Benton Township
Policy Chapter
April 8, 2010

Produced by
CARVER COUNTY | Public Health & Environment Division | Planning and Water Management Department
Government Center, Administration Building | 600 East 4th Street | Chaska, Minnesota 55318

The Carver County 2030 Comprehensive Plan | www.co.carver.mn.us/2030plan

INTRODUCTION

Located 35 miles south west of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Benton Township is one of 10 townships in Carver County, Minnesota. First settled in May 1855, it was named in honor of the U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton. He died April 10, 1858, a month before this township was organized and named. The village of Benton, on the northeast shore of the little Lake Benton and a half mile north of Cologne, platted in June 1880, was incorporated in March 1881. In 2006, an estimated 886 residents (Metropolitan Council) made their home in Benton Township, making it the 8th most populous township in Carver County. Benton Township has a total land area of approximately 34 square miles (21,698 Acres) with US Hwy 212 running through the middle of the township. Benton Township borders Waconia Township to the north, Young America Township to the west, Hancock Township to the south, and Dahlgren Township to the east.
POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

Population Trends and Forecasts

Benton Township has experienced a slight population change over the last several decades. The Metropolitan Council estimates that in 2006 Benton Township population numbered approximately 886.

Benton Township population is expected to remain stable over the next 23 years. The Metropolitan Council forecasts for 2010, 2020, and 2030, suggest minimal changes in population with the 2030 population expected to reach approximately 940 people.

Visit www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/stats.htm for more information on the methodology behind the estimates and forecasts.

Population Estimates and Forecasts for Carver County Cities and Townships
Source: US Census Bureau, Metropolitan Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benton Township</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver County Total</td>
<td>70,205</td>
<td>86,236</td>
<td>110,740</td>
<td>163,830</td>
<td>195,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forecasts include future annexation areas. All forecasts approved by Council Actions, January 14, 2004, and August 24, 2005

Household Trends and Forecasts

Benton Township has experienced modest household change over the last several decades.

Benton Township households are expected to increase gradually over the next 23 years. The Metropolitan Council forecasts for 2010, 2020, and 2030, suggest households will increase at a rate of approximately 2 per year. During the decade from 1996 to 2006, 26 new homes were built in Benton Township, which makes up 5.3% of the total new homes built in all of Carver County townships during that decade.

Visit www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/stats.htm for more information on the methodology behind the estimates and forecasts.

Household Estimates and Forecasts for Carver County Cities and Townships
Source: US Census Bureau, Metropolitan Council

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benton Township</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver County Total</td>
<td>24,356</td>
<td>30,986</td>
<td>41,780</td>
<td>62,680</td>
<td>76,180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forecasts include future annexation areas. All forecasts approved by Council Actions, January 14, 2004, and August 24, 2005

Source: US Census Bureau, Metropolitan Council
EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Employment Status, Educational Attainment, and Employment Forecasts

Employment Status and Commute to Work
According to the 2000 Census, Benton Township had 706 persons 16 years and over. Of this total, 75.9% of these persons were in the labor force. The total civilian labor force (not including persons on active duty in the United States Armed Forces, unpaid volunteers or homemakers) consisted of 536 persons, 74.9% of which were employed and 1.0% unemployed.

Educational Attainment
In 2000, Benton Township had 577 people 25 years and over, 261 were high school graduates. In addition, 126 had some college with no degree, 48 obtained associates degrees, 48 graduated with bachelor’s degrees, and 19 received a graduate or professional degree. Overall, 87% of the population 25 years and over were high school graduates or higher.

Employment Forecast
Job growth in Benton Township is expected to increase only minimally over the next 22 years. The township land use policy of directing commercial and industrial activities to rural service districts and cities limits the amount of new jobs possible in the township outside of agricultural industry.

EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES AND FORECASTS
Carver County and Benton Township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2010 MC Forecast</th>
<th>2020 MC Forecast</th>
<th>2030 MC Forecast</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benton Township</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver County Total</td>
<td>28,740</td>
<td>39,860</td>
<td>51,540</td>
<td>59,080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forecasts include future annexation areas.
All forecasts approved by Council Actions, January 14, 2004, and August 24, 2005
Employment Estimates and Forecasts for Carver County Cities and Townships
Source: US Census Bureau, Metropolitan Council

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic Resources Profile

Historic Resources in Benton Township
A number of known historic and archeological sites have been identified within Benton Township. 118 standing structures and 11 archaeological sites have been identified in the Standing Structures and Archaeology Inventory, a Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) survey program that has recorded over 50,000 historic structures and approximately 16,500 archaeological sites statewide.

