

# Community Vision 2040



## City of Faribault

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Faribault gratefully acknowledges the dedication and contributions of all who participated in the development of Community Vision 2040. The following lists key people who graciously shared their time and talents to help guide the preparation of this plan. Not listed, but critical to the success of this planning effort, were many others who contributed by participating in community surveys, neighborhood meetings, and community forums.

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### CITY STAFF

Brian Anderson, City Administrator  
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Peter Waldock, Planning Coordinator

### COMMUNITY FORUM SPEAKERS

Susan Brower, State Demographer  
Annette Parker, South Central College  
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### PLANNING CONSULTANT

Craig Rapp, LLC  
Craig Rapp, President  
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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY VISION 2040

In 2014, the Faribault City Council decided it was important to articulate a long-term vision for the community. As a historic, unique community with a good reputation as a place to live and raise a family, the Council wanted to ensure they sustained that reputation, and more importantly, positioned themselves to thrive.

Faribault has experienced tremendous change over the past 25 years and it will continue to experience tremendous change over the next 25 years. While we cannot predict with complete certainty what Faribault will be in the year 2040, if we have a clear and compelling vision, we will have a far better chance of being the community we desire than if we simply address issues as they arise without a vision.

The City undertook Community Vision 2040 to articulate a vision of the community for the next 25 years. Community Vision was conceived, led and managed by the City of Faribault, but from the beginning, the effort was dedicated to the creation of a community-wide vision- one that expresses the hopes and dreams of Faribault residents and stakeholders from all walks of life, and which directs decision-making not only by the City itself, but by other stakeholders throughout the community.

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*“There is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward excellence and long-range success than an attractive, worthwhile, and achievable vision for the future, widely shared.”*

*Burt Nanus*

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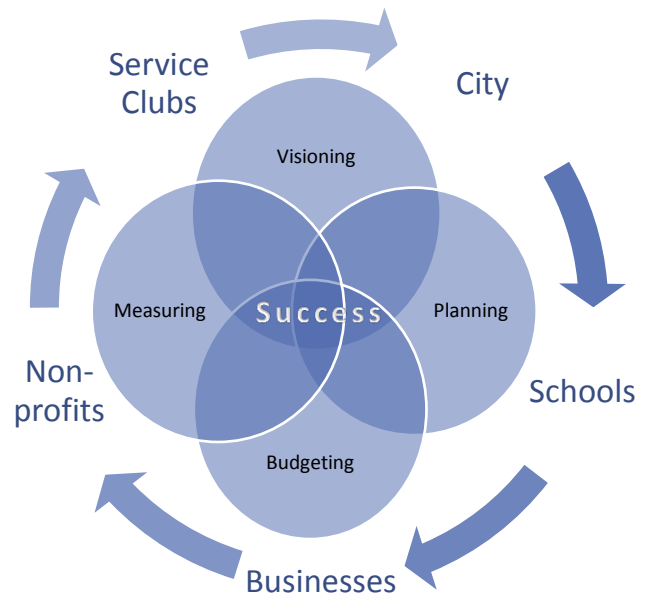
## USE OF COMMUNITY VISION 2040

Community Vision 2040 is not an operational plan or a strategic plan. Rather, it is a framework to help ensure the long-term success of the community. As such, Community Vision 2040 serves several uses including the following:

1. It guides the City Council, Planning Commission, and others in overarching decisions related to the future of the community.
2. It provides the foundation for all other community plans, including the Comprehensive Plan.

3. It provides property owners, residents, businesses, industries, developers, and others with an understanding of how all the parts of the community can work together as a whole to achieve the community's shared vision.

Although Community Vision 2040 was adopted by the City of Faribault, the Faribault City Council recognizes that achieving the vision requires the support and cooperation of all who make up the community, including schools, businesses, non-profits, service clubs, and others. The next phase will be to implement the strategic initiatives of the Community Vision 2040 by entering the planning stage with our community partners, budgeting for the long-term improvements, and then measuring the performance of our actions on an annual basis.



## **OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The driving force behind this planning process came from the City Council's strong belief that Community Vision 2040 must reflect the vision of the whole community – not just the exclusive vision of the City Council, City Staff, or community leaders. To that end, the City hired Craig Rapp, LLC to help guide a community-wide visioning process.

