

a shared vision for golden valley's future

creatively connecting people and places, and inspiring care for community



Hundreds of your neighbors spoke in depth about their hopes for the community through surveys, focus groups, and brainstorming sessions.

What emerged are themes that express the American Dream and call for renewal of the suburban ideal. A vision intended to inspire citizens and empower creative participation.

A Shared Vision For Golden Valley's Future

Successful cities, like their counterparts in business, need a vision and a plan for the future. *Envision Golden Valley* blossomed into a citizen-led community initiative in 2002, when the City of Golden Valley partnered with the Golden Valley Rotary to develop an inclusive and accessible visioning process.

More than 70 trained *Envision* volunteers asked their fellow citizens about their hopes and ideas for their city's future in six overlapping categories: Development, Transportation, Community Engagement, Environment, Recreation, and Government. When challenged to think about Golden Valley's future, more than 600 people responded.

Many of the resulting expressions of community vision harmonize into broad themes of agreement. Hundreds of ideas speak about the physical city but also address its soul. We want safe, quiet neighborhoods, less traffic, and a more distinctive downtown. But we also call for—directly and between the lines—a city that satisfies our needs for beauty, affiliation, and social betterment.

These viewpoints and opinions coalesced into the glimmer of a community vision that can be expressed in two core ideas: Creatively Connecting People and Places, and Inspiring Care For Community.

Creatively Connecting People And Places

Golden Valley's location at the axis of urban density and suburban tranquility makes us acutely aware of our connections to a greater whole. We enjoy the access afforded by the highway system that intersects our community but want to reduce its impact on our neighborhoods and natural spaces. "Connecting" isn't just about getting from place to place. It's also about bringing people together—by fostering inviting public spaces, vital businesses, and community institutions where people work and play, encounter their fellow citizens, and discover common interests.

Inspiring Care For Community

True community is defined not by borders, but by its common ground. As individuals, families, neighborhoods, and organizations, our actions protect and enhance the public assets for which we share responsibility:

- ◆ air, water, wildlife, and landscape
- ◆ playgrounds, parks, streets, and pathways
- ◆ good government, education, and public services
- ◆ safety and welfare of our fellow citizens

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How To Use This Guide

This Vision Guide reflects thousands of ideas, opinions, and statements from citizens who engaged in *Envision Golden Valley*. It unifies all this input into a shared community vision expressed as: Creatively Connecting People and Places, and Inspiring Care For Community.

Ideas were contributed in six Categories, and a summary was developed for each Category. The diagram below shows how the six primary sections of the Vision Guide are organized, so you can quickly grasp main concepts and locate areas of special interest.

Whether you browse favorite topics or read the Guide cover-to-cover, you'll find it serves up a bold "what if" rather than a detailed "how to." We hope it will inspire you to look for your own connections and opportunities to collaborate with other community members.

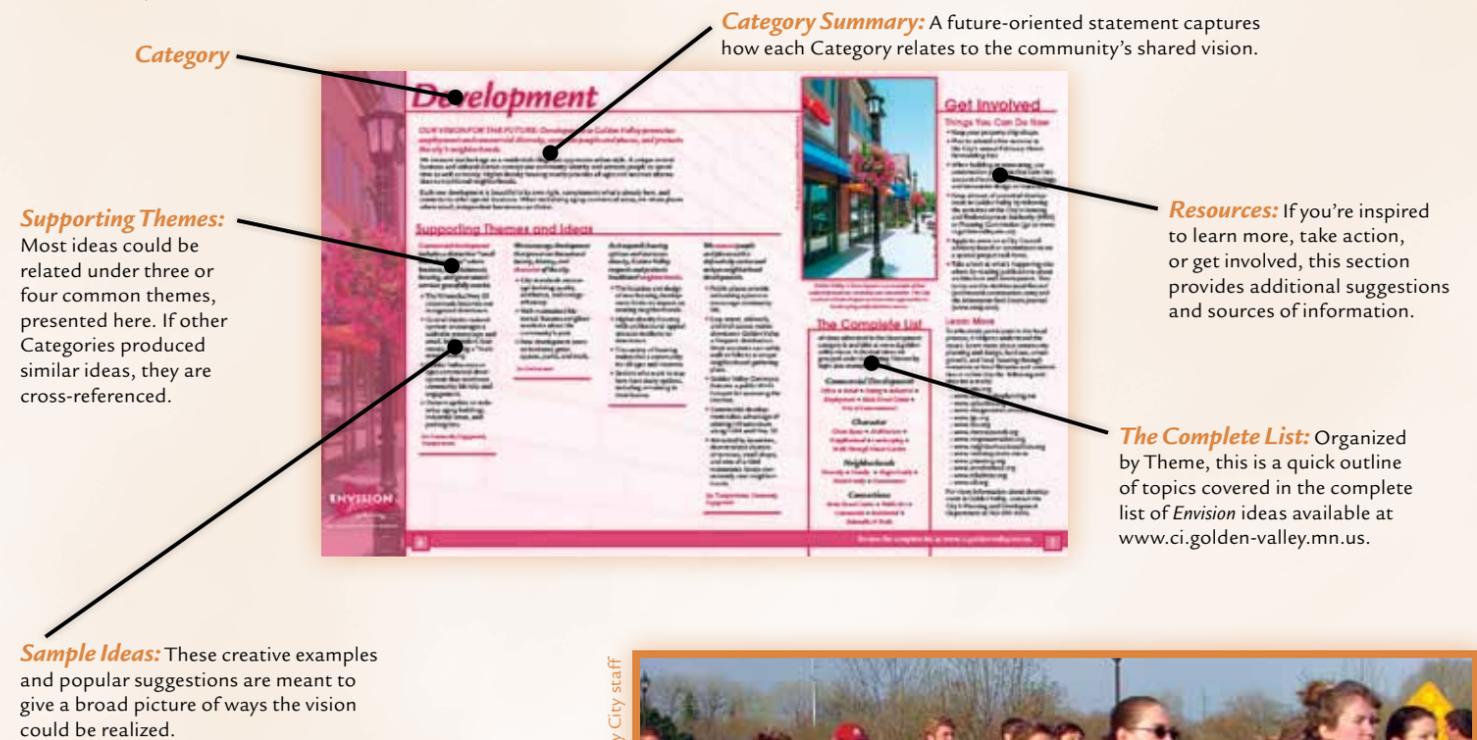


Photo by City staff

Each year Run the Valley draws hundreds of runners and walkers to raise money for local human service organizations.



