

**CITY OF
NEVIS
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

Updated May 13, 2024

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Sue Gray

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Blair Reuther

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Emily Whitaker

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Introduction

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to guide in a community's development. It tries to capture the community's identity and history, collaborates their vision for the future, and establishes goals and objectives to help that vision come to life. It identifies issues that are of concern as well as resources available. It serves the following functions:

It guides future development of land to ensure safe, pleasant, and economical environments.ⁱ
It provides continuity and a common framework for addressing issues and accommodating change.

It strikes a balance between individual and community interests/needs and provides a means to communicate them.

It protects property rights and values.

It helps protect public and private investments through organized planning.

It plans development that protects valued resources, agricultural land, and other open lands.

It fosters a "sense of place."ⁱⁱ

Authority

Cities are granted the authority to regulate land use by the Municipal Planning Act (MN Stat. 462). It provides the framework and road map that all cities must follow.ⁱⁱⁱ

History

Explorers such as William Morrison, Zebulon Pike, and Joseph Cass first explored this region during the late 17th century in their search for the headwaters of the Mississippi River. Fur trading posts between the French and the Chippewa Indians were rapidly expanding throughout the country during this time as well as into the early 1800's. "The Leech Lake area, including Hubbard County, was firmly under Chippewa control [in] 1780," according to Peter Wilson, author of Hubbard County Settlement in the 1880's. Very few white men entered this area prior to the middle 1800's until the logging industry began to boom.

Hubbard County, itself, was organized in 1883 when the legislature detached 16 Congressional townships from Cass County to the east and reorganized them as Hubbard County. The first elected officers took office on November 23, 1883.

Originally a trading post on Upper 8th Crow Wing Lake named "Ojibwa," the new site for the town of Nevis was selected and established by two men by the names of Miller and Halvorson. They established the first post office (1899). The area soon gained the attention of the logging industry magnates T. B. Walker (Walker) and J. J. Hill (Akeley) as a switching off point for the railroad serving the lumber mills in Akeley. A great Northern railway station was erected in the area.

Halvorson, one of the town's founding fathers, apparently was a great recruiter as well. He traveled the country to bring people to the area. And come, they did. An inventory of the area for 1930 referenced immigrants of Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, German, British, Slav, and Finnish heritage.

Nevis was incorporated as a village on February 4, 1902, and again on April 9, 1921, as separate from the township.^{iv}

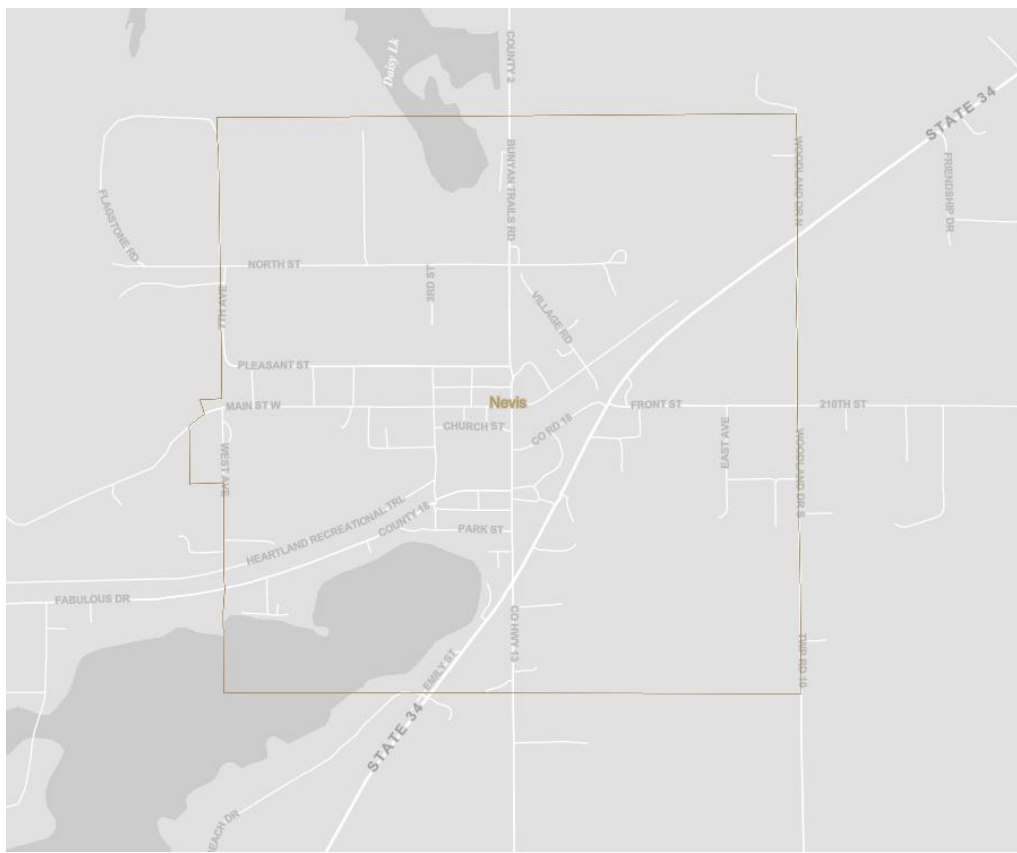
General Characteristics:

