

FOREWORD

The story of Faribault is deep and diverse.

The first chapter of the story of Faribault was written in 1826 when the Faribault area was home to the Wahpekute band of the Dakotah. Alexander Faribault introduced fur trading along the banks of the Cannon River. Later, he moved his operation to the Straight River, where the downtown exists today. Alexander Faribault’s connection with the Dakotah forever established the importance of relationships and natural and social assets in the community that we now know as Faribault.



Sculpture of Alexander Faribault and Dakota trading partner

In the next chapters of the story of Faribault, the city experienced substantial growth. Faribault attracted significant private, parochial, and state institutions, which earned the city the moniker “Athens of the West.” Each chapter of the story of Faribault influenced the development of the community in which we now live. Each chapter left lasting impressions that are evident in the physical and social realms of the city. One can look at Faribault today and recognize how these chapters guided development patterns and cultivated community assets. One can also read these



Map of Faribault circa 1869 (Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society)

chapters and understand how Faribault responded to change, proved to be resilient, adjusted, grew, embraced modernization, and thrived. Faribault’s resilience and innovation are themes embedded throughout all of Faribault’s past and present chapters.

It is now time to write the next chapter in the story of Faribault. Over time, Faribault has undergone demographic shifts, welcomed new immigrant populations, weathered recessions, embraced sustainability, experienced significant industrial growth, and outpaced neighboring communities in job creation and investment. At the same time, Faribault has not been immune to the effects of disinvestment, poverty, health pandemics, and inequities.

Recognizing our community strengths and challenges, Faribault came together in 2016 to articulate a shared and compelling vision of Faribault in 2040. The Community Vision 2040 process identified ways to capitalize on our community strengths and address our community challenges.



Faribault banner

This Journey to 2040 Comprehensive Plan builds on the work of Community Vision 2040 and provides the framework for the community to write the next chapter in the story of Faribault. It is a strategic, comprehensive plan that guides physical, social, and economic development in Faribault through the year 2040.

The story of Faribault is not over. This Comprehensive Plan guides how we will work together as a community to write the next chapters in the story of Faribault as we journey to 2040. Embedded in the following pages of this Comprehensive Plan are strategic steps that build upon the interrelationships of our assets and our shared community vision. This Plan tells the story of how Faribault can preserve those aspects of the community that we value, enhance those aspects that need improvement, and create those aspects that we feel are important to the future of our community.



Residents who are helping to write the story of Faribault