To help facilitate the visioning process and review the opinions and ideas from citizens, the Council appointed an 11-member Steering Committee from a variety of backgrounds. To effectively gather the opinions and ideas of the broadest possible range of stakeholders, a multi-faceted outreach program was undertaken. The program included four elements: (1) Four community forums--offering information and facilitated discussion--using "audience participation technology"; (2) Eight focus groups--made up of key community constituencies; (3) A community leader's survey-- administered to Advisory Boards and Commission members and City management staff; and (4) Fifteen "Meetings-in-a-Box" --small neighborhood conversations regarding the community's future.

The information gathered in the outreach process provided the foundation upon which the Community Vision Steering Committee developed the Community Vision 2040 Plan. Using this input, the Steering Committee examined:

- The community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and challenges
- The character, image and assets of the community
- Guiding principles and core values

The Steering Committee met seven times over six months to review detailed data, citizen input, and to listen to expert testimony. The Committee debated the impact of demographic and social trends, interpreted community input, and wrestled with alternative views of the future.

Ultimately, these efforts enabled the Steering Committee to recommend a set of strategic priorities and long-term actions to help create a better Faribault. Through this community effort, the Community Vision 2040 plan was developed with the following four key elements:

1. A Vision Statement. This is a clear statement of what the community aspires to be in the future
2. Community Values. These are the core beliefs and operating principles of Faribault.
  - a. *Sense of Community*
  - b. *Sense of Place*
  - c. *Opportunity*
  - d. *Innovation*
  - e. *Excellence*
3. Strategic Priorities. These are the five most important issues that will determine long term success.
  - a. *Thriving economic development*
  - b. *Excellent schools and high quality education*
  - c. *Pride in our community*
  - d. *Public safety*
  - e. *A vibrant downtown*
  - f. *Access to nature, leisure, and the arts*
4. Key Initiatives. These are the actions within each priority that should be the focus of community activity.

This document represents the culmination of an effort from the citizens and businesses of Faribault, the educational institutions, non-profits and service clubs, the Steering Committee, members of the City Council, and City Staff.

The Faribault City Council would like to thank everyone in the community for their participation in developing the Community Vision 2040 and looks forward to working with the members of this community in turning this Community Vision 2040 into reality!



## COMMUNITY VISION

Visions reflect our highest aspirations and speak to us on an emotional level. A community's vision offers a picture of what is possible and desirable for the future.

Community Vision 2040 presents a vision statement that describes Faribault in the year 2040. The vision statement reflects community input, embodies community values, connects with a core purpose, and describes how the community will distinguish itself. It is a reflection of what Faribault is and what it wishes to become.

The following is the Community's Vision for 2040:

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*"If you want to build a ship,  
don't herd people together  
to collect wood and don't  
assign them tasks and  
work, but rather teach  
them to long for the endless  
immensity of the sea."*

*Antoine de Saint-Exupery*

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### **COMMUNITY VISION**

#### **SMALL TOWN PRIDE. BIG CITY OPPORTUNITY.**

*Faribault is one of America's best small communities.*

*A place where all people find opportunities to succeed, grow, and prosper.  
We celebrate our unique strengths in education, business, industry, medical,  
nature, recreation, leisure, and the arts – and we are proud of our historic  
downtown and iconic institutions.*

*As a community we embrace the future and plan for positive change through our  
commitment to innovation and excellence, making  
Faribault an outstanding place to live, work, grow, invest, and visit.*

## COMMUNITY VALUES

Values are our most important and closely held beliefs and ideals. They guide our actions and filter our decisions. Community values are the shared values of the community that provide the foundation of Community Vision 2040.

Based on extensive community input, the Community Vision 2040 Steering Committee identified five core community values. Although the community will change in many ways in coming years, these core community values will remain constant. These values reflect how we interact and how we go about all we do as a community.

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*"It is not hard to make a decision when you know what your values are."*

Roy Disney

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### SENSE OF COMMUNITY

*We value a strong sense of community and belonging. We believe in being a friendly, respectful, safe, inclusive, and welcoming community that celebrates strong connections among all people.*

Faribault will be a community that residents from a wide range of backgrounds, ages and cultures call home. We will strive to provide a friendly, respectful, and inclusive environment that creates a strong sense of unity and togetherness. People will come to Faribault and stay and Faribault.



