
- 3. *The city develops a set of specific strategies to achieve that vision over time.*

This plan offers a roadmap for the City of Vergas to prioritize future development decisions and identifies a set of specific goals and strategies to address these issues that align with the community's vision for the future. The comprehensive plan should be considered a living document that the city can amend and update as needed. These amendments may occur following regular reviews or can occur as changes are identified. To amend the plan, changes should be identified and then presented to the Planning Commission for approval.

The Process



Process



Steering Committee

In August 2021, the City of Vergas began the planning process by nominating members of the community to participate in a Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee. The role of the steering committee was to build consensus and support regarding the topics, approaches, and policies outlined in the comprehensive plan project. The steering committee worked with West Central Initiative, city staff, and other local leaders while engaging the public for input throughout the duration of the project. The steering committee also provided recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council on the drafting and adopting the Comprehensive Plan.

The steering committee, City staff, and West Central Initiative facilitated two public meetings and six focus groups from October 2021 to February 2022. They also distributed a community survey for 30 days in January and February.



Focus Groups

From January to February 2022, the Steering Committee hosted 7 focus groups, taking place in a variety of formats and focusing on both narrow target audiences and the broader public. Approximately 87 people were engaged through this process.



Youth

Conversations and cocoa at the ice rink on Long Lake



Land Use and Built Form

Facilitated conversation at Planning Commission Meeting



Housing

Facilitated Conversation at Vergas Housing Redevelopment Authority



Economic and Business Development, Broadband, Tourism, Parks and Open Spaces

Rotating table activity with Community Club and Public at Vergas Event Center



Transportation

Facilitated conversation and mapping activity at Vergas Lions Club Meeting



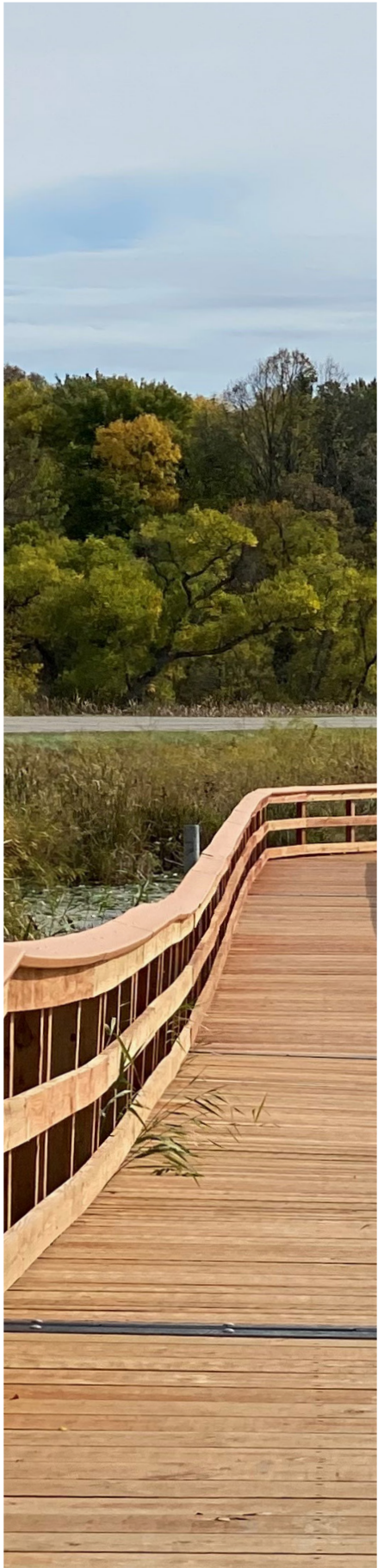
Seasonal residents and retired residents

Virtual Meeting via Zoom



Assisted living residents

Informal conversation at Vergas Assisted Living





Community Survey

From January 7th-February 28th, 2022, residents, visitors, and surrounding township residents were invited to participate in the comprehensive plan community survey, asking questions across all areas of the community to seek input on specific challenges, opportunities, and priorities for the City. Both paper and online surveys were available and promoted in the local paper, on the social media pages of local businesses, and in the City’s newsletter. Seventy-seven people participated in the survey (52 online and 25 print). A summary of the survey results can be found on the City’s Comprehensive Plan webpage, and salient findings are integrated into the plan where appropriate.

Public and Open House Style Meetings

October Open House

In October 2021, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee hosted its first public engagement activity as an open house-style meeting at Billy’s Bar downtown. The Vergas HRA sponsored a meal from Billy’s, and large boards were placed throughout the restaurant to collect feedback on the following questions:

- What do you like?
- What do you not like?
- What do you want more of?
- What do you want less of?
- What are your big ideas for the future of Vergas?
- How do you want to be engaged in the Comprehensive Plan?



June Public Meeting

On June 16th, the Steering Committee hosted its final informal public engagement activity, which was held in conjunction with Otter Coffee’s live music and food trucks on Main Street. Draft goals and strategies were printed on large paper and shared with the community for feedback to 1) Illustrate to residents and visitors how feedback from the public meetings were incorporated into the plan and 2) Solicit feedback on the goals and strategies for improvements or changes that could then be incorporated into the final draft.



Final Draft

The Comprehensive plan was approved and adopted by the City of Vergas on [insert date] during the regular meeting. A copy of the signed resolution can be viewed at right.

Adoption Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VERGAS, MINNESOTA, APPROVING THE ADOPTION OF THE 2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City Council has designated as one of the duties of the Planning Commission to write and revise its Comprehensive Plan when it finds need to do so; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission determined that it would be in the interest of the City and its residents to invest in developing the City’s first Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, with the assistance from Staff, and West Central Initiative began the process of creating the Comprehensive Plan in 2021; and

WHEREAS, after reviewing the proposed document and taking public testimony, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vergas City Council has reviewed the proposed 2022 Comprehensive Plan on **DATE** and does hereby approve its adoption.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Vergas, Minnesota, this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Councilperson 1 _____

Councilperson 3 _____

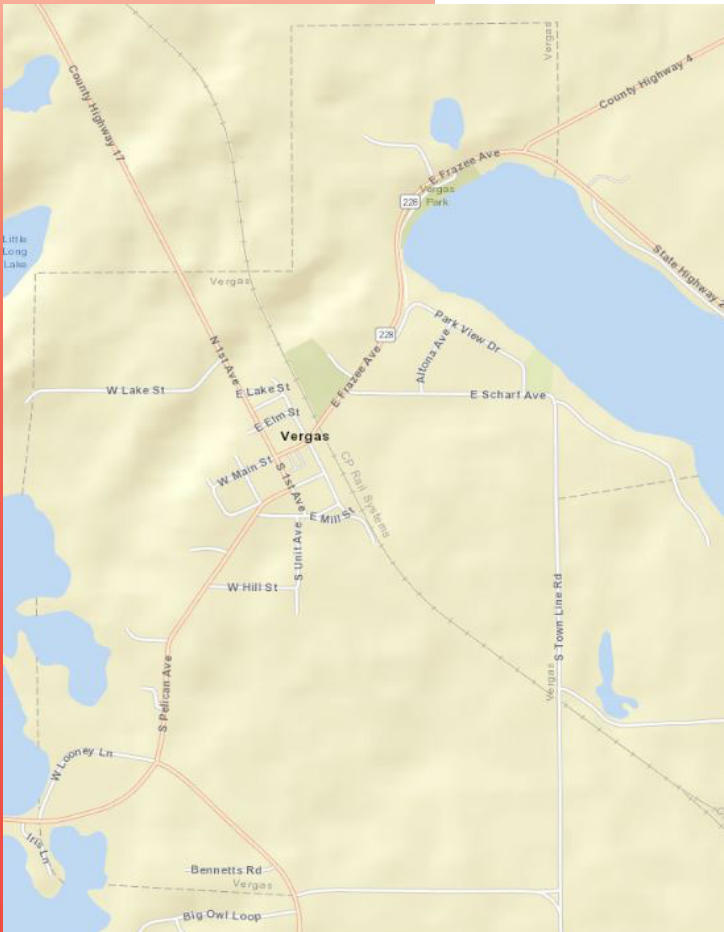
Councilperson 2 _____

Councilperson 4 _____

Julie Bruhn, Mayor

ATTEST: Julie Lammers, City Clerk

Community Profile



Street map of the City of Vergas with municipal borders outlined, courtesy of Esri: wcif.maps.arcgis.com

While Vergas is the home of “The World’s Largest Loon”, just over 350 individuals also call the town home. A quarter of the population is over 65 years of age and 20 percent is age 18 or younger. This close-knit community includes 155 households with a median household income of \$45,625 annually (ACS, 2019).

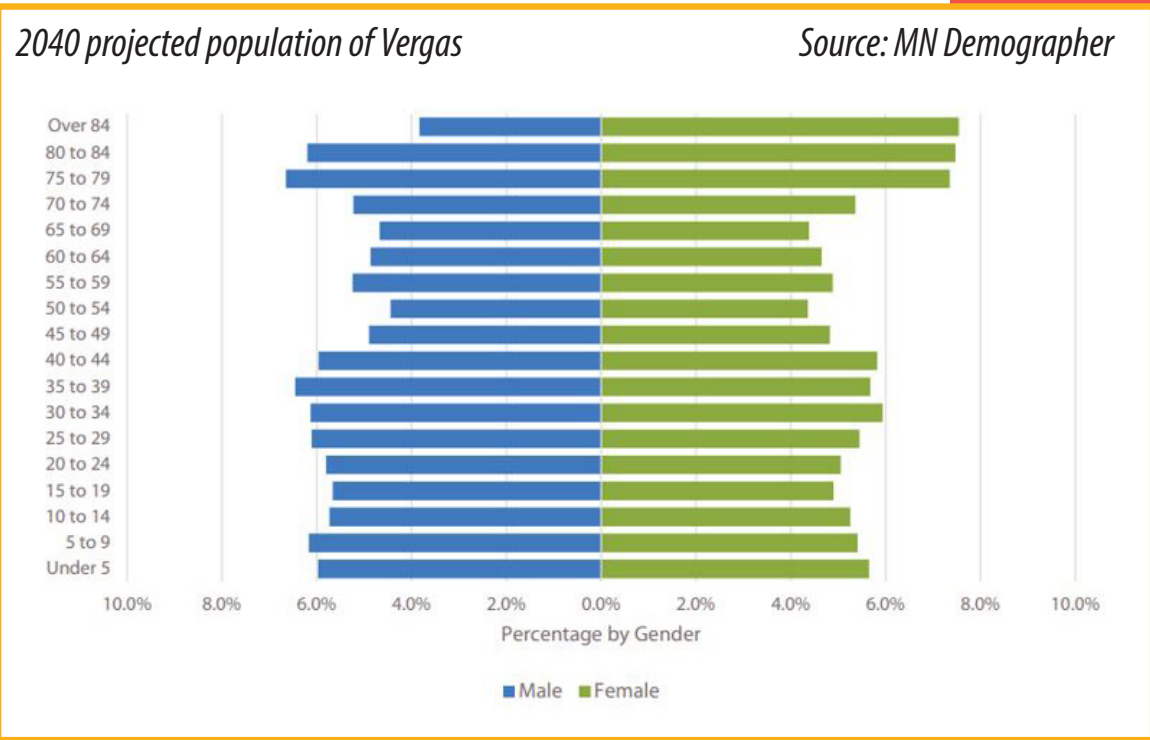
Locals note, “It’s a great place to visit, and an even better place to live!” This rings true, as many residents choose to live in Vergas and commute to surrounding cities for work. Vergas is also a regional and statewide destination for its many lakes, its public swimming beach, the giant loon in Long Lake Park, and the many unique events that take place over the course of the year: Looney Days, the Hairyman Run, Maple Syrup Festival, Small Town Christmas, and Vergas Day of Play, just to name a few. In fact, these events were cited many times by residents and visitors at the public meetings and focus groups held to gather more input on the topic of tourism and seasonal residency.

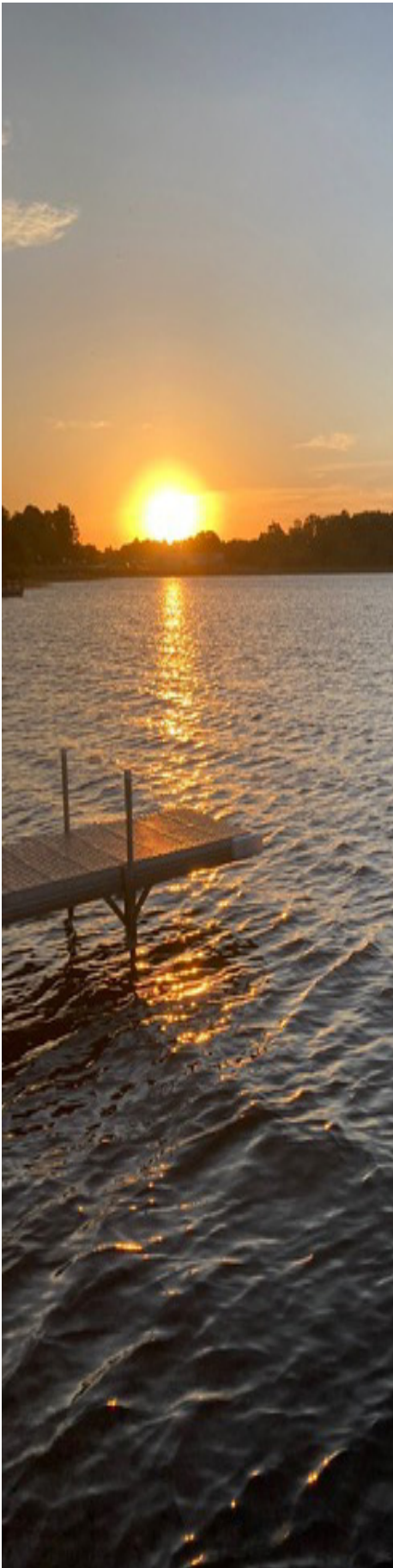
The cost of living in Otter Tail County is \$47,196. The county’s unemployment rate is lower than the state average and hovers slightly above 5%. When considering the workforce, 91% of individuals in the area hold a high school diploma and 61% are college educated (MN DEED, 2020).

Health Care and Social Assistance (20.75%), Manufacturing (18.1%), and Retail Trade (11.7%) are the largest industries. Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade are the industries with the highest number of vacancies. (MN DEED, 2020).



Otter Tail County is no stranger to the age-wave affecting Greater Minnesota, with more deaths than births regarding natural population. There is a slight increase in growth coming from immigration. (MN DEED 2020). The population pyramid (below) projected for Otter Tail County in 2040 illustrates that the largest age segments of the population are expected to fall at age 75 and above, representing a significant demand for services supporting these age groups.





Goals, Strategies, & Actions

The following goals, strategies, and actions draw from a combination of the survey, feedback from two public meetings and eight focus groups held from October 2021-May 2022, a public comment period and public hearing, and feedback solicited from regional stakeholders.