Benton Township currently has one site on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Standing Structures and Archaeology inventories contain the County’s known archaeological sites and historic standing structures; however, according to SHPO many archaeological sites and historic standing structures remain unidentified or not inventoried across MN, including Carver County.

IDENTIFIED HISTORIC STRUCTURES (Source: SHPO, 2007)
The Township has a moderate level of participation in the Agricultural Preserve Program by landowners. About 5,720 acres (37%) of the land is entered in the Preserve Program as of 2007. Of the total land in preserve, 3,244 acres (56%) has the expiration filed. The Agricultural Preserve participation rate indicates a commitment to agriculture over the long term, particularly in the central and western portions of the township. The Agricultural Preserve covenant limits the residential density to 1/40 regardless of other zoning provisions.
The primary land use in the township is commercial agriculture centered around dairying, livestock, and cash grain farming. The amount of land in farms has remained relatively stable with the size of farms increasing both in size and operation.
PLANNED LAND USE (2030)

BENTON TOWNSHIP LAND USE (2030)

- **Mixed Use Residential** (Two or more of the following residential, industrial, commercial and/or office, and institutional uses, where the primary use is residential)
- **Commercial** (Provision of goods or services)
- **Industrial** (Primarily manufacturing, and/or processing of products)
- **Institutional** (Primarily religious, governmental, educational, social or healthcare facilities)
- **Park and Recreation** (Primarily for public active recreation activities)
- **Roadway Rights-of-Way** (Public or private vehicular, transit and/or pedestrian rights-of-way)
- **Railway** (Public or private freight or passenger rail activities)
- **Rural Residential** (Residential purposes, including mostly one-family homes. Housing development should not exceed 1 housing unit per acre)
- **Agricultural** (Agricultural purposes, including farming, dairying, pasturage, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, and animal and poultry husbandry)
- **Wetlands** (Wetlands included in the National Wetlands Inventory)
- **Open Water** (Permanently flooded open water, rivers, streams)
- **Transition Area**

Note: Land use within city boundaries or in transition areas are not included in the legend.

This map was created using Carver County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It is a compilation of information and data from various City, County, State, and Federal offices. This map is not a surveyed or legally recorded map and is intended to be used as a reference. Carver County is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Source: Carver County Planning and Water Management, Metropolitan Council Basemap: National Geographic Society

Visit www.co.carver.mn.us/2030plan
## Land Use Summary

**Benton Township**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Description</th>
<th>2008 (acres)</th>
<th>2030 (acres)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use Residential</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway Rights-of-Way</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>741</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>17,140</td>
<td>16,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands(^1)</td>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>3,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Water(^1)</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Area(^2)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>508</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,682</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,682</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The difference in wetland and open water acreages does not reflect actual wetland loss and all Wetland Conservation Act requirements must be followed.

\(^2\) Land uses within the transition area shown on the 2030 land use map have been aggregated to create the total shown in this table. For final determination of future land use designations within transition areas, please consult City Comprehensive Plans.
The land in the township is flat to gently rolling and is highly suited to agriculture; it is predominately Soil Classification Survey (SCS) Class 1, 2 & 3 land - Prime and Good agricultural land. A 1999 Carver County Permanent Agricultural Land study showed that most of Benton township is “highly qualified” for permanent agricultural preservation. Not all land in the township is suitable for intensive agricultural land use however, and may be better suited for open space or other uses.
TOWNSHIP POLICIES