### SENSE OF PLACE

*We value and respect our historic character, iconic institutions, rich traditions, and natural amenities that give Faribault its unique sense of place.*

Faribault will be a community known for its unique and iconic surroundings. In 25 years, we will have continued to cultivate our rich history through preservation of our distinctive buildings, our downtown, our institutions, and cultural traditions. We will also enhance our unique natural amenities to attract and retain our distinctiveness.



## OPPORTUNITY

*We value the opportunities that all people have for growth and enrichment in our community, including opportunities for high-quality education, decent jobs, good housing, quality healthcare, and access to nature, leisure, and the arts.*

In 25 years, Faribault will have a diversified economy that provides residents with expanded opportunities to work and to meet their personal, educational, recreational, and cultural needs. A mix of industrial, commercial, and retail redevelopment will provide the tax base needed to support high quality services and amenities.



## INNOVATION

*We value and encourage creativity, flexibility, and openness to new ideas and positive change in all sectors of our community, including business, industry, education, and government.*

Faribault will be known for its creativity, thought, and leadership in business, education, and government. We will foster a culture where new ideas can flourish, and will regularly demonstrate our innovative spirit through advances in our educational sector, unique new businesses, and our cutting edge government service.

## EXCELLENCE

*We value excellence and strive for it in everything we do. We believe if it is worth doing, it is worth doing to the best of our ability.*

Faribault will be a community known for its commitment to excellence. We will demonstrate in all sectors of our community the attention to detail and quality necessary to achieve great outcomes and a highly livable and thriving community.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Community Vision 2040 is not an operational plan or a strategic plan. Rather, it is a framework for long-term success. Achieving the vision requires focus and follow-through.

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*“It is not what the vision is,  
but what the vision does.”*

*Peter Senge*

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To ensure that the community’s vision of a desirable future has the greatest chance of succeeding, the Steering Committee developed a set of strategic priorities to focus City Council actions. Using input gathered from community outreach efforts, the Steering Committee conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to understand the current environment, and to gain insight into the desires and preferences of a broad range of community stakeholders. Supplemented by research on future trends, the Steering Committee initially identified a set of critical issues facing the community. Using community values as a framework, the Steering Committee established the following six strategic priorities:

1. Thriving economic development;
2. Excellent schools and high quality education;
3. Pride in our community;
4. Public safety;
5. A vibrant downtown; and
6. Access to nature, leisure, and the arts.

To provide a focus for follow-up action, the Steering Committee developed a list of goals and key initiatives that should be undertaken – correlated to each strategic priority. Because the vision covers a 25-year time horizon, the initiatives have been categorized by approximate time periods: ongoing, short term (1-5 years), medium term (6-15 years), and long term (16-25 years). The goals represent the end that the community is striving to attain. The Initiatives are specific actions to accomplish the stated goals.

## THRIVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Faribault's economic vitality reflects the quality of life found in the community. Proactively attract and retain a broad mix of quality businesses that provide quality jobs, strengthen our tax base, build on our existing industrial parks and commercial corridors, and promote tourism.*



### Goal 1: Define Faribault's competitive advantage in the region and identify target markets based on the community's existing strengths and business assets.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Conduct a comprehensive market analysis/industry sector validation study to identify Faribault's competitive advantage.		✓		
B. Use the results of the studies to evaluate the existing business mix in Faribault and identify gaps and opportunities for ensuring a diversified local economic base.		✓		
C. Use the results of the comprehensive market analysis and industry sector validation study to build messaging for targeted business attraction/marketing materials. Update the community profile and compile business data on unemployment, workforce, educational attainment, training, and related data.		✓		
D. Identify specific businesses and industries to target for growth in the community. Build on Faribault's competitive advantage in the region and address the gaps and opportunities as they pertain to industry mix and economic base.		✓		

### Goal 2: Develop a comprehensive business incentive package to attract, retain, and grow quality businesses and industries.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Develop/update incentives to attract targeted industries and/or industry sectors.		✓		