Nevis is located in the southern part of Hubbard County in north central Minnesota. The city is located on the shores of beautiful Lake Belle Taine and covers a total area of 1.01 square miles (2.62 km²), according to the United States Census Bureau. Of this area, 0.93 square miles (2.41 km²) of it is land and 0.08 square miles (0.21 km²) is water. The elevation is 1,473 ft. (449 m) above sea level.^v

The Heartland Trail, an abandoned railway-turned-recreational trail, bisects the city. Minnesota State Highway #34 runs through the city from south to northeast, connecting the area to the rest of the state and region.

Nevis is surrounded by pine and mixed hardwood forests, agricultural land and numerous lakes, two of which (Daisy Lake, and Lake Belle Taine) are partially contained within its boundaries, and another (Deer Lake) which impacts land through its shoreland buffer area. Sandy soils are predominant throughout and around the city.

The natural beauty of the area makes Nevis an attractive place to live. Recreational opportunities abound.



Population and Demographics:

Nevis has grown from 308 people in 1970 to 377 in 2020. There has been a small decrease since 2010.

Population and Housing in Nevis from 1970-2023

Nevis	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	308	332	375	364	390	377
Land Area (sq. mile)	0.9	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93
Density (persons per sq. mile)	342	361	403	389	419	407
Housing count	147	189	220	199	217	217
Households		143	162	162	173	177
Persons per Household		2.32	2.32	2.25	2.26	2.13

Minnesota State Demographic Center

Information gleaned from the 2020 Five Year ACS Survey projects the population will increase

According to the 2020 Census, the average median age (both sexes) of someone living in Nevis was 35 years. When considering just one sex, the average median age for males was 33 years, and the average median age for females was 37 years.

Demographics Report

Under 5 years	15.0%
5 – 9 years	8.9%
10 – 14 years	6.3%
15 – 19 years	2.8%
20 – 24 years	1.2%
25 – 29 years	2.4%
30 – 34 years	11.6%
35 – 39 years	5.7%
40 – 44 years	4.9%
45 – 49 years	2.4%
50 – 54 years	7.1%
55 – 59 years	11.4%
60 – 64 years	4.5%
65 – 69 years	4.5%
70 – 74 years	4.1%
75 – 79 years	.8%
80 – 84 years	3.3%
85 years and older	3%
Male	50%
Female	50%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The largest percentage Education Attainment is High School or Equivalent Degree of 23.1% in Nevis. The smallest percentage is Graduate or Professional Degree of 4.8%.