Golden Valley Is Unique

As an inner-ring suburb only four miles from the center of downtown Minneapolis, Golden Valley represents the best of both suburban tranquility and urban style. This pleasant community of 20,947 features many spacious lots, winding, tree-lined streets, and gracious homes, but it is also home to several international corporations that bring an additional 30,000 people into the city each day to work (more per capita than any other metro area city).

Although Golden Valley is fully developed, its location and amenities continue to make it appealing to potential businesses and residents. The four major freeways that bisect the city provide convenient access to other parts of the Twin Cities metro area, yet fifteen percent (more than 1,000 acres) of the city's 10.5 square miles is dedicated to parks and open space, including two lakes, a creek, two golf courses, and 47 miles of recreational trails.



As envisioned by the community task force that provided input on redevelopment at the northeast corner of Hwy 55 and Winnetka Ave, Golden Valley Commons has become a popular gathering place.

So Are Its People

The people of Golden Valley are a diverse, well-educated group who defy the stereotype of people who move to the suburbs to get away from urban problems. People may move here because of the proximity to Minneapolis, but most Golden Valley residents care about their community and want it to thrive and have an identity of its own. The ideas in this Vision Guide attest to that.

Hundreds of people—residents of all ages, business owners, employees of local companies, members of civic and faith organizations—earnestly contributed their ideas to *Envision Golden Valley*. This Vision Guide is just the beginning.

Throughout this Vision Guide, a recurring “we” voices the aspirations for Golden Valley.

Who are “we?” Hundreds of citizens who spoke in depth about our hopes for the community through the *Envision* process.

“We” also represents the thousands of community members who have a stake in the future of Golden Valley:

- ◆ individuals and families whose personal choices and daily actions define community
- ◆ youth and schools who represent our community identity and hopes for the future
- ◆ neighborhoods, where judgments about quality of life are fine-tuned
- ◆ nonprofits, civic groups, and faith communities, where human connection and common interests inspire community service
- ◆ employers and small businesses that produce jobs, provide services, and create gathering places
- ◆ City staff, elected officials, and advisory boards who frequently balance the visionary and the practical, the local and the regional, the special interest and the greater good
- ◆ developers, builders, and realtors whose interpretation of our community aspirations create a lasting imprint
- ◆ other communities, since we are all in this together



Development

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: *Development in Golden Valley promotes employment and commercial diversity, connects people and places, and protects the city's neighborhoods.*

We treasure our heritage as a residential village but appreciate urban style. A unique central business and cultural district conveys our community identity and attracts people to spend time as well as money. Higher density housing nearby provides all ages and incomes alternatives to traditional neighborhoods.

Each new development is beautiful in its own right, complements what's already here, and connects to other special locations. When revitalizing aging commercial areas, we retain places where small, independent businesses can thrive.

Supporting Themes and Ideas

Commercial development includes a distinctive "small town downtown" where business, entertainment, housing, and government services gracefully coexist.

- ◆ The Winnetka/Hwy 55 crossroads becomes our recognized downtown.
- ◆ Central district redevelopment encourages a walkable streetscape and small, independent businesses, creating a "main street" feeling.
- ◆ Golden Valley encourages commercial development that reinforces community identity and engagement.
- ◆ Owners update or redevelop aging buildings, industrial areas, and parking lots.

See Community Engagement, Transportation

We encourage development that preserves the natural beauty, history, and character of the city.

- ◆ City standards encourage building quality, aesthetics, and energy efficiency.
- ◆ Well-maintained historical features enlighten residents about the community's past.
- ◆ New development saves or increases green spaces, parks, and trails.

See Environment

As it expands housing options and increases density, Golden Valley respects and protects traditional neighborhoods.

- ◆ The location and design of new housing development limits its impact on existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ Higher-density housing with architectural appeal attracts residents to downtown.
- ◆ The variety of housing makes this a community for all ages and incomes.
- ◆ Seniors who want to stay here have many options, including remaining in their homes.

We connect people and places with a defined city center and unique neighborhood developments.

- ◆ Public places provide welcoming spaces to encourage community life.
- ◆ Easy street, sidewalk, and trail access makes downtown Golden Valley a frequent destination. Most residents can safely walk or bike to a unique neighborhood gathering place.
- ◆ Golden Valley Commons features a public Wi-Fi hotspot for accessing the Internet.
- ◆ Commercial development takes advantage of existing infrastructure along I-394 and Hwy 55.
- ◆ Attracted by incentives, decentralized clusters of services, small shops, and one-of-a-kind restaurants locate conveniently near neighborhoods.

See Transportation, Community Engagement



Photo by Janice Laulainen (2002 Views of the Valley)

Golden Valley's Town Square is an example of how redevelopment can revitalize our community. The City worked with developers on innovative approaches to landscaping and pedestrian access.

Get Involved

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Keep your property ship-shape.
- ◆ Plan to attend a free seminar at the City's annual February Home Remodeling Fair.
- ◆ When building or renovating, use construction practices that take into account the environment, technology, and innovative design or materials.
- ◆ Keep abreast of potential development in Golden Valley by following the activities of the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) or Planning Commission (go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us).
- ◆ Apply to serve on a City Council advisory board or commission or on a special project task force.
- ◆ Take a look at what's happening elsewhere by reading publications about architecture and development. Two to try are the *Architectural Record* (archrecord.construction.com) and the *Minnesota Real Estate Journal* (www.mrej.com).

