

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JON RADERMACHER, City Administrator

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – CEDA PROPOSAL

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 21, 2025

BACKGROUND

The City Council has committed to a new Comprehensive Plan in 2026 in the Preliminary Budget, staff met with Annie Nichols of CEDA to discuss a proposal for services to draft the comprehensive plan with additional services for community engagement. The proposed work would start March 2026 with an anticipated completion of November 2026, and a cost not to exceed, \$38,084. Currently the preliminary budget has included \$40,000 for Comp Plan efforts. There may be additional costs of services for the comp plan from our engineers or other consultants, but those costs would be minor, and may come at later dates to build out further strategic plans and action steps identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, we will look to work with partnerships like we have in the past, for example the Goodhue County Housing Study update, would likely be used to provide more specific details on the housing needs in our community.

The Comprehensive Plan is the highest level of future planning that the City creates. It will outline the priorities and areas of growth and development for the next 20 years. While CEDA is the only proposal that staff received, they come with very good references and examples of this project in communities in our region, they have a very knowledgeable team that we feel will do an excellent job on this project for Cannon Falls. This is a professional service and does not require a competitive bid or RFP process.

Finally, it is recommended to conduct all of the optional add-on services for community engagement within the proposal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to accept the proposal from CEDA for Comp Plan services, and engage in a contract to complete at Comprehensive Plan for the City in 2026, with a cost not to exceed \$38,084, allowing for all of the optional services.

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

Motion to approve entering into a contract with CEDA for Comprehensive Plan services in 2026, not to exceed \$38,084.



City of Cannon Falls

Comprehensive Plan Proposal

Prepared October 2025

Letter of Transmittal

Dear Mr. Radermacher and the Cannon Falls City Council,

Thank you for your interest in CEDA! We are excited about the possibility to draft a plan for the City of Cannon Falls. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the City's overall long-term vision for the future. We believe each plan should be thoughtfully crafted to the City's specific setting and needs. As a growing rural community in Southeastern Minnesota, we are eager to highlight Cannon Falls' business development opportunities and strong sense of community while addressing strategies to meet the City's evolving needs and future goals.

CEDA's Comprehensive Planning Process includes demographics, economic development, housing, land use, transportation, public facilities, parks and recreation, and natural resources. It will then outline goals, policies, and objectives along with ideas for implementation. We prioritize opportunities to facilitate community engagement throughout the planning process, and work with the City to design a process that meets your unique needs.

It can be difficult to think about what your community will look like in 20 years, and as such we engage the City through data, visualizations, focus groups, a resident survey, and several strategy sessions. Our goal is to build a plan that reflects the true goals and desires of the community.

We look forward to exploring the possibility of collaborating to advance our mission of empowering communities in rural America, ensuring they thrive and are well-prepared for the future.

