

# RECEIVED

By: OAH on July 3, 2023

**PROPERTY OWNER PETITION FOR DETACHMENT  
OF PROPERTY FROM A CITY**

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR DETACHMENT OF  
CERTAIN LAND FROM THE CITY OF KASSON, MINNESOTA  
PURSUANT TO MINNESOTA STATUTES § 414.06

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TO: Office of Administrative Hearings  
Municipal Boundary Adjustment Unit  
P. O. Box 64620  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0620

*Pursuant to the 2012 amendment to Minn. Stat. § 414.06, the petitioner(s) shall also provide a copy of this petition to:*

- 1) the city from which the land may be detached;*
- 2) all property owners who have not signed this petition;*
- 3) the clerk of the town to which the property may be attached if granted;*
- 4) the clerk of any other abutting town or city; and*
- 5) the county recorder in the county in which the land is located.*

PETITIONERS STATE: The number of petitioners required by Minnesota Statutes § 414.06, Subd. 1, to commence this proceeding is: all of the property owners if the area is less than 40 acres; or 75% or more of the property owners in number if the area is more than 40 acres.

It is hereby requested by:

  X   all of the property owners, the area is less than 40 acres; or  
       75% or more of the property owners, the area is more than 40 acres;  
to detach certain properties described herein from the City of Kasson and make a part of the Township of Mantorville.

1. There is one property owner of the land to be detached.
2. All of the property owners of the land to be detached have signed this petition
3. The property is situated within the City of Kasson, abuts the municipal boundary, and is located in the County of Dodge.

The petitioned area abuts on the city's North boundary. Adjacent to the west and north of the petitioned area is property located in the unincorporated area of the county (Mantorville Township). Adjacent to the east and south of the petitioned area is land located in the incorporated area of the City of Kasson.

Attached is **Exhibit A**, a map of the City of Kasson. The yellow denotes municipal boundary. Unincorporated land currently lies within the incorporated boundary. The petition property is highlighted with a blue boundary.

4. The property proposed for detachment is rural in character and not developed for urban residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. In addition, Dodge County is not planning to develop this property for urban residential, commercial or industrial purposes in the future. In 2003, the previous property owner petitioned for annexation for the purpose of installing city services for a planned residential subdivision. This development never occurred, the petitioned property was split off from the parent parcel, and the petitioned property has been vacant and unserved by city services for 20 years. Due to the potential migration of gases and impacted groundwater from the MPCA's Closed Landfill site located on the Dodge County Transfer Station and Recycling Center (DCTSRC) property adjacent to the west, the petitioned property was purchased in 2017 for the specific purpose of serving to buffer the facility from non-compatible land uses. The 19.14 acre property was in agricultural production until the fall of 2021 and was seeded to a native prairie pollinator mix in June of 2022. (**See Exhibit B**)

**Exhibit C** shows the Dodge County Transfer Station and Recycling Center Property with the Petitioned Property identified. To the west (native prairies) and south (future reuse site) are also lands purchased to buffer the DCTSRC facility.

5. The reason detachment is requested is:

The petitioned property is not an essential city property; however, it serves an essential function to the Dodge County Transfer Station and Recycling Center (DCTSRC) by serving to buffer the facility from non-compatible land uses. Currently, the public is not permitted on the petitioned property and it is not accessible. Dodge County is proposing to use the 19.14 acre petitioned property along with 12 acres of wooded land on the DCTSRC as a 32 acre nature park with a trail system that will be open and accessible to the general public.

While most other uses are not recommended in the petitioned property, open space and transient usage (such as the park) is acceptable and considered compatible with facility operations according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and Dodge County, provided security, operation and management issues can be addressed. In an April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 email, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff noted that "...creating additional buffer in this area by creating a park and natural area helps reduce potential landfill risks to those using or occupying this parcel...".

The 19.14 acre petitioned property is currently located within a "Developmental Holding" District in the incorporated area (City of Kasson). The 12 acre wooded area is within the "Closed Landfill Restricted District" (CLR) in the unincorporated area (Dodge County). See **Exhibit D**.



Land use jurisdiction for cities and counties are authorized under different Minnesota Statutes. Minnesota Statutes 482 addresses cities and Minnesota Statutes 394 addresses counties. Each entity is granted authority and jurisdiction to regulate land use under these statutes. Each entity has its own ordinances, departments, staff, governing bodies and in this case, law enforcement services. This creates conflicting land use regulations, separate land use authorities, and unnecessary and duplicative government oversight on a single park that will be owned, operated and maintained solely by Dodge County. In addition, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) also has jurisdiction over the "Closed Landfill" portion of the DCTSRC property as well as the DCTSRC permitted area which is proposed to contain public walking trails for the park. This add another layer of regulation and jurisdiction.

When the petitioned property was simply serving as vacant buffer land that the public could not access, the jurisdiction issues were not relevant; however, as this area is now proposed to be open to the public it is necessary that Dodge County, as managers of the DCTSRC and park, is able to have the authority to respond to issues that arise within the park and manage park operations in a way that will be compatible with the MPCA permit and closed landfill provisions and DCTSRC facility operations, some of which may be inconsistent with the city's park ordinance and other land use regulations.

Upon detachment, the petitioned property will be included in Dodge County's "Closed Landfill Restricted District" (CLR), similar to other buffer properties the county operates that are adjacent to the west and south of the DCTSRC primary parcel. **(Exhibit E)** The CLR District limits land use to only those reviewed and approved by MPCA and that are considered compatible with long-term management of the closed landfill and facility.

6. Summarize what efforts were taken prior to filing this petition to resolve the issues:

County staff reached out to the City Administrator and Parks Supervisor about the development of the park in April of 2022. At that time it was indicated that there should be no issues from the city's perspective. Under the City of Kasson's Zoning Code, parks are a permitted use which means they are allowed in all zoning districts. Initial conversations and correspondence with the city's Planning and Zoning staff and contractors revolved around interpretation of the ordinance and how it would relate to future development of the park and its potential features. However, as more research was done by county staff, questions revolved around the split jurisdiction and authority of the park and what issues it might cause considering the necessity of the county to be able to respond to park issues/emergencies as well as manage and regulate the land in accordance with the DCTSRC's MPCA permit and operations, which may not be consistent with the city park ordinance and other city regulations.

For one example, the language of the city's park ordinance states that "The Park Board shall have full, absolute and exclusive control over all property set aside for park purposes, subject only to Council budgetary consent". As the petitioned property's primary purpose is to buffer the DCTSRC facility including the MPCA's Closed Landfill, with a possible secondary beneficial use of a county "park", the county could not permit another entity to have control of this land as it could jeopardize security and interfere with facility operation and management. The petitioned property is not simply a stand-alone park, similar to other park's in the city's jurisdiction, but serves an essential function to the DCTSRC. This is just one example. County staff also posed numerous questions regarding the city code and discussed the jurisdictional concerns to city's contracted zoning staff in early December of 2022. After several months without receipt of information from the city's zoning staff, the County Board invited the Mayor, City Administrator and Planning & Zoning Staff to a meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to discuss possible detachment and to obtain information on any specific negative impacts to the city resulting from detachment of the petitioned property. Please see **Exhibit F**, which was provided to the County Board by Kasson city staff at this meeting.

Since the date of the meeting, the county has not been offered the opportunity to respond to the city's P & Z staff memo. In addition, no further information has been provided by the city to address the jurisdictional concerns. Due to the unique circumstances of the petitioned property and its accessory use to the DCTSRC, there does not appear to be any way to adequately resolve the jurisdictional issues which are necessary to offer the land as a public park without detachment from the city. To support the county's detachment request and to address all concerns, the city and the county are working on an agreement for city services (should a future park building be constructed).

County staff reviewed the City of Kasson's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Kasson Upward 2040) and has provided **Exhibit G**, containing figures and information from this plan which identifies the petitioned property, district purposes and other information for reference. According to the city's comprehensive land use plan (Kasson Upward 2040), the existing use of the petitioned property is "Other, railroad, utilities, etc", which is the same existing land use as the Dodge County Transfer Station and Recycling land adjacent to the west. The future land use identifies the petitioned property as "Public Institutional", which is again the same classification as the DCTSRC property adjacent to the west. There are no city services planned in this area. Although land was conveyed from the county to the city for the construction of 16<sup>th</sup> St NW and the North Service road, the construction has been delayed indefinitely. The installation of sewer and water lines along these roads are not included in the plans, although a force main is included along 16<sup>th</sup> St. NW. The detachment request does not conflict with the city's comprehensive plan, and it fulfills the goals of the county's comprehensive plan. Section 7.2 of the Dodge County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which specifically references the potential use of the petitioned property as a county park, is also provided in **Exhibit G**.



The county has also discussed its plans to detach the petitioned property with the landowner of the adjacent property to the east. The landowner has indicated that the detachment of the petitioned property for use as a county park would not impact the plans that he has for his land or negatively affect his property. It is anticipated that the planned use of the park will positively affect his proposed development.

Further, the county has discussed possible detachment of the petitioned property from the city with Mantorville Township and requested support for the request. The township asked questions which county staff addressed and has indicated that it does not have any concerns with the county's request.

The county's petitioned property meets the statutory criteria of Minnesota Statutes 414.06 for detachment, but the information provided by city staff does not appear to meet the burden of proof the "remainder of the municipality cannot continue to carry on the functions of government without undue hardship."

7. The number of acres in the property proposed for detachment is 19.14 acres and is described as follows:

That part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 28, Township 107 North, Range 16 West, Dodge County, Minnesota, described as follows:

Commencing at the Southeast Corner of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 28; thence North 89 degrees 54 minutes 39 seconds West (Note: All bearings are in relationship with the Dodge County Coordinate System NAD '83, Adjusted 1996) along the South line of said Northwest Quarter, 534.93 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING; thence continuing North 89 degrees 54 minutes 39 seconds West, along said South line, 507.99 feet; thence North 00 degrees 04 minutes 40 seconds East, 1763.85 feet to the North line of the South 2/3 of said Northwest Quarter; thence South 89 degrees 55 minutes 14 seconds East, along said North line, 488.72 feet; thence South 00 degrees 09 minutes 26 seconds West, 1243.57 feet; thence South 89 degrees 56 minutes 13 seconds East, 21.72 feet; thence South 00 degrees 09 minutes 26 seconds West, 510.36 feet to the point of beginning.

