

**CHAPTER 1.**  
**VISION AND CONTEXT**

## **Introduction**

The Vision and Context chapter is the starting place for Eureka Township’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan. It presents the local and regional context, the findings of Eureka’s recent planning efforts, and data and descriptions of existing conditions.

This chapter includes:

- 2030 Vision
- Why Plan?
- Regional Setting
- Early History
- Demographics, Economy and Growth Forecasts

## 2030 Vision

In 2007, the Township completed an extensive community process to develop a vision for the Township's future. The Strategic Vision was undertaken specifically as a prelude to the comprehensive plan update process. This document is the basis for the Township's vision of its future in the year 2030.

*In the year 2030, Eureka Township is a rural and agricultural environment characterized by farms, private and public open space, very low density non-farm housing with private utilities, and a small number of businesses including home occupations and agricultural-related enterprises. Residents enjoy a high quality of life due to the Township's natural beauty and tranquility.*

## Why Plan?

### **For the Town**

A Comprehensive Plan is general in nature and long range. The Eureka Township 2030 Comprehensive Plan identifies the goals, policies and implementation strategies that guide the Town's decision-making.



**Goal:** A statement that broadly describes a desired future condition for Eureka Township.

**Policy:** The position of the Township, or course of action the Township will take to implement the goals.

The Town's objective for comprehensive planning is: to make sound public decisions through a structured and transparent process for the wise long-term use of land, water and financial resources in Eureka Township. The Plan is the basis for regulating land use, including the zoning ordinance. It is to be used in reviewing land use applications, guiding investment of Township resources, and coordinating with other units of government.

The Strategic Vision document communicates the importance of using, amending, and maintaining the Eureka Township Comprehensive Plan.

*Using the Comprehensive Plan: Use the comprehensive plan to guide all zoning changes to ensure consistent development policy.*

*Maintaining the Comprehensive Plan: Review the comprehensive plan annually and amend it as necessary to ensure its usefulness as*

*a practical guide for current and future development. Formulate and enforce ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the comprehensive plan.*

*Amending the Comprehensive Plan: The Eureka Township Planning Commission may propose amendments to the comprehensive plan from time to time as circumstances warrant. The public should be notified of these major proposed changes and allowed an opportunity to become informed of the change and comment.*

These strategies will ensure that the Plan continues to be a relevant policy document over the years, maximizing the investment in time and resources spent in updating the Plan in 2008. Like all other communities in the Metropolitan Region, Eureka Township will again go through a process to update its comprehensive plan every ten years.

### ***For the Region***

The comprehensive plan update also serves to meet the Town's requirements under the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. In 1967, the Minnesota Legislature created the Metropolitan Council to plan and coordinate the orderly development of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Minnesota law requires every municipality and county within the metro area to prepare and submit a comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council every ten years. The local plan is to address certain components of the Council's *2030 Regional Development Framework* and be consistent with the regional system plans.

### ***Planning Process***

Eureka Township created its 2030 Comprehensive Plan through a committee made of up the Planning Commission, two Town Board members, and two citizens who served on the committee that developed the Strategic Vision. Committee meetings were open to the public. Information was shared through the Township website and the Township held public meetings to share draft planning elements with the community. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 19, 2008 and the Town Board approved the Plan on October 14, 2008.