Sincerely,

Annie Nichols
Planning Manager
CEDA

Overview

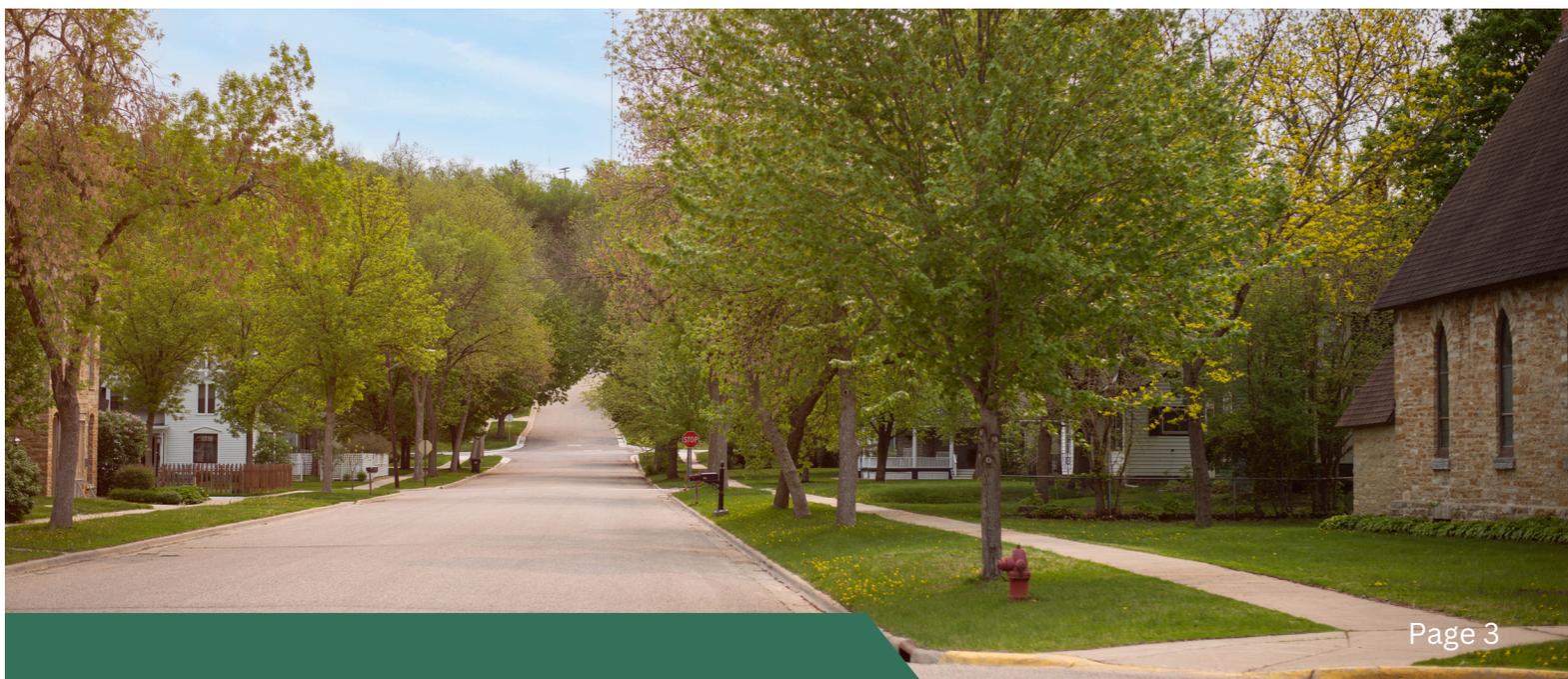
About CEDA

CEDA is a 501c3 non-profit organization first established in 1986. The organization serves Greater Minnesota, Northeast Iowa, and Western Wisconsin with its community development and economic needs. Notable initiatives range from its Community Support Program, to grant writing, to planning and development. With over 100 years of combined experience in the economic and community development field, CEDA strives for aiding communities and projects alike.

CEDA has conducted many planning studies over the years and currently has a focus on Housing Studies, Comprehensive Plans, and Strategic Plans. We have recently completed plans for the City of Pine Island, the City of Mapleton, and the City of Spring Valley.

At CEDA, we understand how much work rural cities do with limited resources every day, so we strive to make planning for the future easy.

Our planning process focuses on building collaboration from the beginning of the planning process through project implementation. By bringing community stakeholders together we can create clear, practical strategies tailored to the community's unique identity and goals.



Planning Process

➤ Review and Strategy

It is important to understand the needs of the community and to review any relevant plans prior to engaging the steering committee. The CEDA team will begin by gathering relevant local plans, and helping to organize the steering committee. During this phase, a kick off meeting is held with the steering committee to create the community engagement plan and conduct a SWOT analysis.

➤ Community Audit and Vision

The CEDA team begins this step by conducting a visual assessment of the community, and researching data for each element of the plan. We prepare the data and relevant discussion topics to engage the steering committee in discussion.

➤ Community Engagement

CEDA believes that the most important part of the comprehensive planning process is to gather feedback from local residents, community stakeholders, and City officials. We have a range of opportunities for the public to engage in this process including a community meeting, community survey, goal setting sessions, focus groups, a youth engagement session, stakeholder interviews and a final presentation of the plan to the community.

➤ Plan Mapping

CEDA works with the City Staff or City Engineer to prepare relevant maps and to undertake a review of critical infrastructure. This usually includes creating or updating the zoning map, future land use map, maps relating to local utilities, infrastructure, and physical features of the community.

➤ Plan Formulation and Implementation

The CEDA team combines relevant data, stakeholder input, and future growth maps to formulate a final document. We craft a marketable document branded to the community so that the information can be neatly and professionally displayed. During this process, we also provide insight and ideas for implementation. At the end of the process, we work with the City to identify a strategy for presenting the final plan. We can conduct an open house, or simply present a short summary to the City Officials during a regular meeting.



Work Plan



Demographics

We begin our Comprehensive Plans with a current condition report, analysis of local trends, and projections for the future.



Land Use

The land use chapter serves as the defining chapter that brings together each of the other elements to provide a sustainable and focused image of the future. This chapter determines land use conflicts and defines future growth boundaries.



Housing

Housing is essential for a city's growth and stability, providing the foundation for community well-being for its residents. CEDA will focus on three main components to housing needs including rehabilitation, new construction, and affordability.



Economic Development

Economic Development is a multi-faceted effort towards improving the quality of life in a community. The chapter will focus on three main components including business retention and expansion, childcare, and tourism.



Transportation

Transportation plays a major role in defining future development, regional mobility, and local access. In this chapter an assessment of the local road network is conducted and mobility, access and safety concerns are analyzed.