Goals

The goals for the comprehensive plan were developed using public input and comment. The steering committee reviewed and revised the goals to ensure that they were appropriate for the City of Vergas. The purpose of the goals is to serve as guidelines for the comprehensive plan and were intentionally designed to be broad and encompassing of the community’s vision for the future.

Strategies

The strategies, which are nested under each of the goals, describe a plan of action toward the goals. They take into consideration the underlying values, principles, and/or context for each goal.

Actions

The actions, nested under each of the strategies, are designed to provide more specific guidance for project-related items, personnel needs, and defining specific department’s responsibilities, more clearly articulating how to achieve each goal

Land Use & Built Form

Overview

This section describes where new housing, workplaces, and retail establishments may locate in the city to achieve the plan goals. The city may utilize a combination of policies and maps to guide development decisions. The land use maps included in this section allow developers and city personnel to make decisions regarding proposals for new construction or developments and will be a useful tool as Vergas explores the ideal locations for additional housing units and retail establishments. These maps take into consideration public engagement activities related to housing to ensure that Vergas has options throughout the city. Furthermore, these recommendations outline ways to support employment growth and ensure that land is available for living-wage jobs close to where people live. Land use maps related to parks and open space are included in a separate section, with the understanding that there may be overlap in these respective areas.

Community Input

Since land use is the physical development of the city, it overlaps with most sections of the plan. Thus, the physical aspects were noted in the following sections that will provide for improvements to take place in their respective domain. Maintaining the rural aesthetic and feel, however, was an overarching theme informing land use, aesthetics, and the physical domain. In focus group discussions, community members understood change as something inevitable and the planning commission specifically noted land-use strategies as a way for change to happen, “in a meaningful and organized way.”

Housing

Survey and focus group results indicate a strong need for single-family, detached housing and affordable (not subsidized) rental housing. Most focus group respondents also see a need for single-level housing for seniors looking to transition from a larger family home.

Parks & Recreation

As a town known for its residential offerings, seasonal living, and tourism, the physical parks and community spaces of Vergas are of the utmost importance. Residents expressed support for expanding the park on Long Lake and developing sports fields for activities intended for all ages.

Economic & Business Development

Focus group respondents communicated a need for retail and commercial spaces for owners to rent. They noted the lack of opportunity in the downtown area for start-ups that do not have the ability to own and build their own property. This, in return, discourages potential businesses that respondents also indicated a need for within the community. Land use as it pertains to parking also presents a challenge to several topics within the plan and poses a barrier for businesses specifically when centered around the downtown area. Residents expressed that the lack of parking discourages business activity, limits residents with limited mobility, and poses a safety issue when the town hosts some of its largest festivals and events.

Land Use & Built Form

Current State

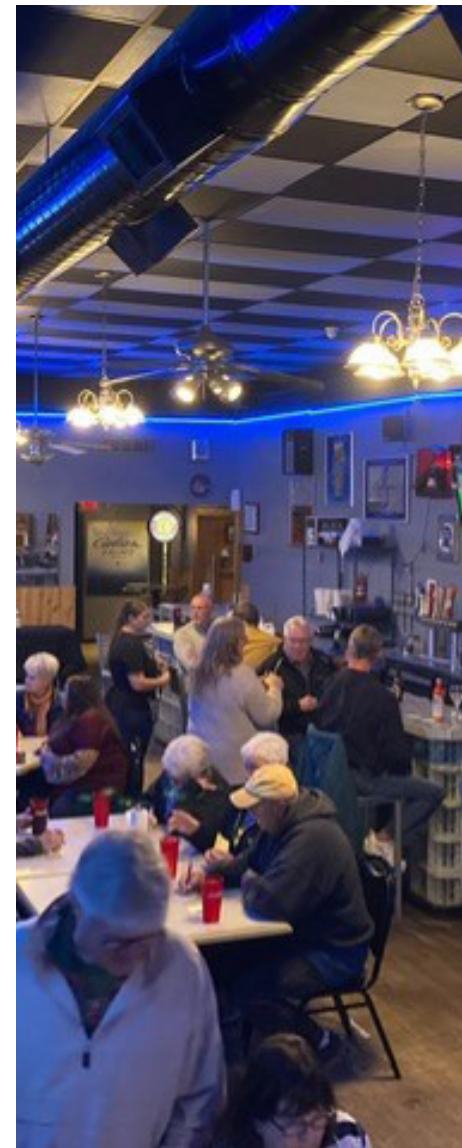
The input from public engagement demonstrates that zoning restrictions are not the barrier to further development of the city. Rather, when viewing the zoning map with focus group discussions in mind, there is a clear need to extend city limits and expand to make way for the future developments expressed above. The physical geography limits expansion in the downtown area to some extent as water poses a barrier while also adding to the attractiveness of the area. Development, then, will need to come in the form of negotiating with landowners while also working with legal counsel to broaden the city's geographical base.

Any outward expansion, of course, would be a slow process and rely on the capacity of sewer and water systems to accommodate more households and businesses. The City is currently exploring how to update these systems while keeping the cost of public utilities affordable (See Appendix A).

Trends

Several nearby towns were built between lakes, like Vergas, and have focused on annexing shoreline properties over the course of decades to expand their limits. They slowly increased their city's footprint by providing city services, creating a mutually beneficial arrangement. This strategy allowed for the cities to expand and develop gradually while not overloading its systems.

Notably, the relationship between built structures and the natural environment has gone through a transformation in the past four decades. Society is evolving to appreciate the integration between natural features and man-made structures—a sentiment that many rural residents have valued over time. For example, cities look towards the installation of natural playgrounds, and seek power technology through the environment in the form of solar panels and windmills. Zoning, traditionally a clear-cut practice known for black and white decisions, needs to respond to this shift in thinking to accommodate the contemporary needs of cities.



GOAL: Land use and built form decisions support and celebrate the existing character of the town.

Strategies

- Encourage land uses that strengthen Vergas' reputation as a family-friendly, safe place with a small-town charm
- Limit land uses that allow for big box stores, chains, large processing plants, or other developments that have short-term gains and long-term losses of community character and environmental protection
- Ensure that any land use involving light industrial developments has a plan for maintenance and accessibility
- Encourage or offer tax incentives for parking for new construction

Action

- Explore above- and underground parking.
- Continue to have a Vergas representative participate in the Frazee-Vergas Positive Community Norms Coalition

GOAL: Capitalize on in-fill opportunities and direct growth to new areas where infrastructure is planned to be cost-effective and sustainable

Strategies

- When considering expansion options, prioritize expansion that follows a set of guidance developed through a growth and management plan
- Investigate annexing shorelines across bodies of water when landowners are favorable to the request

Action

- Develop tiered system for expansion based on Vergas' sewer and water capacity, EMS services, and other public services and facilities.



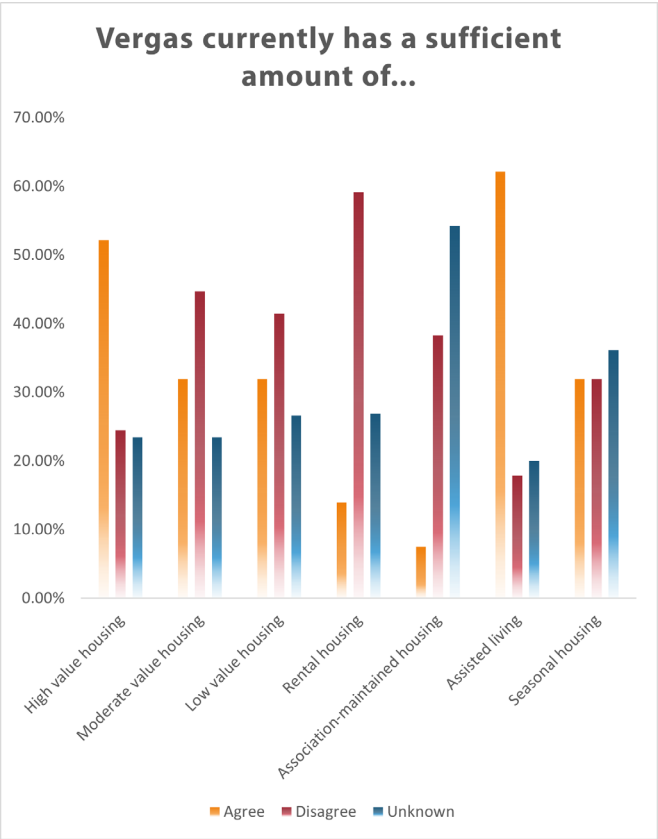
Housing

Community Input

The 2019 Housing Study found that many respondents indicated they intend to live in Vergas for the rest of their lives, or at least until a major life event instigates a move. This may mean that there will be very little turnover in the existing housing stock. However, at some point in time, between ten and fifteen years from now, there will likely be a major turnover in existing housing stock ownership.

Additionally, 81% of those survey indicated that the City of Vergas should be working with developers to create additional residential options.

The graph below demonstrates respondents’ impression that Vergas is lacking in rental housing. It will be important for Vergas in the next fifteen years to use existing and future land use plans to identify the ideal locations for future apartment developments.



Overview

In a community that prides itself on being an exceptional place to live, whether residents work there or not, safe and affordable housing is a foundational element for the well-being of Vergas’ residents. The topic of housing aims to investigate the availability of housing within a community alongside the needs of current and future residents. Housing--whether it be apartments, condos, single homes, etc.--provides a foundation for stability and the opportunity to become rooted in community. This section strives to assess the type and amount of housing available, measured against what residents need.

Current State

In 2020, the City of Vergas contracted with KLJ engineering to develop a housing plan, outlining the projections for housing needs in the coming 15 years. Findings of this plan’s community survey indicated that residents felt high taxes, utilities, or housing prices were a barrier to moving to Vergas. The study recommended a comparison between Vergas housing, tax, and utility costs in other nearby cities to rank Vergas’ competitiveness. The comprehensive plan sought to create this comparison, the full results of which can be found in Appendix A. It includes Vergas’ utility rates (water, sewer), waste collection and recycling, storm water fees, and property taxes for homes with a value of \$250,000 and \$400,000 against 11 other communities: Candor, Dora, and Hobart Townships, Pelican Rapids, Perham, Audubon, Callaway, Frazee, Underwood, Ottertail, and Battle Lake.

The key finding from this evaluation is that the property taxes in both brackets (homes valued at 250K and 400K) are most closely aligned with the property taxes in Perham, Pelican Rapids, and Battle Lake--communities significantly larger, and additional community amenities. For example, both Perham and Pelican Rapids have a swimming pool. Perham is home to a large community center with an indoor walking track, several gyms for open play, and space for large sports competitions. Vergas’ largest comparable asset is Long Lake and the public swimming beach, which is a destination for residents across the area due to the limited number of public access areas on the lakes. It is worth considering what has made these communities attractive places to live aside from recreational opportunities. For example, Battle Lake prides itself on being a strong arts community, and Perham and Pelican Rapids both have a strong industry base in food processing. Similarly, Vergas can capitalize on existing assets to develop its own regional reputation, distinct from surrounding communities.

Trends

The following goals and strategies take into account the significant increase in demand for housing in the region as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Described as the Rural Rebound Movement, or the Great American Migration of 2020, people have been moving from urban areas to rural places across the country. In fact, in an article published by Greater Fergus Falls in early 2021, it states “Bankrate reported that the number of mortgages obtained for homes in non-urban areas increased by 36% in 2020” (Greater Fergus Falls, 2021). This represents a significant uptick in the demand for rural homes and potential for Vergas to shift the trends that were predicted as part of the housing study completed in 2020.

The rate of inflation and housing market behavior coming out of the first year of the pandemic created an increasingly competitive environment for buying and selling houses. Property taxes in Otter Tail County rose 10%-30% in the year 2021 alone while the price of housing and home improvement projects continues to rise.

Overall, the following goals related to housing seek to address the concerns and needs highlighted by the housing study and public engagement to serve as a framework for future development decisions and ensure that both housing supply and choice are increased.

GOAL: Identify affordable housing lots that can be developed within the next five years.

- Strategies
- Develop partnerships with Otter Tail County to share county-level resources with local developers and future residents via existing incentives and initiatives
 - Conduct and inventory and promote lots available

- Action
- Utilize City website by adding housing resources comparable to neighboring cities

GOAL: Provide high efficiency, low-cost water, sewer, and energy

- Strategies
- Improve education available for residents related to water and energy conservation
 - Encourage a culture that celebrates and normalizes responsible landscaping
 - Explore renewable energy sources
 - Communicate local and regional existing resources available to residents (ex. Compost, recycling)

- Action
- Add Clean Energy Resource Teams to the City website
 - Increase awareness of environmentally friendly and sustainable home improvement options
 - Consider sponsoring a local garden tour, highlighting residents using native plants and grasses
 - Conduct a solar site assessment to identify solar capacity for downtown businesses

Transportation

Overview

The goals, strategies, and actions included in this section work to support a more walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly community. They are intended to achieve outcomes that increase equity in Vergas’ transportation system, address climate change and reduce carbon emissions, improve human health through improved air quality and increases in active travel, and enabling the movement of people, goods, and services across the community.

Current State

Vergas’ main transportation network is comprised of its municipal street system, the two highways that bisect the community, and the railroad line. Highway 4 cuts diagonally north-south through Vergas, Highway 17 intersects Highway 4 from the northwest, and the railroad runs parallel to Highway 17 to the north. The highways serve as two primary thoroughfares through the community, not only for residents and visitors, but also significant industrial traffic.

In recent years, the approval of regional trail expansions is likely to increase the attractiveness of Vergas as both a destination for recreation and a place to live. This includes both the Pelican Rapids to Perham Trail in Otter Tail County and the Heartland Trail in Becker County. See Appendix C for an outline of resources available for expanding trail connections.

Trends

he Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is taking a holistic approach to developing the state’s means of transportation in both urban and rural areas. Its “Complete Streets” program seeks to encourage the health and well-being of not only Minnesotans, but also their economy and environment. To do so, MnDOT factors in the following:

- Community context
- Topography
- Road function
- Traffic speed
- Freight volumes
- Pedestrian and bicyclist demand

Options that may or may not be selected, depending on each project’s unique situation, could include:

1. Paved shoulders
2. Sidewalks
3. Bicycle lanes
4. Pedestrian refuge medians
5. Truck mountable curbs in roundabouts
6. Signal retiming
7. Updated striping
8. Bus stop access

Community Input

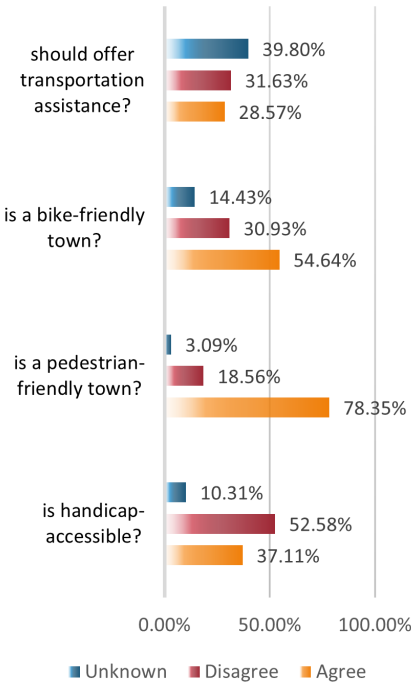
Two major concerns the community survey revealed include limited downtown parking and the train blocking traffic. Given existing parking limitations, the survey asked participants to indicate how far they would be willing to walk from their downtown destination. 58% of respondents indicated 2 blocks, and 42% indicated 1 block.