Education Attainment

High School or Equivalent Degree	23.1%
Some College, No Degree	27.9%
Associate’s Degree	21%
Bachelor’s Degree	18.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.8%

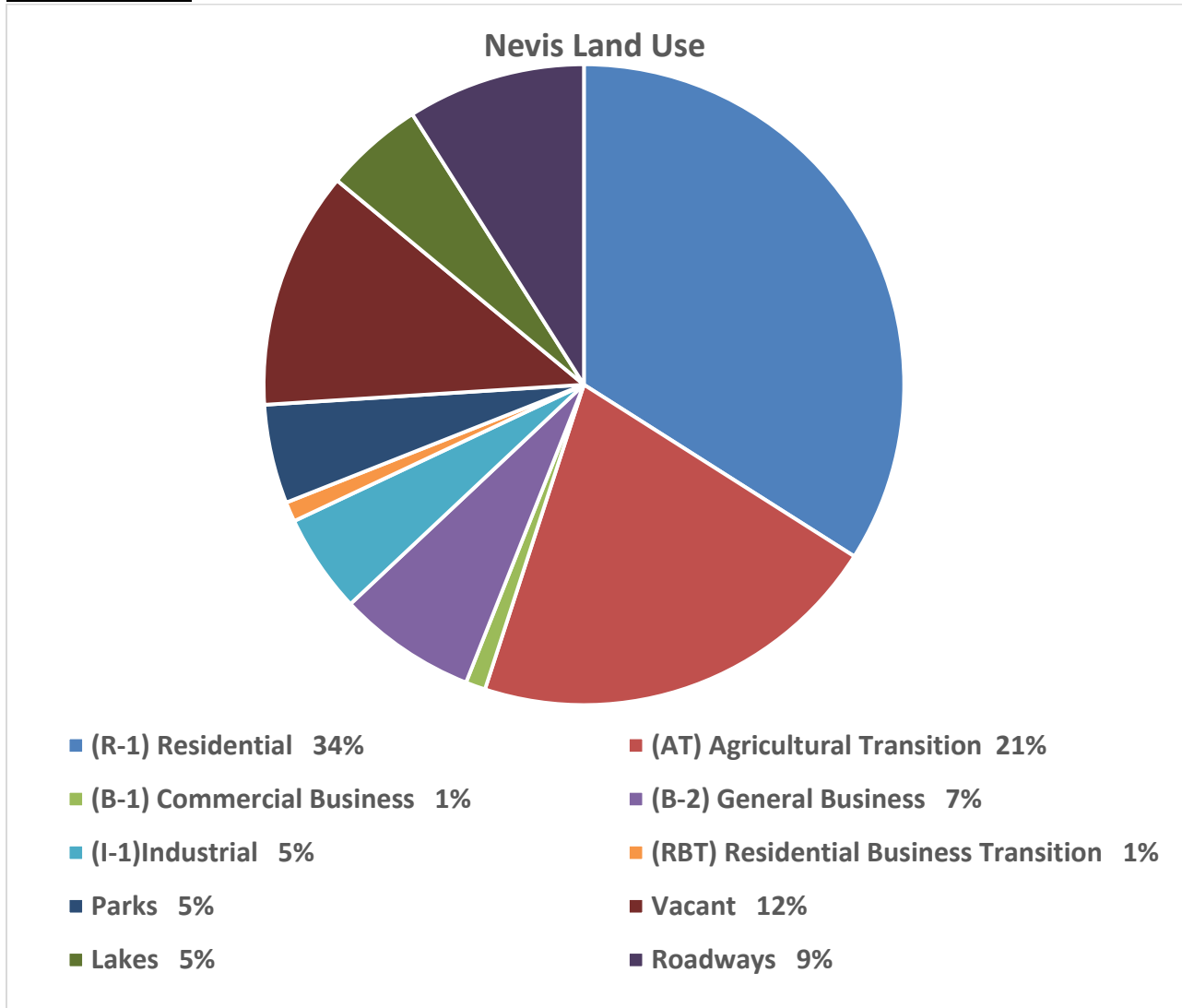
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household Income

Less than \$10,000	1.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	4.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	25.95%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0%
\$200,000 or more	1.8%
Median income (dollars)	\$54,583.00
Mean income (dollars)	\$67,692.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Nevis Land Use

