I. INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan defines the vision, goals, and aspirations of a community's long-term development. A strong plan can intricately shape land use and transportation patterns, develop ways to conserve natural resources, and identify needs for housing, utilities, parks, and other community facilities. These assessments then help the community make well-informed decisions on both public and private infrastructure/facility investments for years to come.

The City of Scandia's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the vision of the community in 2040. It provides an overview of the City of Scandia, including historical context, existing and future land use, water and nature features, public facilities, transportation, population, housing, and employment trends and forecasts. The Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives and policies to guide public and private land use development, redevelopment and preservation of all lands and waters within the City and proposes an implementation plan extending toward 2040. These elements have been developed in conjunction with the City's tradition of planning.

A. Purpose of the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan responds to the requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act: Minnesota Statutes, Section 473.859, and the Metropolitan Council's Thrive MSP 2040. The plan is intended to guide future land use development, redevelopment, and other planning and policy concerns for the City of Scandia.

B. Vision, Goals and Policies

1. Vision and Overarching Goals

As a guiding element of this Comprehensive Plan update, the Steering Committee and the Mayor of Scandia develop the following vision statement:

Scandia is known for its distinctive character and history. The City's overall vision is to maintain its rural character typified by the agricultural heritage and natural resources. In 2040, Scandia has an economically vibrant village center, which is home to a diverse population that is surrounded by mix of natural resource and agricultural areas intermixed with rural residential and lakeshore neighborhoods. As new development is proposed, the emphasis will remain on the protection of rural, agricultural and natural resources.

The following four overarching goals for the City of Scandia expanded upon the above vision and further guided the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan update:

- **Maintain and promote the City's cultural character and history.**

  Scandia includes several historical structures. The Gammelgarden museum in the Village Center attracts people to learn about Minnesota history and Swedish immigration to Minnesota. Rural buildings and sites endowed with Scandia's history and identity are preserved or incorporated into development and redevelopment while protecting their historic integrity, and family farms can still be found within the City.

- **Maintain and promote a variety of land uses and residential densities while maintaining Scandia's existing agricultural and rural character.**

  Scandia has diverse land uses emphasizing its rural nature and natural landscape, including agriculture, large lot and clustered rural residential housing, wooded areas, scenic areas and open spaces, and recreational areas. The village center provides a variety of housing types with community-scale commercial and industrial uses. Agricultural uses in Scandia include traditional commodity production, smaller farms devoted to local markets, and hobby farms. The mix of land uses in different parts of the City changes with the geography, and is preserved and maintained by sound, intentional land use policies.

- **Preserve and protect the City's natural resources.**

  Scandia is home to several high quality natural areas, lakes and the St. Croix River. The City's parks, trails, open space and recreation system preserves rural character and protects natural beauty while offering opportunities for healthy lifestyles and recognizes the City's history. Sensitivity to the City's green infrastructure – trails, green corridors, natural areas and systems, surface and groundwater systems, scenic vistas, and night skies – will continue to be a priority for all development and infrastructure improvements. Periodic review of City ordinances to ensure development occurs with adequate protection of sensitive areas is part of the City's commitment to preserve and protect valuable natural resources.

- **Provide economic opportunities for residents and businesses.**
  Economic opportunities in the City continue to evolve. The City will seek solutions to create economic opportunities for employment in Scandia and to provide needed services for Scandia's residents. The number of residents who are self-employed or work from home will continue to increase. The nature of agriculture will change with a transition from traditional commodities to smaller, more specialized agricultural operations serving exclusively local markets.

2. Specific Goals and Policies

Goals and policies are official statements that provide the basis for development and redevelopment strategies. Goals identify various objectives of the city in managing future growth and protecting natural resources. Policies represent the official position of the city with respect to implementation of goals. The general goals for each of the plan elements are listed below. These goals and the corresponding policies are also included at the beginning of their respective chapters.

Land Use

1) Preserve the rural, agricultural character of Scandia through zoning regulations, ordinances, and site design standards
2) Manage land use to prevent the premature demand for extension of urban services and in ways that allow existing service levels to meet service needs.
3) Ensure a variety of lot sizes to create affordable development opportunities to best meet the needs of residents and businesses in Scandia.
4) Ensure agricultural uses are part of the community as a viable long-term land use.

5) Allow for the safe and orderly extraction of aggregate resources now and in the future while protecting sensitive resources on or near those properties and providing for transitions to other uses when resource extraction is complete

Natural Resources

1) Protect natural resources and look for opportunities to connect large areas of open space
2) Preserve high quality natural areas
3) Eliminate, reduce or mitigate the negative effects of invasive species on natural areas
4) Recognize and enhance publicly owned lands and improve public access to such lands where appropriate.
5) Work with property owners to protect and preserve native, endangered, threatened and unique plants and animals on privately owned land.

