

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: April 17, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 26, 2017

Subject: City of Ramsey Woodlands 4th Addition Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Review File No. 20652-7

District(s), Member(s): District 9, Edward Reynoso

Policy/Legal Reference: Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minn. Stat. § 473.175)

Staff Prepared/Presented: Patrick Boylan, AICP, Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1438)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Adopt the attached Review Record and allow the City of Ramsey to place the Woodlands 4th Addition Comprehensive Plan Amendment into effect.
2. Find that the amendment does not change the City's forecasts.
3. Strongly encourage the City to:
 - a. Consider implementing the existing lower rural residential density guiding or employing density transfer and conservation design methods in the proposed site design to minimize the impacts to existing habitat.
 - b. Consider siting of municipal stormwater management facilities on publicly-dedicated outlots instead of constructing them on private property, which could hamper site maintenance activities.

Background

The proposed comprehensive plan amendment is for the proposed Woodlands 4th Addition, and extends the Metropolitan Urban Services Area (MUSA) by sixteen (16) acres for the addition of twelve (12) single family homes with wastewater services. The City is extending local infrastructure to connect the proposed development to regional service. The area is proposed to be reguided from Rural Developing to Low Density Residential. The property is located generally north of Alpine Drive, and west of Ramsey Boulevard NW, and east of Traprock St.

Rationale

The proposed amendment conforms to regional system plans; and with the exception of the Natural Resources Protection policy, the amendment is consistent with Council policies; and is compatible with the plans of other local communities and school districts.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The proposed amendment is reviewed against the land use policies in *Thrive MSP 2040*. To achieve the outcomes identified in *Thrive*, the metropolitan development guide defines the Land Use Policy for the region and includes strategies for local governments and the Council to implement. These policies and strategies are interrelated and, taken together, serve to achieve the *Thrive* outcomes.

Funding

None.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this proposal.

Review Record

*City of Ramsey
Woodlands 4th Addition Comprehensive Plan Amendment*

Review File No. 20652-7, Council Business Item No. 2017-88

BACKGROUND

The City of Ramsey (City) is a developing community approximately 19,000 acres or 29 square miles in area. It is located in Anoka County and is bordered by the Cities of Nowthen to the north, Andover to the east, Otsego and Elk River in Sherburne County to the west and by the Mississippi River and Dayton to the south.

Consistent with the policies adopted by the Council in June 2014 ([Business Item 2014-143](#)) regarding review of local comprehensive plans, this amendment is being reviewed under *Thrive MSP 2040* and its policy plans. *Thrive MSP 2040* (Thrive) designates Ramsey as a “Emerging Suburban Edge” community. Figure 1 shows the general location of Ramsey and nearby communities, and the Council’s Thrive Community Designation.

The Council reviewed the City’s Update (Business Item 2010-19, Review File No. 20652-1) on January 27, 2010. This amendment is the City’s sixth since the review of the Update.

REQUEST SUMMARY

The proposed comprehensive plan amendment is for the proposed Woodlands 4th Addition, and extends the Metropolitan Urban Services Area (MUSA) by sixteen (16) acres for the addition of twelve (12) single family homes with wastewater services. The area is also proposed to be regraded from Rural Developing to Low Density Residential. The proposed amendment is located generally north of Alpine Drive, and west of Ramsey Boulevard NW, and east of Traprock St.

OVERVIEW

Conformance with Regional Systems

The amendment conforms to the Regional System Plans for Parks, Transportation (including Aviation), and Wastewater, with no substantial impact on, or departure from, these plans.

Consistency with Council Policies

The amendment is consistent with the *Thrive MSP 2040* except the Natural Resources Protection policy, with the *Housing Policy Plan*, with water resources management, and is consistent with Council forecasts.

Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Jurisdictions

The amendment will not have an impact on adjacent communities, school districts, or watershed districts, and is compatible with the plans of those districts.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTIONS

- The Council acted on the City’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update on January 27, 2010 ([Business Item 2010-19](#), Review File No. 20652-1).

- The Council acted on the Legacy Christian Academy CPA on April 27, 2011, ([Business Item 2011-109](#), Review File No. 20652-2)
- The Council administratively reviewed the Stoney River CPA on September 1, 2011 (Review File No. 20652-3).
- The Council administratively reviewed the 2011 Major Amendment CPA on July 18, 2012 (Review File No. 20652-4)
- The Council administratively reviewed the Hope Fellowship CPA on November 7, 2012 (Review File No. 20652-5).
- The Council acted on The COR Development Plan on December 12, 2012 ([Business Item 2012-366](#), Review File No. 20652-6).

