

Benson's Future...

FOR CITIZENS

Continue to empower citizens to be in control of the city's future. Make a future that is ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable.



FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Protect and improve Benson's natural environment for a better quality of life for all people.



FOR HOUSING

Increase the number of housing alternatives within the city to help meet the changing needs and preferences of a diverse population.



FOR THE ECONOMY

Foster a strong and diverse economy that provides a full range of employment, business opportunities, and economic choices for all residents in all parts of the city.



FOR TRANSPORTATION

Create a safe transportation system and a healthy balance of transportation choices that improve the mobility and quality of life of all residents.



FOR COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Enhance and improve Benson's visual identity and community pride. Enhance the livability of Benson by preserving its historic character and building a substantial legacy of quality public and private developments.

Benson

MINNESOTA

rural setting, friendly people, great community



Benson is a great community in which to live and work. We cherish its small-town atmosphere. It's a friendly community, one where people know and respect each other. It's a safe, quiet, and peaceful community. We are proud of our schools, churches, parks, and community events. These are the qualities of Benson that we value and want to carry forward into the future.

We want Benson to grow, but we believe that growth should enhance the small town character of Benson rather than detract from it. We want Benson to have an attractive and strong central business district, one that meets our shopping needs and respects the viability of small, locally-owned businesses. We will strive to diversify our industries and embrace technologies that will provide Benson with strong economic growth and good-paying jobs. We want to refine our transportation system to be safe and efficient for pedestrians and vehicles.

As we move forward, we will be proactive in preserving and enhancing the qualities of Benson that we value.

Visit Benson - we think you'll want to stay!

Demographics

Location



Benson is approximately 130 miles west of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area, 30 miles west of Willmar, MN and 22 miles east of Morris, MN.

Population



2000 population:	3,376
1990 population:	3,235
Change:	+4.4%
Male:	1,563
Female:	1,813
Median age:	41.8 years
Population by age	
Under 18 years:	794
18 - 64 years:	2,582
65 years and over:	823

Housing



1999 median household income:	\$32,234
Households:	1,451
Single-family owner-occupied homes:	1,025
Median housing value:	\$63,700
Renter-occupied homes:	426
Median contract rent:	\$298

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Successes

The City has made great progress in the last ten years since the 2000 Comprehensive Plan was developed. Highlighted successes, identified by residents who completed the Benson Community Survey, are:

- Newly created surgery center and renovated emergency room at the Swift County Benson Hospital, a Top 100 hospital in the United States as ranked by Thomson Reuters
- New and expanded industries calling Benson home include:
 - Case IH – Cotton picker manufacturing
 - Fibrominn – The first poultry litter fired electric power plant in USA
 - SpecSys – Providing fabrication, machining, welding, paint and assembly along with hydraulic, electrical, and structural testing
- Converted municipal swimming pool into an aquatic center, complete with water slide, diving, lap swimming, kids play area, accessible design
- Improved infrastructure with the reconstruction of Highways 12, 29 and 9-improving access to and through the City of Benson, serving businesses and its residents
- Expanded local fire hall to better serve the community and meet its safety needs
- Established the Benson Area Community Foundation – The mission of the foundation is to enrich our quality of life and provide a legacy by connecting charitable donors to community visions

Assets and Resources

- Benson is the county seat for Swift County
- Regional transportation hub:
 - Access to the region via three major highways
 - BNSF railroad
 - Chippewa River
 - Benson Municipal Airport, accommodates small aircraft to Lear jets
 - Transmission lines, natural gas lines
- Biomass power/ethanol fuels: Fibrominn & Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company
- Public bus transportation with curb to curb service, 7 days a week
- Benson Public Schools and Benson Christian School
- Close proximity to secondary education:
 - University of Minnesota-Morris
 - Ridgewater College-Willmar
- Natural resources including trails, river, open spaces, and parks for camping, hiking, fishing, boating, and birding
- Multitude of both summer and winter recreational activities, including:
 - 18 hole golf course
 - tennis courts
 - 8-lane bowling alley
 - indoor and outdoor swimming pool
 - groomed snowmobile and cross country ski trails
 - ball fields
 - racquetball center
 - hockey civic center



Comments gathered from the 2009 Community Survey...

It's clean, attractive. People are friendly and we have a good hospital, doctors, and clinic.

A great community in a rural setting with great people.

Friendly, not too much government interference, promotes small business and doesn't over-regulate. Affordable.



Excellent school system, excellent health care, welcoming people, and friendly businesses.

Location on Highway 12 between Minneapolis and South Dakota. Parks, schools, churches, senior care and activities, bus service, and meal site.

A community goal to stay viable in healthcare, business and education. Exceptional focus on the younger (student age) population.

Big enough to serve our needs yet small enough to know the community and its residents.



Benson has been progressive and supportive of education, the library, and the arts. Overall a good community feel!

Rural atmosphere - improvement on Main Street are excellent, especially the stop lights and turning. Efforts to save businesses like the movie theater.

Excellent medical care close to home. Convenience of services locally, friendliness of a small town.

Benson has its own power plant so we can have emergency power.

We love Ambush Trails and the parks!

Lots of things to do, and you don't have to wait in line to do them!

For a town of approximately 3,500 Benson provides a lot of services: various businesses, nice library, movie theater, roller rink, market days, strong Community Education.



Smaller community, low crime rate, lots of open space.

It is a booming town with lots of renewable energy plants - I think that's cool!

Multi-generational families.

Benson has been building new businesses to help with jobs.

Big enough to provide everything, but small enough where you know people.

Small, safe community. We feel very comfortable here!