B.	Inventory available land and building supply to ensure there is an adequate and competitive supply of land and buildings available, and willing sellers, to support business growth.	✓	
C.	Pursue pre-annexation and annexation agreements for land along the I-35 corridor that can support economic development activity (Met-Con Business Park, etc.).	✓	
D.	Assess and plan for transportation needs to support business growth into the future. More specifically, plan for a future I-35 interchange, a future airport runway expansion, and future railroad spurs with railroad corridor industries.	✓	
E.	Participate in the development of strategies for talent development necessary to support and encourage economic development growth.	✓	
F.	Develop policies to support Faribault's role in Destination Medical Center (DMC) and other regional initiatives.		✓
G.	Evaluate opportunities for land assembly by the EDA (EDA owned/controlled/developed land) to support business growth.		✓
H.	Increase private and public investment capital sources (angel funds, equity funds, and related sources).		✓
I.	Assess and modify the City's regulatory environment/permit process to find a balance that removes unnecessary delays and hurdles while preserving the integrity of the City's vision and goals.		✓

**Goal 3: Enhance and expand strategic partnerships and regional collaboration with other organizations that share the Communities vision for proactive economic development.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Identify regional partners, such as those involved with the Destination Medical Center (DMC), who can help define Faribault's role and participate in the investment happening to support the DMC vision.		✓		
B. Build strategic partnerships around transportation objectives, specifically as they pertain to the I-35 corridor and future CR 9 interchange.		✓		
C. Participate in talent/workforce development initiatives that support the workforce needs of our existing employers, by building on the existing talent supply chain and education and training opportunities available locally.		✓		

**Goal 4: Develop a Comprehensive Plan that provides a strong link between economic development and other components of the community, including land use, housing, natural and cultural resources, transportation, and utilities.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Determine community needs to get to desired economic goals and outcomes and to ensure a vibrant mix of housing, jobs, industries, retail, and services.		✓		
B. Update the City's Unified Development Ordinance to support the Comprehensive Plan.		✓		
C. Evaluate the market and the need for a community event center.				✓

## EXCELLENT SCHOOLS AND HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

*Faribault is home to a variety of high quality educational facilities – from pre-kindergarten through college – that play a central role in growing a talent-based economy and an engaged citizenry. We will partner with our schools to ensure that we provide high quality education, recognized athletic and extra curriculum programs, and a well-trained workforce.*



### Goal 1: Strengthen and celebrate the variety of respected, high quality, and specialized education opportunities that exist in all levels of the community's education system.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Use City media to periodically recognize and celebrate academic, athletic, and other notable accomplishments of students and teachers in the education system.	✓			
B. Collaborate with schools, businesses, non-profits, and others to convene an education summit to explore how all parties can work together to strengthen, promote, and celebrate the education system.		✓		
C. Encourage collaboration between schools to help ensure that each school capitalizes on their individual strengths while contributing to quality of the whole education system		✓		
D. Work with schools to coordinate their long-term planning efforts with the long-term planning efforts of the City. Coordinate the City's infrastructure, plans, and processes with school needs for facilities, technologies, and tools.			✓	

### Goal 2: Recognize and support a strong link between excellence in education, economic prosperity, and a high quality of life.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Help promote an understanding of how education contributes to economic prosperity and quality of life in the community when financial support is needed for local schools.	✓			



B.	Collaborate with schools, service organizations, businesses, to promote lifelong learning through community education.	✓	
C.	Use the City's website and other tools to promote the community as a premier destination for educational excellence.	✓	
D.	Encourage the schools to be an active participant in community discussions on diversity and inclusion.	✓	
E.	Collaborate with educational institutions to promote excellence in school athletic programs.		✓
F.	Collaborate with schools, the county, service organizations, and others to address the effect of hunger, poverty, inadequate housing, and other factors affecting the ability of students to learn.		✓
G.	Explore opportunities to work with schools and private enterprise, to promote and development a sports complex (baseball, soccer, hockey, etc.) to host state and national athletic events.		✓

## PRIDE IN OUR COMMUNITY

*Protecting and promoting the special and unique features of our community helps give residents a sense of pride of ownership. That pride of ownership, in turn, enhances our neighborhoods, educational achievement, government effectiveness, economic growth, and public safety.*



### Goal 1: Enhance and maintain public and private property throughout the community to reflect our sense of pride in the community.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Work with businesses, institutions and others to enhance and maintain public and private property throughout gateway corridors and key destinations.	✓			
B. Provide attractive gateway signage and way finding signage to direct people to key destinations in the community.		✓		
C. Identify, enhance, and maintain green corridors in the community.				✓