ISSUES

- I. Does the amendment conform to the regional system plans?
- II. Is the amendment consistent with *Thrive MSP 2040* and other Council policies?
- III. Does the amendment change the City's forecasts?
- IV. Is the amendment compatible with the plans of adjacent local governmental units and affected jurisdictions?

ISSUES ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Conformance with Regional Systems

The amendment conforms to the regional system plan for Regional Parks, Transportation, and Wastewater, with no substantial impact on, or departure from, these system plans.

Wastewater

Reviewer: Kyle Colvin (651-602-1151) and Roger Janzig (651-602-1119)

The City is extending local sanitary sewer infrastructure to connect to regional service. The metropolitan disposal system has sufficient capacity to support the amendment. The regional system does not require any additional investment to support the proposed development.

Consistency with Council Policy

The amendment is consistent with Council policies for forecasts, land use, housing, sub-surface sewage treatment systems, and water supply. The amendment is not consistent with Thrive's Natural Resources Protection policy. Additional review comments regarding policy consistency are detailed below.

Land Use

Reviewer: Patrick Boylan (651-602-1438) and Jim Larsen (651-602-1159)

The proposed amendment is consistent with Thrive land use policy for Emerging Suburban Edge communities, except for the Natural Resources Protection policy. The proposed amendment would support a new residential subdivision called Woodlands 4th Addition. The subdivision is at a concept phase with a proposal to add 12 new housing units. The proposed site, as shown in Figure 2, is largely wooded and has wetland areas over portions of the site.

The MUSA extension is within the long-term service area for regional wastewater service (see Figure 5 and Figure X).

The amendment is consistent with Thrive expectations for the planned residential density of 3-5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) in the Emerging Suburban Edge communities. The proposed amendment reguides 16.4 acres of land from Rural Developing to Low Density Residential (at least 3

units per acre). Table 1 below shows the City’s updated overall minimum planned densities, which decreases slightly from 4.67 to 4.66 du/acre with this amendment.

Table 1. City of Ramsey Planned Residential Density

Within Urban Service Area	Allowed Density Range Housing Units/Acre		2008-2030 Change	Housing Units	
	Min	Max	Acres	Min	Max
Low Density Residential	3	4	1,125	3,376	4,501
Medium Density Residential	3	7	49	147	343
High Density Residential	7	15	68	476	1,020
Mixed Use Primarily Residential*	10	10	334	3,340	3,340
Totals			1,576	7,339	9,204
Overall Density			4.66	5.84	

* Mixed Use Primarily Residential is for projects that include residential must be at least 10 units per acre

The proposed development with this amendment does not have the potential to result in a regional system impact. However, development as proposed would impact habitat characterized as “outstanding” in quality by the Council’s Natural Resources Inventory/Assessment (NRIA). This is inconsistent with the Thrive Natural Resources Protection policy, which encourages Emerging Suburban Edge Communities to “locate and design new developments in a way that preserves and benefits from the natural environment and reduces development pressures that endanger natural resources by promoting growth in already urbanized areas.” The Council and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) staff, in concert with the University of Minnesota, jointly prepared the NRIA database for the seven-county area in 2004-5, which the Council continues to utilize. The data set is identified in the Council’s geographic information system as Regionally Significant Ecological Areas. Thrive directs staff to work with local and regional partners to conserve, restore, and protect the region’s remaining vital natural resources by adopting local land uses and planning strategies for protecting NRIA resources and minimizing development impacts.

The Woodlands 4th Amendment is in a location designated by the NRIA as supporting “outstanding” quality wooded habitat – its highest characterized level of habitat quality. The woods are not “old growth,” based upon their size and quality; however, they are worthy of preservation if impacts can be avoided.

It is clear to Council staff that city and watershed staff have, with a great level of detail and review, attempted to provide habitat protection and setbacks, and necessary runoff management facilities wherever required on the parcels, given the existing level of protections offered by local ordinances and policies. However, urbanization of the parcels at even the proposed (low, by sewer standards) density would result in the permanent loss of a majority of the site’s diverse ecological integrity.

Advisory Comments

If development is to occur on the site, Council staff strongly encourages the City to consider implementing the existing lower rural residential density guiding or employing a density transfer and conservation design methods to minimize impacts to existing habitat. Density transfer and conservation design methods would allow increased density in areas exhibiting lower quality habitat and facilitate preservation of the areas exhibiting high quality habitat.

Further, to minimize potential future encroachment issues with private landowners, Council staff urges the City to consider siting of municipal stormwater management facilities on publicly-dedicated outlots instead of constructing them on private property, which could hamper site maintenance activities. Stormwater basins when located on private property are often promoted as site amenities and wildlife attraction to prospective homeowners; but some homeowners many grow to dislike the periodic fouled appearance of the basins. Frequently owners will remove their native vegetation that has been planted to deter bank erosion and complain about the disruption to their property that is involved in providing necessary shoreline maintenance activities.