Resilience

1) Encourage the use of renewable, local and diverse forms of energy in order to increase use of local resources, mitigate the local risk from fossil fuel scarcity and price increases, and help meet Minnesota's climate protection goals.
2) Encourage energy efficient housing that exceeds the minimum efficiency levels required in the State building codes
3) Review the goals of the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program. Implement GreenStep Cities Best Practices as appropriate

Economic Competitiveness

1) Concentrate on retaining and expanding local businesses in and around the Village Center and existing Rural Commercial districts.
2) Actively support the retention and expansion of Scandia community-scale agricultural operations
3) Encourage home-based entrepreneurs and businesses
4) Expand access to internet services throughout the entire City.

Housing

1) Support a variety of housing types and densities for residential uses in and surrounding the Village Center and other areas where appropriate.
2) Expand life-cycle housing opportunities for residents at all points of life.
3) Encourage a range of housing choices that fit with the character of the community

Parks and Trails

1) Develop an effective planning approach to developing and maintaining parks and recreation areas and constructing and maintaining trails and routes to meet the needs of City residents.
2) Develop a close working relationship with other agencies and groups to enhance the parks and recreation facilities and develop trails and routes in the City.
3) Support a network of parks and trails to provide community-wide connections to serve the health and welfare of the City's residents.
4) Use park search areas and recreational facilities search areas and other natural

resource information to guide and encourage park acquisition donations and potential site acquisitions when property becomes available.

Transportation

1) As new development or redevelopment occurs, provide an integrated, internally-connected, efficient street system connecting village and higher density neighborhoods to the Village Center.
2) Establish context-sensitive roadway design standards that will protect the narrow and heavily wooded character of identified low-traffic roadways.
3) Maintain Scandia's system of local roadways that is well coordinated with MN DOT and Washington County roadways.
4) Encourage the use of non-automotive modes of transportation.
5) Support the development of regional and local transit options.
6) Preserve the safety of regional air traffic

Water Resources

1) Preserve and protect the quantity and quality of surface water and groundwater.
2) Improve stormwater management and land stewardship practices.
3) Protect the natural and scenic resources of the St. Croix River Corridor, both within and adjacent to the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.
4) Ensure financial and environmental accountability for installation, maintenance, remediation, and management of any permitted private wastewater system.

C. Background/History of the Community

1. History of the City

The City of Scandia is the site of the first Swedish settlement in Minnesota. Swedish settlers Carl A. Fernstrom, Oscar Roos, and August Sandahl, arrived by boat at the Log House Landing on the St Croix River in 1850. They hiked to their homesteads from the St Croix & established a farm near Hay Lake. A monument inscribed with the names of the first settlers stands near the site of the original log house, at Hay Lake Historic Corner, about a mile-and-a-half south of the Scandia Village Center.

Many of the subsequent immigrants, a majority of them Swedish, settled in the area in the 1850's, among them Nels Johan Johnson. Johnson was instrumental in the founding of what is now Scandia. According to Anna Engquist's book, Scandia Then and Now, another early settler was Olof Olin who came from the province of Medelpad, Sweden. When Olin arrived, he purchased land that comprised what became the original town of Scandia. Olin would eventually go on to donate the land for Elim Church and cemetery in 1860, as well as other locations spread throughout the city. Scandia would eventually grow to incorporate other neighboring communities such as Copas (originally named Vasa) and Otisville. Now marked only by a cluster of homes and the memories of older citizens.

The communities of Copas and Otisville formed close to the river but did not last as permanent villages. Otisville, the community that grew up around the Log House Landing in the 1850s was named after Henry Otis, a Civil War veteran and the son of Benjamin Otis and a Native American mother. During the summer he lived in a small cabin on the river across from Log House Landing. The log house at Log House Landing served as a public

house during the years of Swedish immigration. From 1912 to the present it has been a private residence.

Copas grew up just southwest of Otisville. The larger of the two settlements, it was the site of more commercial development. It lay alongside the railroad tracks, just west of what is now Highway 95 and once housed a lumberyard, hardware store, mill and elevator, and potato warehouse, as well as the train station.

Elim Lutheran Church, founded May 19, 1854, was the most significant force in the community, to the point that outsiders found it hard to see where the church ended, and the community began. As the State of Minnesota grew, it had relatively little impact on Scandia in either a social or a cultural sense. Not until the 1930s did Scandia gradually allow English to take over as the dominant language instead of Swedish.