Said parcel contains 20.00 acres more or less.

Except:

That part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 28, Township 107 North, Range 16 West, Dodge County, Minnesota more particularly described:

Commencing at the southeast corner of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 28; thence North 89 degrees 54 minutes 24 seconds West (Note: All bearings are based on the Dodge County Coordinate System, NAD'83, Adjusted 2011) along the south line of

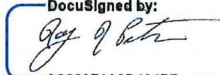
said Northwest Quarter, 534.93 feet to the Point of Beginning; thence continuing North 89 degrees 54 minutes 24 seconds West, 66.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 09 minutes 41 seconds East, 586.29 feet; thence South 89 degrees 50 minutes 19 seconds East, 44.28 feet; thence South 00 degrees 09 minutes 41 seconds West, 66.00 feet; thence South 89 degrees 55 minutes 58 seconds East, 21.72 feet; thence South 00 degrees 09 minutes 41 seconds West, 520.25 feet to a point on said south line of the Northwest Quarter and the Point of Beginning.

Containing 0.86 Acres, more or less.

Subject to any easements and restrictions of record.

8. The number and character of buildings on said property is: There are no building on said property.
9. The number of residents in the area proposed for detachment is zero.
10. Public improvements on said property are: There are no public improvements on the petitioned property. A 50' wide Northern Natural Gas pipeline easement transects the property but no service is present. The proposed park use of the property has been discussed with Northern Natural Gas staff and the only condition is that trees and/or structures are not located within the easement area.  
5/12/2023

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DocuSigned by:  
  
0C229F1A8D104B7...  
Property Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner

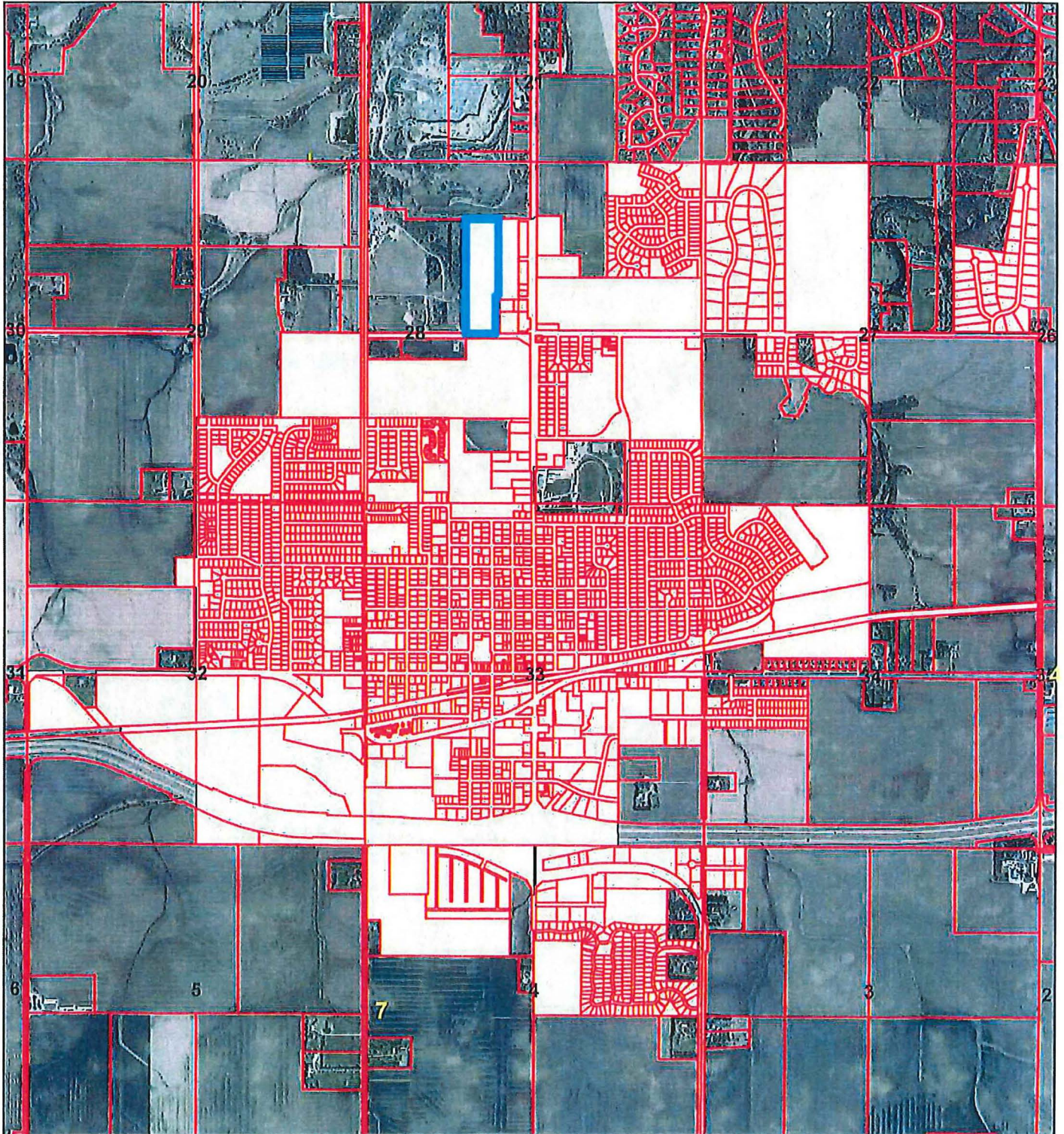
Municipal Boundary Adjustment Unit Contact  
Star Holman [star.holman@state.mn.us](mailto:star.holman@state.mn.us) 651-361-7909  
(March 2023)



# Exhibit A

## City of Kasson Boundary

### Petition Property Highlighted



0 1,250 2,500 5,000 Feet

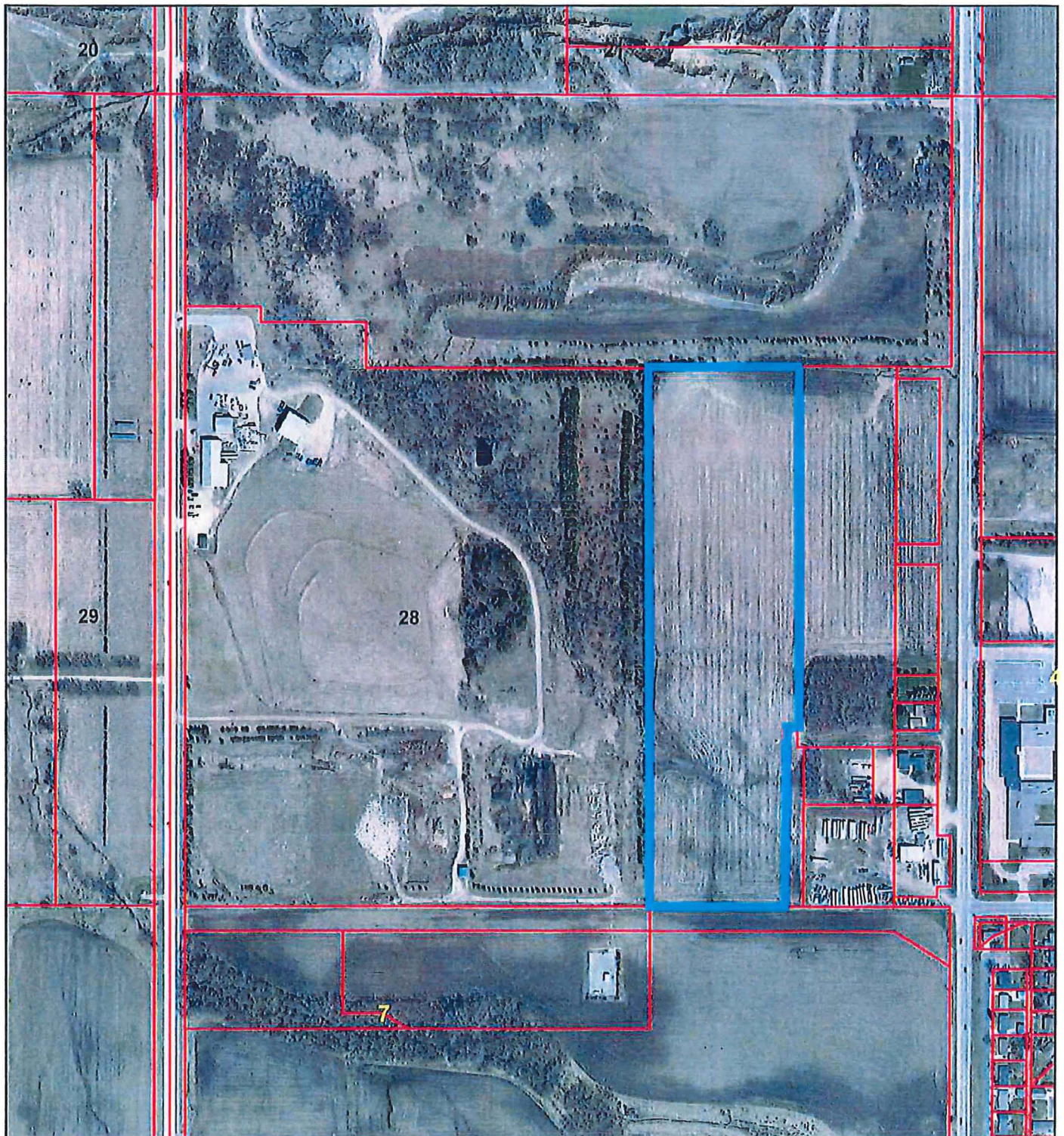
A horizontal scale bar with four segments. The first segment is labeled '0', the second '1,250', the third '2,500', and the fourth '5,000 Feet'.