Housing

Reviewer: Tara Beard (651-602-1051)

The amendment is consistent with the Council's *Housing Policy Plan*. This amendment does not have an impact on the City's ability to promote land at densities sufficient to support their share of the region's need for low and moderate income housing development. The City's share of the region's affordable housing need from 2011-2020 is 625 units, which they currently address through over 227 acres of land guided at densities over 7 units per acre or above.

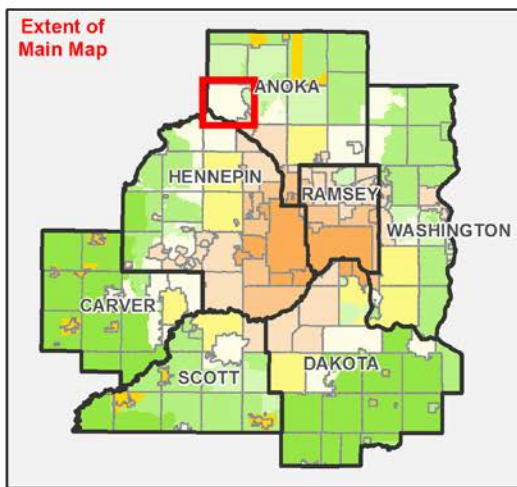
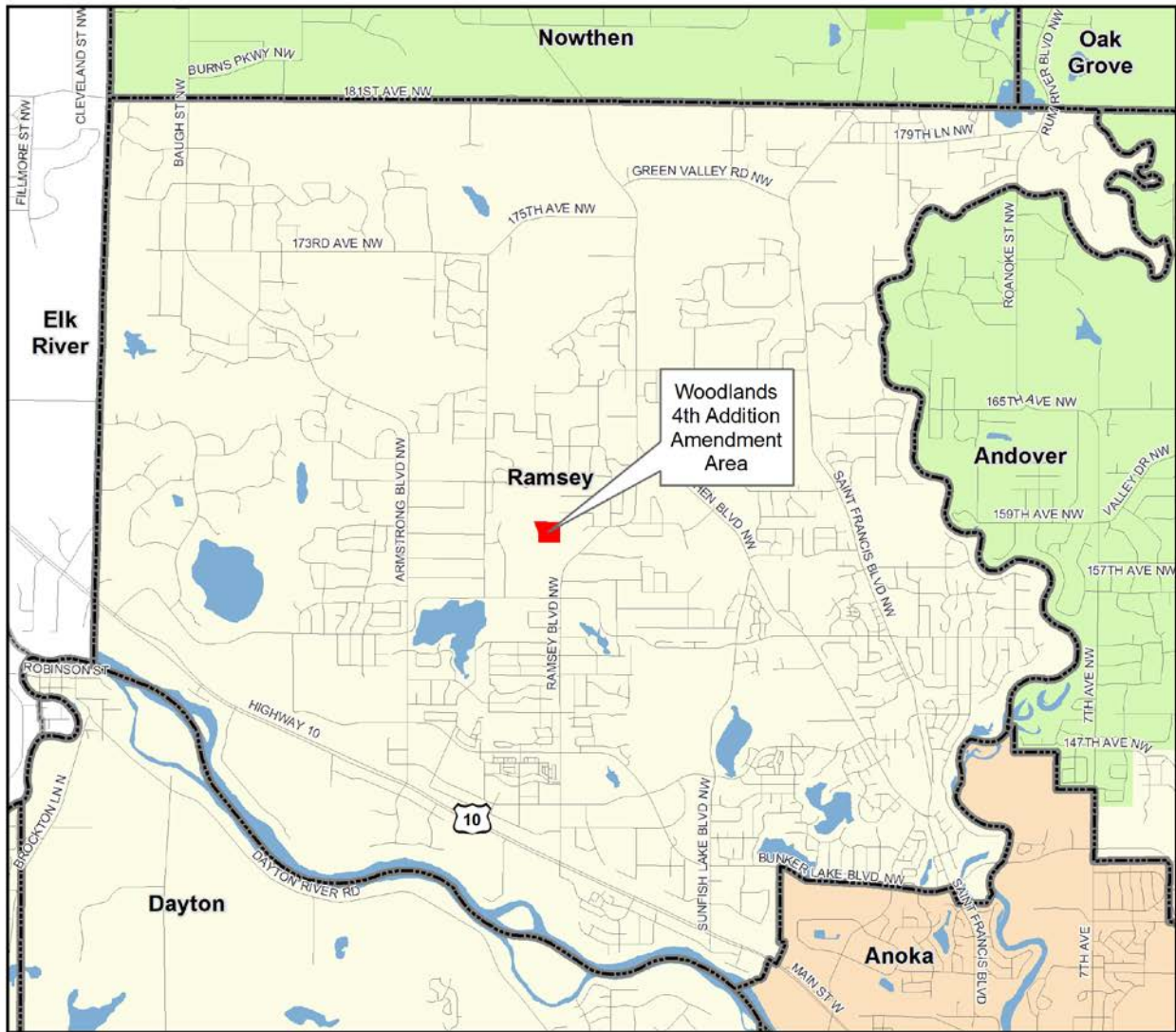
Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Governmental Units and Plans of Affected Special Districts and School Districts