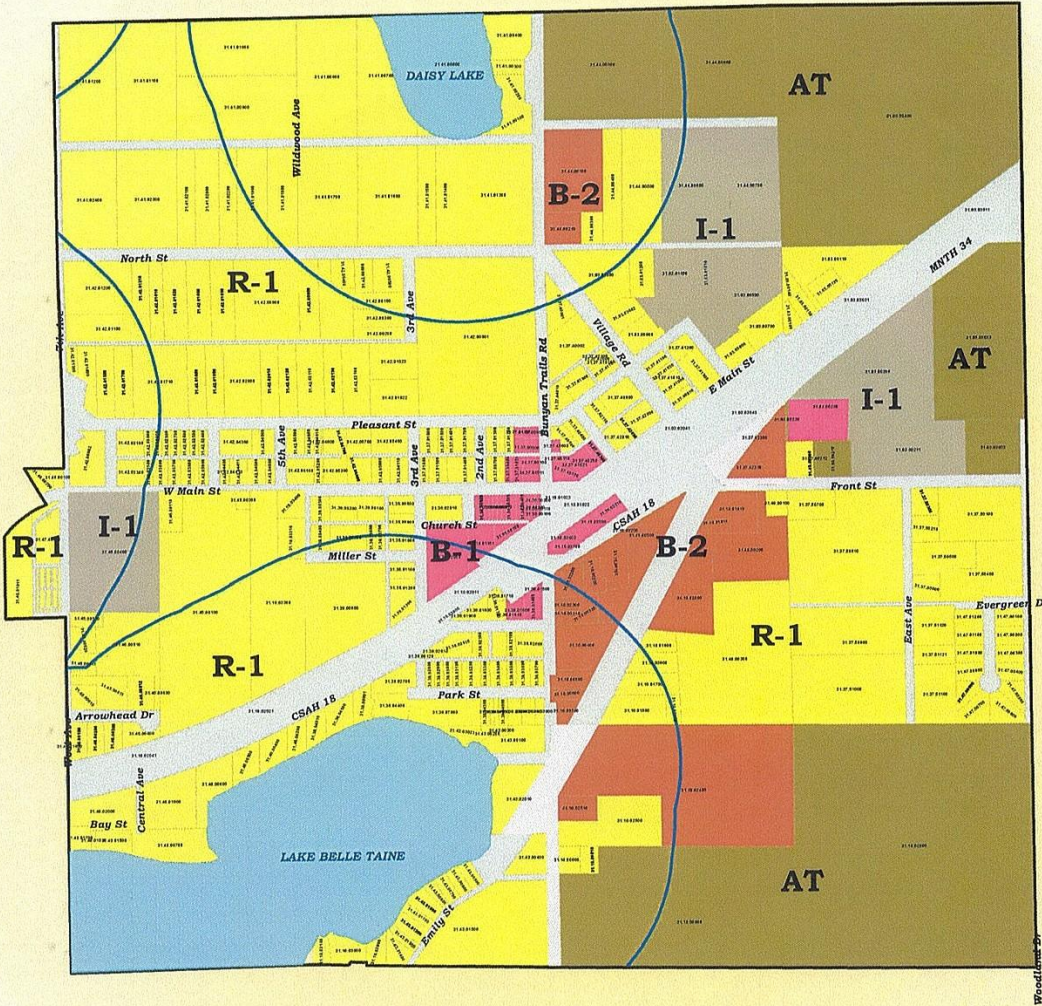


Source: Hubbard County GSI







The largest division of Land Use is (R-1) Residential at 34% in 2020. In 1998 the largest division of Land Use was Agriculture at 32%.

The City of Nevis current zoning map shows 363 parcels within the city limits. Out of those 363 parcels 268 are (R-1) Residential, 10 parcels are (A-T) Agriculture, 32 parcels are (B-1) Commercial Business, 25 parcels are (B-2) General Business, 8 parcels are (I-1) Industrial, 4 parcels are (RBT) Residential Business Transition, 16 parcels are Parks, 30 parcels of the (R-1) Residential, 1 parcel of the (I-1) Industrial, 5 parcels of the (A-T) Agricultural Transition are vacant. The lakes encompass 51.48 acres of water and the roadways include 30.2 acres of land.

