

About the Program

The Plat Monitoring Program tracks and monitors development in the region, specifically within areas designated as *Developing* in the *2030 Regional Development Framework*, the region's development guide. Twelve communities participated in the pilot program in 2001, including: Blaine, Chanhassen, Eden Prairie, Hugo, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Maple Grove, Ramsey, Savage, Shakopee, Woodbury, and Waconia. The Program continues to grow as the Twin Cities region develops.

The program provides baseline data on residential development trends in these communities and was designed to help answer the following questions:

- Is residential development consistent with Metropolitan Council policies?
- How are communities accommodating residential development in comparison to their local comprehensive land use plans?
- What is the mix of housing types that communities are approving each year (single-family vs. multi-family)?
- How is residential land being developed within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA)?

The Council annually reports on residential development in participating communities, using data collected through the Plat Monitoring Program. The report includes analysis on the following:

- Overall residential development densities, both net and gross densities (see descriptions below);
- Amount of land that had been consumed for various uses, such as single-family dwellings, parks, and arterial road right-of-way, among others;
- Single-family and multi-family housing mix; and
- Development trends since the inception of program.

The program assists communities and Council staff in assessing a community's consistency with the Council's residential density policy, which requires residential sewer development to occur at a minimum density of 3 to 5 units per net developable acre. By maintaining an historical record of approved sewer subdivisions, the Council and metropolitan communities can evaluate the success of communities in implementing the density policy and the extent to which the Metropolitan Disposal System is being used efficiently. In addition, participating communities receive credit for previous

plats meeting the Council's density policy and increased development flexibility within the MUSA.

Program Reporting Form

Participating communities complete and submit an annual residential plat reporting form, a copy of which can be downloaded from the Council's website (http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/RPM_P2007Form.xls). The form requests the following information (underlined titles represent column headings in the form):

I. Project Background

Plat Names - The official name for sewer residential plat that received final plat approval during the calendar year.

MUSA Exp. - Did the plat require the expansion of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area? (Yes or No)

Comp Plan Amend - Did the plat require an amendment to the community's comprehensive plan? (Yes or No)

Rezoning - Did the plat require the zoning designation to be changed? If so, indicate the original zoning and the new zoning classification.

II. Type of Residential Development and Allowed Density

Land Use Designation - The designation given to the development property in the community's comprehensive plan in the land use plan map.

Allowed Density Range - Based on the comprehensive plan land use designation for the property, indicate the lower and upper number of allowable units per acre.

Units Allowed - The form automatically calculates this value by multiplying the Allowed Density Range by the Net Residential Acres in the plat.

Number of Units - The number of single-family and multi-family units the community approved in the plat.

Total Units - The form automatically calculates this value by adding the single-family and multi-family columns.

III. Land and Density Analysis

Gross Residential Acres - The total acreage contained within the boundaries of the residential plat. If a plat includes commercial and residential acreage, only

include the residential portion.

Wetlands, Water Bodies, Ponds – The number of acres of wetlands, water bodies, and ponds in the plat, but not including buffers, setbacks, or storm ponds.

Public Parks and Open Space – The number of acres of parks and open space set aside in the development for public use/ownership. If wetlands are located in these areas, do not count that acreage in this column; rather, include that under the Wetlands column. Do not include private parks or outlots for future development.

Arterial Roads Right-of-Way – The area within the plat that is set aside for the rights-of-way of arterial roads. Do not include rights-of-way for any other roads.

Other – Other undevelopable acres, including those that are protected by local ordinances such as steep slopes and bluffs, as well as outlots reserved for future development and outlots that are not restricted for development, but not included under previously described categories. If wetlands or water bodies fall across these outlots, include the wetlands/water acreage under the Wetlands column, with the balance of the outlot acreage included under the Other column.

Net Residential Acres – The form automatically calculates this value by subtracting the figures entered in the Wetlands, Parks and Open Space, Arterial Roads, and Other columns from the Gross Residential Acres figure.

Net Density – The form automatically calculates this value by dividing the Total Units by the Net Residential Acres.

Gross Density – The form automatically calculates this value by dividing the Total Units by the Gross Residential Acres.

Participating communities also submit copies of each plat approved by the community. Council staff uses these copies to verify submitted numbers and to track geographic development patterns. Council staff encourages communities to submit electronic copies if possible. Data is typically collected in the first quarter of the calendar year for all plats that have received final plat approval from the city in the previous calendar year.

Frequently Asked Questions

▷ How do I obtain the Plat Monitoring Report?

The Plat Monitoring Report can be viewed and downloaded from the Council's website at <http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/resources.htm>. This report contains information and analyzes data updated from the most recent full calendar year.

▷ How is the net residential acreage calculated?

Net density is calculated by taking the gross (total) area of the development and removing wetlands and water bodies, public parks and open spaces, arterial road rights-of-way, and any other area that is protected or removed from development by local ordinances. Examples of areas that may be protected by local ordinances include steep slopes and floodplains. These areas are listed under the "Other" column in the spreadsheet. When listing items here, communities should include an explanation of what this area represents. The Program Reporting Form automatically calculates net residential acreage.

▷ If the final plat was approved, but has not yet been recorded, do we still include that information in our plat monitoring spreadsheet for the year it was approved?

Yes, we include all plats that received final approval for the year in question, with the understanding that some applicants take time to submit their plats for recording several months after receiving final approval.

▷ Should we submit information regarding replatted areas?

Yes. This information helps Council staff to track trends in development patterns, but this information does not figure into density calculations, particularly if the density of the area has been reduced.

▷ Can the community bill the Metropolitan Council for paper copies of the plats?

No. In exchange for receiving credit for previous plats and for increased flexibility within the MUSA, communities in the Plat Monitoring Program are required to provide annual reports to the Council. These reports include the type of development, the acreage, number of units, gross and net densities, and copies of plats receiving approval that year.