### Goal 2: Promote and celebrate the people, places, and events that are unique to the community and make us proud.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Strive to ensure appointed commissions and boards reflect the diversity of the community.	✓			
B. Work with a variety of organizations to promote and celebrate Faribault as a diverse and inclusive community by planning and promoting a culturally diverse marketplace that includes foods, gifts, and arts from diverse cultures, seniors, the schools for the deaf and blind, and others.			✓	
C. Identify and promote iconic people, businesses, institutions, and cultures in the community.			✓	
D. Explore the feasibility of developing a sports complex, such as a softball, hockey, and/or soccer complex, which will attract state and national athletic events.				✓

## PUBLIC SAFETY

*Public safety is fundamental to the quality of life we seek in our community. We will work to ensure the safety of our residents and property, and to assure that justice and protection is provided to all whom we are entrusted to serve.*



### Goal 1: Continue to exceed the community's expectations of all public safety services.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Conduct a needs assessment study and develop a Police Department staffing plan to meet the increased demand for service and proactive policing efforts.		✓		
B. Conduct a needs assessment study and develop a Fire Department staffing plan to meet desired service levels and community expectations through applied public safety measures.		✓		
C. Implement a comprehensive strategy to recruit and hire diverse public safety personnel.				
D. Enhance professional training for public safety employees.		✓		
E. Market public safety through proactive enforcement and outreach programs such as, the Police Citizen Academy and the Youth Fire Starter Program.			✓	

### Goal 2: Make the community a safer place to live and thrive by reducing the crime rate by 10 percent by 2030 and by 20 percent by 2040.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Continue to support the collaborative efforts of the Drug Task Force.	✓			
B. Develop effective programs to reduce drug use and related crimes.	✓			
C. Reduce repeat calls to problem properties through crime-free multi-housing and proactive policing.		✓		

**Goal 3: Maintain public safety infrastructure needs.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Conduct a study of Fire/EMS response times for an expanding community.	✓			
B. Analyze ways to improve intersection safety for pedestrian and vehicle traffic flow.		✓		
C. Conduct a parking study for the existing Police Department building.		✓		
D. Improve intersection safety and overall traffic movement with emergency vehicle preemption technology.			✓	
E. Plan for a second fire station to meet expected response times for Fire/EMS.				✓

**Goal 4: Address mental health concerns and collective abilities within the Faribault community.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Develop partnerships with mental health stakeholders, area medical facilities, social services, and public safety entities.		✓		
B. Initiate a study to address mental health patient needs.			✓	
C. Facilitate and promote the building of a mental health facility within the community to meet the community's needs.				✓

## A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

*An active downtown provides a sense of place for community residents and is vital for sustained economic activity. We are committed to actively managing our downtown to balance the preservation and transformational requirements to remaining vibrant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*



### Goal 1: Establish anchor businesses in the downtown that complement and strengthen existing downtown businesses.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Identify potential sites for anchor businesses in the downtown area.		✓		
B. Develop a plan that identifies potential programs and incentives to establish anchor businesses in the downtown.		✓		
C. Identify and actively pursue anchor businesses that could locate in the downtown.			✓	

### Goal 2: Enhance the appearance of downtown building and the streetscape.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Enforce the building codes, rental ordinances, and property maintenance ordinances.	✓			
B. Aggressively pursue blighted properties with incentives to sell or renovate.			✓	
C. Explore possible programs and incentives for property owners interested in enhancing their properties.		✓		
D. Maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the existing streetscape through way finding signage, benches, lighting, and related features.		✓		
E. Establish a commercial rental licensing program for property owners leasing their properties to businesses			✓	



**Goal 3: Establish market rate and high-end residential in the downtown.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Identify potential properties where market rate and high-end residential would be appropriate.		✓		
B. Work with the HRA and City Council to develop and implement a plan to establish an appropriate mix of high-end housing in the downtown.		✓		
C. Identify and actively pursue partnerships and development opportunities to establish market rate and high-end housing in the downtown.			✓	