Starting in 1857 well into the twentieth century, Scandia was home to six schools which were reflective of the small communities that grew up in what is today's Scandia. A number of these communities still identify as unique neighborhoods within the city. In the northwest part of Scandia was Bone Lake School founded in 1860. The Tin Box or Sunnyside School founded in 1866 was on the border of Washington and Chisago Counties. Goose Lake School founded in 1858 was in the northern part of today's Village Center. Copas/Vasa School was founded in 1874 in the hamlet of Copas. Hay Lake School founded in 1857 was just south of where the Swedish monument stands. Big Lake School founded in 1877 was on the western side of Scandia. The Copas/Vasa School building still stands, now as a retail gift shop. The Hay Lake School is today a Washington County Historical Society museum.

As Scandia moved from strictly rural to semi-rural, the city changed. Due to the Depression, banking moved out of Scandia. Over the years schools were consolidated so countryside schools were closed. Farms increased in size as industrialized farming took over, and better roads and state highways replaced the railroad, which eliminated the need for the station in Copas. As automobiles improved and became common, Scandia residents began to work jobs in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and metropolitan residents moved to Scandia in search of country living.

The formal government of Scandia was first formed in 1893 when New Scandia Township was organized as a separate entity from Marine Township. Led by an elected town board of supervisors, and eventually commission, the township remained in control until 1972 when Scandia adopted the Washington County zoning code by reference. The County retained final authority in zoning and subdivision matters after review by the Township Planning Commission and Board until 1998 when the County required townships to provide their own building inspections.

As a township, Scandia was vulnerable to annexation by surrounding cities and could not control land use to the extent the town desired. On January 1, 2007, New Scandia Township was incorporated as the City of Scandia. The first meeting of the new City Council was held on January 2, 2007. The City of Scandia adopted its first Comprehensive Plan on March 17, 2009.

2. Notable features and character of the community

Scandia is known for its rural setting and history. The historic village center remains, including Elim Lutheran Church. The Scandia Community Center and the Gammelgarden Museum are the centers of social community activities. Gammelgarden attracts people to learn about Minnesota history and enjoy Swedish immigrant culture. Structures in the

village are recognizable from old photos, and family farms can still be found within the city. Rural commercial centers marking the sites of historic settlements still exist at Copas on Highway 95 and near the Big Lake community on County Road 15.

3. Natural resources and geographic features

Scandia is home to several lakes and high quality wetlands. The St. Croix River runs along the east boundary of the City. Scandia also includes many areas of prime agricultural land.

D. Process

Descriptive data about the City of Scandia was gathered through a variety of sources. These data identified community assets, weaknesses, values, goals, and basic demographics of the City.

- A series of public meetings and open houses was held between January 2017 and June 2018 to review the various issues addressed within the Comprehensive Plan.
- A survey was mailed to each household in the summer of 2017. The survey was also available in online. The survey was partially funded by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership through a grant that was given to investigate and improve the access to healthy food in the area. Questions in the survey asked basic demographic data of the respondent, community assets and weaknesses, visions for the future, food access, and investment priorities. Approximately 391 responses were collected, accounting for about 20% of households in Scandia. Survey responses are provided in Appendix A.
- An interactive website was developed and remained active from January 2017 to December 2018. Residents could view the previous 2030 land use plan and stay informed about all public meetings and events regarding the comprehensive plan. All material from steering committee meetings, open houses and Planning Commission discussions were provided online.
- A steering committee was formed to inform the overall comprehensive process, engage a full spectrum of the community from youth to seniors, and guide policy goals and recommendations. The committee was comprised of key community leaders from public, private, and government spheres. The committee met three times throughout the comprehensive planning process.
- Three focus groups were held in June 2017 to gain perspectives and gather information and insights from key stakeholders in the community. One group consisted of residents who were 55 years old or older, another group represented businesses and the agricultural community in Scandia, and the third consisted of students from Scandia Elementary School. The format for each of the three groups was the same; the moderator asked questions about the positive aspects of the City of Scandia, what the community is missing, and what you would like to see in the city in 20 years. Focus groups also brainstormed “big ideas” for the city, or what would you do in Scandia if there were no restrictions. These results are summarized in Appendix B.
- Information about the Goals, Policies, and Recommendations section came from previous comprehensive plans, the 2017 survey, Commission/Steering Committee Discussions, public hearings, and review by adjacent communities and the Metropolitan Council.

E. Regional Setting

Scandia is located on roughly 39.7 square miles (25,425 acres) in Washington County. It is

served by four A-minor arterial roads, TH 97, TH 95, CSAH 3, and CSAH 15; one major collector, CSAH 1; and three minor collectors, CR 15A, CR 52, and CR 50/192nd Street. The city neighbors Forest Lake, Hugo, May Township, and Marine on St. Croix within Washington County, Chisago Lake Township and Franconia Township to the north in Chisago County, and Farmington Township across the St. Croix River in Wisconsin.