City of Nevis "Zoning District Map"



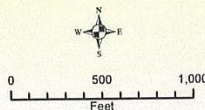
Zoning Districts

-  Shoreline Buffer (1,000 Feet)
-  AT (Agricultural Transition District)
-  R-1 (Residential District)
-  B-1 (Commercial Business District)
-  B-2 (General Business District)
-  I-1 (Light Industrial District)



"Home of the World's
Largest Tiger Muskie"

January 2014

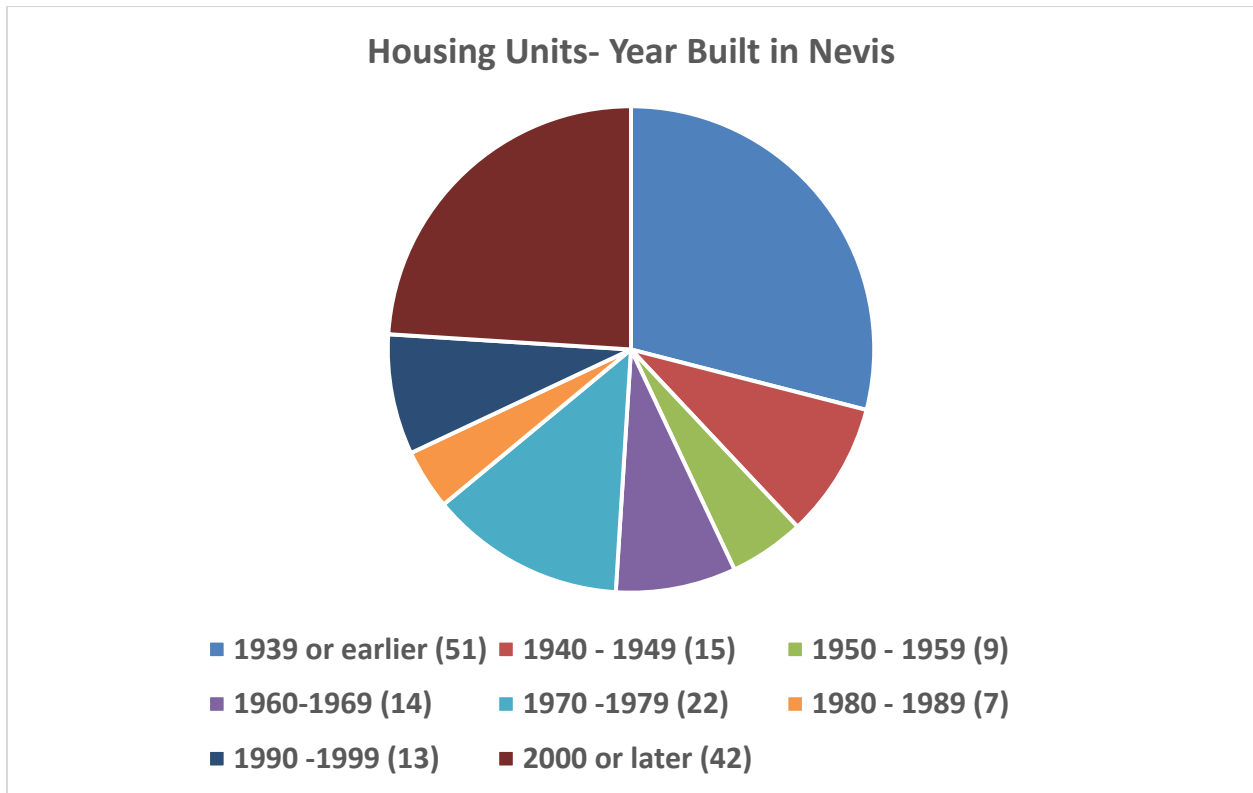


Effective:
04/14/2014



Residential

Residential comprises the largest use of land in Nevis with approximately 34%, or 202 acres used residentially. Residential includes both single and multi-family dwellings, churches, and schools. Lot sizes vary from 50’ x 140’ near the core of the city to 100’ x 400’ in the newer subdivisions. In the older core near downtown, densities average 5 units per acre while in some newer areas they maybe 1 unit per acre and sometimes 1 per several acres. Housing styles are mixed with a few manufactured homes interspersed throughout the community. The maintenance and repair of homes seems to be kept up.