# Regional Setting

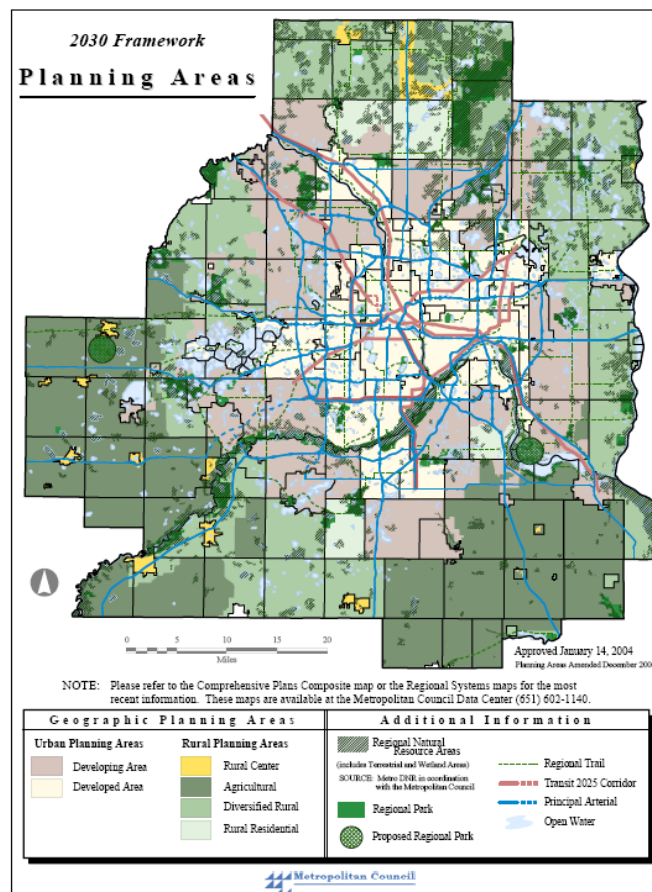
## Location

Eureka Township is located in the southwestern corner of Dakota County, Minnesota, on the fringe of suburban development in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region. Eureka Township is thirty-six square miles, an area established through the U.S. Public Land Survey System (PLSS). The PLSS was a method used to divide lands in the Midwest and Western United States, occurring in Minnesota during the mid-1800s.

Unlike many townships in the metropolitan region which have had boundary changes over the years as nearby cities annexed land, Eureka Township’s political boundaries largely remain along the PLSS boundaries.

## Regional Planning Designation

Eureka Township is designated as an “agricultural area” geographic planning area in the Metropolitan Council’s *2030 Regional Development Framework*. Through local planning and zoning, Agricultural Areas are to maintain agriculture as the primary long-term land use. The Regional Development Framework states that growth in the agricultural areas should be consistent with regional population, household and employment forecasts, at average densities of no more than 1 housing unit per 40 acres.



## Early History

The first claim in Eureka Township was made by C.M. Kingsley in the early 1850's. He was a friend of Captain Dodd, and constructed the claim stake for Dodd, who admired the land area north and east of Rice Lake while working on the extension of old Dodd Road. Dodd forgot about the claim but Kingsley didn't and he had a friend, Benjamin Cashey, settled on a Dodd claim in the spring of 1854. Kingsley settled in the northeast quarter of section 17 in July of the same year.

Also in July of 1854, Peter Sampson, Ole Torrison and Ole Oleson led a group of Norwegian families to the shores of Chub Lake in south central Eureka Township. They quickly cleared the land and set up farming operations. Later that year and during 1855, many more settlers arrived to make claims in the Township. A large group of immigrants from the State of Indiana settled in the north central part of the Township at this time. It is said that this group, which became known as the "Hoosier" settlement, is responsible for the name of the Township. They were on the move from Indiana, in search of a better life, and when they arrived at the place where they settled, they cried "Eureka", meaning, "I have found it".