Public Utilities and Facilities

Public services are an important factor to enabling future growth. In this chapter an inventory of public facilities is conducted and utility capacity is described.



Parks and Recreation

Open space and recreation contribute to a high quality of life in a community. This chapter will include an inventory of the existing system and identify future park and recreation priorities.



Natural Resources

Natural resources provide a bountiful resource, but can also limit development. This chapter describes physical features and sustainability measures that can be implemented for harmonious future growth using the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program Framework.

Meet the Team

The CEDA model is based on a team approach; while you may have one point of contact, your community can utilize the specialty and resources of the full CEDA team.



Courtney Bergey Swanson

Chief
Mission Officer

Courtney grew up on a farm in rural Lanesboro, Minnesota, and returned to southeast Minnesota after earning her degree from Luther College. She has 15+ years of experience in grant proposal writing, public engagement, and economic development, all within the context of rural communities. Courtney is especially passionate about entrepreneurship and community development projects focused on place-based design.

Outside of work, Courtney enjoys gardening, making fiber art, and spending time with her family. She serves on the board of Mainspring, a nonprofit arts and cultural center in rural Houston County, Minnesota.



Allison Wagner

Vice President
Strategic Initiatives

Allison Wagner joined CEDA in 2018. She has over a decade of experience working in both economic development and public administration. Allison grew up on a small dairy farm in Southeast Minnesota. Her background includes marketing, advertising, grant writing, retail, and fashion buying. Prior to working for CEDA, Allison worked as the assistant clerk-administrator and economic development coordinator in her hometown of Caledonia, Minnesota.

Allison has a passion for helping small towns like her own grow and prosper. She especially enjoys helping business owners turn visions into reality.



Annie Nichols

Planning
Manager

Annie joined the CEDA Team in 2018. She is committed to helping municipalities find success, and takes pride in finding solutions for communities that fit their unique needs. As the Planning Manager for CEDA, her goals include raising awareness towards the benefits of planning for the years ahead and relaying accurate and relevant data to the communities she works with.

Annie received her Masters Degree in Public Administration from Minnesota State University, Mankato and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Planning and Community Development, and Political Science from St. Cloud State University.

Meet the Team



Cameron Payne

Entrepreneurial
Programs Manager
Planning Associate

Cameron joined CEDA in 2023. Her main areas of work are with the Rural Business Innovation Lab and the Planning Department. She graduated from Macalester in 2022 with a BA in Economics and Geography. While in college, Cameron interned with Dovetail Partners where she found her passion for climate change advocacy, as well as interning with the City of Saint Paul's Public Works Department where she learned the importance of government work. Previous to joining the CEDA team she worked as a Project Manager at a consulting firm in the Twin Cities.

Cameron enjoys being a part of her community by coaching Ice Hockey for Macalester's club teams as well as volunteering for Mac's tennis teams.



Sarah Schrauth

Planning Associate

Sarah Schrauth is an Economics and Public Health student at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, earning a certificate in Urban and Regional Planning. Originally from a rural community, she is committed to advancing equitable economic development in underserved areas. Her experience includes working in municipal government as a Downtown Events and Promotions Intern with the City of Eau Claire, where she helped implement programs that foster civic pride and economic vitality.

With a passion for urban planning, economic development, and community resilience, Sarah is dedicated to helping create vibrant, healthy communities. She is driven to leverage her education to highlight the critical intersection of community health, urban economics, and successful development strategies.