No compatibility issues with plans of adjacent governmental units and plans of affected special districts and school districts were identified.

ATTACHMENTS

- Figure 1: Location Map Showing Community Designations
- Figure 2: Location Map Showing Regional Systems
- Figure 3: Existing Planned Land Use, Pre-Amendment
- Figure 4: Proposed Planned Land Use, Post-Amendment
- Figure 5: Location Map Showing 2030 MUSA

Figure 1: Location Map Showing Community Designations

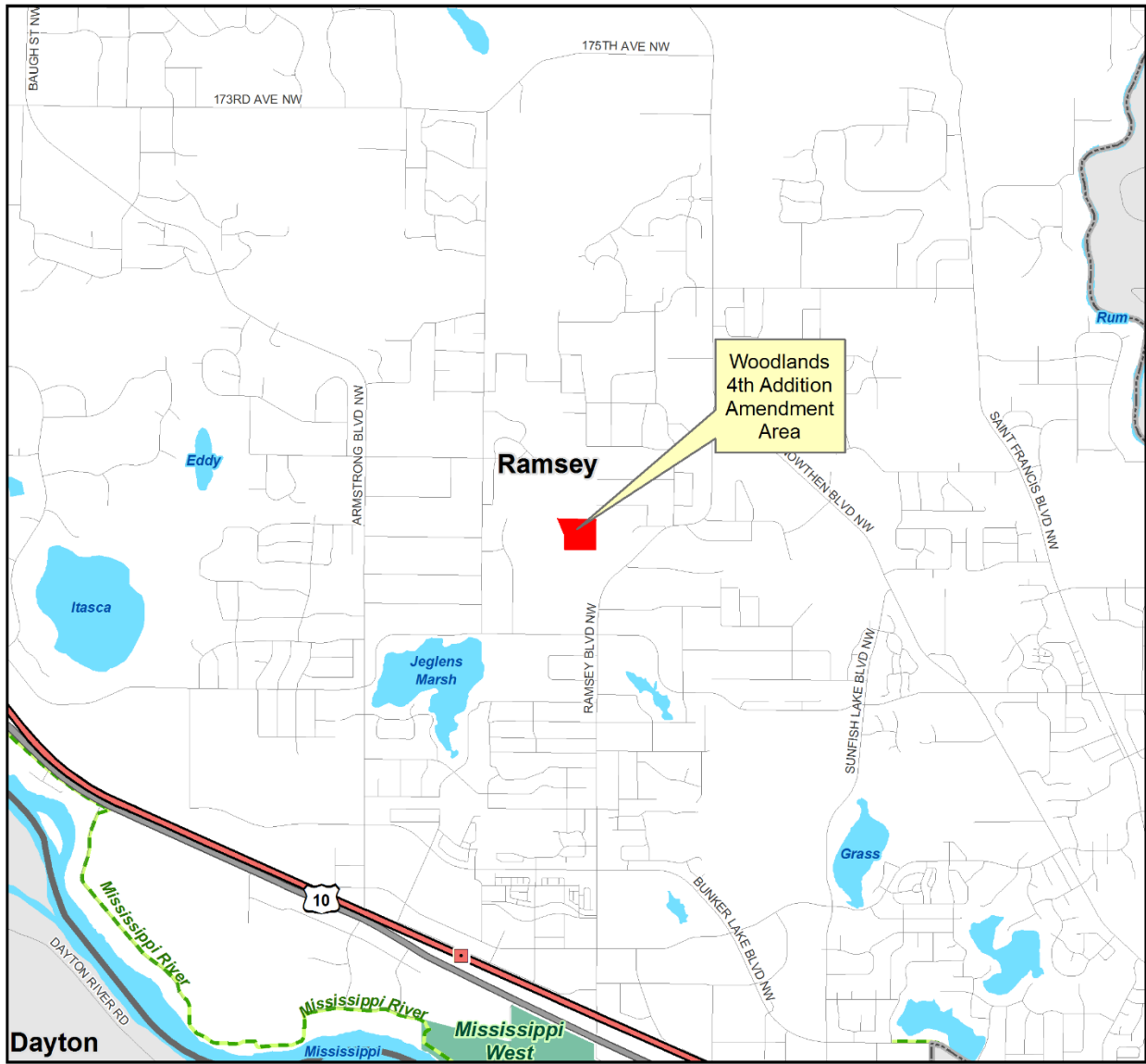


ThriveMSP 2040 Community Designations

- Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Suburban Edge
- Suburban
- Urban
- Urban Center

— Ncompass Street Centerlines

Figure 2: Location Map Showing Regional Systems