Learn More

To effectively participate in the local process, it helps to understand the issues. Learn more about community planning and design, land use, smart growth, and local housing through resources at local libraries and universities or online (try the following web sites for a start):

- ◆ www.cnu.org
- ◆ www.communityplanning.net
- ◆ www.cyberbia.org
- ◆ www.designcenter.umn.edu
- ◆ www.lgc.org
- ◆ www.lisc.org
- ◆ www.metrocouncil.org
- ◆ www.mnpreservation.org
- ◆ www.neighborhoodcoalition.org
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.planning.org
- ◆ www.sensibleland.org
- ◆ www.tchabitat.org
- ◆ www.uli.org

For more information about development in Golden Valley, contact the City's Planning and Development Department at 763-593-8095.

The Complete List

of ideas submitted in the Development category is available at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us. Individual ideas are grouped under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below).

Commercial Development

- Office • Retail • Dining • Industrial • Employment • Main Street Center • Arts & Entertainment

Character

- Green Space • Architecture • Neighborhood • Landscaping • Walk-Through Flower Garden

Neighborhoods

- Diversity • Density • Single-Family • Multi-Family • Homeowners

Connections

- Main Street Center • Public Art • Commercial • Residential • Sidewalks & Trails

Review the complete list at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Transportation

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: Golden Valley enhances quality of life and community connection by encouraging innovative transportation choices that are appealing, efficient, and safe.

Highways and public transit link Golden Valley to the greater metropolitan area and bring visitors into the community to work, shop, and play. Transit schedules and routes take us to friends, jobs, and entertainment. Traffic congestion and accidents are reduced. Neighborhood streets are safer, inviting residents to bike, stroll, or linger. We easily make transitions between transportation modes.

Shopping areas are designed for pedestrians, not just cars, and clusters of independent businesses are within walking distance of most homes. Bicyclists ride separated from street traffic. Sound walls present a friendly face to commuters and reduce traffic noise to neighborhoods, and bridgeways minimize highway divisions between neighborhoods.

Supporting Themes and Ideas

Our neighborhoods maintain physical connections and mitigate the impact of highways and other transit systems on quality of life.

- ◆ Bike-pedestrian bridge-ways restore connections severed by highways.
- ◆ Improvement of highways, roads, boulevards and right-of-ways considers beauty and quality of life as well as traffic capacity and safety.
- ◆ An integrated, neighborhood-friendly road system reduces commuter traffic through residential areas.

We consider individual priority destinations when solving transportation needs.

- ◆ The community advocates regional collaboration on transportation issues.
- ◆ The City, developers, and property owners encourage walkability in commercial areas.
- ◆ Employers promote carpooling, off-peak commute times, telecommuting, and other traffic management methods.
- ◆ Residents call a one-point transit dispatch system that matches riders (students, shoppers, elderly, commuters) with rides (cab, Rideshare, Metro Mobility, shuttle, bus).
- ◆ Commuter hubs with indoor amenities and parking serve drivers, bikers, and transit riders.

Our public transportation systems coordinate with neighboring cities and regional systems—using a balanced infrastructure to meet community needs for recreational, business, and commuter transit.

- ◆ We support development of light rail routes along I-394, Hwy 100, and Hwy 55.
- ◆ An intra-city shuttle connects key Golden Valley destinations with metro transit systems.
- ◆ Entertainment destinations are accessible via public transit on nights and weekends.
- ◆ Walking paths and bike trails radiate in all directions from city parks, connecting to other cities' trail systems and to transit routes.

While planning for future transportation innovations, we encourage inventive design and technology to manage traffic efficiency and reduce negative impacts of traffic congestion.

- ◆ Synchronized “smart” traffic lights measure traffic flow and reduce wait times.
- ◆ Road and street maintenance uses environmentally sound materials.
- ◆ Golden Valley is a government-funded pilot test site for innovative transportation solutions.
- ◆ City infrastructure and regulations accommodate electric, fuel cell, wireless mobile, and other emerging technologies.



Photo of Xenia Avenue courtesy of SEH, Inc.
To resolve transportation concerns in the Meadowbrook School area, the City worked with a neighborhood task force to plan the new Xenia Ave, a community asset that manages traffic, provides pedestrian connections, and integrates environmentally sensitive landscaping.

Try It Out

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Walk or ride a bicycle on short trips in the city.
- ◆ Use public or senior transportation whenever possible.
- ◆ Talk with neighbors and friends to form carpools whenever possible.
- ◆ Be aware and alert when driving through neighborhoods and near schools.
- ◆ Use public trails and sidewalks for transportation and leisure.
- ◆ Host a Neighborhood Watch traffic safety meeting to build awareness about individual responsibilities on local streets.
- ◆ Volunteer to drive a neighbor or acquaintance for errands, etc.
- ◆ Keep up-to-date on Golden Valley's Pavement Management Program (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/pmp.htm) and Minnesota Department of Transportation projects (www.dot.state.mn.us).
- ◆ Subscribe to publications covering transportation issues.

Learn More

Effectively participate in the local process by understanding the issues. Learn more about public transportation, alternative transit, infrastructure, and emerging technologies through resources at local libraries and universities or online (try the following web sites for a start):

- ◆ www.americawalks.org
- ◆ www.bikeped.org
- ◆ www.bikewalk.org
- ◆ www.cnt.org
- ◆ www.fuelcells.org
- ◆ www.its.dot.gov
- ◆ www.metrocouncil.org
- ◆ www.mnsafetycouncil.org
- ◆ www.mpta-transit.org
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.parksandtrails.org
- ◆ www.tlcmnnesota.org

For more information about transportation issues in Golden Valley, contact the City's Public Safety Department (763-593-8079) or Public Works Department (763-593-8030).

The Complete List

of ideas submitted in the Transportation category is available at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us. Individual ideas are grouped under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below).