**Goal 4: Create a museum in the downtown that will be a draw for tourists and the community.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Establish a task force with local stakeholders to explore the idea of a museum in the downtown that could include a tourist center, a connection to the Paradise, and walking tours.		✓		
B. Select potential properties that could be used to renovate for a successful museum along Central Ave.			✓	
C. Prepare a detailed implementation plan to present to the Council including the purpose, partnerships, financing, and operations.			✓	

**Goal 5: Create and strengthen public places and plazas in the downtown.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Work with community organizations and businesses to develop and implement a plan that strengthens public places in the downtown.		✓		
B. Explore opportunities to acquire public land in or adjacent to the downtown for green space, plazas, connections to the river, and to accommodate celebrations and events.			✓	

## ACCESS TO NATURE, LEISURE, AND THE ARTS

*Residents and businesses across all generations choose communities that offer easy access to outdoor amenities, recreation, leisure, and the arts. We are committed to providing inviting parks, trails, cultural venues, and entertainment opportunities for residents and visitors.*



### Goal 1: Enhance public facilities to strengthen the community's access to nature, leisure, and the arts.

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Construct an adaptive playground at North Alexander Park.		✓		
B. Explore constructing an addition to the Community Center in conjunction with the planned Senior Center expansion.		✓		
C. Design and construct Straight River Park and Water Access on the former City Public Works site.		✓		
D. Explore opportunities to build on the success of the Aquatic Center by encouraging the development of complementary facilities, such as an indoor play facility.		✓		
E. Collaborate with the school district and the soccer association to expand the soccer complex to the south when land development occurs.			✓	
F. Develop and implement a plan to adapt access to nature, leisure, and the arts to our changing demographics.			✓	
G. Work to improve the quality of water resources in community parks and natural areas.			✓	
H. Explore relocating the Teepee Tonka baseball fields to another location in the community.			✓	
I. Work with the community to plan and develop an additional regional park in the community.				✓

**Goal 2: Collaborate with organizations to promote community facilities, festivals, and events.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Work with technology and media outlets to promote community facilities.	✓			
B. Expand outreach to promote festivals, programs, and events for underserved groups.		✓		
C. Collaborate with others to provide community events that relate to the diverse needs and interests of the community.		✓		
D. Work with the Tourism Committee to identify and promote community facilities and events to area residents and the region.		✓		
E. Collaborate with others to promote Faribault as part of the Hockey Day in Minnesota festivities.		✓		
F. Continue to evaluate and refine the library's role and services, including public access to technology.			✓	
G. Promote River Bend Nature Center for outdoor winter activities and events like fat tire bike and ski trails.			✓	

**Goal 3: Collaborate with others to plan and develop the Faribault region as a premier destination for bicycling.**

Initiative	Ongoing	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
A. Develop and implement a plan to enhance and expand bicycle routes and trails in Faribault.		✓		
B. Complete the Northern Links Trail connection.		✓		
C. Complete the Mill Towns Trail connection from 17 <sup>th</sup> Street to White Sands Trailhead.		✓		
D. Work with other communities, Rice County, and Steele County in the planning and construction of Prairie Wildflower Trail.			✓	

## APPENDIX 1: OUTREACH AND DATA

The Faribault Community Vision Steering Committee consulted a wide range of background information and reached out to Faribault residents and other stakeholders for guidance in its efforts to develop a 25-year vision for the city.

- Primary research was conducted in the form of a broad-based community outreach process, which included a survey of four community forums, 15 meetings-in-a-box, eight focus group discussions, and a survey of city leaders.
- The Minnesota State Demographer Susan Brower spoke to a kickoff meeting that was attended by city leaders, steering committee members and members of the general public. Her presentation included a variety of demographic and other data that describes Faribault in the recent past, at the present time and is projected to do so into the future.
- The City created a video highlighting the changes that have come to Faribault over the past 25 years, which was meant to be suggestive that the changes that might come to Faribault over the next 25 years are likely to be just as dramatic.

### Community Outreach

As noted above, the outreach effort consisted of four different methodologies.

- The four Community Forums featured the use of audience technology, which enabled participants to indicate their answers to a series of questions. The responses were then displayed onscreen in real time and formed the basis of further discussion.
- The Meetings-in-a-Box consisted of a series of questions, plus instructions that would enable any Faribault resident to organize a meeting of their friends, neighbors and colleagues, discuss those questions, and submit their answers to the Steering Committee. A total of 15 meetings were held, with a total of 146 participants.
- The Focus Groups targeted key stakeholders such as the business community, developers, educators, senior citizens, social service providers, the Somali community and youth. Almost 100 individuals participated in the eight discussions.
- Finally, an online survey was targeted toward community leaders both inside city government and representing other entities such as the chamber, the school board and other groups.