# Exhibit B



## Undeveloped Property Rural in Character



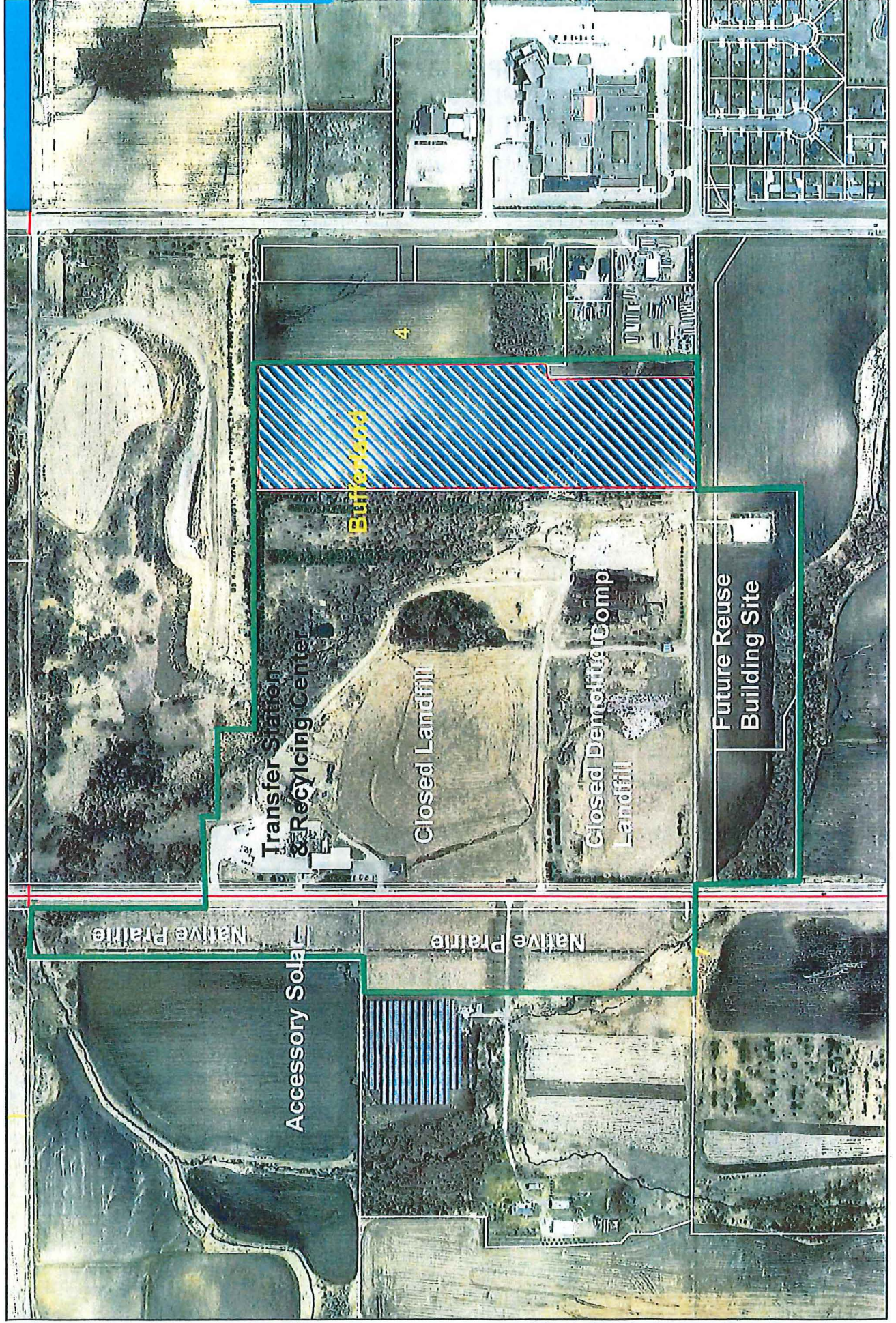
0 262.5 525 1,050 Feet

A horizontal scale bar with four segments, corresponding to the values 0, 262.5, 525, and 1,050 feet.



Exhibit C

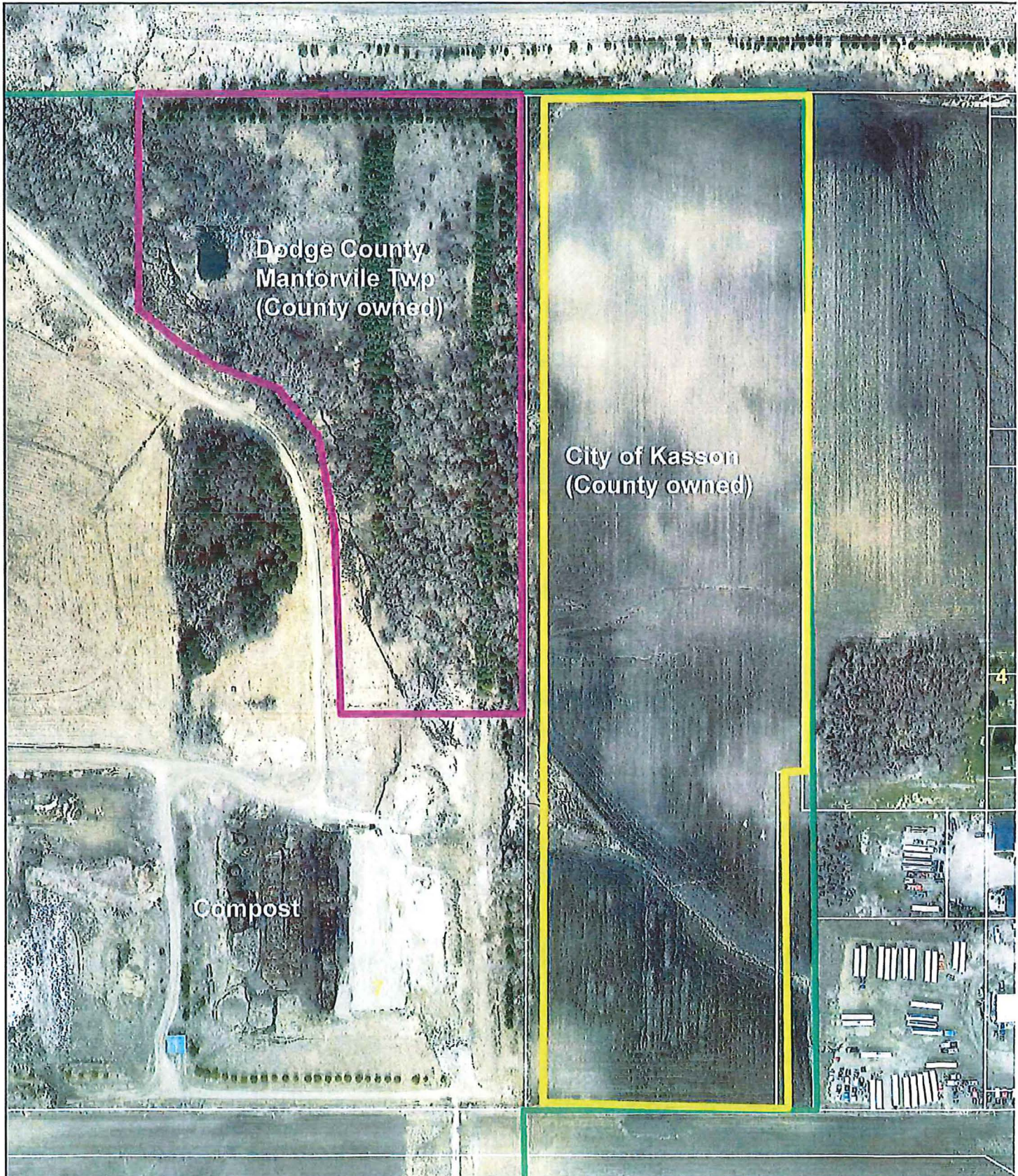
Dodge County Transfer Station and Recycling Center Property  
with Petioned Property Identified





# Exhibit D

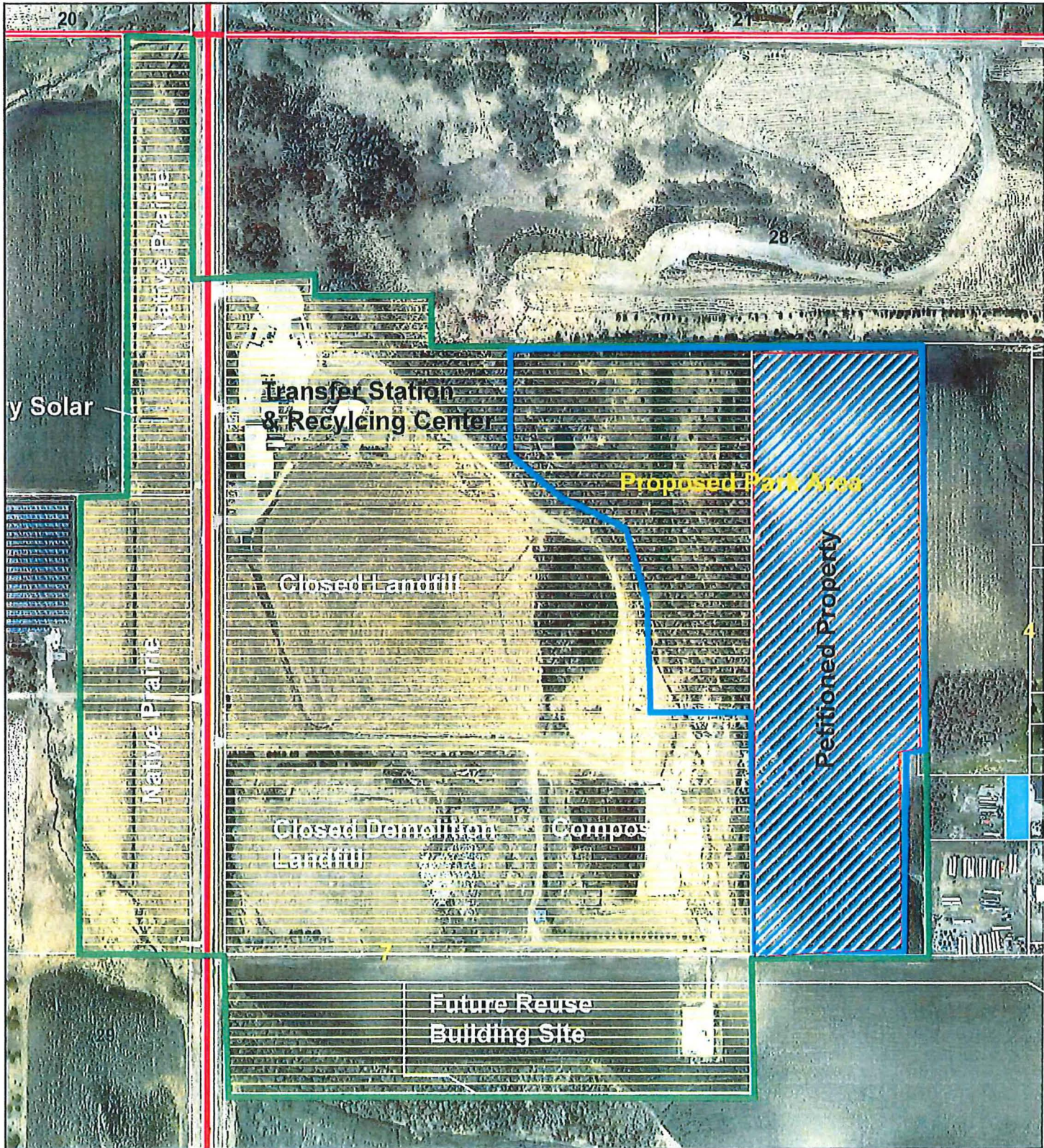
## PROPOSED COUNTY PARK SPLIT JURISDICTION & SPLIT LAND USE AUTHORITY