Neighborhood Reconnection

- ◆ Parkways • Trees & Plants • Street Crossings • Traffic Reduction • Under/Overpasses • Parking Standards • Noise/Light Pollution • Infrastructure Beautification

Priority Destinations

- ◆ Parks • Options • Schools • Methods • Shopping • Transitions • Businesses • Restaurants • Entertainment • Traffic Timing • Regional Trails • Neighborhoods • Transit Centers • Traffic Management

Public Systems

- ◆ Buses • Light Rail • Sidewalks • Local Trails • Park Access • Safety of Systems • Regional Lanes & Trails • Accessible Transit Centers

Smart Planning

- ◆ Safety • Stations • Fuel Design • Maintenance • Pilot Projects • Signal Management • Signs & Wayfinding • Traffic Management

See the complete list at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Community Engagement

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: *Golden Valley is a diverse, spirited community where people work together to make it even more lively, beautiful, and welcoming.*

Golden Valley citizens are actively engaged, contributing members of a city known for its community spirit. Diverse people volunteer their individual talents—and work together—to participate in government, improve their neighborhoods, and build a beautiful, safe, lively, innovative, welcoming community.

Through creative promotion, unique events, and inviting locations, Golden Valley establishes a clear identity as a place where people of all ages and backgrounds want to live, work, and play.

See Recreation, Development

Supporting Themes and Ideas

We encourage involvement and inclusiveness within neighborhoods, among cultures, and across generations.

- ◆ Golden Valley residents identify their neighborhoods with names and signs to lead the way.
- ◆ A City Neighborhood Council provides a framework for neighborhood groups and citizen involvement.
- ◆ Neighborhood associations promote citywide Neighborhood Watch nights.
- ◆ Golden Valley youth start a retirement home partnership program.
- ◆ Most community gatherings feature multi-cultural activities.

See Recreation, Government

Our strong community identity is effectively communicated formally—and informally—through innovative citizen involvement.

- ◆ Residents always identify their home address as Golden Valley instead of Minneapolis.
- ◆ Well-designed signs mark major entrances to the city.
- ◆ Newsletters, the Web, community kiosks, email networks, and public access television keep residents of all ages informed and excited about the community.

See Development, Government

We have engaging spaces and events that bring people together year-round.

- ◆ Golden Valley has a multipurpose community center that includes a community theater and arts center.
- ◆ Community gardens and garden tours provide summertime gathering places and widen appreciation of the city's neighborhoods.
- ◆ The Lilac Festival/Valley Days and parade are revived as an annual springtime event.
- ◆ A Golden Valley Book Club creates a popular community forum for reading and discussion.
- ◆ Innovative partnerships between the City and businesses create outdoor dining venues overlooking public parks.
- ◆ A local farmers' market expands.
- ◆ Residents establish a food co-op.
- ◆ Parks (including Wirth Park) are used for music, fireworks, theater, and other events.

Our network of volunteers identifies and responds to a wide range of community needs.

- ◆ A full-time coordinator matches volunteers with projects and organizational needs.
- ◆ Golden Valley residents are known for their read-aloud-to-kids program in local schools.
- ◆ Neighborhood beautification volunteers bring the city area-wide interest.
- ◆ Youth can find jobs and service projects in Golden Valley through a network linking schools, service clubs, the Historical Society, and local businesses.

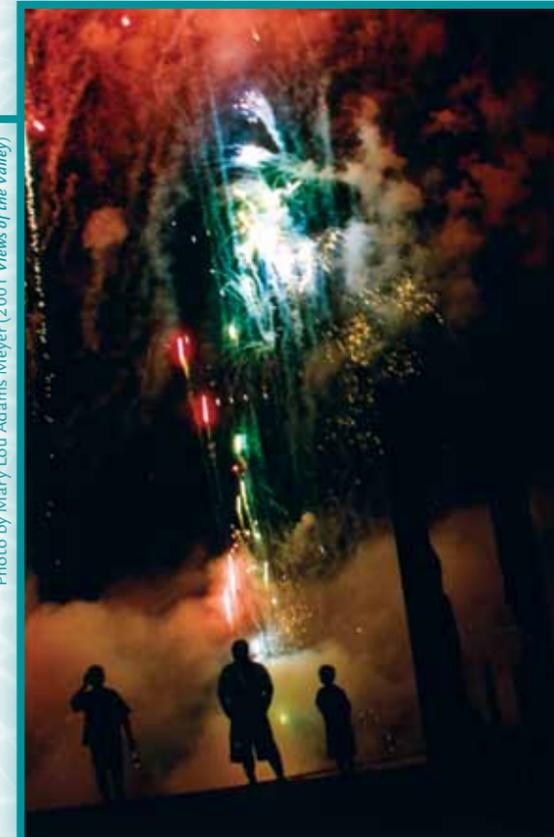


Photo by Mary Lou Adams Meyer (2001 Views of the Valley)

Festivals add sparkle to community engagement.

Join In

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Connect yourself. Get to know your neighbors.
- ◆ Start a Neighborhood Watch group (763-593-8058) and participate in National Night Out.
- ◆ Organize a neighborhood association for social and civic activities.
- ◆ Plan a neighborhood rummage sale or clean-up day.
- ◆ Support local businesses.
- ◆ Participate in or volunteer for a community event, such as Golden Valley Days (www.goldenvalleyfund.org) or the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation fundraisers: the Golden Valley Golf Classic and Run the Valley (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citygovernment/GVHSF.htm).
- ◆ Check out the local library for meetings, books, and activities for all ages (830 Winnetka Ave N, 763-540-8290).
- ◆ If you have a special skill to offer the community, volunteer it.
- ◆ Organize a food or book drive.
- ◆ Support and volunteer for a local human services organization (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/humanserv.htm).
- ◆ Join a local organization, such as the Golden Valley Rotary or Garden Club.
- ◆ Help preserve local history through the Golden Valley Historical Society.
- ◆ Consider becoming a paid, on-call firefighter (763-593-8055).
- ◆ If you see a community need, jump in and be part of the solution.