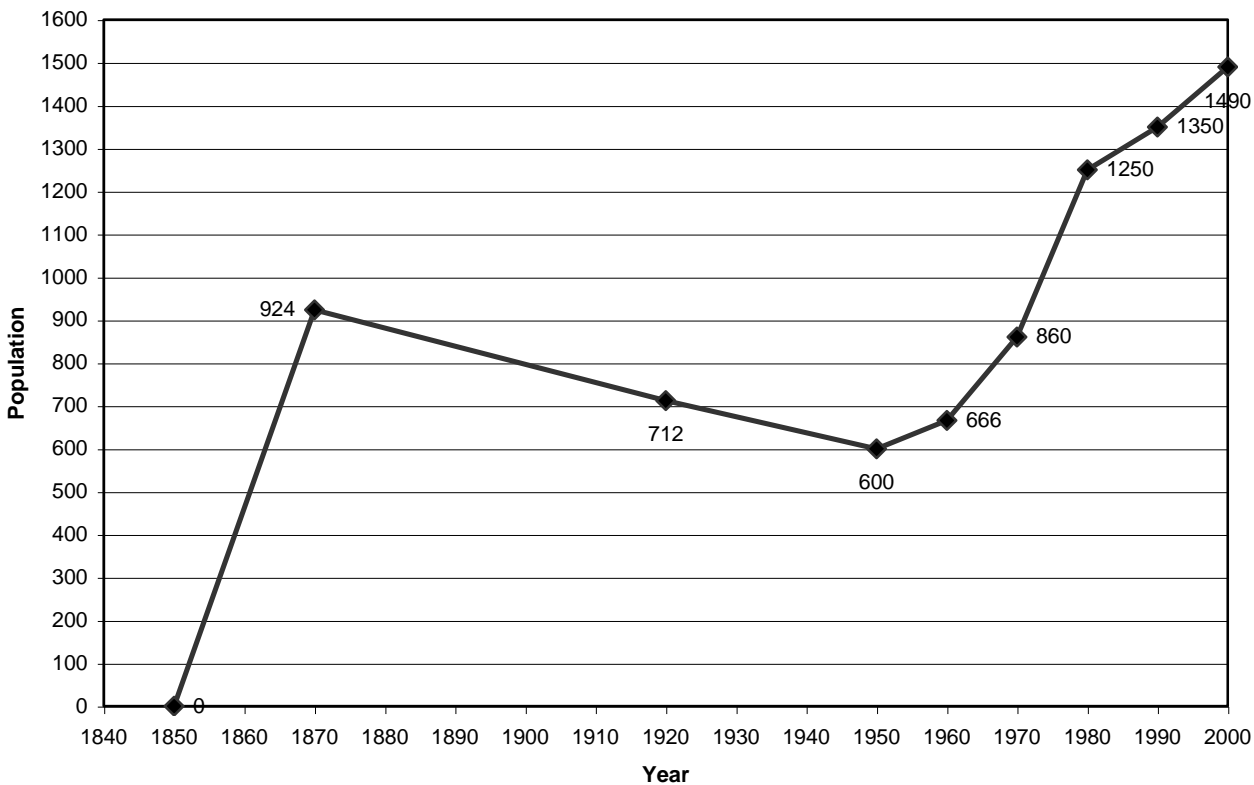
While some of Eureka's early records have been lost, it is believed that the first meeting for the organization of the Township government was held in the barn of Isaac VanDoren sometime in the mid 1850's. The Township was officially created by the Board of Dakota County Commissioners in May of 1858. Garrick Mallery was the first chairman of the Town Board, and Cornelius Wager and Joseph Bean were the other two supervisors. James Pool was the first Township clerk and Isaac VanDoren the first treasurer.

# Demographics, Economy and Growth Forecasts

## Historic Trends

The first European settlers arrived in the Township in 1854. By 1870, the population had reached 924; after that time it slowly and steadily declined until it reached a low of 600 in 1950. This decline was a result of the rural to urban migration that characterized many farm areas in the early part of the twentieth century. After 1950, however, improved highway access, inexpensive energy and the suburban growth boom put Eureka Township on the fringe of suburban growth in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Population began to grow again in the 1950s and 1960s. Over the past two decades, the Township experienced population growth rates of 8.0 to 10.4 percent.