# Exhibit E

## Closed LandFill Restricted District with Petitioned Property Identified



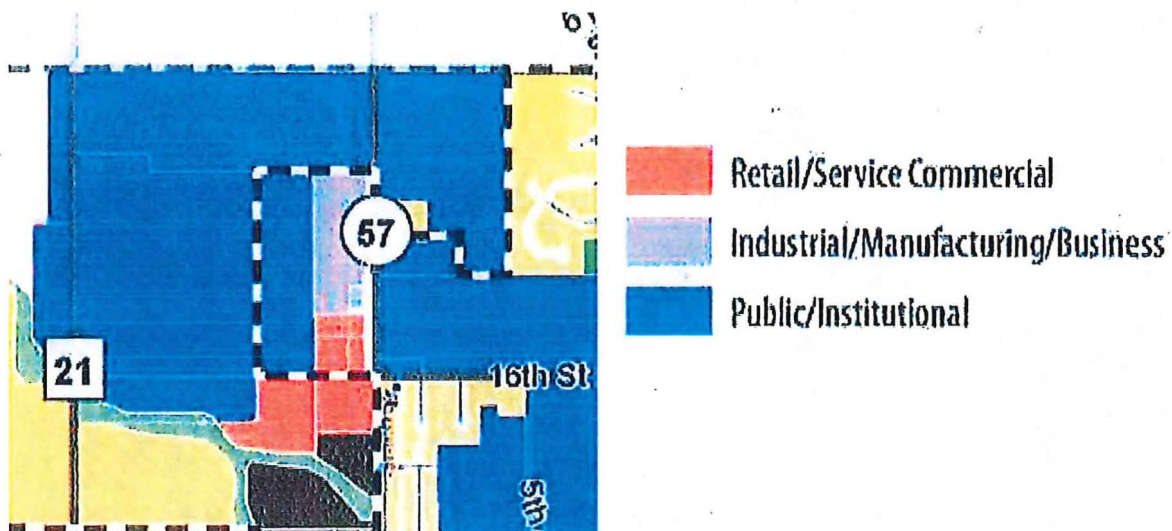


# Exhibit F

## Dodge County Park Memo-PZ staff review

The property is currently within the City limits. The city's long term growth plans as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan "Kasson Upward 2040", envisions this area as more of business or light industry type uses, one that generates jobs, commercial tax base, and contributes to the economic vitality of the city. The county parcel proposed for the park is guided as "public/institutional" in the comprehensive plan (see figure below) because it is owned by the County and because it is adjacent the land fill. The concept explored during the comprehensive plan update process and subsequently inserted into the plan as an idea, was to leverage the surrounding context of that area and the High School to promote and support the *concept or idea* of an eco-industrial or business park (see insert below and page 4-15 of the comprehensive plan).

<https://cms7files.revize.com/kassonmn/planning%20&%20zoning/KassonCompPlan-FINAL-06-2018.pdf>



within each site or parcel.

- » Bicycle parking and/or carpool parking spaces should be provided at an amount equivalent to at least 10% of the total automobile parking.

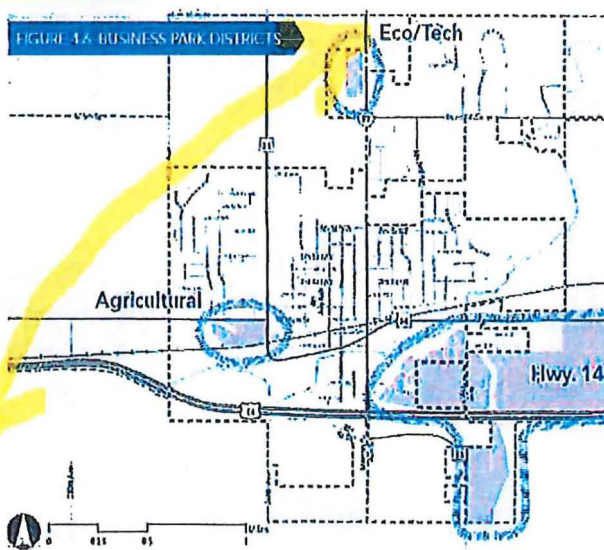
### BUSINESS PARK DISTRICTS

As mentioned earlier, business parks are intended to provide a coordinated and planned environment. Additionally, each area guided for industrial/manufacturing/business has its own unique context within the city, and therefore should reflect that. Each of the city's future districts are illustrated in Figure 4.6. The business park districts consist of an Eco/Tech District, Agricultural District, and Hwy. 14 District. Their particular character is detailed below.

#### Eco/TECH DISTRICT

Characteristics of the Eco/Tech District include:

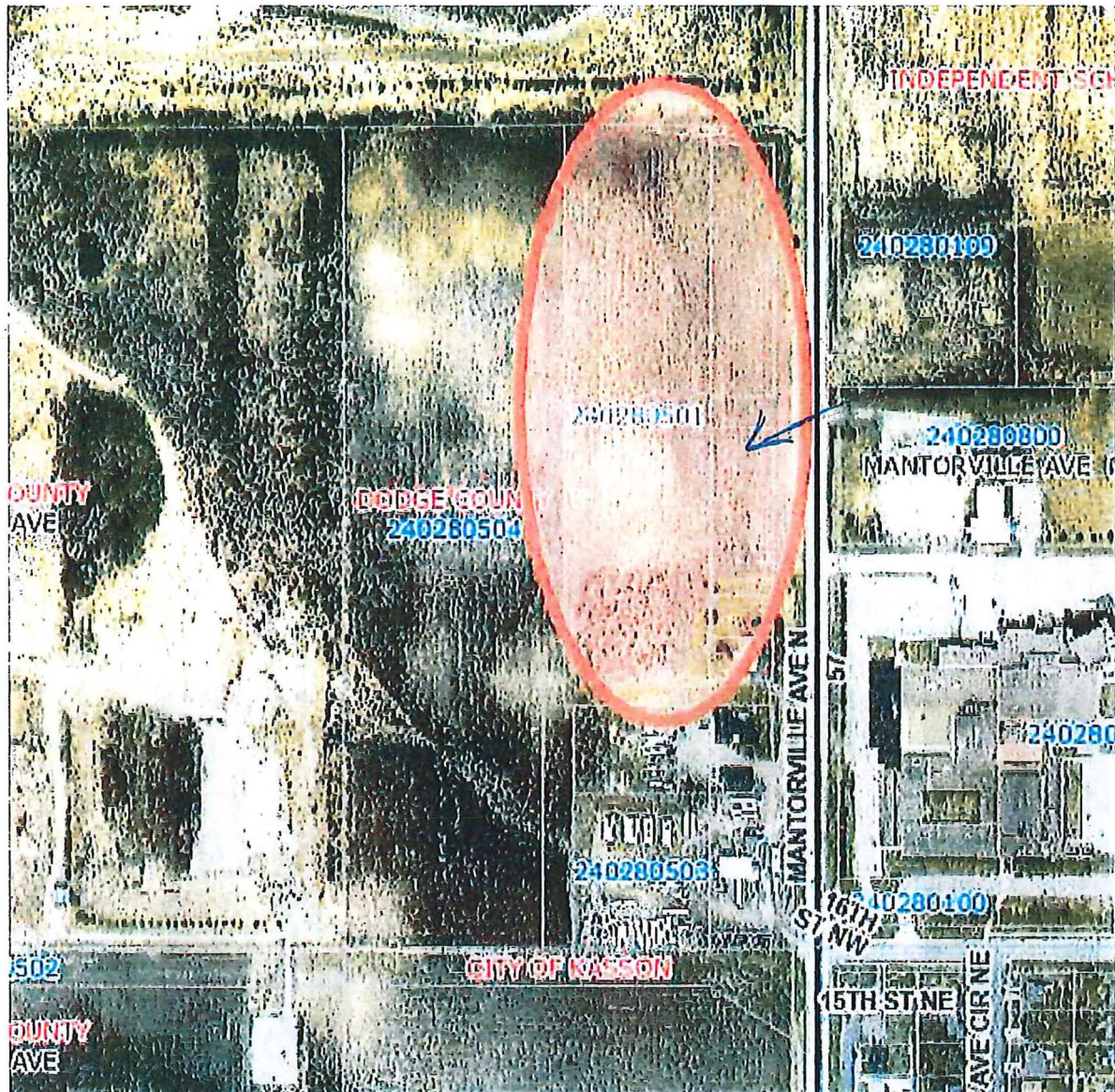
- » Ecologically friendly and technology oriented businesses
- » Partnerships with K-M Schools, resource recovery specialists (landfill), energy based uses
- » Low/no heavy truck traffic because of proximity to school and distance from Hwy. 14



- » Easy access to Highway 14
- Further exploration and master planning may be necessary to understand the potential for



The concepts presented thus far by the County would seem to be consistent with that idea. As this area continues to develop, we would envision city sewer, water, utilities, and roadway access needing to be coordinated with surrounding development including the vacant land between the County parcel and Mantorville Avenue.