Other survey results (see graph at right):

- There is **no clear consensus** on whether the city should offer transportation assistance
- More than half of respondents **agreed** that Vergas is bike-friendly
- More than half of respondents **disagreed** that Vergas is handicap-accessible

Focus group participants highlighted two areas of interest: Increasing safety through sidewalks and trails, and using trails to support recreational activities and active transportation. In discussions, participants stressed the lack of sidewalks within city limits and how this poses a challenge for pedestrians around town. Support for investing in trail systems in and around the City of Vergas found support from the motivations of increasing the safety of bicyclists, and maintaining and attracting the biking community to boost recreational activity and tourism. Ultimately, focus group participants were in favor of keeping bikers away from highways and on designated trails.

Do you believe Vergas...



GOAL: Make Vergas accessible for all modes of transportation and for people of all abilities

Strategies

- Identify key places across the city that can improve handicap-accessibility
- Communicate and market existing transportation services (Ex. Neighbor to Neighbor)
- Identify additional locations for downtown parking
- Construct handicapped parking spots and sidewalks along County Road 4
- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of rerouting Highway 4 through downtown to reduce through-traffic on Main Street
- Explore options for reducing stopped trains and subsequent stopped traffic
- Promote programs that promote ridesharing networks and services

Action

- Conduct an ADA audit or other type of evaluation to identify the key areas for improvement across the city.
- Create short reference guide for residents and visitors describing local and regional transportation options (example: veteran services transportation)
- Work with the Planning Commission to determine if vacant or undeveloped property could serve as space for new parking lots, and potential for diagonal parking
- Contact Canada Pacific to explore moving the exchange back

GOAL: Increase connectivity between Vergas and regional trails

Strategies

- Connect Vergas to the Pelican Rapids-to-Perham Trail.
- Connect Vergas to the Heartland Trail.
- Construct a multi-use path from downtown Billy’s Corner Bar & Grill to the Veterans Memorial.

Action

- Consult with entities like MnDOT, the DNR, WCI, and PartnerSHIP 4 Health about pursuing grants for planning and infrastructure for a trail connection
- Work with Otter Tail County to pursue grant funding to connect the Heartland Trail along County Road 4.
- Add multi-use path to the update of the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan to ensure that it is included in a future city budget

Business & Economic Development

Overview

Economic and Business Development refers to the growth of resources within a community through more business activity, increasing job opportunities and workforce development. Historically, conversations surrounding economics and businesses begin and end with money. This section takes into account the increasing awareness of diversity, equity, inclusion, and healthy communities, and the impact that investing in these target areas has on sustainable development.

The character of Vergas as a bedroom community, in which many residents commute to surrounding towns for work, creates a unique foundation for economic and business development in the city. The service industry is key in terms of providing and creating jobs for residents, and seasonal tourism elevates the importance of these businesses.

Current State

Based on the plan’s community survey results, only a quarter of Vergas residents work in the city. Therefore, to fully assess the economic viability of the community it is helpful to step back and look towards the county-level indicators on the state of economic development.

Pre-Pandemic Information: WCI Otter Tail County Snap Shot

In Spring of 2022, Otter Tail County (OTC) tracked 1,000+ current job openings, projecting an additional 320 jobs added in the next 3 years by the leading industries. They also predicted a 1,300-person reduction in available in the next decade due to an aging population and skill gap. OTC Works Workforce Strategy addresses these economic challenges, informing goals and strategies in this comprehensive plan.

GOAL: Maintain the small business atmosphere

Strategies

- Advertise local businesses regionally
- Review and update city laws and ordinances that support small business owners

Action

- Work with neighboring Chambers of Commerce to advertise and access resources
- Collaborate with the Community Club to identify opportunities and resources to market regionally
- Submit stories, ads and updates to surrounding local papers
- Invest in enhancing the City’s website
- Preserve existing protections within city laws and ordinances
- Explore state and federal incentives for small businesses, especially those making positive impact in nearby communities

Trends

The Minnesota Association of Development Organizations (MADO) has identified four cornerstones for strong and healthy communities: Human Capital, Economic Competitiveness, Community Resources, and Foundational Assests. By investing in the four cornerstones, Vergas can create the conditions necessary for a successful economy resilient enough to withstand future challenges.

Opportunities for Human Capital:

- Population and workforce expansion through immigration
- Investment in talent retention and attraction
- Utilizing retirees’ knowledge and experience
- Marketing quality of life and economic opportunity
- Entrepreneur training
- Develop and implement college and career awareness programs

Opportunities in Economic Competitiveness:

- Support societally and environmentally aware entrepreneurs/businesses
- Challenge the business perception of state government by eliminating the unnecessary (e.g. delays, regulations, taxes) and providing assistance to offset business costs
- Increase awareness of the benefits of business in Vergas
- Broaden access to start-up capital to encourage innovation and investment
- Explore cost sharing and collaborative opportunities with surrounding small cities (e.g. marketing)
- Capitalize on bio-energy to expand and create businesses
- Utilize workforce centers and technology/business incubators

Opportunities in Community Resources:

- Empowering and encouraging new and emerging leadership
- Place-making through arts and culture
- Expand on tourism opportunities
- Promote livability, public spaces, and identity
- Community preservation and enhancement
- Healthy communities

Opportunities in Foundational Assets:

- Expand broadband/fiber footprint in Greater MN
- Identify partnerships and resources to maximize infrastructure investment
- Develop public/private partnerships to identify solutions for housing challenges
- Shared services/resources and intergovernmental cooperation

GOAL: Invest in human capital

Strategies

- Invest in local childcare options
- Create opportunities for socializing, connecting, and creative placemaking year-round
- Provide opportunities for retirees to utilize their knowledge and experience and increase social connection

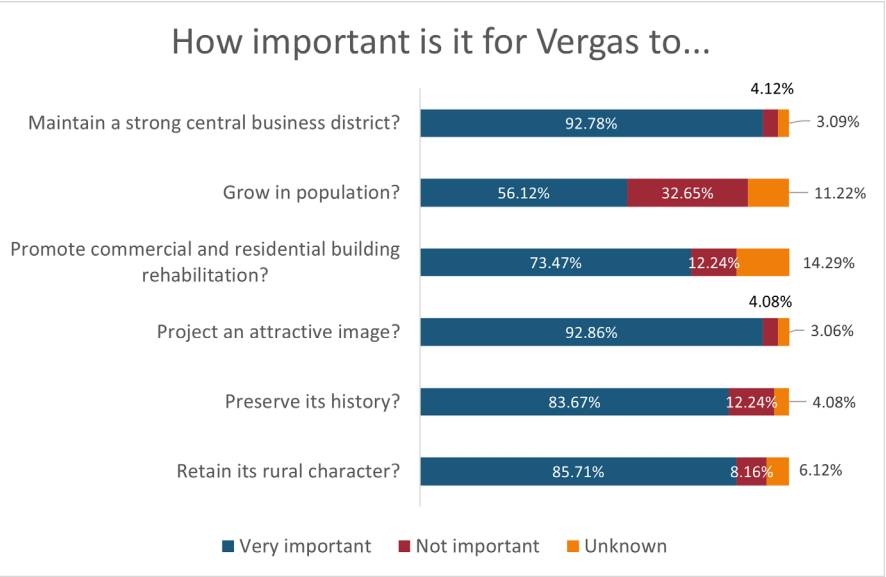
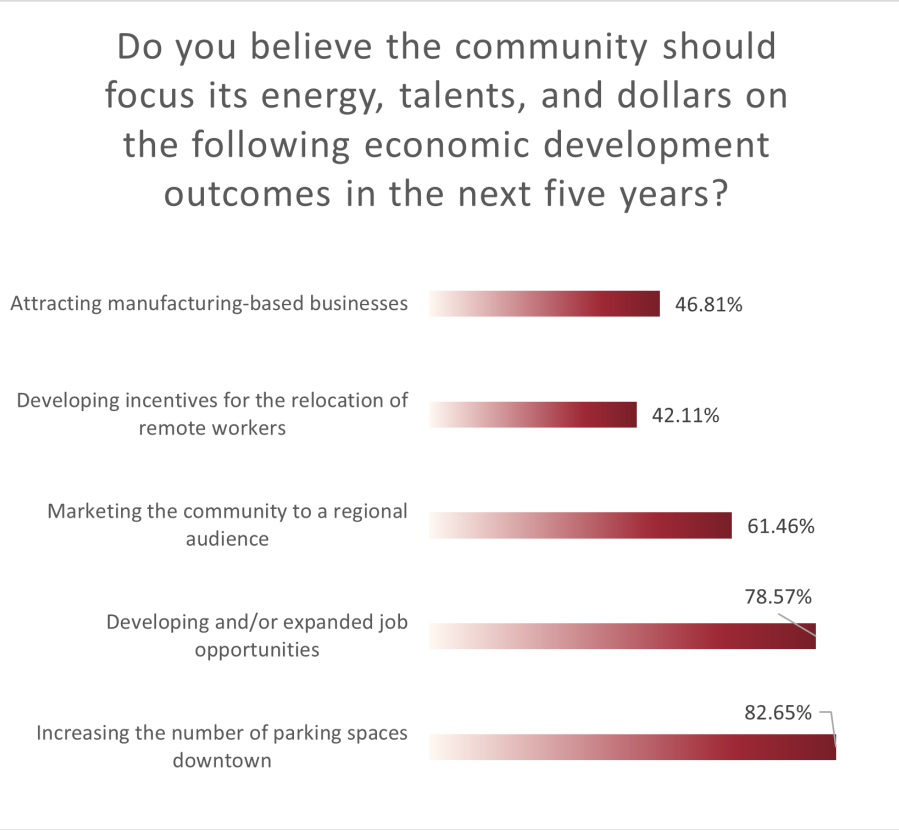
Action

- Connect with Otter Tail County Early Childhood Coordinator to identify needs and resources
- Improve marketing of existing community activities, from small socializing opportunities to large events
- Identify gaps in existing community programming and recruit volunteers to host one-off and recurring events
- Explore development of spaces for families to recreate and youth-specific activities
- Identify and invite volunteers to join planning and implementation projects

Community Input

When asked about economic and business development, residents almost exclusively focused on expanding opportunities in the service industry and retail, alongside exploring the sector of light manufacturing. Above all, residents prioritize maintaining the rural character of Vergas, and at the same time see a need to make the city more attractive and family friendly by adding services such as a car wash and more restaurants, and possibly more job opportunities through light manufacturing. To bring these new businesses to town, most focus group participants agreed that the city should focus on developing new spaces in which businesses could operate.

Vergas residents understand the need to grow population to boost the city's economy. Like many cities in west central Minnesota, the community is concerned about suitable options for housing and childcare to create new jobs and attract new residents.



Economic activity typically triples in the summer for Vergas, largely due to the influx of seasonal residents and visitors from the surrounding townships. Survey data from the 2020 housing study supports this claim, finding that out of 115 respondents, 103 said they live in their residence year-round, and 12 said they use it seasonally. This creates economic challenges, as it can be difficult to sustain certain employment opportunities year-round, retain seasonal employees from year-to-year, and ensure that businesses are generating enough revenue during peak seasons to sustain themselves financially year-round.

GOAL: Prioritize business development that provides daytime and evening activities for residents

- Strategies**
- Create more opportunities to recruit local businesses, especially where gaps in existing services exist
 - Increase awareness of state and regional resources for small business owners and entrepreneurs

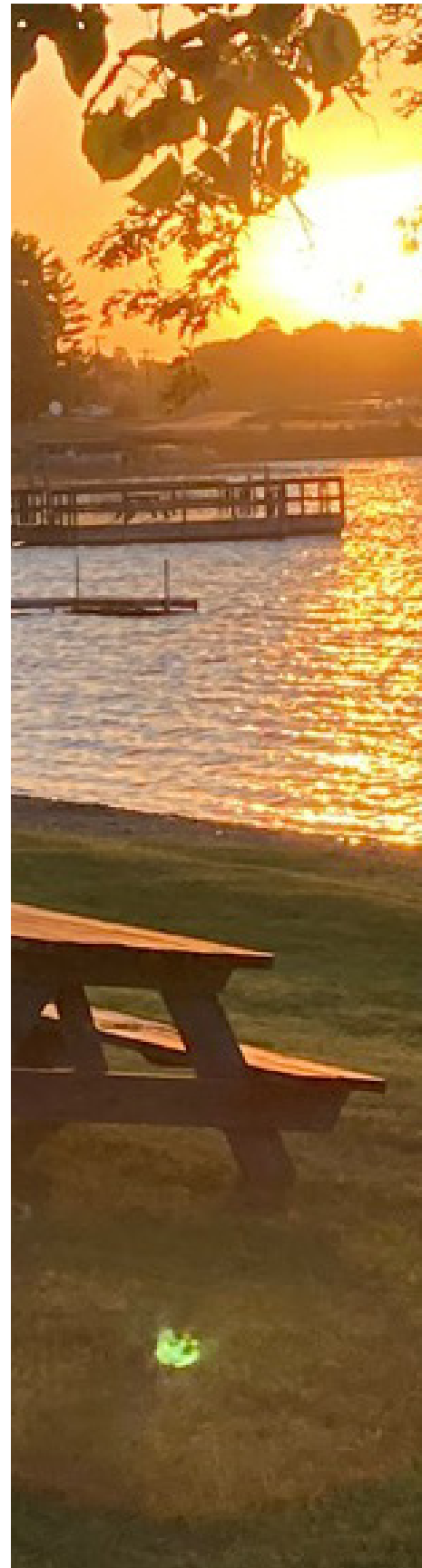
- Action**
- Work in partnership with Vergas EDA to integrate public feedback into business development and expansion strategies
 - Host a business & entrepreneurship fair in partnership with Otter Tail County with targeted outreach based on survey results and public input
 - Leverage partnerships with existing programs, such as SCORE business mentors, MN DEED, West Central Initiative, the Vergas Community Club, the West Central Small Business Development Center, Women Venture, and Otter Tail County Small Business Coaching.

