

## Cottage Grove Development Process



Cottage Grove has been under development for over 150 years. From 1858 through 1965, a board of Township Supervisors was the governing body making policy that influenced the shape of this community. Since 1966, a Mayor and four Council members have served in that role. During that entire history, decisions have been made for better or worse that have determined what Cottage Grove is today.

This elected group of citizens, your neighbors, however, has not made policy and development decisions in a vacuum. Initially, the current City Council has the benefit of input from a number of volunteers that serve on City Advisory Commissions. These commissions are 1) Human Services / Human Rights; 2) Public Works; 3) Public Safety; 4) Heritage Preservation; 5) Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources; 6) Planning; and 7) Economic Development Authority (EDA). Each of these commissions and the EDA provide recommendations regarding developments within the community.

Additionally, as a development is proposed those property owners within close proximity of the development are notified of the proposal. Those property owners and any other interested parties are provided opportunities to comment on the proposal at commission meetings, Council meetings and perhaps neighborhood meetings throughout the review process. These meetings are all open to the public.

Input from the public is a valuable piece of the development review. Many, many subdivision proposals and other development projects have been altered from the original proposal due to input from the public. If a development proposal meets or exceeds the Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinance and other regulations the

developer or builder has a right to receive a positive review from the City Council. However, even in these cases many developers are willing to respond positively to citizen input by making changes to their proposal. Further, in cases where the developer does not meet or exceed all ordinance requirements the citizens and the City Council have an opportunity to enhance the proposed project through the development review process.

Community and economic development is a collaborative process between the development community, the citizens, elected officials, Council advisory commissions, and the development arm of the City, the Economic Development Authority (EDA). The EDA is comprised of seven members two of whom are also City Council members. The other five members are residents or business owners within the City as volunteers on the Board.

Development and related decisions of the EDA must be approved by the City Council. The mission of the EDA is to encourage growth of business and industry and the creation of quality jobs within Cottage Grove. The EDA does that by working with the development community to assist business expansion or to conduct activities that improve the local business climate or attract new businesses to the community. At the Board's disposal are development tools such as the ability to provide for infrastructure construction, land acquisition, project financing and the like. The Board conducts its business in accordance with City Council goals and at the direction of the City Council.

Development projects managed by the EDA are funded by revenues created by the developments themselves absent infusion of any taxpayer dollars. Development revenues include fees and charges borne by the development projects as well as tax increments generated by these same projects. A recent project developed by the EDA and approved by the City Council is the new Werner Electric Minnesota corporate headquarters, training and warehouse facility located at 7450 95th Street South in Cottage Grove. This new 116,496 square foot building is home to 110 new jobs for the community.

The EDA meets at 7:30AM on the second Tuesday of each month at the Cottage Grove City hall. Meetings are open to the public.