This is not the petitioned property

We are not sure what the full use of the County parcel would be in the future. Is there an opportunity for some shared development on the northern half of the property that is more business or industry oriented and that is done in a way that complements the County Park vision as well as the city's comprehensive plan goals? There is no guarantee we are aware of that the County will continue to own this property. If the County were not to own it, staff would hope that the development of this "area" would complement surrounding development of a more urban character with city services. What about the long-term plan for the additional property to the north i.e. the quarry parcels? How is the County currently guiding those in terms of long-term use?

Detaching this parcel back to the County would likely complicate the orderly planning and development of this area that would support the City's vision. We're glad to work with staff and figure out how to support the park, but we're currently guiding it to stay in the City so that we can provide services to this parcel or so that when and if the surrounding area develops we can do it in a responsible way.



#### RETAIL/SERVICE COMMERCIAL



Reflects highway frontage along Highway 14, and small neighborhood nodes (5 to 10 acres in size). Uses require high visibility and good access to the arterial system. Uses in this category might be general retail and service commercial, specialty retail, small professional offices and support services.

#### INDUSTRIAL/MANUFACTURING/BUSINESS



Intended to provide a coordinated and planned environment for business uses including manufacturing, light industrial, research and design, or professional offices. This category is less focused on retail goods and services and more focused on jobs. This use should be characterized by strict development standards, which include well designed buildings, generous landscaping, and limited outdoor operations.

#### PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL



Represents uses such as churches, schools, and government facilities. Properly integrated into neighborhoods, public/institutional uses can be a strong anchor.

#### OPEN SPACE



Represents areas where the community intends to preserve and manage the valued natural resources. Open space is more passive in character. Recreational trails may be included in open space corridors where appropriate, but development is kept to a minimum.



FIGURE 2.17 EXISTING LAND USE

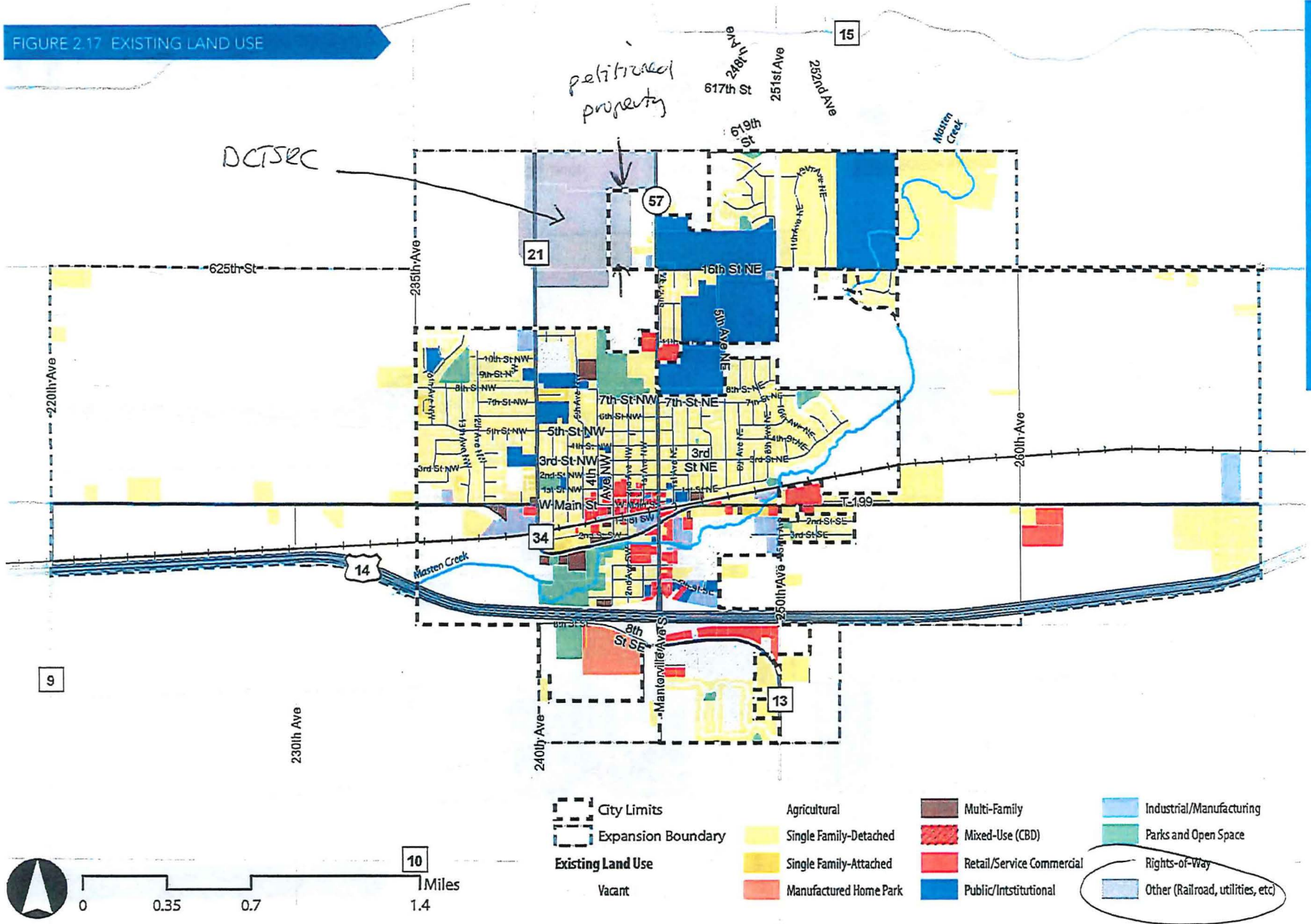
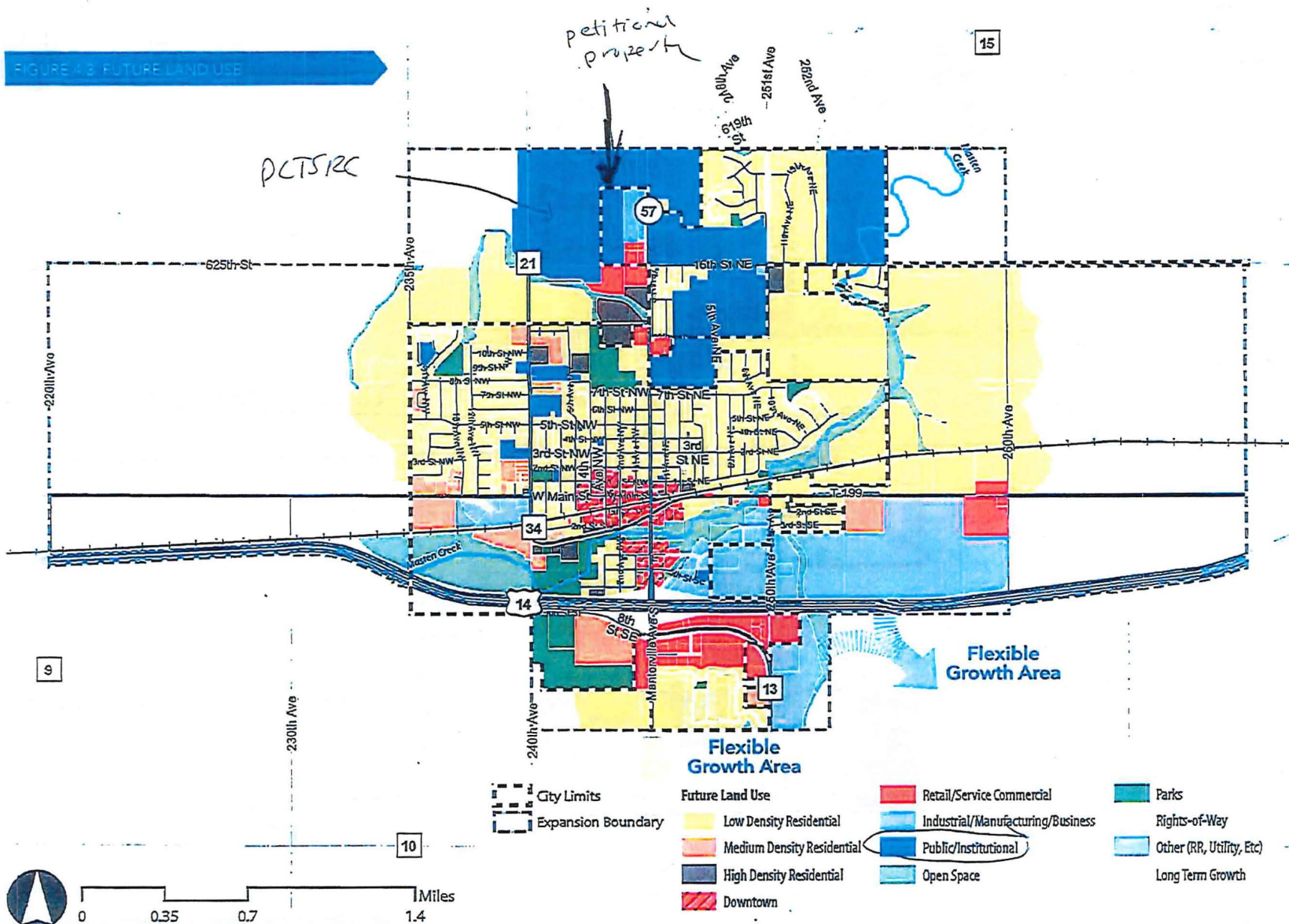




FIGURE 4.3 FUTURE LAND USE





within each site or parcel.

- » Bicycle parking and/or carpool parking spaces should be provided at an amount equivalent to at least 10% of the total automobile parking.