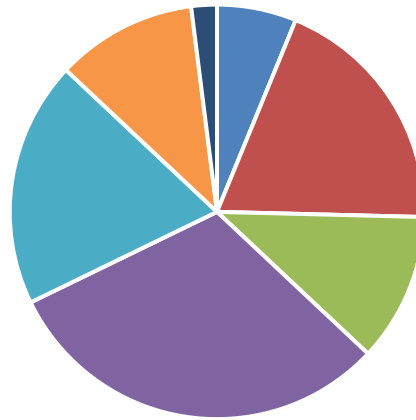


Hubbard County GSI

<https://publicaccess.co.hubbard.mn.us>

The largest number of housing units were built from 1940-1999.

Value of Homeownership in Nevis



- Less than \$50,000 6%
- \$50,000-\$99,999 19.2%
- \$100,000-\$149,999 11.6%
- \$150,000-\$199,999 30.8%
- \$200,000-\$299,999 19.2%
- \$300,000-\$499,999 11%
- \$500,000-\$999,999 2%

United States Census Bureau
Hubbard County GSI

The value of homeownership has increased. In 1990 over 50% of housing values were \$35,000.00 or less; now, in 2020 housing values are \$50,000.00 or over.

Agricultural Transition

This is land in Nevis comprising approximately 21% or 132 acres. Land in this category is defined as currently use for agricultural purposes – including crop farming, pasture land, animal raising, and forestry, if this is the major use of the land. This category does not include personal gardens, nurseries that raise plants or public forest land. There are large areas of Agricultural Transition land in the east quadrants of the city, but the largest concentration is in the northeast part of the city. As the community develops, Agricultural Transition land will become a smaller percentage of the total land use acreage.

Commercial and General Business

Commercial and General Business land use is the category of land use in Nevis with (B-1) Commercial 1% or 9 acres, and (B-2) General Business 7% or 44 acres. This includes highway office, and downtown commercial uses throughout the city. Most of this use is concentrated in

the downtown core area of the community and along Highway 34, in close proximity to the downtown.

Industrial

Industrial use is 5% of the total land use or about 30 acres. This is land that is used for assembly and manufacturing, warehousing, light manufacturing, construction companies or sawmills. Two main users make up the entire industrial category in Nevis: the local sawmill (no longer in use) and the fireplace manufacturer company.

Residential Business Transition

This is the smallest use of land use in Nevis approximately 1% or 3.78 acres. The purpose of the Residential/Business Transition District is to provide for the transition in land use from residential to low-intensity business, allowing for the intermixing of these uses.

Vacant

Vacant land comprises approximately 12% or 62 acres of the land in Nevis. Vacant land is defined as undeveloped land that is not in active agricultural, forestry use. This land is combined with agricultural transition when determining the city's growth potential. This also includes residential or commercial properties that are not actively being used but that are available for development.

Parks

Parks, open space, and public lands comprise 5% or 28 acres within the city limits. The parks and open space include the Heartland Trail, Muskie Park, Halverson Beach, the frisbee golf course, the boat launch, docking facilities, and fishing pier on Lake Belle Taine. These areas provide ample recreational opportunities to the residents of Nevis. Public lands include public utilities.

Lakes

Water makes up approximately 5% or 32 acres within the city limits. The majority is Lake Belle Taine, located in the southwest corner of the City. Daisy Lake juts into the city limits on the north side Lake Belle Taine is classified as a Recreational Development lake by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Deer Lake is located outside the city limits, however, Deer Lake shoreland district affects property within the city limits of Nevis.

Roadways

With 9% or 52 acres, right of way is the city's 3rd largest land use. This includes streets, alleys, highways, roadways, and sidewalks. State Highway 34 intersects the city, as do county 2, and county 18 west and 18 east, in addition to local thoroughfares.

Public Participation

In 2020 Nevis Planning Commission sent out a Needs Assessment survey. About 50 surveys were returned. Many thoughts and ideas were included in the survey. The fact that so many people responded shows the community spirit and pride in the City of Nevis.

The purpose of this survey was to gain input from the community on land use issues that they feel are important. Areas of Challenges and opportunities were commented on in the survey. The survey input was used in the writing of this land use plan. The following is the information gained from the community and their ranking for each area.

Challenges

Housing

Condition of houses and lots

Vacant lots

Maintain small town feel

Crime Control within the City

Transportation

School growth

Community garden

Parks

The top four challenges/concerns: housing, condition of houses and lots, vacant lots, maintain small town feel are challenging for a community and are the focus of the land use plan and future city planning. The remaining challenges are also important and should be considered in the overall continued planning of the city.