GOAL: Develop and expand job opportunities

- Strategies**
- Maintain and increase the number of visitors
 - Pursue opportunities for light manufacturing
 - Support digital entrepreneurs and remote workers

- Action**
- Advertise businesses and recreational opportunities, and events regionally
 - Pursue and invest in trail development
 - Cultivate more year-round attractions and events
 - Identify land available for development and purchase
 - Offer the Event Center as coworking space by appointment
 - Maintain and develop broadband capabilities
 - Connect with neighboring communities to participate in county-wide networking opportunities (host pre-existing groups for a meeting)

Public Services & Facilities

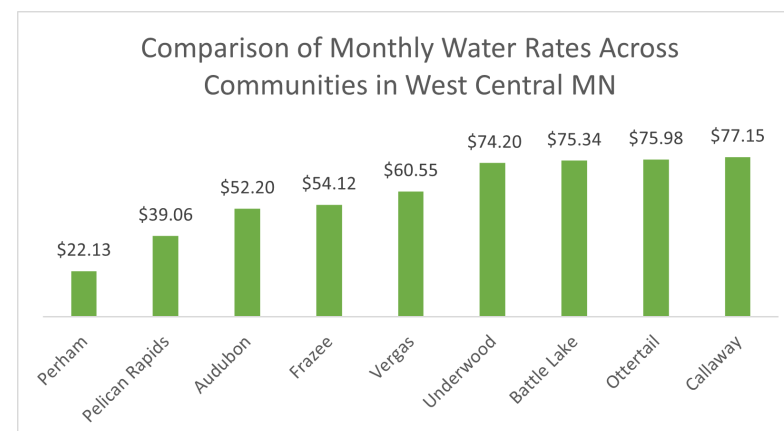


Overview

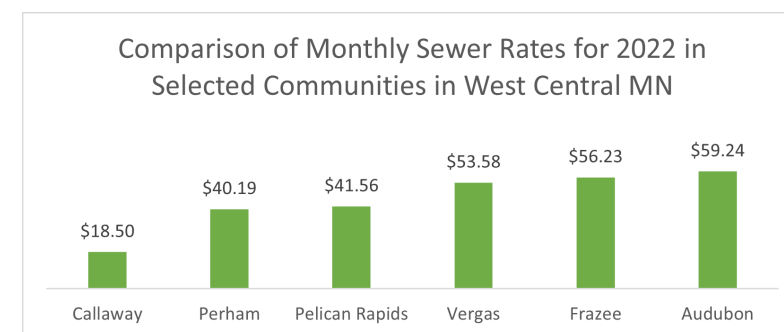
Public services and facilities refer to the infrastructure – both hardware and capital assets, such as broadband, street maintenance, stormwater management, that supports the community. For the purposes of this plan, we include both local and regional services such as the bookmobile through the regional library system, transportation assistance, cellular service, and other public utilities. Effective planning around public services and facilities not only considers current demand for services, but also anticipates changes driven by development, consumer demand, demographic changes, and other factors.

Current State

As described in the Housing Section, this plan undertook a comparison of the three surrounding townships around Vergas and several cities across the region that represent Vergas' competitors for future residents. The water and sewer rates comparison is discussed in this section. Due to the nature of water and sewer rates in townships, creating an equal comparison of residents in city limits versus out of city limits is fraught with challenges. Therefore, townships were described as 'variable' in the original calculations and are not reflected in the graph below.



Looking at all of the communities included in this comparison, Vergas falls in the mid-range of monthly water rates, with the lowest monthly rate at \$22.13 in Perham and the highest at \$77.15 in Callaway.

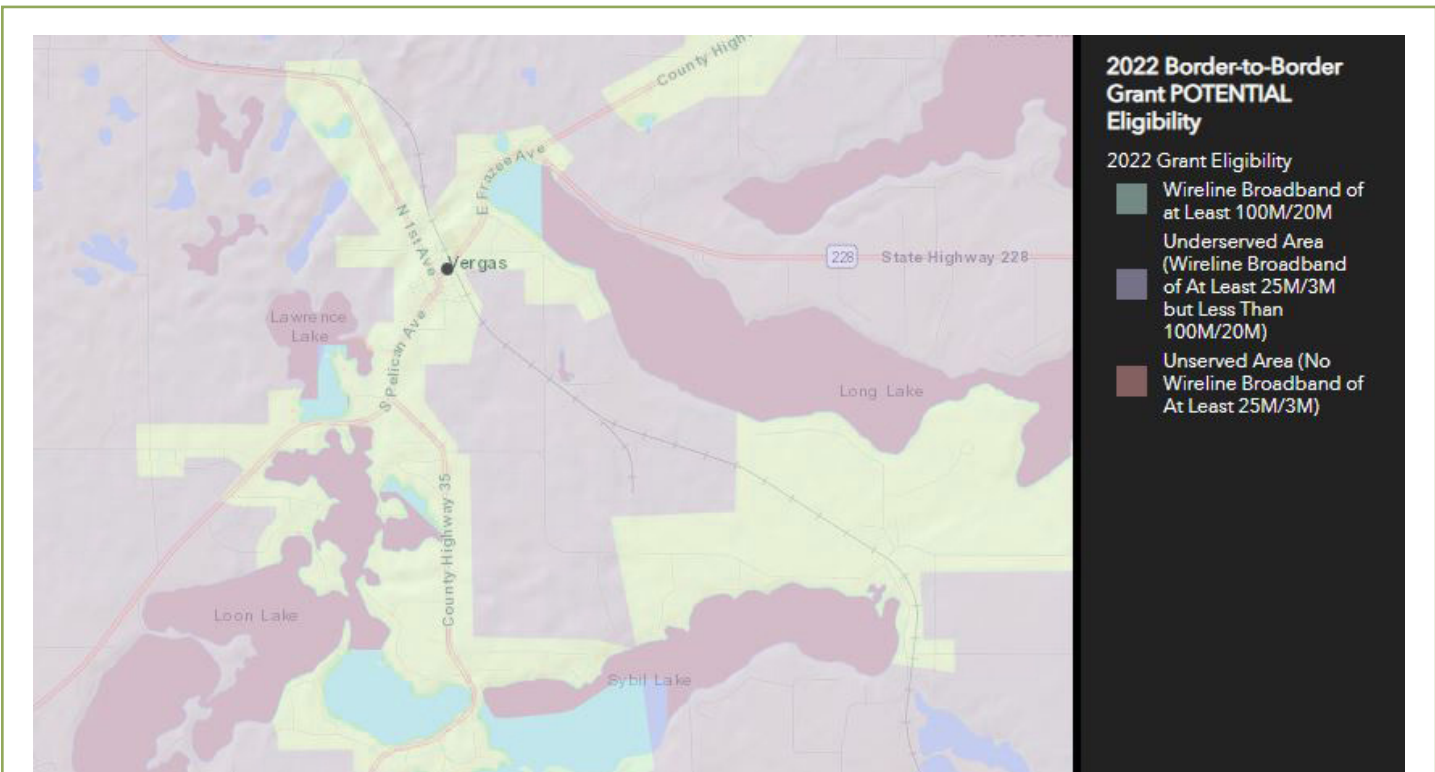


Note: Dora, Candor, and Hobart Townships have such variable septic tank annual costs that they were excluded from this comparison, as well as Ottertail, because it does not have a central sewer system and requires residents to use septic tanks.

Current State - Broadband

Internet connectivity is a major barrier to economic growth. Vergas is served by Arvig, a regional broadband provider, which currently has a monopoly on the market. At the county level, Otter Tail County continues to make investments in broadband access. Vergas is one of 10 locations in the county that recently installed a Smart Room for the public to access wi-fi and virtual meeting technology, located at the Event Center. The Viking Regional library system also has hotspots available for the public to check out for temporary use, which can be accessed via the Bookmobile, which visits the community on a regular basis. The Viking Library System's bookmobile stops at the Vergas Municipal Building every other Thursday from 1:15 pm - 2:15 pm.

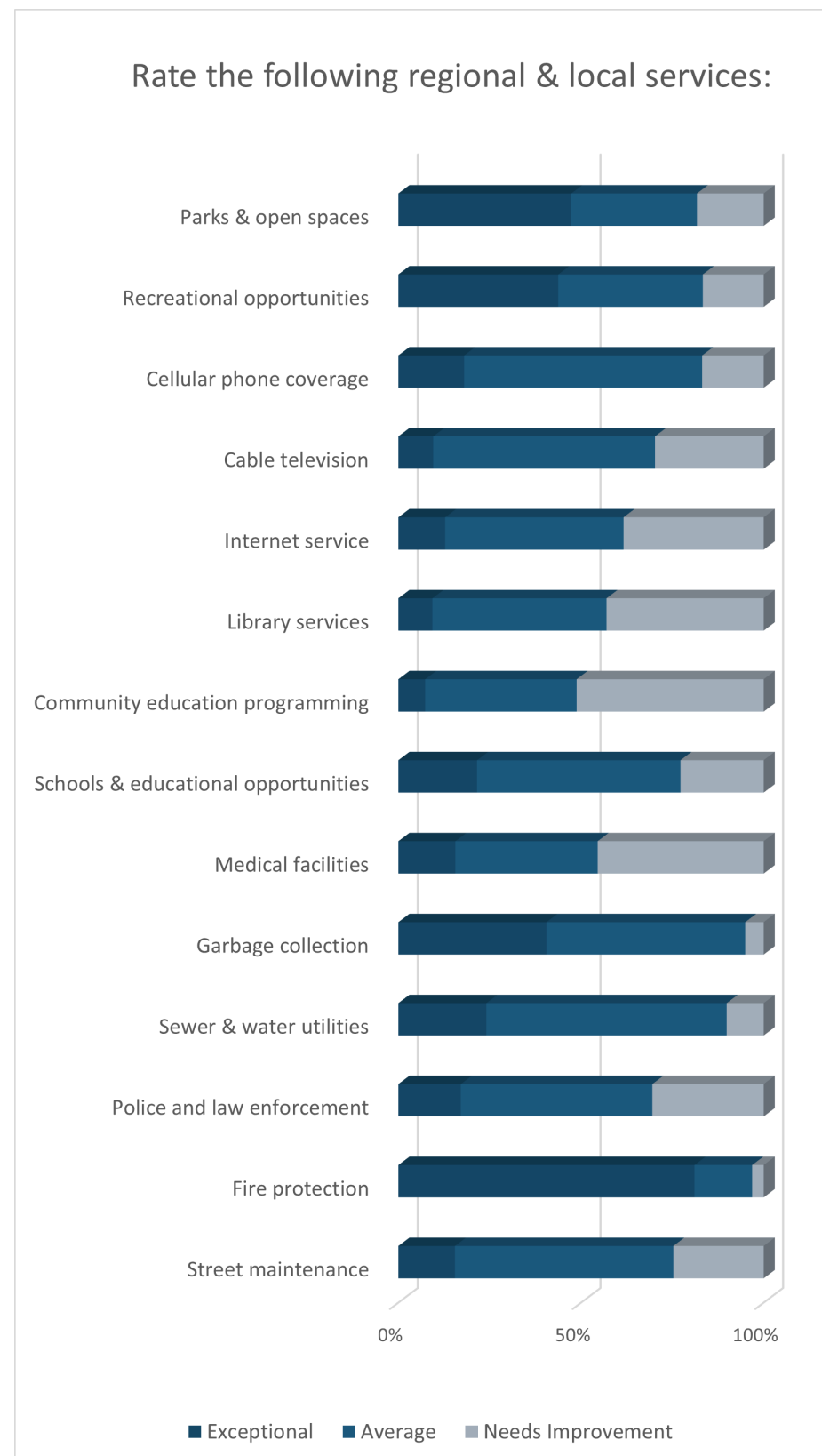
The Minnesota Office of Broadband created an interactive GIS mapping tool that outlines broadband availability, (see map below). While most of the city limits are covered by Cable, Vergas represents a dead zone with regards to fiber optic cable. These areas, represented in purple below, are deemed "underserved" and are potentially eligible for the Minnesota Border-to-Border Grant.



To view the map in its entirety, visit the Esri site at <https://gis.connectednation.org/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a2d243ccf7e547eba2ec0d5c80c80917>

Community Input

One question in the community survey covered both local and regional services, asking participants to rate them as average, exceptional, or needs improvement. These findings are highlighted below. It is important to note that the City of Vergas staff and its residents, unless actively engaged in regional and state-level planning efforts, may not have much control over regional services. During the writing process, these survey results were shared with respective stakeholders to ensure transparency and offer an opportunity for them to engage with Vergas residents directly, should they choose to do so.



Trends

The Otter Tail County Long Range Strategic Plan 2040 points to significant efforts underway to address public infrastructure for its residents with the forecasted population and economic growth in mind. At the county level, planners work to increase quality infrastructure access for all with a commitment to fiscal responsibility.

Specifically, transportation and solid waste have their own master plans to ensure resilient and efficient systems within the county. Solid waste management is exploring the "Towards a Zero Landfill" initiative. Otter Tail County also follows their Local Wastewater Management Plan (2014) with efforts to increase wellhead protection and the capacity of septic systems.

GOAL: Maintain adequate public facilities and services to meet the health, safety, education, and leisure needs of all Vergas residents

Strategies

- Prioritize infrastructure investment based on existing facilities with deficiencies first, replacement and retrofitting of facilities second, and future facility needs third
- Engage in strategic partnerships to ensure that Vergas is identified as a community for investment in fiber optic cable to increase broadband access
- Conduct a needs assessment to understand more about the barriers and opportunities to improve residents' access to medical facilities (transportation access, awareness, etc.)

GOAL: Ensure highest quality standards and services for public safety given Vergas' existing resources and staff capacity

Strategies

- Ensure safety of navigation throughout city streets and sidewalks
- Make Long Lake Park a desirable location for recreation year-round

Action

- Review, update, and publicize the city's planning and zoning maps to accurately indicate which city sidewalks are to be maintained by the city vs. residents
- Renovate and upgrade the public restroom facilities at Long Lake Park
- Explore opportunities to work with rental company for non-motorized watercraft
- Consider snowshoe rental companies

GOAL: Ensure that services and facilities allow residents and visitors of 55 years or older to age in place.

Strategies

- Ensure safety of navigation throughout City's streets and sidewalks
- Work to develop a full spectrum of transitions in senior housing needs, from accessibility options to access to services and skilled nursing

Action

- Utilize city website by adding housing resources comparable to neighboring cities.



Parks & Open Spaces

Overview

The parks & open spaces section of the comprehensive plan focuses on improving opportunities for residents to increase their physical and social well-being within the community. This encompasses parks, state- and federally-owned land, and other open spaces along with community-wide events and activities.

Current State

Several stakeholders are collaborating to design and recreate Long Lake Park, one of the most popular outside spaces in the town. The city's 2019 Capital Improvement Plan outlined this project, and the Parks and Rec Board is currently overseeing the design process with students from North Dakota State University.