## BUSINESS PARK DISTRICTS

As mentioned earlier, business parks are intended to provide a coordinated and planned environment. Additionally, each area guided for industrial/manufacturing/business has its own unique context within the city, and therefore should reflect that. Each of the city's future districts are illustrated in Figure 4.6. The business park districts consist of an Eco/Tech District, Agricultural District, and Hwy. 14 District. Their particular character is detailed below.

### Eco/TECH DISTRICT

Characteristics of the Eco/Tech District include:

- » Ecologically friendly and technology oriented businesses
- » Partnerships with K-M Schools, resource recovery specialists (landfill), energy based uses
- » Low/no heavy truck traffic because of proximity to school and distance from Hwy. 14

### AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

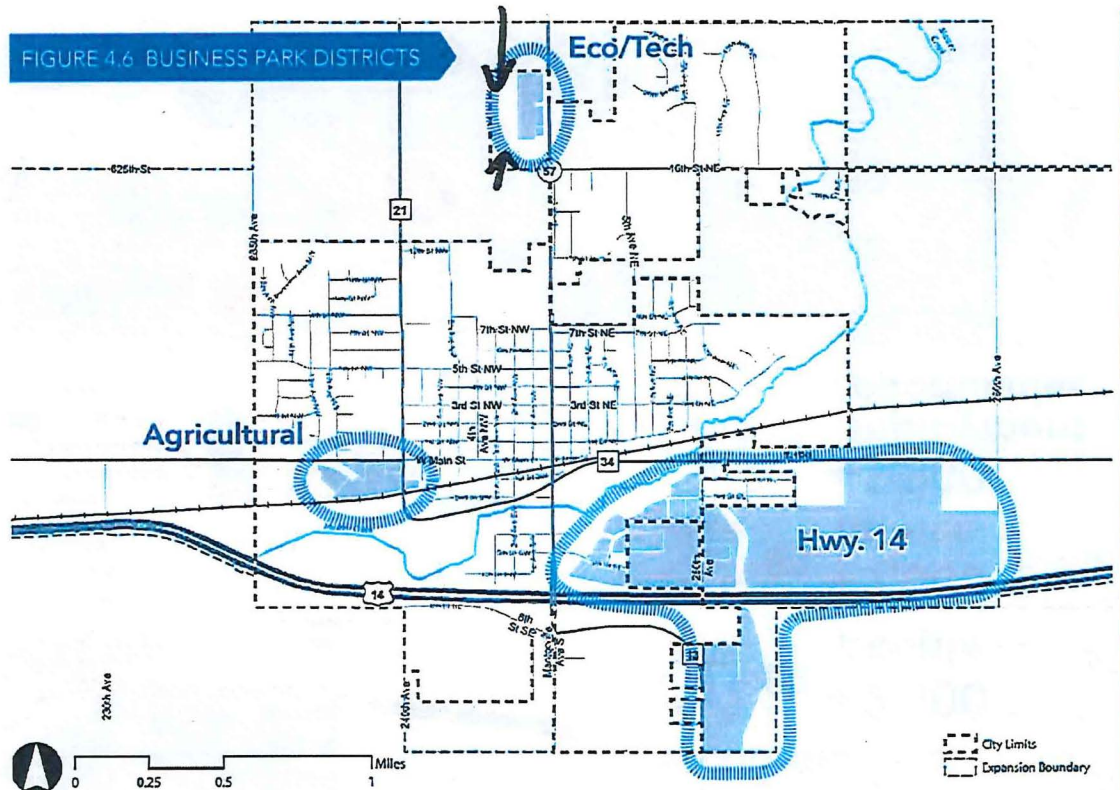
Characteristics of the Agricultural District include:

- » Agricultural, farm and implement, and grain and feed oriented businesses
- » Proximity to agricultural uses
- » Railroad spur access

### HWY. 14 DISTRICT

Characteristics of the Hwy. 14 District include:

- » Large and regional employers and general industrial and manufacturing

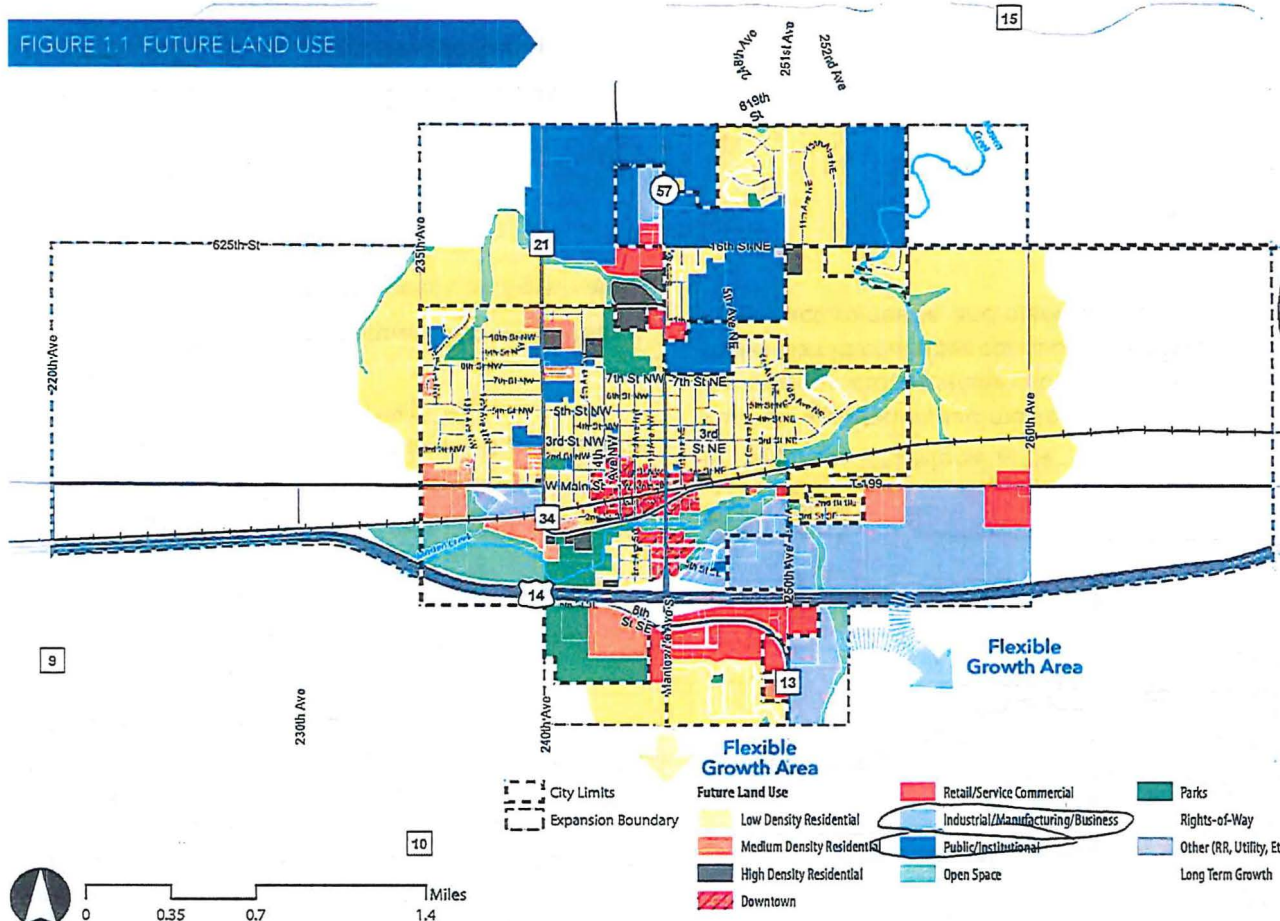


- » Easy access to Highway 14

Further exploration and master planning may be necessary to understand the potential for these district character concepts, their feasibility, infrastructure needs, and marketability.



FIGURE 1.1 FUTURE LAND USE



agencies and commissions a tool to ensure that new development adds to the unique character and form of Kasson.

Business park districts have been established to recognize and support their unique surrounding context. Districts include an Eco/Tech District, an Agricultural District, and a Hwy. 14 District.

By **2040** Kasson will need to accommodate:



≡ **+2,500 people**

*Adjacent property to east, not county property*



≡ **+1,000 homes**



≡ **+1,000 employment opportunities**

## READY FOR GROWTH

Kasson Upward provides for a balanced mix of housing, businesses, and commercial resources that will ensure that Kasson remains prosperous and is welcoming to current and new residents and businesses.