Opportunities

Housing for seniors

Room for business growth

Tourism

Plan for the future as a community

Reasonable land prices for affordable growth

Eligibility for grants to improve

These opportunities should be referred to for the future planning and consideration.

What do these challenges and opportunities mean for the City of Nevis?

The issues identified by the land use survey are excellent areas for a community to continue planning. Nevis is taking positive steps towards short- and long-range planning with the implementation of the Zoning Ordinance, land use and building codes.

Each of these areas are to considered as tools in guiding development to assist the city in reaching their desired goals. Policies and implementation strategies are included for the city to follow. The planned development of a community doesn't happen overnight. Following the plan of the community by enforcing ordinances can be a slow process. At times, it seems like there is no noticeable difference. In addition to the implementation of ordinances, a strategic plan should be created with definite strategies and time lines. The goals of the city often aren't seen in the short term but rather the long term. Planning for the future means planning for future generations so that they may see the benefits of the community's efforts to guide development. Progress will be seen by the planners also. Conformance to city ordinances by new development will occur and the community will begin to shape itself in the direction of its plan.

Community Vision

Residents were asked in the survey what would they consider strengths of the community. The following are some of the replies:

- Small town feel
- Recreational Areas
- Small Businesses
- School
- Fire/Sheriff's Department
- People
- Other: Lake access, Churches

Residents of Nevis feel very proud of their quiet residential community. The friendly atmosphere provides a good place to raise a family. They also feel that the fire department/first response and sheriff's department are good and provide security for the community.

The Land Use Plan

The City of Nevis encompasses a one square mile of land. Within this one square mile, many recreational opportunities exist with the Heartland Trail and Lake Belle Taine. These amenities in Nevis offer a beautiful community with small town charm.

The City's transportation system is well served with State Highway 34 running through it also county highways and local thoroughfares. The Heartland Trail is an abandoned railway-turned-recreational trail, bisecting the City from the southwest corner to the northeast corner. Along this trail are a mixture of land uses including Residential, Commercial and Agricultural Transition.

The residential areas are separated from most commercial uses. There are also large agricultural transition areas within the residential areas that are available for future residential development.

The commercial district has been developing and seems to continue to develop.

Industrial district consists of two businesses. The community has not placed industry on the top of their list of challenges and opportunities as they are better suited as a bedroom community

and a tourist destination. Because our City is close to the City of Park Rapids and the City of Walker, which provides services on a larger scale. It is difficult for some businesses to compete.

This land use plan focuses on increasing residential and commercial development opportunities while maintaining the existing uses within the developed areas of the City. It builds upon the established land use pattern and identifies compatible use areas for future development.

Planning Provisions

With a land use plan, zoning ordinance and zoning map implemented and enforced, the following provisions should be followed to realize the community's plans and vision.

- The zoning map should follow the land use plan or have provisions for future zoning in accordance to the plan.
- To accommodate growth and development, the extension of sewer and water utilities should be addressed and extended to all areas of the City.
- Collector streets should be planned and extended through areas of development to accommodate ease of access to all areas of the City. The official map should be updated to endure future development of roads and to deter building over future roadways.
- Extension of utilities to areas outside the City limits should be reviewed and these areas considered for annexation. The City should work cooperatively with surrounding Nevis township and Hubbard County to accomplish orderly annexation and handle requests for utility extensions from surrounding areas.
- In-fill development should be encouraged to take advantage of existing sewer and water utilities and to provide cost-effective development for the future.

Nevis is a community that stresses a high quality of life for raising families. Existing residential development is one of the most important factors of this quality of life. The residential neighborhoods include a mix of single-family housing styles and also include manufactured housing interspersed throughout the neighborhoods. Properties are well-maintained. Commercial development has not been allowed to encroach into these neighborhoods for the majority of the City. There are a number of vacant lots among the developed areas of the City that could be available for additional, in-fill housing. Agricultural Transition land also is available for future housing development.

Maintaining existing residential areas and encouraging future development are important factors for maintaining the quality of life in Nevis. The community focuses on its good school system and ability to attract students. This further strengthens the need for increased residential areas to maintain the strong school district.