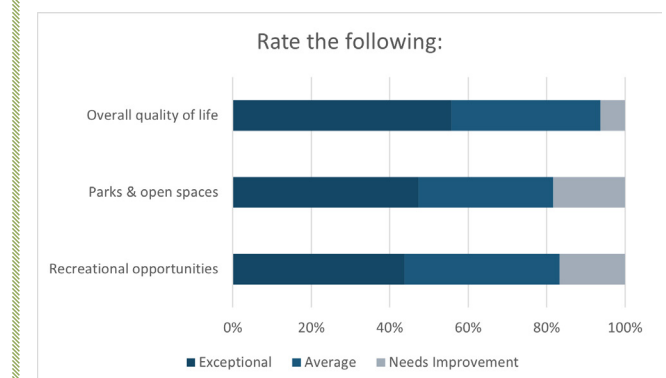
Trends

Minnesota's park usage has increased, in line with national trends of park usage as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sales of annual state park permits hit 125,281 through the first half of 2021, according to DNR data, which is significantly higher than in 2020 (100,673 annual permit sales) and 2019 (78,246). As outdoor recreation becomes a 'safer alternative' to indoor gatherings and spending time in large crowds, Vergas' parks and open spaces are likely to remain in high demand. The way in which that public space is used, however, could evolve as the demand for hosting more gatherings outside continues to increase.

A more recent trend at the state-level for parks is a move to increase their cultural and physical accessibility. Strategy 4.1 in the MN Department of Natural Resources Strategic Plan from 2011-2022 is to "Develop and promote outdoor recreational opportunities for women and members of racially and ethnically diverse cultures who have not traditionally used DNR facilities and resources." This follows trends of shifting demographics statewide. Given the demographic shifts anticipated in Vergas, with the largest age brackets shifting heavily towards residents in their mid-seventies and eighties, Vergas would benefit from considering investments that allow for intergenerational use of facilities (ex. ADA compliant, caters to both younger and older users) that are accessible for those with mobility challenges while also drawing in younger visitors to encourage an active lifestyle. Part of these efforts can rely on the leadership of Otter Tail County, whose staff are already working to expand the regional trail network to connect existing facilities with destinations throughout the county.

Community Input

Focus group respondents expressed a desire for outdoor theatre spaces to host cultural events and live music. They also encouraged plans for a pickleball court and frisbee golf course. Increasing parking spaces, updates to restrooms, and making parks and open spaces handicap accessible proved to be a common theme in responses for both old and new spaces and events.



From public engagement at the Maple Syrup Fest on April 9th, 2022, participants indicated an interest in a wide range of community programming and activities that they would like to see at the parks and in open spaces. We asked the following questions and received 77 responses: What would improve your experience with community education programming? What kind of programming would you like to see?

Highlights of the responses include:

- Card/social party
- One-act or short community play/dinner
- Free kittens
- Knitting classes
- Fly-tying class
- Fly fishing class and fly tying
- Broadening use of smart rooms for education

The suggestions are reflected in the following goals (next page) and where they did not fit in this section, are included in Appendix B: Aspirational Projects & Programs.



GOAL: Support community art and arts programming

- Strategies**
- Increase number of displays of interactive art around town, in parks, and open spaces
 - Increase community education arts programming

- Action**
- Create directory of local artists
 - Continue offering summer youth art camp with display in front of City Hall



GOAL: Upgrade public facilities at Long Lake City Park

- Strategies**
- Continue working with North Dakota State University to develop concept designs of Long Lake City Park
 - Communicate with county and regional stakeholders in parks and recreation the desire to pursue state and federal funding
 - Follow guidelines and budget in 2019 Capital Improvement Plan for restroom facilities specifications and budget

GOAL: Leverage existing amenities to create a culture that celebrates physical activity and community-based sports that are complementary to school sports schedules

- Strategies**
- Create opportunities for sports and physical activity education
 - Begin offering adult leagues for baseball/softball
 - Explore opportunities for additional recreational space development

- Action**
- Create directory of local artists
 - Examples: Offering lessons for pickleball, classes with local fitness trainers, dance classes
 - Conduct a feasibility study for soccer fields and/or frisbee golf

Resources for Implementation

While it does not make sense to include an exhaustive list of resources that may be available to implement the goals outlined in this plan, one part of the community survey worth noting are the responses to question 17, which asked in what ways residents might be willing to contribute to any changes identified in the comprehensive plan.

How would you be willing to contribute to any changes identified in the comprehensive plan?

■ **Volunteering**



■ **Financial contributions or donations**



■ **Taxation**



The chart above indicates that almost 73% of survey respondents are willing to volunteer to support community changes, 54% are willing to make financial contributions or donations, and about 30% would be willing to contribute via taxation. This is reflective of the strong culture of volunteerism and 'everyday philanthropists' that populate both Vergas the surrounding townships and should be taken into account for 'in-kind' contributions and financial support that may be available outside of traditional funding sources.

Appendix A. Tax Comparisons Across Communities

The following graphs were generated from data gathered from Otter Tail and Becker County auditors. The request put in to both auditors was to estimate the property taxes in each community for two different values of homes - \$250K and \$400K. These values were chosen based on the Steering Committee's desire to learn more about the impact of housing affordability across a range that is financially accessible for households of different income levels.

For context, property taxes are calculated based on a combination of fees from the county, the city, the school district, and special taxing districts, such as economic development districts and watershed protection areas. Not all communities included in the comparison area are part of special taxing districts, and recent changes in school district fees will greatly affect this comparison, likely putting these numbers out of date soon after this plan's publication. For example, in 2021, the Frazee school district voted on a referendum to increase the taxes by 50% for the next school year.

Estimated Annual Property Taxes for Homes
Valued at 250K in Selected Communities in
West Central MN

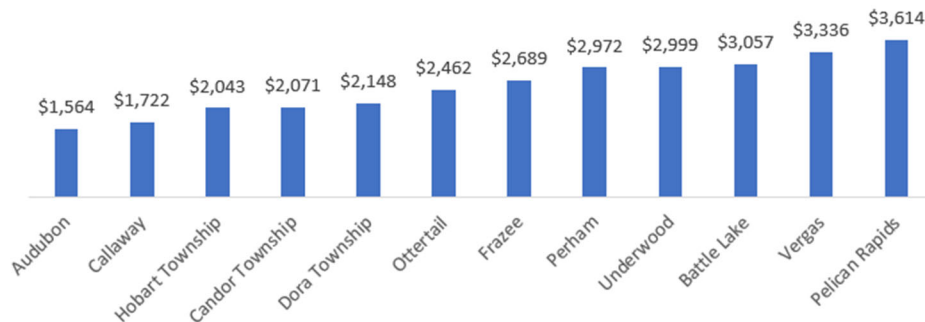


Figure 2. Estimated annual property taxes for homes valued at 250K in selected communities in West Central MN

Note: Several communities included in this comparison had a range of property tax values (Ex. Dora Township has 6 different district codes, which leads to 6 different values when calculating the net tax capacity, and ultimately the property tax). These included Hobart, Candor, and Dora Townships, Ottertail, and Perham.

Figure X above indicates that for a town of its size, Vergas is on par with communities of a much larger population - Battle Lake and Pelican Rapids with regards to the property tax values for a home valued at \$250,000.

Estimated Annual Property Taxes for Homes Valued at 400K in Selected Communities in West Central MN

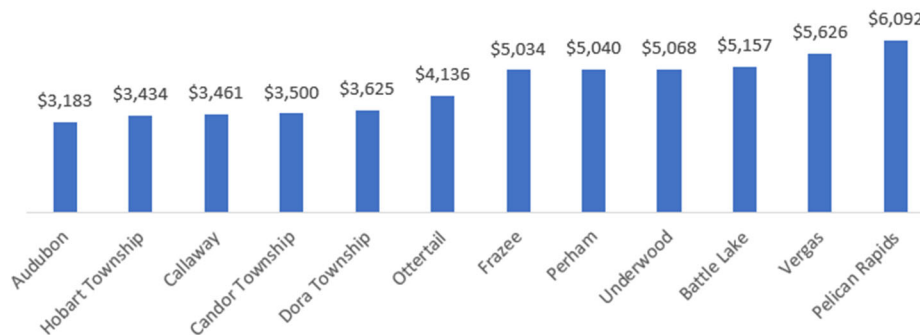


Figure 3. Estimated annual property taxes for homes valued at \$400,000 in selected communities in West Central Minnesota

With the exception the lower end of the spectrum (Audubon, Hobart Township, Callaway, and Candor Township), the rest of the comparison at the \$400,000-level are consistent with the findings of the previous graph.

City-provided utilities and services

The graphs below describe the differences in the utility costs for residents in Hobart, Dora, and Candor Township, as well as Pelican Rapids, Audubon, Callaway, Frazee, Underwood, Ottertail, and Battle Lake. These communities were chosen for their geographic location as well as from recommendations from the steering committee as communities that are seen as Vergas' competitors for attracting new residents. Reasons for this include population size, lake access, recreational opportunities, and proximity to other regional destinations, such as the state parks.

Note: It was nearly impossible to compare the Townships against the utility costs of the other cities due to the nature of private wells and septic systems having such variability in their cost for initial installation/drilling, as well as maintenance over time. The geography of each property dictates how deep a well must be built, and the water quality of the area dictates how much filtration and water softening is needed. As such, determining a blanket estimate would be flawed on many levels; therefore, for the purposes of this comparison, they are described as 'variable' in the following graphs and tables.

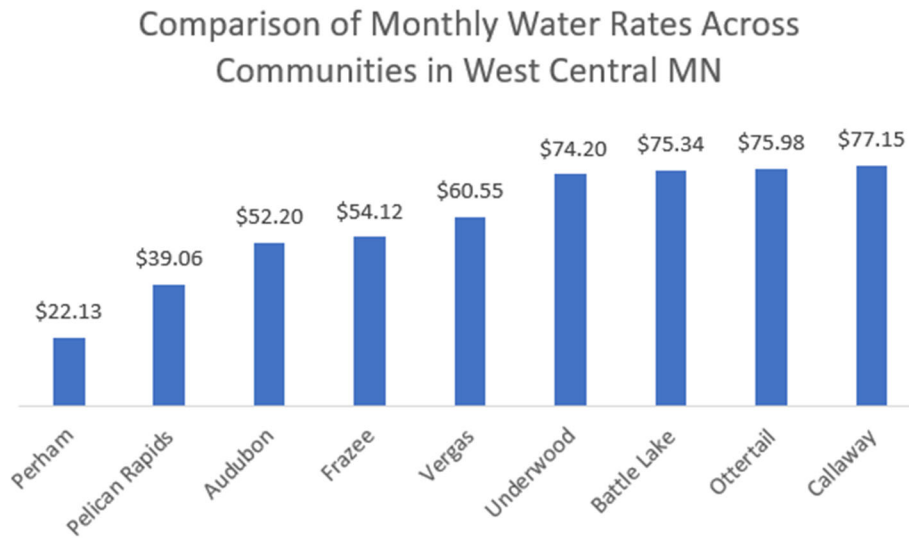


Figure 4.

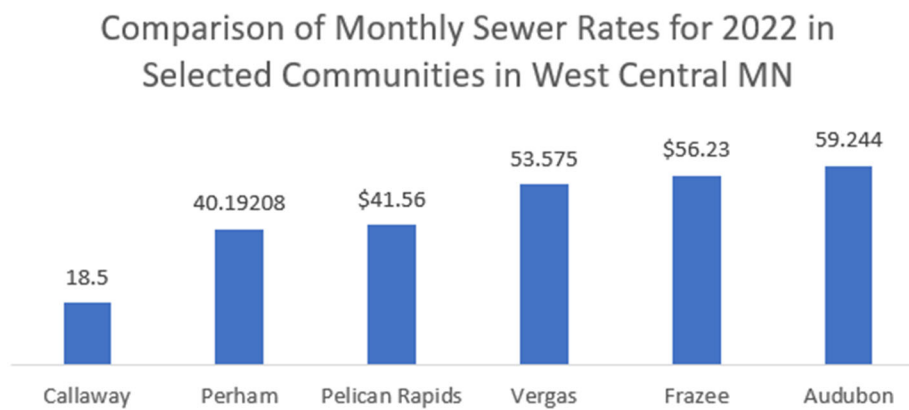


Figure 5. Comparison of Monthly Sewer Rates for 2022 in Selected Communities in West Central MN.

Note: Dora, Candor, and Hobart Townships have such variable septic tank annual costs that they were excluded from this comparison, as well as Ottertail, because it does not have a central sewer system and requires residents to use septic tanks.

Monthly Waste Collection & Recycling Rates for 2022 in Selected Communities in West Central MN



Figure 6. Monthly Waste Collection & Recycling Rates for 2022 in Selected Communities in West Central MN

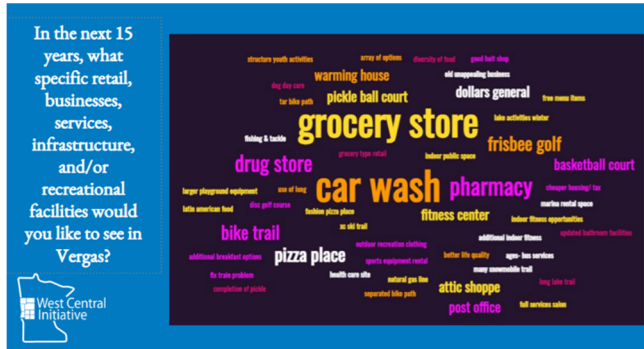
Note: Vergas offers both composting and recycling bins for residents but does not charge for this service. Pelican Rapids also offers recycling drop off bins through Otter Tail County but does not charge an additional recycling fee. Estimates for waste collection fees were based on a 65-gallon bin per household, with pricing estimates for townships and communities without a city-led service coming from providers servicing these communities: Steve's Sanitation and Ballard's Sanitation.

A note on stormwater fees

Of all the communities in this comparison, only two charge a specific storm water fee to residents – Perham, at \$1.75/month and Frazee at \$1.25/month. In other communities, these fees often show up in property taxes through the calculation of net tax capacity rate. Because there were so few communities that charge this fee, and due to how nominal of a month charge it is, specific comparison charts were not generated for this element of 'fixed costs'.

Appendix B. Aspirational Projects & Programs

The following list of projects and programs draws on the community survey findings and are captured here to ensure that the community's aspirations are not lost and can be a reference for future development projects.