TOWNHOMES & CONDOS



RETAIL, SERVICE, & SMALL OFFICES



OPEN SPACE



MULTI-FAMILY HOMES



DOWNTOWN BUSINESS & HOMES



PARKS



SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED HOMES



SCHOOLS & PUBLIC SERVICES



OFFICES, INDUSTRIAL, & MANUFACTURING



FIGURE 2.31 WATER SYSTEM

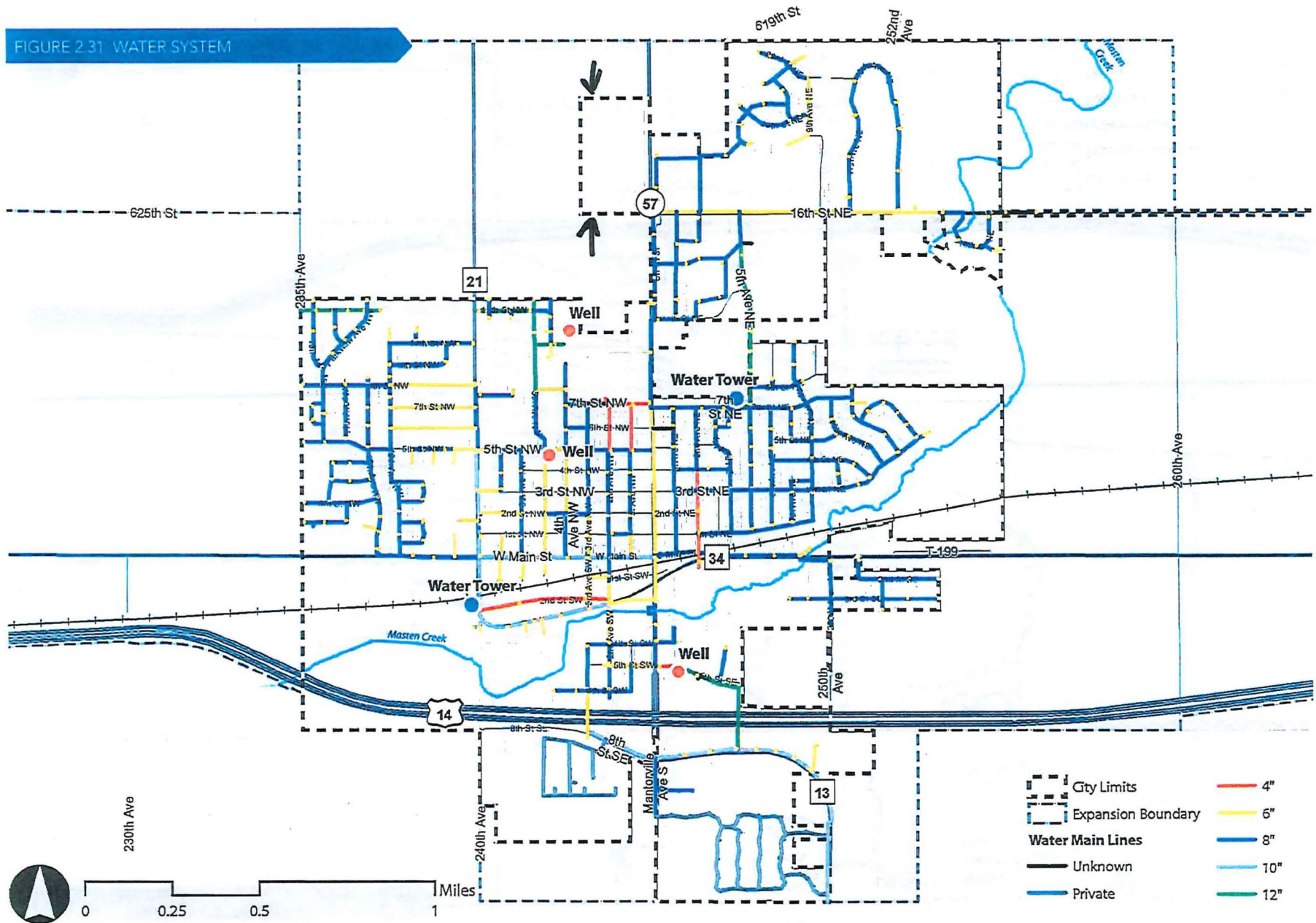
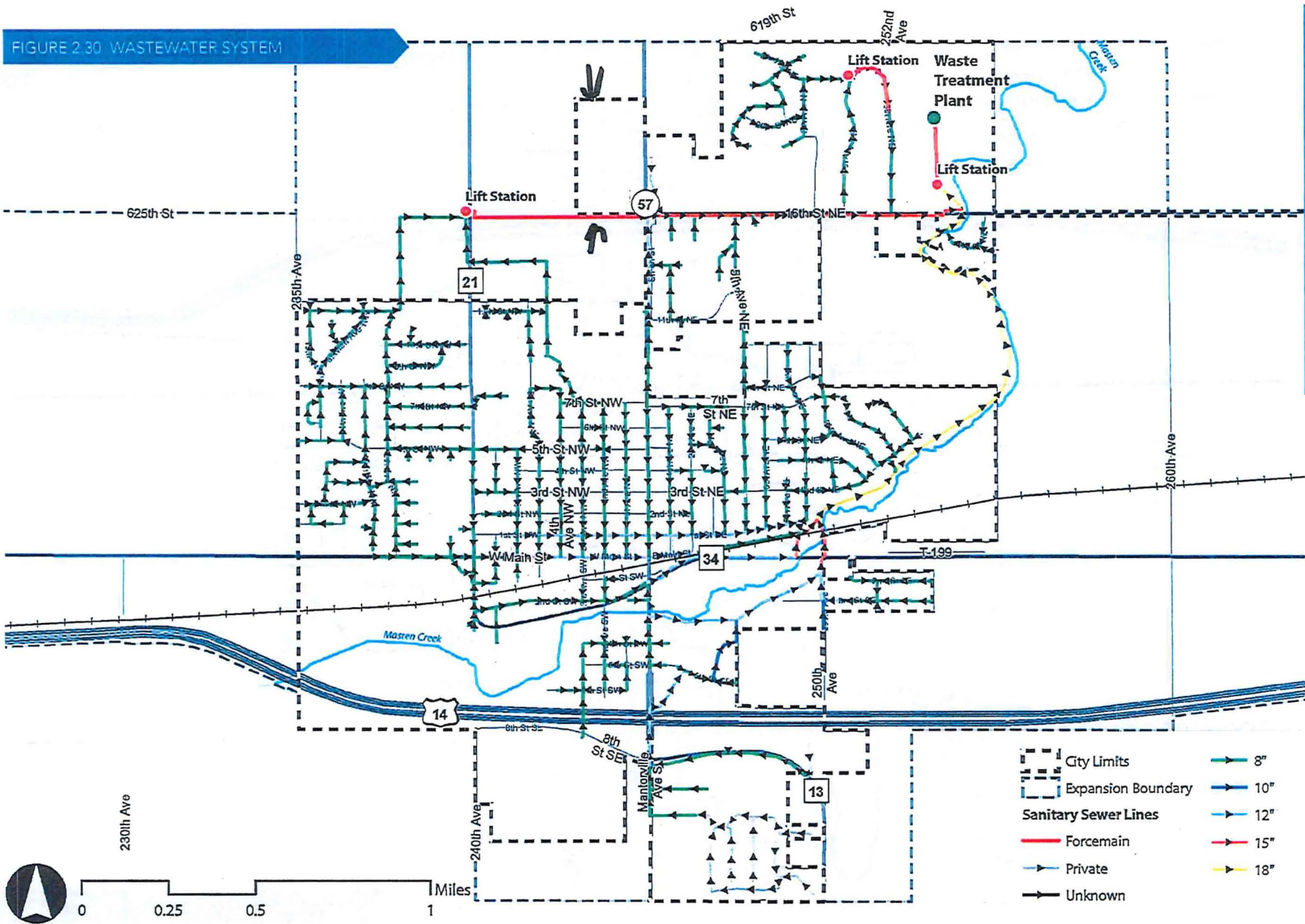




FIGURE 2.30 WASTEWATER SYSTEM





Agency (EPA) requirements. This plan would create a storm water management program to address stormwater discharges to our waterbodies.

The City has a stormwater utility fee that provides a funding source to plan improvements, maintain the system, and educate the public regarding the importance of stormwater management.

## ELECTRIC

The City is served by a municipal electric system (Kasson Public Utilities). The electrical system consists of a distribution network of underground cables, overhead poles, conductors and transformers which services 2,600 customers. The City purchases power from Central Municipal Power Agency/Services (CMPAS).

A small portion of the City is served by Xcel Energy and People's Energy Cooperative. The City has been in discussions with these utilities to obtain their service areas within the current City limits.

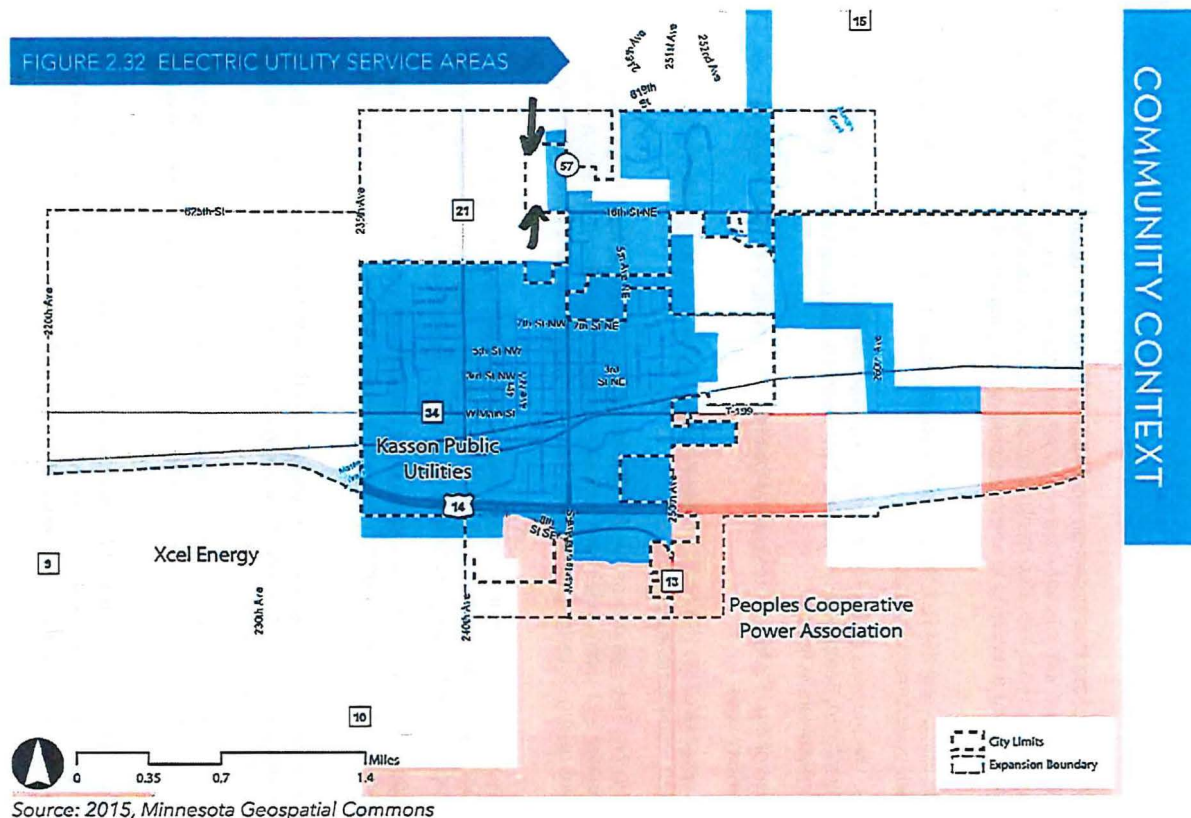
In growth areas, within the future city limits, the City is considering purchasing additional territory to continue to service all areas within the City.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

As the City of Kasson continues to grow and community services evolve, the City will need to continue to evaluate and plan this growth in key community facilities. Current key community facilities are listed below.