The Complete List

of Community Engagement ideas are grouped under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below) at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Inclusiveness

- Events • Service • Identity • Cultures
- Leadership • Diversity • Joint Events
- Associations • Youth Events • Faith Community

Identity

- Technology • Communication • Private Promotion • Public Promotion

Engaging Spaces & Events

- Music • Sports • Movies • Parades • Art Fairs • Festivals • Downtown • Food Co-op • Home Tours • Green Space • Cultural Center • Community Center • Pedestrian Friendly

Volunteers

- Clubs • Schools • Project Menu • Volunteer Hub • Student Internships

Learn More

Learn more about community engagement through resources at local libraries and universities or online (try the following web sites for a start):

- ◆ www.center4neighborhoods.org
- ◆ www.consentbuilding.com
- ◆ www.muni.org/planning
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.toolkitparticipation.nl

For more information about Community Engagement in Golden Valley, contact the City Manager's Department at 763-593-8014.

Environment

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: *Golden Valley is a beautiful, healthy city that preserves its balance of natural and developed urban spaces.*

Golden Valley, a Tree City, is noted for its thriving urban forest. We treasure each open space, park, woodland, and wetland. Our water features—Sweeney Lake, Twin Lake, and Bassett Creek—are pollution-free jewels.

Residents, government, industry, and developers work together to preserve and protect the environment.

Supporting Themes and Ideas

We embrace new technologies and innovative practices to manage waste and pollution at the source.

- ◆ The City sponsors hazardous waste disposal for homes and private businesses.
- ◆ The community recycles 50 percent of its waste materials.
- ◆ Alternative energy sources reduce air pollution.

See Transportation

The City's master plan inspires the community and individuals to preserve green and open spaces.

- ◆ Wildlife-friendly woods, wetlands, community gardens, or public green areas are within walking distance for all.
- ◆ Residents plant and display selected "city flowers."
- ◆ Native plants and low-input lawn care keep the city green while reducing the noise and chemical pollution of lawn maintenance.

We are leaders in surface water protection and enhancement.

- ◆ Bassett Creek becomes a beautiful river walk with inviting stops along its length.
- ◆ Wetlands, storm water retention ponds, and reduced runoff improve the quality in creeks, lakes, and ponds to swimmable quality.

Our urban design practices enhance the beauty of the city's green and open spaces.

- ◆ Downtown is more walkable.
- ◆ Natural buffers screen neighborhoods from industrial areas and roads.
- ◆ New building projects and public spaces include green spaces.
- ◆ Sound barrier walls are improved by natural plantings.
- ◆ Hwy 55 is a green boulevard from Highway 169 to Wirth Parkway.
- ◆ A trail system links our city parks.

See Transportation, Development



Photo by Janice Laulainen (2003 Views of the Valley)

Golden Valley's ponds provide aesthetic and storm water management benefits to the community.

You Can Help

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Reduce, reuse, and recycle to minimize waste; start a compost; adopt a neighborhood park or storm drain (www.ci.goldenvalley.mn.us/environment).
- ◆ Properly dispose of hazardous materials (www.co.hennepin.mn.us).
- ◆ Attend a Hennepin County environmental seminar (www.co.hennepin.mn.us).
- ◆ Reduce application of fertilizer, deicer, herbicides, and pesticides in your yard.
- ◆ Use native plants for landscaping. Plant trees, shrubs, or ground covers to increase the amount of water that soaks into the ground.
- ◆ Use alternative or mass transit.
- ◆ Practice water conservation.
- ◆ Learn about Golden Valley's watershed (www.bassettcreekwmo.org) and how to help protect local waterways (see links below).
- ◆ Celebrate Arbor Day, Earth Day, or World Water Day by doing something for the environment.
- ◆ Start a family, neighborhood, or service club tree planting program.
- ◆ Create an environmental awareness group.

Learn More

Use resources at local libraries and universities or online (try the web sites below for a start) to learn more about waste management, green practices, surface water protection, and other environmental issues.

- ◆ www.dnr.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.epa.gov
- ◆ www.greenguardian.com
- ◆ www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh
- ◆ www.mepartnership.org
- ◆ www.metrocouncil.org
- ◆ www.moea.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.pca.state.mn.us/backyard
- ◆ www.wef.org
- ◆ www.worldwatercouncil.org

For more information about environmental issues in Golden Valley, contact the City's Public Works Department at 763-593-8030.

The Complete List

groups Environment ideas under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below). Go to www.ci.goldenvalley.mn.us.

Waste & Pollution

Light • Noise • Recycling • Composting • Air & Smoke • Hazardous Waste • Alternative Energy • Alternative Transit • Community Clean-Up

Green & Open Space

Wildlife • Gardens • Aesthetics • Lawn Care • Master Plan • Landscaping • Native Plants • Mosquito Control • Community Gardens • Green Space & Wetlands

Surface Water

Wetlands • Creeks & Lakes • Surface Runoff • Water Conservation

Beauty & Urban Design

Softening the Hardscape • Land Management • Sound Barriers • Trail Systems • Hwy 55 • Buffer Zones

See the complete list at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Recreation

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: Golden Valley nurtures places, events, and associations that maintain recreation as a focal point of family and community life.

Golden Valley encourages year-round participation in sports, fitness, the arts, entertainment and dining, leisure, and educational experiences. We celebrate life in our neighborhood parks, schools, and civic buildings but also share recreational assets with other cities. Affordable, innovative, and inclusive recreation programs for all ages cement friendships, anchor families, and bridge differences.

Well-maintained athletic fields, gyms, playgrounds, auditoriums, and commercial establishments complement natural features like green space, trails, and lakes. Many envision a community recreational center that rounds out a revitalized commercial and transportation hub.

Supporting Themes and Ideas

Our parks, athletic fields, and natural areas accommodate multiple uses in pleasing outdoor settings.

- ◆ Trails and sidewalks provide easy access to local and regional amenities.
- ◆ Recreation areas are landscaped and scenic. Natural areas are preserved.
- ◆ Parks are enlivened with pools, wading ponds, fountains, and sprinklers.
- ◆ Ballfields, golf, and flowers in summer transform to skating rinks, cross country skiing, and holiday greens in winter.

We have unique places and creative opportunities for all citizens to gather and celebrate life.

