



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
SWOT Results from 8/29/2018

On August 29<sup>th</sup>, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee completed a SWOT analysis, providing their opinions on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for the City of Fairmont.



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**FAIRMONT**  
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## Personal Feedback

Individual steering committee members completed a SWOT analysis with the following results:

### Strengths

- Excellent Education with focus on vocational education
- Community Volunteers / giving community members
- Diverse job opportunities (Agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, constructions, education and government)
- Lakes and parks
- Traffic
- Mayo
- Diversity in workforce
- School system – public and private
- Recreation importance – trails
- Agriculture
- Significant wealth in area
- Affordable housing
- Strong sense of community
- Strong community foundations and charities
- Geographical location
- Size
- Available land
- I-90
- Retail/healthcare hub
- Bacon Capital / the lakes radio station
- Some young people moving back

### Weaknesses

- Millennials may feel lack of things to do
- Options for new multi-family housing
- Some of our own have a negative attitude about who and what we are
- Empty Businesses
- Roads
- Housing opportunities
- Acceptance of diversity
- Lack of skilled workforce



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SWOT Results from 8/29/2018

- Aging population
- Aging Infrastructure
- Shortage and quality of rental housing
- Difficult to attract young professionals
- Workforce shortage
- Close to states with lower taxes
- Lack of retail
- Blighted neighborhoods
- "I-90 view" is not accurate representation of Fairmont
- Conservative culture/ leadership
- Broadband choices
- Childcare availability
- Lack of jobs to lure people back from metro
- Entrance to town on highway 15
- No campground on lake
- Low unemployment

### Opportunities

- Build on regional health care (elderly population)
- Healthcare providers are generally younger
- Affordability of available housing
- Lakes recreation, trails, 500 acres of park
- Industrial Expansion
- Regenerate college
- New Martin County Campus
- Other cities and towns in area shrinking
- Reasonable cost of houses to purchase
- Multiple areas for expansion
- Food Processing
- Young people coming back to Fairmont
- Promoting employment growth
- New families coming to Fairmont
- Getting more jobs
- Lake values rising
- Increase in immigrant population
- Revitalization of housing / new homes / apartments downtown (adding incentives)
- Lack of amenities in surrounding communities
- Serious effort in childcare core team



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SWOT Results from 8/29/2018

- Adding amenities such as a community center
- The business of caring for the aging population
- Replacing baby boomers in the workforce
- Fairmont as a more regional hub rather than Mankato
- Location to major highways
- Low immigrants – get ready
- Using retirees in the workforce
- Returning graduates
- Increase in business confidence

### Threats

- Agriculture Economy
- State LGA
- Distance to Metro Area
- Empty Downtown
- Lose more big box stores
- Daycare availability
- Housing availability
- Tariffs
- Commodity prices
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Amazon type companies
- Aging population
- Loss of tax base
- Comparing and competing with Mankato
- Negative minority dominating discussion
- Nearby communities seen as more desirable
- Cost of development
- Long term job growth (should we offer subsidies? Ethanol plants?)
- NAFTA – trade agreements
- Building code – downtown buildings
- Cost of rental housing
- Living wage income

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## Group feedback

After providing individual analysis, steering committee members were combined into three groups which provide the following refined SWOT Analysis.

### Strengths

- Lakes and Parks
- Strong school districts + vacations and private schools
- Geographic Location
- Lack of traffic
- Community volunteers/ organizes
- Lots and varied community organizations
- Amenities
- Healthcare choices
- Strong community support for youth
- Active, passionate youth leaders

### Weaknesses

- Housing is in poor or rough conditions
- Perceived lack of home ownership
- Lack of housing
- Infrastructure
- Empty business downtown
- Millennials may feel a lack of things to do
- Some of our own have a negative attitude about what and who we are
- Community narrative among residents
- Lack of recognition of agriculture importance among legislators
- Lack of workforce

### Opportunities

- Brain Gain – Attract young people coming back
- Adding to Agriculture value
- Elderly care
- Health care hub for region – elderly people can bring young people to take care of them
- Room for industrial expansion
- College home health care
- Young people
- School workforce program expansion



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- Focused effort/ funding for entrepreneurs

## Threats

- Agriculture environment / economy
- Lack of (good) workforce
- State LGA loss population loss = funding loss
- Aging community
- Drug and Alcohol abuse
- Daycare availability
- Housing
- Funding loss for under 10,000