RECREATIONAL & COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Disc golf course
- Walking trail to Trowbridge Zoo
- Fishing pier
- Waterslide
- Pickleball
- Badminton
- Public bikes in summer
- Snow shoeing in winter
- Yoga
- Baseball games
- Club sports for young adults in evening
- Monthly clubs (writing, knitting, crafts)
- Splash pad
- Farmers market
- Theatre group
- Outdoor exercise stations along trail
- Yoga studio and climbing/bouldering wall
- Community garden
- Edible landscaping around town
- Indoor fitness opportunities

RETAIL/COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Grocery store
- Carwash
- Laundromat

- Small storage rental units
- Toy store
- Bakery
- Pharmacy/Drug store
- Farmers market
- History museum
- Pop-up shop style retail
- Rooftop entertainment areas
- Brewery and/or distillery
- Pizza place
- Sports equipment rental & outdoor recreation clothing
- Dog day care
- Fishing & tackle/bait shop
- Marina rental space
- Seasonal menus

Appendix C. Resources for Trail Connections

The following resources are available to support trail development efforts connecting Vergas to regional trails in the area. Stakeholders involved in trail planning in the future may find these useful as they explore funding opportunities for trail planning and funding.

[Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Grant Program](#) - U.S. Department of Transportation | The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the new Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over the next 5 years. In fiscal year 2022 (FY22), up to \$1 billion is available. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

[Greater Minnesota Transportation Alternatives Solicitation](#) | Mn DOT | The Transportation Alternatives Solicitation is a competitive grant opportunity for local communities and regional agencies to fund projects for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic preservation, Safe Routes to School and more. Minnesota will be soliciting projects for approximately \$6.2 million in available grant funding across the state where the total is sub-targeted to the seven area transportation partnerships.

**Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022**

4. Minutes

May 23, 2022
June 20, 2022

Files Attached

- 05-23-2022 Planning Commission Meeting minutes.pdf
- 06-20-2022 Planning Commission Meeting minutes.pdf

CITY OF VERGAS PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
Monday, May 23, 2022
6:00 pm
Event Center & Zoom Meeting

The City of Vergas Planning Commission held a public hearing on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 6:00 pm as a hybrid meeting with the following members present: Van Bruhn, Robert Jacoby, Neil Wothe, and Paul Pinke. Absent: Bruce Albright. Also present: Clerk- Treasurer Julie Lammers, Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane, Scott Kolbinger, Julie Bruhn, Bruce Nereson, Janice Nereson, Josh Pfeffer, Shelly Bunkowske and Keith Bunkowske.

Robert Jacoby open the public hearing.

Lammers reviewed reason for public hearing: Notice is hereby given that the Vergas City Planning Commission will conduct a Public Hearing regarding a Final Plat of Keilley Shores Third Addition located on parcel 82-000-50-0037-000 Section 30, Township 137, Range 40. This will divide the parcel into fifteen parcels along East Scharf Avenue.

Keith Bunkowske reviewed the plan and addressed drainage concerns by providing a drainage area between lots 2 and 3. Discussed swail located on lots 2 and 3 which a permit will be applied for from MPCA after final plat is approved. Discussed the need for a road to Townline Road and Bunkowske stated they would not be putting in another road at this time and if the rest of the parcel is developed in the future they could deal with a road, at that time. DuFrane question land dedication and Bunkowske stated he was not aware of a dedication. Lammers questioned MPCA permit for drainage and Bunkowske stated they could not apply for the permit until final plat was approved.

Jacoby closed public hearing at 6:15 pm.

CITY OF VERGAS PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, May 23, 2022
Following 6:00 pm Public Hearing
Event Center & Zoom Meeting

The City of Vergas Planning Commission was held on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 6:15 pm as a hybrid meeting with the following members present: Van Bruhn, Robert Jacoby, Neil Wothe, Bruce Albright and Paul Pinke. Absent: none. Also present: Clerk- Treasurer Julie Lammers, Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane, Scott Kolbinger, Julie Bruhn, Bruce Nereson, Janice Nereson, Josh Pfeffer, Shelly Bunkowske and Keith Bunkowske.

Call to Order

Vice Chairman Robert Jacoby called meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Approved agenda as provided.

Minutes

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Bruhn to approve minutes of the Monday, April 26, 2022, and Tuesday, May 17, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.

Status of Council Recommendations

Council did not make a recommendation regarding land dedication for preferring land or cash donation. Ordinance reads: **§ 152.105 DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS.**

(A) As a condition of subdivision approval, subdividers shall dedicate a portion of any proposed subdivision for conservation purposes or for public use as parks, recreational facilities as defined and outlined in M.S. § 471.191, playgrounds, trails, wetlands or open space; provided that the city may choose to accept an equivalent amount in cash for part or all of the portion required to be dedicated based on the fair market value of the land following the criteria of M.S. § 462.358, Subd. 2b, as it may be amended from time to time.

(B) Land shall be reasonably suitable for its intended use and shall be at a location convenient to the people to be served. Factors used in evaluating the adequacy of proposed park and recreation areas shall include size, shape, topography, geology, hydrology, tree cover, access and location. Land with trash, junk, pollutants, flooding or wetlands and unwanted structures is generally not acceptable.

(C) **The Planning Commission, if the city has a Planning Commission, and the City Council, shall determine the land and/or cash contribution requirements for proposed subdivisions**
(Bruce Albright joined meeting and chaired the meeting from this point.)
Bunkowske stated he was unaware of land dedication.

Construction Permits

Approval of permits

Discussed allowing the City Clerk-Treasurer to approve permits that do not include the change in land use. Motion by Pinke, seconded Wothe to recommend to Council to allow the City Clerk-Treasurer to approve non-land changing permits with them providing planning commission with information on permits approved. Motion passed unanimously.

310 Glen Street-building

Loren Menz provided Bruce Albright a new drawing with the building located 125 feet from the front property line which is in compliance with the city ordinance.

105 E Main Street- sign

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Jacoby to approve construction permit for 105 E Main St for a sign. Motion passed unanimously.

110 S Railway Avenue -sign

Motion by Jacoby, seconded by Pinke to approve construction permit for 110 S Railway for sign if location is within sign ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

1106 E Frazee Avenue, repair fence

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Bruhn to approve construction permit for 1106 E Frazee Ave for fence repair. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Lot Split on Scharf Avenue

Kolbinger stated the plans and specifications have not been provided for the road or utilities. Discussed easement area and the city not becoming fiscally responsible if drainage does not work.

Motion by Bruhn, seconded by Pinke to approve plat with the following conditions: one. City Attorney drafts easement stating property owners are responsible for fiscal upkeep of the drainage area. 2. Storm water permit is received for drainage area and silk fencing is put up immediately. 3. Shoreline ordinance is followed. 4. Land dedication is waved due to inadequacy of proving information Motion passed unanimously.

Lawrence Lake Project

Reviewed information provided at the public hearing on May 17. Motion by Bruhn, seconded by Jacoby to recommend to council to approve the preliminary plat of Lawrence Lake Acres project. Motion passed unanimously.

Mark Sand & Gravel Interim Use Permit

Discussed

The pit is out of compliance and continuing to grow out of compliance. The processing area is under compliance but the active pit area (compliance is five acres) is almost eleven acres. Discussed Mark Sand and Gravel filing for a variance or getting into compliance. The open pit was 26.3 acres in 2021 and now in 2022 they are twenty-eight acres. Motion by Bruhn, seconded by Pinke to send letter to Mark Sand and Gravel stating they need to be in compliance before 2023 permit will be issued. Motion passed unanimously. Commissioners stated no permit should be sent until letter is address with Mark Sand in Gravel at the next planning commission meeting.

Vergas Ordinances

Next month the planning commission will continue to review the following ordinances which have been discussed as needing to be updated: cat and dogs, interim use, snow ordinances and policies, and snowmobiles.

Nuisance Properties

Discussed public nuisance and properties in Vergas. Ordinances 92.19 - 92.21 were discusses.

' 92.19 NUISANCE PARKING AND STORAGE.

(A) *Declaration of nuisance.* The outside parking and storage on residentially-zoned property of large numbers of vehicles and vehicles, materials, supplies or equipment not customarily used for residential purposes in violation of the requirements set forth below is declared to be a public nuisance because it (a) obstructs views on streets and private property, (b) creates cluttered and otherwise unsightly areas, (c) prevents the full use of residential streets for residential parking, (d) introduces commercial advertising signs into areas where commercial advertising signs are otherwise prohibited, (e) decreases adjoining landowners' and occupants' enjoyment of their property and neighborhood, and (f) otherwise adversely affects property values and neighborhood patterns.

(B) *Unlawful parking and storage.*

(1) A person must not place, store, or allow the placement or storage of ice fish houses, skateboard ramps, playhouses or other similar non-permanent structures outside continuously for longer than 24 hours in the front-yard area of residential property unless more than 100 feet back from the front property line.

(2) A person must not place, store, or allow the placement or storage of pipe, lumber, forms, steel, machinery,

or similar materials, including all materials used in connection with a business, outside on residential property, unless shielded from public view by an opaque cover or fence.

(3) A person must not cause, undertake, permit or allow the outside parking and storage of vehicles on residential property unless it complies with the following requirements:

(a) No more than four vehicles per lawful dwelling unit may be parked or stored anywhere outside on residential property, except as otherwise permitted or required by the city because of nonresidential characteristics of the property. This maximum number does not include vehicles of occasional guests who do not reside on the property.

(b) Vehicles that are parked or stored outside in the front-yard area must be on a paved or graveled parking or driveway area.

(c) Vehicles, watercraft and other articles stored outside on residential property must be owned by a person who resides on that property. Students who are away at school for periods of time but still claim the property as their legal residence will be considered residents on the property.

Penalty, see ' 92.99

' 92.20 INOPERABLE MOTOR VEHICLES.

(A) It shall be unlawful to keep, park, store or abandon any motor vehicle which is not in operating condition, partially dismantled, used for repair of parts or as a source of repair or replacement parts for other vehicles, kept for scrapping, dismantling or salvage of any kind, or which is not properly licensed for operation with the state, pursuant to M.S. ' 168B.011, Subd. 3, as it may be amended from time to time.

(B) This section does not apply to a motor vehicle enclosed in a building and/or kept out of view from any street, road or alley, and which does not foster complaint from a resident of the city. A privacy fence is permissible.

(C) Any motor vehicles described in this section constitute a hazard to the health and welfare of the residents of the community in that such vehicles can harbor noxious diseases, furnish a shelter and breeding place for vermin and present physical danger to the safety and well-being of children and citizens; and vehicles containing fluids which, if released into the environment, can and do cause significant health risks to the community.

Penalty, see ' 92.99

' 92.21 BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND APPEARANCE.

(A) *Declaration of nuisance.* Buildings, fences and other structures that have been so poorly maintained that their physical condition and appearance detract from the surrounding neighborhood are declared to be public nuisances because they (a) are unsightly, (b) decrease adjoining landowners and occupants' enjoyment of their property and neighborhood, and (c) adversely affect property values and neighborhood patterns.

(B) *Standards.* A building, fence or other structure is a public nuisance if it does not comply with the following requirements:

(1) No part of any exterior surface may have deterioration, holes, breaks, gaps, loose or rotting boards or timbers.

(2) Every exterior surface that has had a surface finish such as paint applied must be maintained to avoid noticeable deterioration of the finish. No wall or other exterior surface may have peeling, cracked, chipped or otherwise deteriorated surface finish on more than 20% of:

(a) Any one wall or other flat surface; or

(b) All door and window moldings, eaves, gutters, and similar projections on any one side or surface.

(3) No glass, including windows and exterior light fixtures, may be broken or cracked, and no screens may be torn or separated from moldings.

(4) Exterior doors and shutters must be hung properly and have an operable mechanism to keep them securely shut or in place.

(5) Cornices, moldings, lintels, sills, bay or dormer windows and similar projections must be kept in good repair and free from cracks and defects that make them hazardous or unsightly.

(6) Roof surfaces must be tight and have no defects that admit water. All roof drainage systems must be secured and hung properly.

(7) Chimneys, antennae, air vents, and other similar projections must be structurally sound and in good repair. These projections must be secured properly, where applicable, to an exterior wall or exterior roof.

(8) Foundations must be structurally sound and in good repair.

Penalty, see ' 92.99

Motion by Pinke and seconded by Bruhn to send letters to the following properties 350 S Pelican Ave, 371 S Pelican Avenue, 415 S unit Avenue, 121 W Linden, 1498 E Elm St, 159 E Elm St, 235 E Frazee Ave, 146 Main St and 339 E Frazee Avenue. Motion passed unanimously.

The following properties will be discussed at next month's meeting after commissioners are able to evaluate: 260 1st Ave S, 401 E Pelican Ave, 306 E Frazee Ave and 131 E Mill St.

New Business:

No new business was on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Secretary,
Julie Lammers, Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Follow Up Actions:

350 Pelican Avenue construction assessment (Tanya at Otter Tail County HRA)

Snow emergency routes.

Develop a developer's checklist form.

Review camper ordinance.

Lammers send letter to Mark Sand and Gravel.

Council recommendations:

Allow the City Clerk-Treasurer to approve non-land changing permits and providing planning commission with information on permits approved.

Approve Preliminary Plat for Lawrence Lake Acres.

CITY OF VERGAS PLANNING COMMISSION

Special Meeting

Monday, June 20, 2022

6:00 pm

Event Center & Zoom Meeting

The City of Vergas Planning Commission held a special meeting on Monday, June 20, 2022, at 6:00 pm on zoom with the following members present: Bruce Albright, Van Bruhn, Robert Jacoby and Paul Pinke. Absent: Neil Wothe. Also present: Clerk- Treasurer Julie Lammers.

Call to Order

Chairman Bruce Albright called meeting to order at 6:11 pm.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Approved agenda as provided.

Construction Permits

Albright explained Council has approved Clerk-Treasurer to approve permits which do not include land use changes. Council requests for planning commission to approve all other permits. Permits on tonight's agenda were provided to Council and sent to planning commission. Due to work scheduled on site a special meeting was held.

819 E Scharf Ave- new house and garage

This permit does not include any landscaping or driveway.

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Bruhn to approve construction permit for 819 E Scharf Ave for a new house and garage. Motion passed unanimously.

92 Park View Drive -new house and garage

This permit does not include any landscaping.

Motion by Bruhn, seconded by Pinke to approve construction permit for 92 Park View Drive for a new house, garage and driveway. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Secretary,
Julie Lammers, Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

**Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022**

5. Status of Council Recommendations

Construction Permit Approval

**Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022**

6. Construction Permits

1. **Permits approved by City Clerk-Treasurer**
 - a. 1106 E Frazee Avenue - roof repair
2. **Permits needing approval**
- a. **98 Park View Drive**
3. **Building without permit**

Ryan Weibye - 1156 E Frazee Ave - stop work order was sent for steps built in right-of-way (owner continued to build)

Files Attached

- Construction Permit 1106 E Frazee Ave.pdf
- 98 Park View Drive-repair shoreline.pdf

Permit Number: _____ Date Received: 5/18/2022 Parcel Number: 82000500185003
Any questions regarding construction permit please contact City Clerk-Treasurer by calling 218-302-5996 or stopping by the city office at 111 Main Street Vergas MN.