Eureka Population, 1850 - 2000

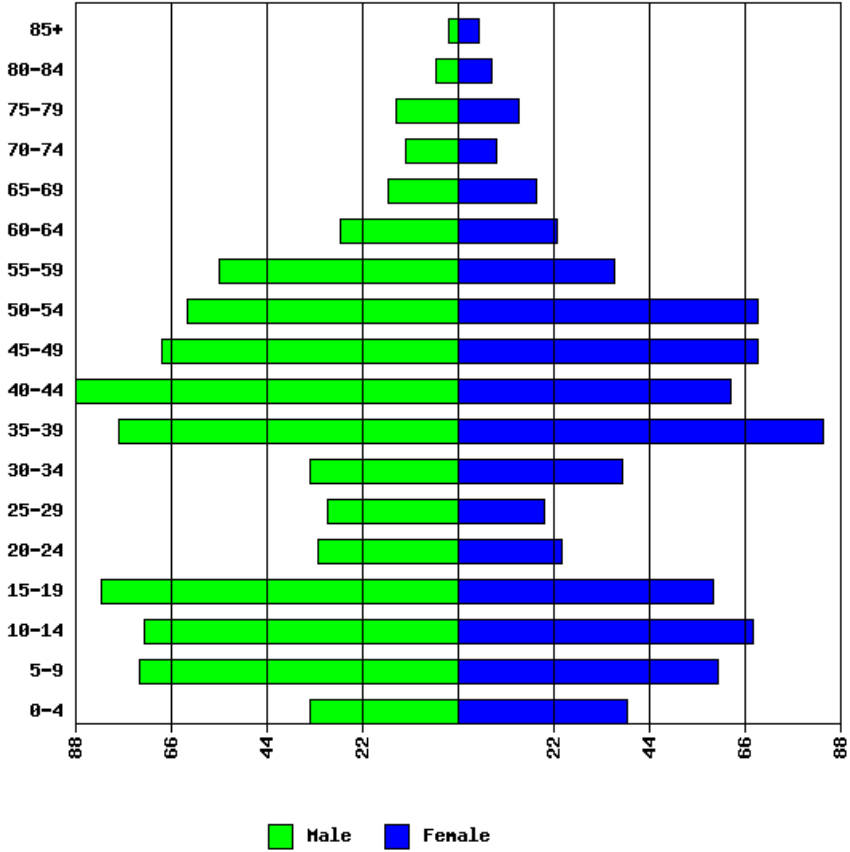


## Current Population Profile

In 2000, Eureka Township's population was reported at 1,490 persons by the United States Census. The Census showed that the Township's population was nearly equally split male/female. Looking at the adult population, the largest age group cohorts are baby-boomers (in their later 40s and earlier 50s in the year

2000) and people in their mid 30s and 40s, a time in life when people are traditionally becoming more established in their careers and families. The Town’s youth population is diverse in age, with nearly equal proportions of 5 to 9 year olds, 10 to 14 year olds, and 15 to 19 year olds. Similar to other suburban and town communities, there are relatively fewer young adults living in Eureka Township. Seniors age 65 and up make up a lesser portion of the community, as is typical, but make up seven percent of the local population, as they do in the County as a whole.

2000 Population for all races:  
Eureka township (Dakota County)



The racial and ethnic population is characterized as homogenous. For the 2000 Census, 98 percent of the population identified themselves as white, with the other two percent identifying as Asian, multiple, or other racial groups. One percent of the population identified as Latino.

## ***Economy***

While farming is still the predominant use of land in Eureka Township, it is no longer the major employer that it once was. Approximately 5% of those age 16 and over and employed in 2000 were farmers or farm laborers. This is down from 19% in 1970, and 8% in 1990. The mean travel time to work for Eureka's working population was 24 minutes, indicating that workers travel to jobs outside of the Township.

**Table 1-1  
Eureka Township Employment, 2000**

<b>Occupation by Industry, employed population age 16 and over</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Information	21	2.3%
Public administration	22	2.4%
Wholesale trade	35	3.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing	38	4.2%
Business and repair services	42	4.6%
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	44	4.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services	50	5.5%
Other services, except public administration	54	6.0%
Professional, scientific, management, Administrative, waste mgmt	65	7.2%
Construction	92	10.1%
Transportation, warehouse, utilities	104	11.5%
Retail trade	109	12.0%
Education, health, social services	115	12.7%
Manufacturing	116	12.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Census 2000



Other than housing construction and farming, there are a few industries in Eureka Township which employ more than ten employees. The Airlake Industrial Park, which is mainly in Lakeville and dependent upon Lakeville's public sanitary sewage disposal system, does include some land in northern Eureka Township. However, most of the portion of the industrial park that lies in Eureka is used for an airstrip.

## **Growth Forecasts**

The Metropolitan Council forecasts population, household, and employment growth for all local communities in the region. The forecasts for Eureka Township are:

**Table 1-2  
Growth Forecasts**

	1990	2000	Revised Development Framework		
			2010	2020	2030
Population	1,405	1,490	1,500	1,650	1,800
Households	447	496	550	630	700
Employment	50	80	100	120	140

Source: Eureka Township System Statement, Metropolitan Council

The Council forecasts growth in order to protect the efficiency of wastewater, transportation and other regional system investments. The forecasts show a population growth rate of about 10 percent between 2010 and 2020, and between 2020 and 2030. This is a similar growth rate to that felt by the Township between 1990 and 2000.

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