- ◆ A community stage brings concerts, plays, puppet shows, and movies outdoors.
- ◆ Themed annual events attract participants from the entire Twin Cities area.
- ◆ Social groups meet to walk, play sports, garden, or discuss books or music.

Our recreational programs reach out to the entire community.

- ◆ We share reciprocity with neighboring cities (swimming, indoor tennis, golf, etc).
- ◆ Local businesses cosponsor activities with the City and community groups.
- ◆ Main facilities include day care and after-school care, plus senior activities and services.
- ◆ Sports programs that include intramurals and informal team sports are available for all Golden Valley youth—unrestricted by school district lines or tryouts.

See Environment, Transportation, and Community Engagement

A community recreational hub supports social, cultural, physical, and entertainment activities for all ages, indoors and out.

- ◆ A multipurpose center for play and culture offers theater, music, and fine arts programs developed in partnership with Perpich Center for Arts Education.
- ◆ A teen center provides a safe and fun place to hang out.
- ◆ Lovers of outdoor sports can find a domed field for winter use.

See Community Engagement



Photo by City staff

Golden Valley's Parks and Recreation programs provide a variety of year-round activities for all ages. Water Day at Scheid Park is a perennial summer favorite.

Jump In

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Use local parks for neighborhood and family gatherings.
- ◆ Sign up for one of the many activities and programs available through the Golden Valley Parks & Recreation Department or Seniors Program (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/parks).
- ◆ Volunteer to help a local youth athletic association, coach a Parks & Rec team, or teach a class.
- ◆ Host a family, neighborhood, or company event at Brookview Golf Course (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/brookviewgolf) or Community Center.
- ◆ Get to know the city by hiking/biking the local trail system.
- ◆ Adopt a park or trail.
- ◆ Talk to your neighbors about your hobbies. You never know when you'll have shared interests.
- ◆ Form a social club around a special interest (books, hiking, biking, art, music, etc). Take your meetings outdoors during the summer.
- ◆ Volunteer to help plant flowers in public spaces.
- ◆ Help plan and coordinate community events or a local festival like Valley Days (www.goldenvalleyfund.org).
- ◆ Attend a summer Concert in the Park at Brookview Park.
- ◆ Use the Golden Valley Connection Project (see page 18) to find others with similar recreational interests.

Learn More

Use resources at local libraries and universities or online (try the web sites below for a start) to learn more about public spaces, trails, festivals, and other recreation issues.

- ◆ www.festivalfinder.com
- ◆ www.minneapolisparcs.org
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.npcr.org
- ◆ www.nrpc.org
- ◆ www.pps.org
- ◆ www.railstrails.org

For more information about recreation in Golden Valley, contact the City's Parks & Recreation Department at 763-512-2345.

The Complete List

of ideas submitted in the Recreation category is available at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us. Individual ideas are grouped under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below).

Outdoor Settings

Aesthetics • Trail System • Natural Resources • Parks & Athletic Fields • Playground Equipment • 24/7 Golf

Unique Places

Community Stage • Themed Events

Outreach

Sharing • Multi-use • Accessibility • Affordability • Communication • Flexible Design • Professional Administration • Sponsorship

Community Hub

Education • Fitness • Teen Center • Civic Center • Water Recreation • Year-Round Variety • Arts & Entertainment

Get the complete list at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Government

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE: Guided by involved citizens and a community vision, Golden Valley's government is responsive, efficient, and imaginative as it delivers services and makes decisions to advance our quality of life.

Golden Valley government is open, business-like, and accountable to stakeholders. We are highly engaged with our government, which fairly represents the interests of its business and residential constituents. State-of-the-art technology provides citizens with information, services, and access to city leaders.

The City actively seeks to improve quality, particularly with effective and efficient services needed today, while incorporating the community's vision in its decision making. Through private, public, and nonprofit partnerships, the City identifies creative ways to deliver services and raise revenues for community benefit.

Supporting Themes and Ideas

Government actively seeks creative ways to manage community resources, deliver services, and ensure public safety.

- ◆ Through reciprocity, partnerships, and merged services, Golden Valley leverages the resources of neighboring cities.
- ◆ Citizens, parents, state officials, and school districts explore the pros and cons of reestablishing a Golden Valley school district.
- ◆ A volunteer network delivers services that enable senior residents to keep living in their homes.
- ◆ Law enforcement actively engages citizens and neighborhood groups in sustaining a safe and peaceful community.
- ◆ The City collaborates with local businesses to provide wireless Internet service that expands online access to information and government services.

See Recreation, Transportation

City government encourages citizen participation with a flexible structure that involves neighborhoods, businesses, and other community interests.

- ◆ Council meetings are held in a variety of settings around the city.
- ◆ The City Council represents defined geographic districts.
- ◆ Regular town meetings supplement official hearings.
- ◆ A Youth Council advises the City on matters that affect non-voting community members.
- ◆ Citizens contribute up to two hours per month in government service—creating understanding and breaking down barriers between City departments and residents.
- ◆ City departments proactively help citizens to ensure projects are in compliance with City regulations and ordinances.

See Community Engagement

Our City is managed in a responsive, efficient, business-like manner with a high degree of accountability to stakeholders.

- ◆ The City researches citizen and neighborhood requirements to shape delivery of government services.
- ◆ City departments employ best practices and educate citizens about their value.
- ◆ Zoning and building codes are used positively, protecting the interests of neighborhoods without unduly restricting individuals.
- ◆ The City, businesses, and citizen groups jointly develop a target price for good government.
- ◆ Regular reports to the community provide visibility for how taxes are spent.