Construction Permit Application

To the City Council of the City of Vergas in the County of Otter Tail, State of Minnesota:
Application is hereby made by the undersigned for a Construction Permit as provided by City Ordinance as adopted by the City of Vergas.

- GOPHER STATE ONE CALL MUST BE NOTIFIED 48 HOURS PRIOR TO ANY DIGGING. CALL 1-800-252-1166 AS REQUIRED BY MINNESOTA STATE LAW.
- THE CITY OF VERGAS WILL CHECK ALL SETBACKS ON ANY NEW CONSTRUCTION. IT IS THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE ALL PROPERTY LINES LOCATED. ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION REQUIRES THE APPLICANT TO MARK THE PROPOSED BUILDING SITE AND PROPERTY LINES BEFORE THE CONSTRUCTION PERMIT WILL BE APPROVED.
- **All Electrical work MUST have an electrical permit. That must be obtained separately from a MN State Contract Electrical Inspector (218)342-3345 or (218)849-6059.**

Property Description: **(NEW CONSTRUCTION ONLY)**

Lot _____, Block _____, Addition _____

Property: Width _____ feet, Length _____ feet

Must supply City with a \$1,000 deposit for tar break up. City will reimburse \$1,000 when project complete and street is approved by Utilities Superintendent.

PLEASE NOTE: WITH ANY NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME, THERE ARE FEES FOR START UP OF UTILITIES. WATER HOOK-UP ASSESSMENT IS \$750.00, SEWER IS \$750.00.

Name of Applicant: _____

Address of Construction Project: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

1. Permit to (CIRCLE ONE)

Build

Install

Addition

Alter

Move

Demolish

Repair

Remodel

Description of work to be done:

2. Proposed use of building: (CIRCLE ONE) Residential Commercial

3. **VALUATION** (not just your cost) of work being completed: \$ 1K

Building Contractor:

Name: _____

License Number: _____

Phone: _____

Plumber: (must have MN License)

Name: _____

License Number: _____

Phone: _____

Electrician:

Name: _____

License Number: _____

Phone: _____

4. Attached a "Site Plan," showing the proposed location of any new construction in reference to the property including existing buildings. If you have a copy of a professionally prepared site plan, attach a copy for review by the City's Site/Zoning Inspector. Blueprint or Design Drawings must be submitted for any new construction, addition or remodel.
5. Certification: I hereby certify that I am the applicant herein and that the information given above and/or any exhibits submitted herewith is in all respects true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and further, if this permit is granted, said construction will comply with plans and specifications herewith submitted and applicable requirements of the City of Vergas.
6. I am the (CIRCLE ONE) OWNER LESSEE PURCHASER AGENT

7. APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: Gweneth Hanson DATE: 5/18/22
 Permit expires in one year if project is not complete, please reapply for permit.

CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION SITE PLAN DESIGN
Provided on separate sheet must include the following.

1. Identify and describe the work to be covered by the permit for which application is being made
 - A. Sketch of the proposed project including current and proposed structures.
 - B. Note the lot size and dimensions and locations of proposed project.

I do hereby say that the facts stated by me in the site application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Please be aware that **no construction** shall begin until the Zoning official has approved the plans and revisions the site plan if necessary and has indicated approval to begin.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____ Zoning Official _____ Date _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

S _____ Water Hook-up S _____ Sewer Hook-up
 S _____ Permit Fee S _____ Tar Break Up Deposit
 S 25.00 Total Fees

Receipt = 144764 Date Paid May 18 2022

Signature: _____ Date: _____, 20____
 (Permitting Authority)

Date Approved by Planning Commission or Clerk-Treasurer: _____, 20____

Permit Number: 2022-042 Date Received: 6/27/22 Parcel Number: 8200 990 229 000
Any questions regarding construction permit please contact City Clerk-Treasurer by calling 218-302-5996 or stopping by the city office at 111 Main Street Vergas MN.

Construction Permit Application

To the City Council of the City of Vergas in the County of Otter Tail, State of Minnesota:
Application is hereby made by the undersigned for a Construction Permit as provided by City Ordinance as adopted by the City of Vergas.

- GOPHER STATE ONE CALL MUST BE NOTIFIED 48 HOURS PRIOR TO ANY DIGGING, CALL 1-800-252-1166 AS REQUIRED BY MINNESOTA STATE LAW.
- THE CITY OF VERGAS WILL CHECK ALL SETBACKS ON ANY NEW CONSTRUCTION. IT IS THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HAVE ALL PROPERTY LINES LOCATED. ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION REQUIRES THE APPLICANT TO MARK THE PROPOSED BUILDING SITE AND PROPERTY LINES BEFORE THE CONSTRUCTION PERMIT WILL BE APPROVED.
- All Electrical work MUST have an electrical permit. That must be obtained separately from a MN State Contract Electrical Inspector (218)342-3345 or (218)849-6059.

Property Description: (NEW CONSTRUCTION ONLY)

Lot _____, Block _____, Addition _____

Property: Width _____ feet, Length _____ feet

Must supply City with a \$1,000 deposit for tar break up. City will reimburse \$1,000 when project complete and street is approved by Utilities Superintendent.

PLEASE NOTE: WITH ANY NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME, THERE ARE FEES FOR START UP OF UTILITIES. WATER HOOK-UP ASSESSMENT IS \$750.00, SEWER IS \$750.00.

Name of Applicant: Edward + Renee Rosendahl

Address of Construction Project: 98 Park View Drive

Mailing Address: 405 S McKinley St
Warren Mn 56762 Phone: 218-686-8687

1. Permit to (CIRCLE ONE)

Build	Install	Addition	Alter
Move	Demolish	<u>Repair</u>	Remodel

Description of work to be done:

repair shore line

2. Proposed use of building: (CIRCLE ONE) Residential Commercial

3. VALUATION (not just your cost) of work being completed: \$ 4000-5000

Building Contractor:

Name: Steve Gordan License Number: _____ Phone: 218-784-8067

Lake Region Aquatics
Plumber: (must have MN License)

Name: _____ License Number: _____ Phone: _____

Electrician:

Name: _____ License Number: _____ Phone: _____

Form approved by City of Vergas Council 09/12/2017
Updated 5/10/2022

4. Attached a "Site Plan," showing the proposed location of any new construction in reference to the property including existing buildings. If you have a copy of a professionally prepared site plan, attach a copy for review by the City's Site/Zoning Inspector. Blueprint or Design Drawings must be submitted for any new construction, addition or remodel.
5. Certification: I hereby certify that I am the applicant herein and that the information given above and/or any exhibits submitted herewith is in all respects true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and further, if this permit is granted, said construction will comply with plans and specifications herewith submitted and applicable requirements of the City of Vergas.
6. I am the (CIRCLE ONE) OWNER LESSEE PURCHASER AGENT
7. APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: Edward Rosendahl DATE: 6/27/22
Permit expires in one year if project is not complete, please reapply for permit.

CONSTRUCTION APPLICATION SITE PLAN DESIGN
Provided on separate sheet must include the following.

1. Identify and describe the work to be covered by the permit for which application is being made
- A. Sketch of the proposed project including current and proposed structures.
B. Note the lot size and dimensions and locations of proposed project.

I do hereby say that the facts stated by me in the site application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Please be aware that **no construction** shall begin until the Zoning official has approved the plans and revisions the site plan if necessary and has indicated approval to begin.

Edward Rosendahl 6/27/22 _____
Signature of Applicant Date Zoning Official Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

\$ _____ Water Hook-up \$ _____ Sewer Hook-up
\$ _____ Permit Fee \$ _____ Tar Break Up Deposit
\$ 25.00 Total Fees

Receipt # 149255 Date Paid June 27, 2022

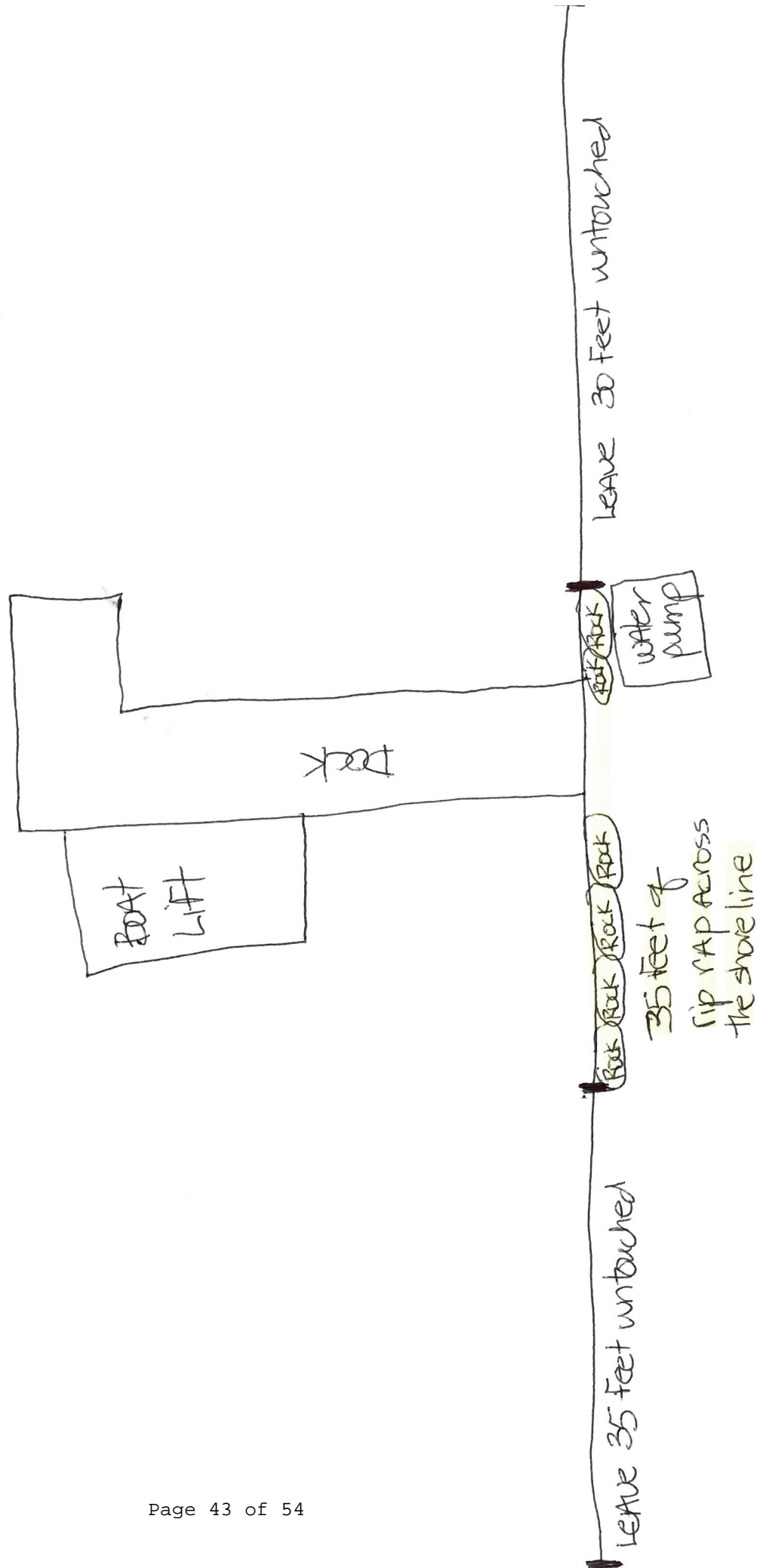
Signature: _____ Date: _____, 20____
(Permitting Authority)

Date Approved by Planning Commission or Clerk-Treasurer: _____, 20____

Repair 35' shoreline that had erosion this spring

Steve Jordan from Lake Region Aquatics will remove brush and concrete block from shoreline. He will use mesh, washed sand - up to 48 yards and 4 to 6" rocks to riprap shore.

* width of Lakefront
is 100 Feet



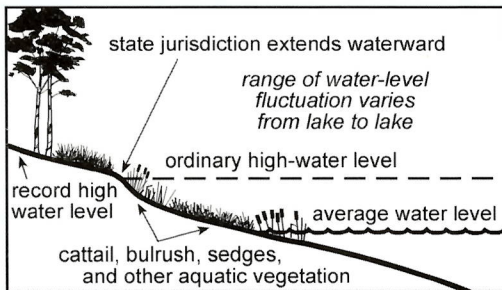
Shoreline Alterations: Riprap



Is an individual permit required?

For most projects constructed *below* the ordinary high-water level* (OHWL) of public waters, an individual Public Waters Work Permit is required by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Riprap exception: An individual permit from the DNR is not required for riprap placement if the conditions outlined in this information sheet are followed.



Shoreline cross section.

If you have questions concerning the contents of this information sheet, contact your local DNR Area Hydrologist. See contact information on reverse side.

Please note that local units of government and other agencies may require a permit for this project.

*For lakes and wetlands, the OHWL is the highest elevation that has been maintained as to leave evidence on the landscape. It is commonly that point where the natural vegetation changes from predominantly aquatic to predominantly terrestrial. For watercourses, the OHWL is the top of the bank of the channel. For reservoirs and flowages, the OHWL is the operating elevation of the normal summer pool.

What can I do to keep my shoreline from washing away?

If your shoreline is eroding, any of the following events may be destabilizing your soil, resulting in erosion: fluctuating water levels, increased wave or wake action, ice pushes, loss of natural vegetation, and human activity. Protecting your shoreline from erosion may not require you to replace natural shoreline with a high-cost, highly engineered retaining wall or riprap.

There are affordable, low-impact methods to stabilize your shoreline and still protect property values, water quality, and habitat. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) encourages you to consider planting native vegetation to control shoreline erosion, enhance aesthetic values, and contribute to better water quality in your lake (see Lakescaping information sheet).

Both riprap and retaining walls can reduce erosion, but they can be expensive and negatively affect lakes by creating a barrier between upland areas and the shoreline environment. Riprap should only be used where necessary and never to replace a stable, naturally vegetated shoreline. Additionally, installing riprap on a stream or river bank is a special condition that may require professional advice to ensure that the structure will stand up to the fluctuations in water levels and flowing conditions.

Natural rock riprap consists of coarse stones randomly and loosely placed along the shoreline. You should consult your DNR Area Hydrologist to determine whether your shoreline needs riprap to stop erosion. If there is a demonstrated need, such as on steep slopes, you may want to consider placing riprap or a combination of riprap and vegetation. In most cases, vegetation planted in the rocks will stabilize the riprap and improve the appearance of your shoreline. Naturalizing your shoreline is the most important contribution you can make to enhance water quality, maintain fishery resources, and provide wildlife habitat.