Land Use

Because of the location, soils types, development trends, market demands in the area, and distance to sewer and water services, agriculture will continue to be the principal use of land in Benton Township. Land use patterns will remain relatively stable. Very limited amounts of agricultural land will be converted to residential uses. A large Multi-Modal Opportunity Area is located in the Township (See Policy map). Land within the Area can be expected to be converted from its current use to rail related Multi-Modal use in the future. Land use in the remainder of the township will experience minimal change.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-1
Agriculture will continue to be the primary land use and economic base of the Township. The Township hereby adopts the Carver County Land Use Plan as part of the Township Plan. A map showing future land use in the Township can be found in the County Plan. The County Plan along with the policies in this Plan will be used to manage land use and environmental resources in Benton Township.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-2
POLICY AREA DESIGNATION the Township’s land use policy designations are shown on the Policy Map. For the land in the Agricultural Policy Area, the density in the Township shall be limited to Option 1 - the basic 1 dwelling per 1/4 1/4 section as provided in the County Plan.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-3
The County Plan provides for a number of land use options the township can choose to implement. Benton Township chooses not to implement: the transfer of 1 per 40 eligibilities to non-adjacent parcels; golf courses; or additional feedlot regulation options.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-4
The City of Cologne is bordered on all sides by Benton Township. The city recently updated its comprehensive plan to include substantial additional area in its 2030 growth area. The Township’s Policy map shows a much smaller area as Transition Area. The Transition Area designation should be limited to the area shown on the Policy map. The Township is willing to work with the city to develop an orderly annexation agreement or other management tool to address the City’s needs to accommodate projected 2030 growth. The Transition Areas(s) on the policy map shall be managed in accordance with the policies in the County Plan.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-5
The Township contains two Rural Service Districts - Bongards and the northern half of the Gotha district. Gotha is not expected to experience very much new development. Bongards is located on US 212, and along the Twin Cities Western Railroad, major transportation routes into the Metro area. The location of the District makes limited highway service and railroad based multi-modal uses appropriate.

TOWNSHIP POLICY LU-6
The Township contains a multi-modal opportunity area as identified in the Carver County Community Development Agency study. Prior to any development a plan amendment will be needed and additional study and analysis will be needed including but not limited to: environmental analysis, stormwater management, sewer and water needs, and traffic studies. The township supports this economic development initiative.

Water Resources

Benton Township is located in the Bevens Creek and Carver Creek Watersheds. Carver County is the Water Authority for these two watersheds and is required to prepare and implement a water plan which addresses surface water and groundwater issues. The Township is required to adopt a Local Water management Plan that complies with the Watershed Plan.

TOWNSHIP POLICY WR-1
Benton Township hereby adopts the Carver County Water Management Organization (CCWMO) Watershed Management Plan; this plan serves as the Township’s Local Surface Water Management Plan. The CCWMO Watershed Management Plan will be updated by 2010 and the Township acknowledges that it will need to address updates in its township chapter and will do so based on input into the CCWMO Plan update process.
Transportation

Benton Township’s transportation system consists of county and state highways and Township roads (see map). The Township is responsible for the planning, construction, and maintenance of the Township road system while the County & State are responsible for their respective systems. The primary function of local roads is to provide access to individual parcel of land and to move traffic to the collector system. The purpose of the collectors is to collect traffic from the local roads and to provide access to individual parcels of property. The principal function of the arterials is to move traffic to destinations outside the township and to provide for connections to the regional system. In a rural area such as Benton Township the arterials also perform a secondary function of providing access to individual parcels of property.

TOWNSHIP POLICY TR-1
Benton Township’s primary responsibility is the maintenance and improvement of the Township road system as shown on the Plan map and as provided by statute. The town road system will be maintained at a level consistent with the need to serve the agricultural economy and residential development at densities provided in the Land Use Plan. Improvements will be made only to maintain or attain that level of service. The Township road system consists of those roads identified as Township roads on the Benton Township Map. The system may be modified by additions or deletions to the system made on the official town road map as recorded in the Office of the County Recorder or other appropriate Township action.

TOWNSHIP POLICY TR-2
Alternatives should be investigated in cases where the approval of a change in land use would raise traffic on a gravel road substantially above 200 ADT. Individual land uses that will generate high levels of traffic and/or heavy vehicle traffic will be discouraged and may be required to participate in the upgrading of facilities.

TOWNSHIP POLICY TR-3
The Township does not foresee the need for the construction of any new roads on the Township system. The Township’s primary concern is the maintenance and improvement (when necessary) of the town road system. If new roads are needed to provide service to new residential development, these roads will be constructed solely at the expense of the developer. Such roads shall meet Township and County standards for local roads or a higher standard if the road will be of a higher classification as shown in the County Transportation Plan. The Township will not accept these as public roads. These roads will be maintained and repaired by a homeowner’s association or similar entity consisting of the land owners served by the road. However, the Township may accept a new road if it connects to an existing public road at either end.
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Source: Carver County Planning and Water Management

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