### CITY HALL

City Hall was acquired and remodeled by the City in 1996. The facility provides space for administrative services, Council chambers, meeting room, and file storage. While the capacity of City Hall is limited, the facility is anticipated to continue to serve the community.





§ 154.110 PURPOSE STATEMENTS.

(A) *D-H Development Holding District*. The purpose of the D-H Development Holding District is to identify land in the outlying parts of the city that have not yet been developed with city services or not yet subdivided in compliance with the future land use map of the comprehensive plan. This district is intended to allow for existing uses, including uses brought in through annexation, to continue, but new uses will require a rezoning to another district in compliance with the comprehensive plan.

(B) *R-1 Single-Family Residential District*. The purpose of the R-1 Single-Family Residential District is to provide for low to moderate density dwellings and directly related, complementary uses.

(C) *R-1A Traditional Core Residential District*. The purpose of the R-1A Traditional Core Residential District is to provide for low to moderate density dwellings and directly related, complementary uses. This district is characterized by more variation in lot sizes than found in other residential districts in the city.

(D) *R-2 Mixed Residential District*. The purpose of the R-2 Mixed Residential District is to provide for low to medium density dwellings and directly related, complementary uses.

(E) *R-3 Multi-Family Residential District*. The purpose of the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District is to provide for medium to high density residential uses and directly related, complementary uses.

(F) *R-C Residential-Commercial Mixed Use District*. The purpose of the R-C Residential-Commercial Mixed Use District is to provide for a district which allows both residential and commercial uses and acts as a transition district between more intense commercial zoning districts and residential zoning districts. Commercial uses are intended to be a lower intensity than nearby commercial zoning districts.

(G) *C-1 Central Business District*. The purpose of the C-1 Central Business District is to provide for high density development for commercial and service activities, with activity focused on Main Street, gaining economic advantage from a concentration of complementary uses and drawing from and serving customers from the community and surrounding area.

(H) *C-2 General Commercial District*. The purpose of the C-2 General Commercial District is to provide for commercial and service activities oriented towards and concentrated along Highway 57, drawing from and serving customers from the community and surrounding area.

(I) *C-3 Highway Commercial District*. The purpose of the C-3 Highway Commercial District is to provide for medium to high intensity retail or service activities which provide goods and services to the community as well as regional motor vehicle traffic. The districts should be located in areas well served by arterial roadways.

(J) *I-1 Business Park / Light Industrial District*. The purpose of the I-1 District is provide locations for small and large scale business park uses as well as light industrial and light manufacturing uses which are compatible and may benefit from co-location with other similar uses.

(K) *I-2 Manufacturing / Heavy Industrial District*. The purpose of the I-2 Manufacturing/Heavy Industrial District is to provide for the development of manufacturing and industrial uses which may not be appropriate in other locations due to noise, dust, vibration, traffic, outdoor storage or other impacts which may not be compatible with other uses.

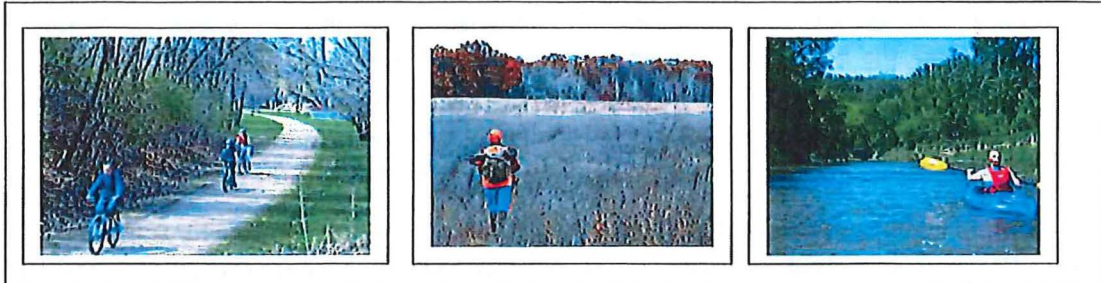
(Ord. 879, passed 10-28-2020)

current  
zoning

class  
proposal  
zoning  
of  
reproducible



## Section 7: Recreation Opportunities and Tourism



Introduction: As a nation, we are increasingly aware of the benefits of outdoor recreation, exercise, and leisure activities. Keeping with the national trend, citizens of Dodge County have also shown a great deal of interest in these areas as demonstrated by resident comments at public meetings and survey responses. Pressures of population growth, changing land use patterns and life styles, and fiscal realities will continue to test the government's ability to provide park and recreational services consistent with public needs.

### 7.1 - Trails:

Trails create recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible places to bike, snowmobile, walk, hike, jog, or skate. Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise and recreation into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go. Linear greenspaces and corridors also provide links for people and places. Finally, trails and green space often provide an economic boost for communities. Many regional leaders have been surprised at how trails have become sources of regional identity and pride.

For many years, the Dodge County Trails Association (DCTA) has worked to secure new trails. The DCTA functions as a non-profit, 501c3 organization. To date, there are two trails that link Kasson and Mantorville; the Sunset Trail and Sunrise Trail. See Map 7.a. Maintenance of the trails has been the responsibility of the County Highway Department.

The DCTA worked with neighboring counties and the MN Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) to establish the legislatively authorized Stagecoach State Trail.

The Master Plan for the Stagecoach State Trail is found on MNDNR Web site: [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/stagecoach/master\\_plan0312.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/stagecoach/master_plan0312.pdf).



The Stagecoach State Trail is planned to connect the state trail system near Owatonna with the state trails near Rochester, travelling across Dodge County and the communities of Wasioja and Mantorville. Completion of the trail has stalled recently due to the difficulty of securing dedicated right-of way for the trail. The greatest opportunity for the next stage appears to be the Mantorville to Wasioja link with only a couple of landowners uncommitted. A representative of the MNDNR has indicated that it will take leadership by local communities to make progress on the trail, primarily in effort to secure approval from private landowners for the trail right-of-way.

Several other opportunities have been discuss locally including a trail between Kasson and Byron along 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and a trail connecting the Sunset Trail to the Sunrise Trail via extension of 16<sup>th</sup> Street east of State Highway 57 to 240<sup>th</sup> Ave, north of Kasson. The City of Hayfield is also considering a trail that loops around, and through, the city.

The DNR has indicated that there was once discussion of plans to build an "Iron Horse Trail" that followed the old railroad bed between Austin and Kenyon.

Trail alignment in Kasson is also a part of a Safe Routes to School Plan:

<https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/viewFile.cfm?id=3927>

Mantorville is a starting point for the Zumbro River Water Trail.

[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/canoe\\_routes/zumbro.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/canoe_routes/zumbro.pdf)

The Zumbro River Water Trail also extends into the northeast corner of Dodge County but there is currently no public access to this portion of the river.

An increasing number of people are using the rivers in southeast Minnesota for canoeing, kayaking, and tubing.

Dodge County also has an active snowmobile club that has established and maintained snowmobile trails shown on **Map 7.b**.

## 7.2 - Parks and Attractions:

Dodge County does not have extensive parkland outside city limits. Nearly all public parks are located inside city boundaries. Several historic attractions including the Seminary and Civil War Recruiting Station in Wasioja, provide passive recreation opportunities. These sites, and others in the city of Mantorville, are cooperatively managed by the Dodge County Historical Society, Mantorville Restoration Association, Friends of Wasioja, and Dodge County. Rice Lake State park occupies about 230 acres of land within Dodge County and offers a wide variety of outdoor activities.

Dodge County owns vacant land between Kasson and Mantorville that is currently used to protect the County's Waste Management Facility from the encroachment of incompatible land uses. These properties may offer an opportunity to develop a park-like recreational site, especially if done in conjunction with the restoration of neighboring "Stussy Quarry". The quarry's restoration



plans include a lake (when groundwater fills the quarry) and a park on the southern shore of the lake. According to the plans, restoration may begin between years 2023 and 2028.

### 7.3 – Public Natural Areas:

The Department of Natural Resources owns and operates public natural areas in fifteen separate locations throughout the county as shown on **Map 7.c**. For details see MNDNR Web site: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/compass/index.html>.

The MNDNR natural areas include two Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) with a combined 75 acres of land available for passive recreation including hiking and photography. SNAs are exceptional places where native plants and animals flourish. The MNDNR natural areas also include ten Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and one Aquatic Management Area (AMA) providing 995 acres of land for passive recreation and hunting/fishing. According to MNDNR staff, adding new public land is most likely in areas near existing public land. Land donations are another method in which MNDNR may expand public recreation opportunities. MNDNR has also identified areas of high natural resource value known as SNA Conservation Opportunity Areas as shown on **Map 7.d** and other focus areas for potential preservation and restoration in southern MN as shown on **Map 7.e**.

The state has designated hundreds of miles of waterways in Dodge County as “Public Waters”. The Public Waters are available for water recreation including canoeing and fishing. However, suitable access to Public Water is limited because access to the water must be over public land, not private land.

### 7.4 County Fairgrounds:

Dodge County owns 44.44 acres that make-up the county fairgrounds. The fairgrounds is located entirely within the boundary of the City of Kasson but it has not been annexed to the city so it is under the jurisdiction of the county. Therefore, the Fairgrounds provides opportunity for additional county sponsored recreation at the current location. The location within Kasson also provides opportunity for converting the property to municipal uses and relocating fairgrounds. See **Map 7.f**

### 7.5 Other Public Recreation Opportunities

Cities within the county also provide a wide range of recreation opportunities including parks, trails, sports facilities, and swimming pools.

### 7.6 Private Facilities and Other Recreation

Private recreational opportunities in the county include gun clubs, golf courses, and a riding stable. Growth of private recreation is limited by demand and current zoning standards.