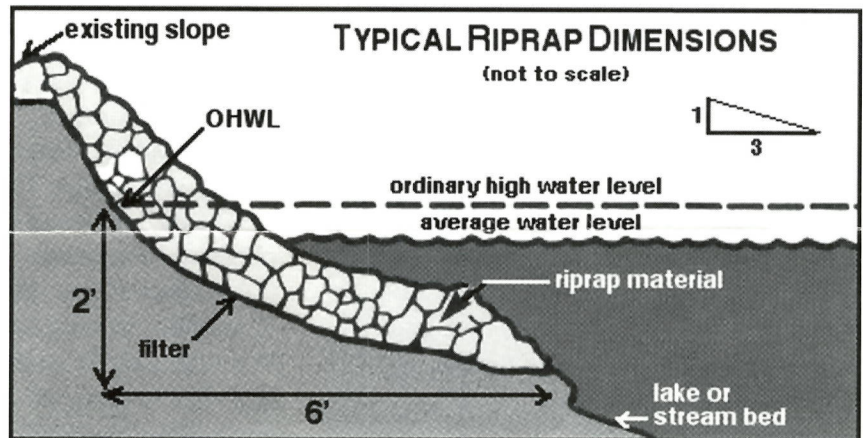


Shoreline stabilized with riprap and enhanced with a vegetative buffer.

Shoreline Alterations: Riprap

Installation of riprap is allowed only where there is a demonstrated need to stop existing erosion or to restore an eroded shoreline. An individual DNR Public Waters Work Permit is *not* required if the installation meets all of the following conditions:

- The riprap must not cover emergent aquatic vegetation, unless authorized by an aquatic plant management permit from the DNR's Division of Fisheries.
- Only natural rock (cannot average less than 6 inches or more than 30 inches in diameter) may be used that is free of debris that may cause pollution or siltation. Concrete is not allowed.
- A filter of crushed rock, gravel, or filter fabric material must be placed underneath the rock.
- The riprap must be no more than 6 feet waterward of the ordinary high-water level (OHWL; see sidebar on page 1).
- The riprap must conform to the natural alignment of shore and must not obstruct navigation or the flow of water.
- The minimum finished slope waterward of the OHWL must be no steeper than 3 to 1 (horizontal to vertical).
- The riprapped area must be no more than 200 linear feet of shoreline along lakes and wetlands or, along shorelines of streams, must be less than five times the average width of the affected watercourse.
- The site must not be a posted fish spawning area, designated trout stream, or along the shore of Lake Superior.



What are some other issues to consider?

A row of boulders at the water's edge is not considered natural rock riprap. Rows of stacked boulders function as a retaining wall, and installation would *require* an individual permit from the DNR. Retaining walls are very damaging to the near-shore environment. Retaining walls cause wave action that scours the lakebed, displacing bottom sediment and creating an extremely sterile environment. The cumulative effect of numerous wall structures on a lake reduces critical habitat for fish and wildlife resources and much of the food chain they depend on. Retaining walls require structural maintenance and are frequently damaged by ice action and undermined by wave action.

Riprap is not maintenance free and does not eliminate ice heaving, but it is easier to return the rocks to their original positions than to repair a wall. Consider planting within the riprap to add color, interest, and diversity. Live cuttings and plant plugs can be planted within riprap to provide additional slope stability and give your shoreline a more natural appearance.

©2003 State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. Prepared by DNR Ecological and Water Resources. Based on Minnesota Statutes 103G, Public Waters Work Permit Program Rules Chapter 6115.

DNR Contact Information



DNR Ecological and Water Resources
website and a listing of Area Hydrologists:
<http://mndnr.gov/waters>

DNR Ecological and Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 32
St. Paul, MN 55155
(651) 259-5100

DNR Information Center

Twin Cities: (651) 296-6157
Minnesota toll free: 1-888-646-6367
Telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD): (651) 296-5484
TDD toll free: 1-800-657-3929

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, or disability. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to Minnesota DNR, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4049; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

This information is available in an alternative format on request.

Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022

7. Old Business

- a. Lawrence Lake Project
- b. Mark Sand & Gravel
- c. Ordinances
 - 1. Snowmobile
 - 2. Dog & Cat
- d. Nuisance Properties

Files Attached

- 2022 Nuisance Notices.pdf
- snowmobile ordinance 2022.pdf
- Proposed 91.02 Cat and Dog Ordinance.pdf

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Zip</u>	<u>Reason for Letter</u>	<u>Date Letter Sent</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>DATE Planning Comm removed</u>	<u>Date Second Letter Sent</u>
82000990127000	Tony Licence	350 S Pelican Ave	Vergas	MN	56587	garbage all over yard	5/26/2022	Abated by Mike		
82000990155000	James M Endersby	415 S Unit Avenue	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/26/2022			6/14/2022
82000990082000	Olson Oil	121W Linden	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/26/2022	Abated by Mike		
82000990051000	Paula Black	149 E Elm St	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/26/2022	Abated by Mike		
82000990050000	Scott Ehlke	159 Elm St	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/26/2022	Stopped in and stated the vehicles belonged to neighbor - I informed in they were on his property and he said he would speak to neighbor. Abated per		
82000500012002	Wanna Be	235 E Frazee Ave	Vergas	MN	56587	garbage all over yard	5/26/2022			6/13/2022
82000990060000	Daniel & Kim Doyle	146 Main St	Vergas	MN	56587	Unlicensed vehicles	5/26/2022	Abated by Mike		
82000990170000	Ben Lankow	339 E Frazee Ave	Vergas	MN	56587	General Debris	5/26/2022	Stopped in and stated he was selling one lawn mower and using the othe one		
82000990077000	Pam Franklin	260 1st Ave S	Vergas	MN	56587					
82000990144000	Tyler Sazama	401 S Pelican Ave	Vergas	MN	56587					
93000990166001	Keith Kuehne	306 E Freazee Ave	Vergas	MN	56587					
82000990118000	Shelby Olson	131 E Mill St	Vergas	MN	56587					

Snowmobile Ordinance for Vergas, MN

- A. It is the purpose of this section to permit snowmobiling only on designed routes within the City of Vergas.
- B. Designed routes. Travel by snowmobile shall be permitted on designated trails along the following routes.
 - 1. From CSAH 17 on the west side of right-of-way to the business district on 1st street and or East Lake ST following the direction of traffic to CHAS 60 to the north or southside of wright-of-way of direction of traffic.
 - 2. From West Lake St following the direction of traffic to CSAH 17 on the west side right-of-way to the business district on 1st street or east lake street following the direction of traffic to CSAH 60 to the north or south side of right-of-way. Of the direction of traffic.
 - 3. From Old Detroit Rd to CSAH 60 to the right- of- way on north or south side to the business district.
- C. Direct access and use. All snowmobiles operating within city limits shall use as direct route to access the designated routes. Designated routes are intended to be means of ingress, egress and movement of snowmobiles to and from adjoining snowmobile trail systems and not as a primary trail for other snowmobile riding.
- D. License requirement. All snowmobiles operating with in city limits shall be properly licensed and authorized for use in accordance with Minnesota Statues.
- E. Qualifications of operators. All persons operating a snowmobile within city limits shall be properly licensed and authorized in accordance with state statue.
- F. Easement required. Snowmobile clubs shall obtain proper easements for all designated routes which travel upon or cross private property.

' 91.02 DOGS AND CATS.

(A) *Running at large prohibited.* It shall be unlawful for the dog or cat of any person who owns, harbors, or keeps a dog or cat, to run at large. A person, who owns, harbors, or keeps a dog or cat which runs at large shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Dogs or cats on a leash and accompanied by a responsible person or accompanied by and under the control and direction of a responsible person, so as to be effectively restrained by command as by leash, shall be permitted in streets or on public land unless the city has posted an area with signs reading "Dogs or Cats Prohibited".

(B) License required.

(1) All dogs and cats over the age of three months kept, harbored, or maintained by their owners in the city, shall be licensed and registered with the city. Dog licenses shall be issued by the City Clerk upon payment of the license fee as established by the Ordinance Establishing Fees and Charges adopted pursuant to ' 30.11 of this code, as that ordinance may be amended from time to time. The owner shall state, at the time application is made for the license and upon forms provided, his or her name and address and the name, breed, color, and sex of each dog owned or kept by him or her. No license shall be granted for a dog or cat that has not been vaccinated against distemper and rabies, as evidenced by a certificate by a veterinarian qualified to practice in the state in which the dog or cat is vaccinated.

(2) It shall be the duty of each owner of a dog or cat subject to this section to pay to the City Clerk the license fee established in the Ordinance Establishing Fees and Charges adopted pursuant to ' 30.11, as it may be amended from time to time.

(3) Upon payment of the license fee as established by the Ordinance Establishing Fees and Charges adopted pursuant to ' 30.11 of this code, as that ordinance may be amended from time to time, the Clerk shall issue to the owner a license certificate and metallic tag for each dog licensed. The tag shall have stamped on it the year for which it is issued and the number corresponding with the number on the certificate. Every owner shall be required to provide each dog with a collar to which the license tag must be affixed, and shall see that the collar and tag are constantly worn. In case a dog tag is lost or destroyed, a duplicate shall be issued by the City Clerk. A charge shall be made for each duplicate tag in an amount established in the Ordinance Establishing Fees and Charges adopted pursuant to ' 30.11, as it may be amended from time to time. Dog tags shall not be transferable from one dog to another and no refunds shall be made on any dog or cat license fee or tag because of death of a dog or the owner's leaving the city before the expiration of the license period.

(4) The licensing provisions of this division (B) shall not apply to dogs whose owners are nonresidents temporarily (staying less than 14 days) within the city, nor to dogs brought into the city for the purpose of participating in any dog show. If the animal owned is a service animal which is capable of being properly identified as from a recognized school for seeing eye, hearing ear, service or guide animals, and the owner is a blind or deaf person, or a person with physical or sensory disabilities, then no license shall be required.

(5) The funds received by the City Clerk from all dog and cat licenses and metallic tags fees as established by the Ordinance Establishing Fees and Charges adopted pursuant to ' 30.11 of this code, as that ordinance may be amended from time to time, shall first be used to defray any costs incidental to the enforcement of this chapter; including, but not restricted to, the costs of licenses, metallic tags, and impounding and maintenance of the dogs.

(C) *Cats.* Cats shall be included as controlled by this division insofar as running-at-large, pickup, impounding, boarding, licensing and proof of anti-rabies vaccine is concerned. All other provisions of this section shall also apply to cats unless otherwise provided.

(D) *Vaccination.*

(1) All dogs and cats kept harbored, maintained, or transported within the city shall be vaccinated at least once every three years by a licensed veterinarian for:

(a) Rabies - with a live modified vaccine; and

(b) Distemper.

(2) A certificate of vaccination must be kept on which is stated the date of vaccination, owner's name and address, the animal's name (if applicable), sex, description and weight, the type of vaccine, and the veterinarian's signature. Upon demand made by the City Clerk, the Animal Control Officer or a police officer, the owner shall present for examination the required certificate(s) of vaccination for the animal(s). In cases where certificates are not presented, the owner or keeper of the animal(s) shall have seven days in which to present the certificate(s) to the City Clerk or officer. Failure to do so shall be deemed a violation of this section.

Penalty, see ' 91.99

**Planning Commission
2022 June Planning Commission Meeting
Vergas Event Center and Zoom - Meeting ID 2670942170 password: 56587
6:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022**

8. New Business

1. Developers notice policy.

Files Attached

- Draft-Development Procedures.pdf

Development Procedures

The following procedures shall be followed and no real property within the jurisdiction of this section shall be subdivided and offered for sale or a plat recorded until a pre-application meeting has been held, a preliminary plat has been reviewed and approved and until a final plat has been reviewed and approved as set forth in the procedures provided herein.

Pre-application meeting. Prior to the submission of any plat for consideration by the Planning Commission the subdivider must meet with the Administrative Officers, City Clerk-Treasurer and Planning Commission Chair to introduce himself or herself as a potential subdivider and learn the relevant requirements of the city's code.

Preliminary plat.

(1) *Submission of plat.* The subdivider shall submit to the City Clerk-Treasurer three paper copies and an electronic copy of a preliminary plat of his/her proposed subdivision, the requirements are found in chapter 15 of the Vergas Basic Code. They shall be filed at least 30 days prior to a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting and shall be accompanied by the fees set forth in the fee schedule.

(2) *Public hearing.* At the public hearing set for consideration of the preliminary plat, the Planning Commission shall consider comments to the notice of plat, and it shall also review the preliminary plat from the standpoint of environmental impact, compatibility with surrounding area, suitability of area for subdividing, public health and welfare, crowding potential, the compatibility with the city Comprehensive Plan and overall city planning.

(3) *Planning Commission action.* At the conclusion of the public hearing the Planning Commission shall either recommend approval, conditional approval or denial of the preliminary plat. The Planning Commission may also table the preliminary plat for future consideration. The Planning Commission shall not recommend approval of a preliminary plat unless the presentation requirements set forth in § 152.08 have all been met. The Planning Commission's recommendation shall then be submitted to the City Council.

(4) *City Council action.* The City Council shall consider the Planning Commission's action at their next regularly scheduled meeting, and shall either approve, approve with conditions, deny or table for future consideration the application. As required by M.S. § 462.358, Subd. 3b, as it may be amended from time to time, the Council must either approve or deny the application for a preliminary plat within 120 days after the application has been submitted, unless an extension of time has been agreed to in writing by the subdivider. The 120-day period does not begin to run until the application contains all of the information required by §§ 152.08(B) and 152.09.

Final plat.

(a) The owner or subdivider shall file with the City Clerk-Treasurer within one year of the date of the approval of the preliminary plat the final plat which shall substantially conform to the preliminary plat as approved (see § 152.08(C) for filing document requirements) and all applicable city regulations and ordinances, state and federal rules, regulations and laws.

(b) Final plat approval shall not be granted to any plat which is not filed within the time herein specified, unless an extension is requested in writing and for good cause, granted by the City Council. The final plat shall be presented to the City Council at a scheduled meeting which is at least two weeks after the date of filing with the City Clerk-Treasurer.

City Council action. Final plat approval shall not be granted unless all presentation requirements of § 152.08 have been met and the plat conforms to all applicable city regulations and ordinances, state and federal rules, regulations and laws. The City Council shall approve, deny or table the final plat, and the Clerk shall notify the owner or subdivider of the Board's actions within 60 days of the submittal of the final plat, as required by M.S. § 462.358, Subd. 3b, as it may be amended from time to time, unless an extension of time has been agreed to in writing by the subdivider. Failure to meet the time limit requirements of M.S. § 462.358, Subd. 3b, as it may be amended from time to time, may result in automatic approval of the final plat. The final plat, if approved, shall then be recorded with the County Recorder by the subdivider. If any irregularity prevents recording of the final plat, the County Auditor shall notify the owner or subdivider. Any approval of the final plat by the Council shall be null and void if the plat is not recorded with the County Recorder within 90 days after the date of approval unless application for an extension of time is made, in writing, during said 90-day period, to the City Council and for good cause granted by the Council.