Nearly all of the residential development consists of single-family housing. This is a desirable situation and these neighborhoods should be maintained. In-fill development should be encouraged where vacant lots exist to take advantage of existing sewer and water lines.

Non-conforming commercial uses existing within residential neighborhoods should be identified and phased-out over time. Preserving the residential character of neighborhoods will strengthen and increase livability of these areas.

The roadway system should be reviewed and platted streets that are not developed should either be developed or vacated. Additional streets should be platted in areas that currently do not have adequate access to neighborhoods or for future development.

Where unbuildable lots exist, abutting property owners should be encouraged to purchase these lots and maintain as open space.

Implementation

Residential

What: Re-zone areas in the northeast and southeast sections of the City that are currently used for agricultural transition purposes. These areas are very compatible for new residential development.

Who: Planning Commission and City Council

When: Short- and Long- term

Commercial and Business

What: Performance standards should be reviewed for maintenance and landscaping of commercial properties to enhance the area. Special attention can be paid to development to ensure compliance with these standards and provide an aesthetically pleasing gateway to the community.

Who: City Staff, Planning Commission, City Council

When: On-going and Short- and Long-term

Industrial

What: Although promoting new industry was not identified as a priority of the community, it is important that land exists if an industry should wish to pursue development in Nevis. It is not in the best interest of the City to wait until an industry is interested before they identify an area that would be compatible for such uses. Land should be identified that could be used as Industrial and is currently, or can be, served by City utilities.

Who: Planning Commission, City Council

When: Short-term

Agricultural Transition

What: Several agricultural transition areas have been identified for future residential use. It is important to remember to zone these appropriately as needs dictate. The northeast and southeast corners of the City could be developed first.

Who: Planning Commission, City Council

When: Short- and Long term

Growth Areas

What: Growth areas are areas that the City believes will develop to such an extent that the extension of City utilities will be needed or requested. Such areas include Agricultural Transition and annexation and warrant close attention.

Who: Planning Commission, City Council, Nevis Township

When: On-going

Public Facilities and Services Assessment

City Administration Bldg.
104 Main Street W.
Nevis, MN 56467

Emergency Services:
Police (contracted through Hubbard County)
Officer Josh Oswald, Hubbard County Sheriff's Office

Fire and Rescue
Nevis Volunteer Fire Department
204 Main Street E.
Nevis, MN 56467

Ambulance Service
North Memorial Ambulance Service
Park Rapids – Walker

Water and Sewer Facilities
City of Nevis Public Works
204 Main Street E.
Nevis, MN 56467

Water information
Water Source: 2 wells
Storage Capacity: 50,000 gallons total
Pumping Capacity:
 Well #1 (Emergency)=320 gallons/min.
 Well #2 (Primary)=230 gallons/min.

Wastewater
Treatment Type: Stabilization Pond System
Capacity of Plant:
 One 5.64 acre pond (Primary)
 One 2.82 acre pond (Secondary)
Avg. Demand: 35,000 gal./day
Peak Demand: 50,000 gal./day
Water Usage Charge: Base charge \$41.16/month for up to 3,333 gal.
 \$ 3.82 per 1,000 gal. over 3,333 gal.
 State testing fee=0.81/month

Sewer Usage Charge: Base charge \$21.22/month for 1 ERU minimum
ERU=Equivalent Residential Unit
Nevis Municipal Liquor Store
100 Main Street W.
Nevis, MN 56467

Nevis School District #308 (K-12)
210 Pleasant Street W.
Nevis, MN 56467

Nevis Senior Center
Senior Meal Program by LSS
114 Village Road
Nevis, MN 56467

Sources:

“Community-Planning-Zoning, “The Purpose of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.”

Most of the information for this history was taken from the “Community Development Plan Nevis, Minnesota-North Dakota State University Student Project” by Michelle Frizzell, Andy Cooper, Suzie Hanson, and Dave Frueh, compiled in Fall, 2000, and the references used therein

Minnesota State Demographic Center

Information gleaned from the 2020 Five Year ACS Survey projects the population will increase

U.S. Census Bureau

Hubbard County GSI

<https://publicaccess.co.hubbard.mn.us>