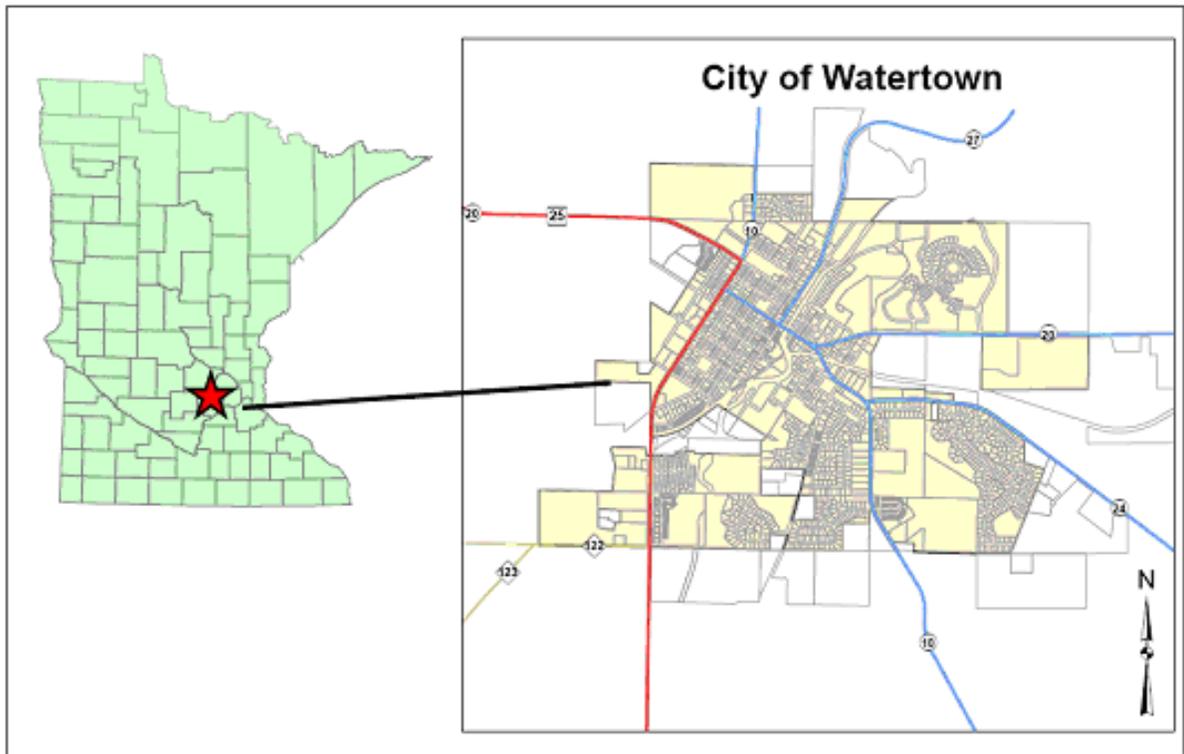


2

REGIONAL CONTEXT



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1856, the Village of Watertown was surveyed and platted into a traditional grid pattern that parallels the Crow River. At that time, the platted property was owned by Caleb Lewis, whom has been suggested as one of Watertown’s original founders.

The initial influx of settlers came from the east coast; they arrived in the Carver County area during the 1850s following the Treaty with the Native Sisseton and Wahpeton Bands (1851). As Carver County populated, European immigrants established themselves within communities of similar culture and heritage. The nearby towns of Cologne and Hamburg attracted Germans, while Watertown attracted primarily Swedish immigrants.