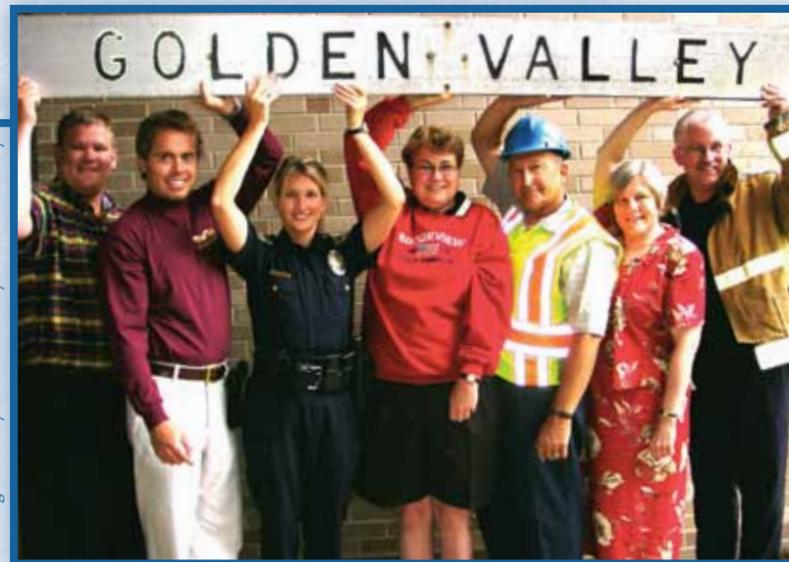


Photo by City staff
Sign courtesy of Golden Valley Historical Society

Golden Valley City employees display the original railroad sign, circa early 1900s, from the city's first whistle stop at Winnetka and 10th Avenues.

InVision Golden Valley

During *Envision Golden Valley*, City staff participated in *InVision*, an organization-wide visioning process with three major goals:

- ◆ establish core values by which City employees will be recruited, trained, and evaluated
- ◆ educate City employees about *Envision Golden Valley*
- ◆ demonstrate the City's commitment to the community by strategically preparing employees to implement *Envision* results



Tips For Effective Citizen Involvement

- ◆ Golden Valley has a variety of methods to provide information and solicit your input on matters that concern you. Participate early, ask questions, and present your views to council members and at public meetings.
- ◆ Whether dealing with elected officials, staff, or other citizens, be respectful and don't personalize differences of opinion.
- ◆ Listen, and do your homework. Talk to neighbors about the issues so you can understand them from various perspectives.
- ◆ Look at the big picture. Council members have to do what's right for the entire city. Try to tie your point of view to larger quality of life or community interests.
- ◆ Be prepared to compromise. Stand up for your beliefs, but recognize that your neighbors are entitled to views different from yours. Intolerance poisons the commons.

The Complete List

of ideas submitted in the Government category is available at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us. Individual ideas are grouped under Supporting Themes by topic (see examples below).

Service Delivery

Safety • Funding • Schools • Efficiency • Technology • Volunteers • Partnerships

Citizen Participation

Information • Town Meetings • Representation • Youth Involvement

Responsiveness

Diversity • Efficiency • Coordination • Accessibility • Accountability • Transparency • Customer-Driven

Participate

Things You Can Do Now

- ◆ Vote in every election.
- ◆ Follow the work of local elected officials (the City Council and its Advisory Boards or Commissions, school boards, etc) by attending meetings or watching meeting replays on cable TV.
- ◆ Watch Cable Channel 12 daily newscasts for coverage of local government, and check City Cable Channel 16 for information about meetings and community events.
- ◆ Run for elected office or volunteer to participate on a government advisory board, commission, or task force.
- ◆ Email or call elected and appointed officials with your questions, concerns, and opinions.
- ◆ Attend government-sponsored open houses and information meetings.
- ◆ Invite federal, state, and local elected officials to attend meetings you think are important.
- ◆ Keep up with local issues by reading local and regional newspapers, including the City's official newspaper of record (*SunPost*), the City newsletter (*CityNews*), utility bill inserts and other City mailings, and the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us).
- ◆ Support civic education for youth.

Learn More

To effectively participate in local government, it helps to understand the process and the issues. Learn more through resources at local libraries and universities or online. Start with your City web site for local updates and information.

- ◆ www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us
- ◆ www.co.hennepin.mn.us
- ◆ www.hopkins.k12.mn.us
- ◆ www.rdale.mn.us
- ◆ www.lgc.org
- ◆ www.lmnc.org
- ◆ www.nextstep.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.state.mn.us
- ◆ www.igs.berkeley.edu/library/gallery-us.html

For more information about Golden Valley City government, contact the City Manager's Department at 763-593-8002.



What's Next?

Envision has built a sense of community among residents and other stakeholders, and *Envision* volunteers worked hard to capture the richness and texture of the resulting visions. Although many of the ideas are complementary, some are in conflict. Some ideas and visions may be inexpensive and easy to implement, while others will require great expense, years of planning, and the cooperation of several public and private entities.

The City Council plans to use this Vision Guide as it sets goals and reviews proposals from citizens, developers, and other governmental units. But because many of the visions are about people and not government, citizens also need to take responsibility.

How To Get Involved

As an individual, you may be inspired by the Vision Guide. Please check each category in the Guide for ideas on how to learn more or work on your own to bring visions forward.

Envision Golden Valley also wants to encourage and enable cooperative, non-governmental approaches to making these visions reality. This would allow you to get together with fellow citizens, neighbors, workers, or your club or organization to work on those parts of the vision that inspire you.

If you would like to be involved at this level, consider joining the Golden Valley Connection Project. Anticipated activities include:

- ◆ fielding and coordinating queries or responses to the Vision Guide
- ◆ creating ways to link individuals and organizations that wish to work on a vision
- ◆ educating individuals and groups on how to promote vision activities to the City Council, City staff, and community organizations

Following the original mission and objectives of *Envision Golden Valley* (see page 19), the Golden Valley Connection Project could partner with the City to forward the vision in a number of ways. For example, the group could:

- ◆ create a speaker's bureau to present the Vision Guide to interested groups
- ◆ organize presentations on the Vision Guide for neighborhoods or organizations
- ◆ sponsor events to focus on community involvement with the Vision Guide

The Golden Valley Connection Project would provide regular reports of activity to the community and the City Council. For more information, or to get involved, contact the City of Golden Valley at 763-593-8014.