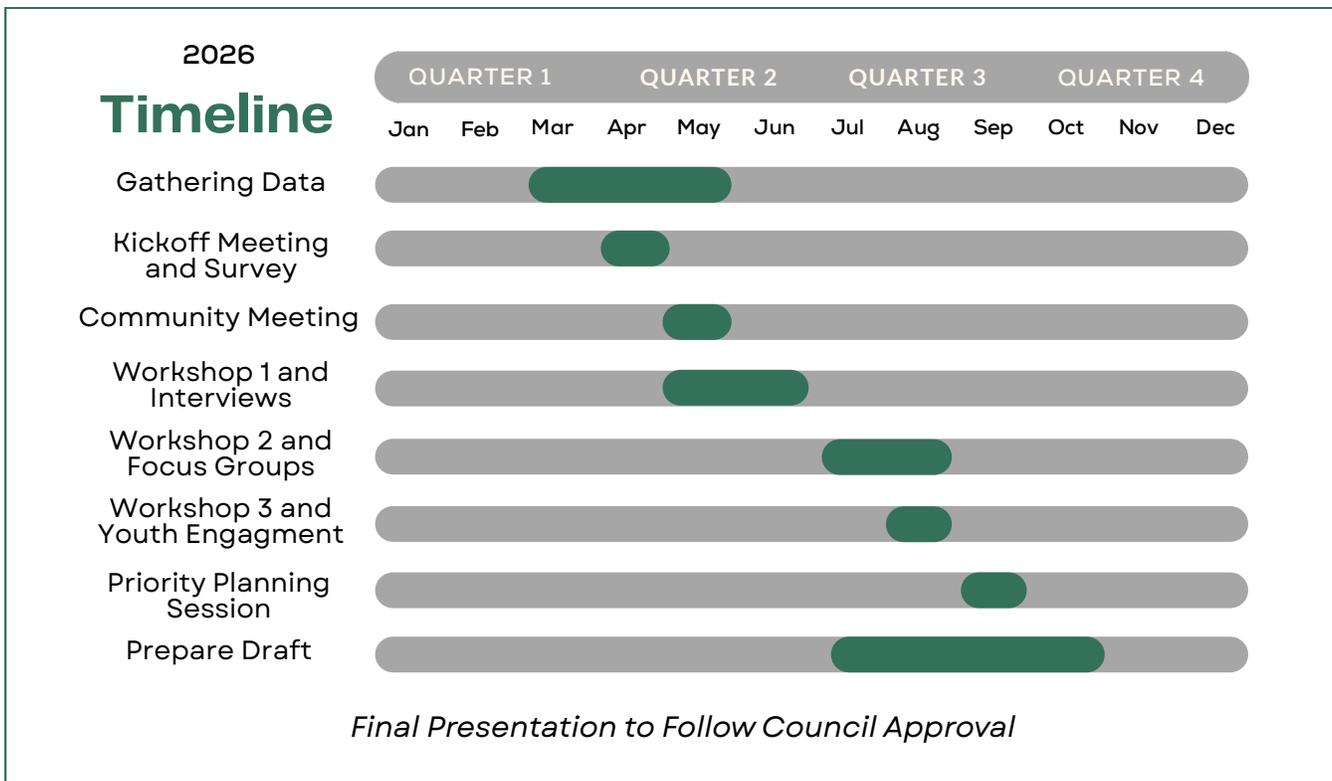


Project Budget and Schedule

CEDA remains flexible in amending or modifying the timeline to meet the needs of the community. The project schedule, and whether any modifications are needed, can be discussed at any time. The ideal start date of this timeline would be (March, 2026), with a completion date by the end of (November, 2026). At that time a final document would be submitted to the City for approval. CEDA will schedule a final presentation following Council approval.

The proposed budget for the services to be completed by CEDA is a **not-to-exceed fee of \$38,084** due upon completion of the project. Included in the proposed cost is all associated travel, meeting handouts, and 10 copies of the final plan printed and bound in a marketable document.

Project	Budget
Comprehensive Plan (including all necessary travel)	\$33,964
Community Meeting (Optional add-on service)	\$1,500
2 Virtual Focus Groups (Optional add-on service)	\$1,120
Youth Engagement Activity (Optional add-on service)	\$1,500
Total	\$38,084



References

CEDA's planning department specializes in long range planning including housing studies, comprehensive plans, and strategic plans. This structure enables our team to provide a framework and actionable steps forward to address housing and community development needs for rural communities. Our goal is to ensure that the work we provide can be implemented by the community and carried out immediately after plan adoption. Below is a list of recent references that CEDA's planning department has worked with.

- City of Pine Island Comprehensive Plan
 - elizabeth.howard@ci.pineisland.mn.us
- City of Pelican Rapids Housing Study
 - brentefrazier@gmail.com
- Swift County Housing Study
 - leanna.larson@swiftmn.us
- City of Truman Housing Study
 - MSirovy@trumanmn.us

Sample Plans

In 2023, the Planning Department launched an organizational development initiative that strengthened the quality and efficiency of our planning processes. For this proposal, we have curated a set of representative samples that best reflect the breadth of our work. This includes a Comprehensive Plan, a Strategic Plan, and a Housing Study. These plans illustrate our ability to guide long-term visioning, set actionable strategies, and respond to specific community needs and priorities.

- City of Pine Island Comprehensive Plan
 - Complete May 2024
 - elizabeth.howard@ci.pineisland.mn.us
- City of Mapleton Strategic Plan
 - Complete March 2025
 - mayor.annis@mapletonmn.gov
- Washburn County, WI Housing Study
 - Complete August 2025
 - jill@livefastfitfree.com

Printed copies available upon request.

Thank You

We hope you find this Comprehensive Plan Proposal insightful and valuable. Our team is happy to discuss this report in depth or to talk about potential next steps. Our contact information is provided below, so if you have any questions or require further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Annie Nichols

Planning Manager

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