In each of these different efforts, many of the same questions were asked, such as:

- Why do people choose to live in Faribault?
- What do people like best about Faribault?

- What do they wish were different?
- What is most important to Faribault residents and stakeholders?
- What is their vision for the future?

### **Why Do People Choose to Live in Faribault?**

Participants were asked this question in each of the outreach efforts. The responses given in the Meetings-in-a-Box were fairly typical. People choose to live in Faribault because of:

- Faribault's strong sense of community
- Its high quality parks, natural environment and recreational assets
- Its broad range of high quality educational opportunities
- Its proximity to the Twin Cities via I-35
- A vibrant and diverse mix of business and industry
- Its historical architecture
- Its diverse cultures

### **What Do People Like Best About Faribault? What Are Its Strengths?**

These questions were asked in several different venues. The responses to the community leaders survey said that Faribault's strengths include:

- It's streets, highways and other local infrastructure
- City services provide a good value for the dollar
- Its parks, trails and open space
- Well-maintained neighborhoods and commercial areas
- Faribault's small-town atmosphere

### **What's Most Important, and How Are We Performing in Those Areas?**

In the community leader's survey, 95 percent said that excellent schools are very important or extremely important. 90 percent said that safety is very or extremely important. 90 percent said that a mix of good paying jobs in very or extremely important.

But, only 14 percent of respondents to the community leaders survey said that Faribault's public schools are very good to excellent. 84 percent are (very or extremely) concerned about the quality of Faribault's public schools. Only 24 percent said that Faribault is safe, and 79 percent are very or extremely concerned about crime in Faribault. And, only 8 percent say that Faribault is economically dynamic.



### **What Are Faribault's Primary Challenges for the Future?**

The community forums were asked explicitly, What were the greatest challenges that face Faribault?

- 32 percent said diversity
- 24 percent said jobs
- 18 percent said poverty

Meanwhile, 68 percent also agreed with the statement, “Faribault residents believe that Faribault is inferior to neighboring communities,” and 78 percent agreed that “Faribault needs to invest to improve its image.”

### **What Is Their Vision for the Future?**

Responses to this question differed significantly among people from different walks of life. Among the many responses are the following:

- Faribault residents will have better job skills, and Faribault will have more and better-paying jobs.
- Faribault schools will provide a great education, and Faribault public schools will achieve better test scores.
- Faribault will embrace diversity, and Faribault residents will have a better understanding of our diverse cultures.
- There will be less poverty in Faribault.
- Faribault will provide diverse housing, appropriate for people of all ages and all walks of life.
- Faribault will embrace change.
- Faribault will be a safer city.

### **State Demographer Susan Brower**

State Demographer Susan Brower presented data about the city of Faribault in comparison with statewide and national trends. Faribault, according to her facts and figures, is in fact quite unique. Highlights include:

- Faribault has experienced considerable population growth over the past 25 years, from 17,085 in 1990 to more than 23,500 today.
- This is similar to the growth of nearby cities Northfield and Owatonna, but it is also similar to a number of cities in the exurban “ring” around the Twin Cities—from New Prague and Buffalo to the west, to Elk River to the north, and to Hudson, WI, to the east.

- Faribault has become significantly more diverse. Faribault was 96 percent white in 1990. It is approximately 75 percent white today. There are approximately ten times more persons of color in Faribault today than 25 years ago, and Faribault has approximately 50 percent more persons of color, as a percentage, than the average Minnesota community.
- Faribault is one of four Minnesota communities (other than Minnesota's largest cities such as Minneapolis-St. Paul, Duluth, Rochester, St. Cloud and Moorhead) with more than 2,000 foreign-born residents. Only Northfield and Owatonna, within Minnesota's "exurban ring," have even half as many foreign-born residents as Faribault.
- Faribault is also much younger than the average Minnesota community. This is almost entirely due to the large number of children who are born into recent immigrant homes and families.
- Faribault, finally, has an average household income and an average educational attainment that are below the statewide averages.