Envision Golden Valley

Envision Golden Valley was created to inspire citizens to contemplate the meaning of community, then come together with ideas for the future of Golden Valley to develop a community vision. It provides multiple opportunities for interaction among diverse members of the community, triggers dialogue, and seeks community cooperation in identifying ways to accomplish the vision.

Objectives

- ◆ Create a forum for citizens to meet others interested in building community.
- ◆ Raise awareness of community and develop a collective vision for the future in 10 and 20 years.
- ◆ Involve a broad range of citizens in creating a community vision.
- ◆ Inspire local organizations/institutions to participate in developing the community vision; invite them to help reach for the vision.
- ◆ Anticipate community aspirations, and invite broad participation in developing a community-based response.
- ◆ Provide leadership opportunities in the community.



Photo by City staff

What will Golden Valley be like in the future? Get involved and help decide.

Thanks

Nearly 900 people participated in *Envision Golden Valley*, sharing their ideas and hopes for the future of the community. Of these, 112 volunteered their time, talents, and energy to develop and implement the process for their fellow citizens. Thanks to everyone who worked on one of the eight subcommittees or as a facilitator (see web site below for complete list). Special thanks to the Steering Committee for its steadfast guidance and to members of the Report Team, who compiled, categorized, and combined the thousands of collected ideas from *Envision* into the material in this Vision Guide.

Envision Steering Committee Don Anderson and Linda Loomis (co-chairs), Mike Barnett, Helen Bassett, Gary Cohen, Jill Field, Dan Freeman, Gloria Johnson, John Kluchka, Gloria Kumagai, Bob Mattison, Pam Paulson, Bruce Peterson, Bob Provost, Dick Rudeen, Dee Schutte, Paul Snyder, John Yngve

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Envision Writing Team Writing and editing by Diane Mundt, Tina Perpich, Charlie Quimby, and Cheryl Weiler. Graphic design by Siri Khalsa.

As pointed out by one *Envision* volunteer, many things in this world happen because of 10 little two-letter words:

“If it is to be, it is up to me.”

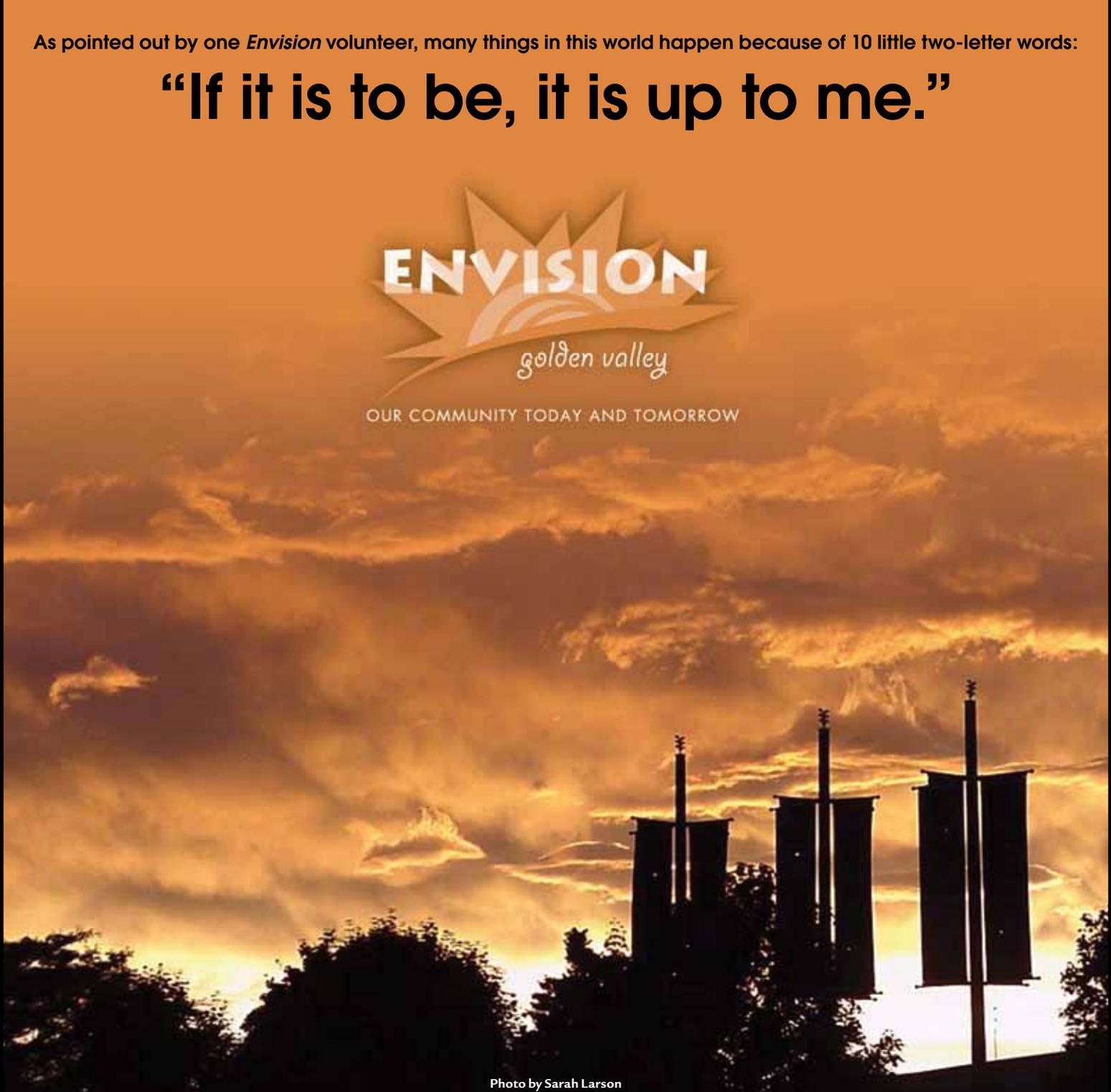


Photo by Sarah Larson

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Notice: To retain cost-effective rates, new postal regulations require us to mail to complete carrier routes, even if they are beyond city borders. We apologize to non-Golden Valley residents who get this publication unsolicited.