Watertown grew as an agricultural center with mills operating along the river. Local retail trade and services were established along the “Main Street” (presently Lewis Avenue), which was typical of other surrounding towns.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGION

Watertown is located 36 miles west of Minneapolis in the northern portion of Carver County. The City borders Franklin Township in Wright County on the north and Watertown Township on the southern, eastern and western edges. The City of Delano is located north of Watertown, and the City of Mayer is located southwest of Watertown. To the east is Lyndale and Mound, and located southeast of Watertown are the cities of Minnetrista and St. Bonifacius. Metropolitan access is gained via Trunk Highway (TH) 7 and US Highway 12. The Metropolitan Council considers Watertown to be a *Rural Growth Center*, meaning a city or town that has the financial ability to provide sewer and other services for its residents, and which has long-term plans to expand the existing service area. A Rural Growth Center is not part of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA).

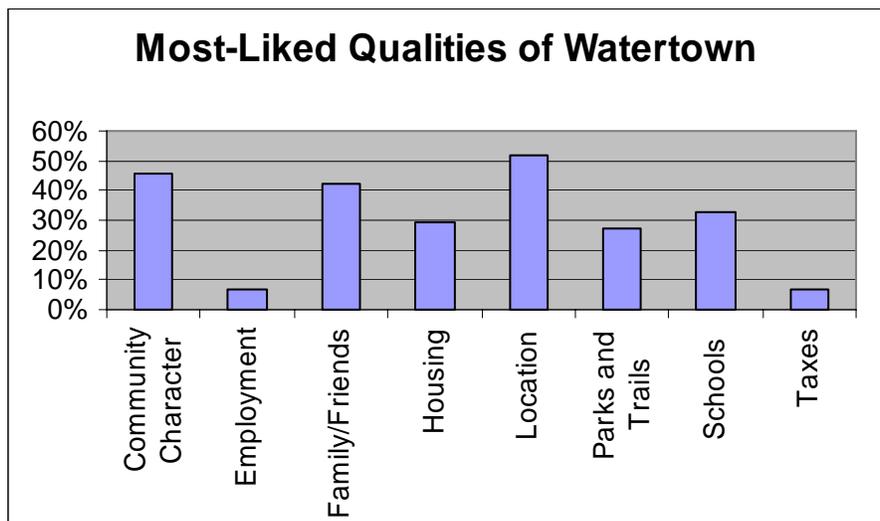
COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Presently, the City of Watertown is a community with diverse backgrounds, a variety of resources, and a promising future. The City has grown significantly in recent years as a result of a residential real estate boom—the effects of which were felt within much of Carver County and surrounding counties. As the region experiences a shift in the demand for residential development, more efforts can be placed on preserving important resources, enhancing facilities, highlighting economic opportunities, and improving the quality of life for all residents. The City of Watertown will continue to strive for excellence in the overall quality of life for its residents, while contributing to vitality of the region.

SURVEY RESULTS

In an effort to gauge opinions and perceptions of Watertown, the City conducted a Community Survey in 2007. From those who participated in the survey, over half believe that Watertown's location is the most desirable quality of the community, followed by community character, and families and friends (shown in Figure 2-1). By conducting regular community surveys, the City will gain a better understanding of residents' feelings and concerns about the community. The knowledge of desirable community attributes as well as serious issues facing the community will help in future planning efforts for the City. Figure 2-2 shows that the availability of retail goods and services and growth are the two greatest concerns for the Watertown community. These concerns present the City with areas for improvement as it strives to provide residents with an excellent overall quality of life. The Comprehensive Plan demonstrates in the following chapters that the City will focus more on economic development in the future, providing more goods and services as the demand increases. The City through its goals and policies will also focus on controlled, orderly growth, using the phasing plan and population projections that have been determined, and the demand for specific housing needs according to the Carver County Housing Study.

FIGURE 2-1 Most-liked qualities of Watertown



Source: Community Survey Results, 2007

FIGURE 2-2 Issues Facing Watertown

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Availability of Retail Goods/Services | 59% |
| Growth | 56% |
| Downtown Development | 32% |
| Employment Availability | 31% |
| Traffic | 30% |
| Congestion | 24% |
| Natural Resources Protection | 22% |
| Parking Availability | 15% |
| Crime / Public Safety | 12% |
| Housing Availability | 7% |

Source: Community Survey Results, 2007