Regional Systems

Regional Highway System

- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Roads

Regional Transitways

- Existing, Fixed Guideway
- Proposed, Fixed Guideway
- Existing, Bus Rapid Transit
- Proposed, Bus Rapid Transit
- Existing Fixed Guideway Stations
- Planned Fixed Guideway Stations

Recreation Open Space

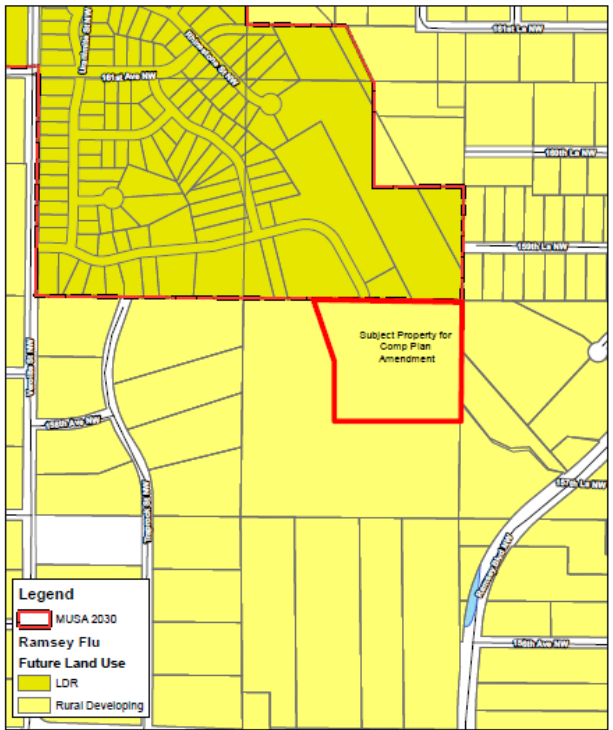
- Park Reserves
- Regional Parks
- Special Recreation Features
- Existing Regional Trails
- Planned Regional Trails

Wastewater Treatment

- Ⓜ Meters
- Ⓛ Lift Stations
- MCES Interceptors
- WTP MCES Treatment Plants

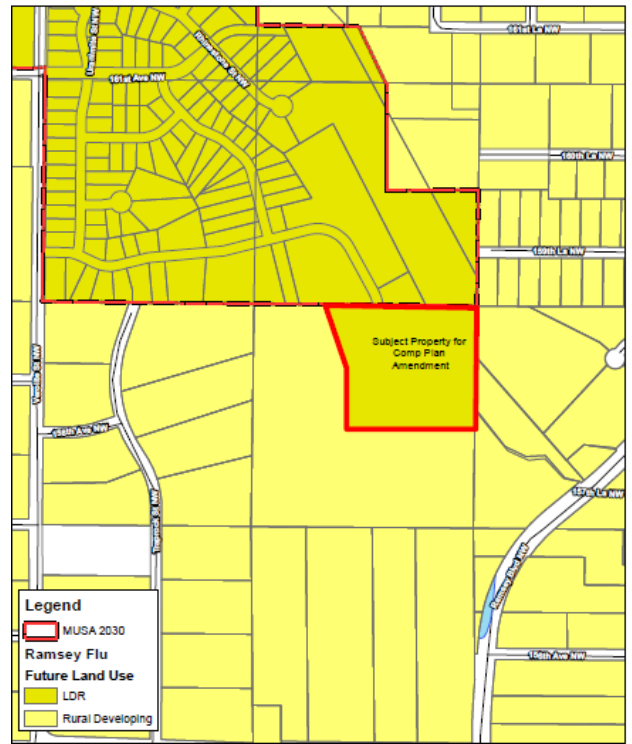
— Ncompass Street Centerlines

Figure 3: Existing Planned Land Use, Pre-Amendment



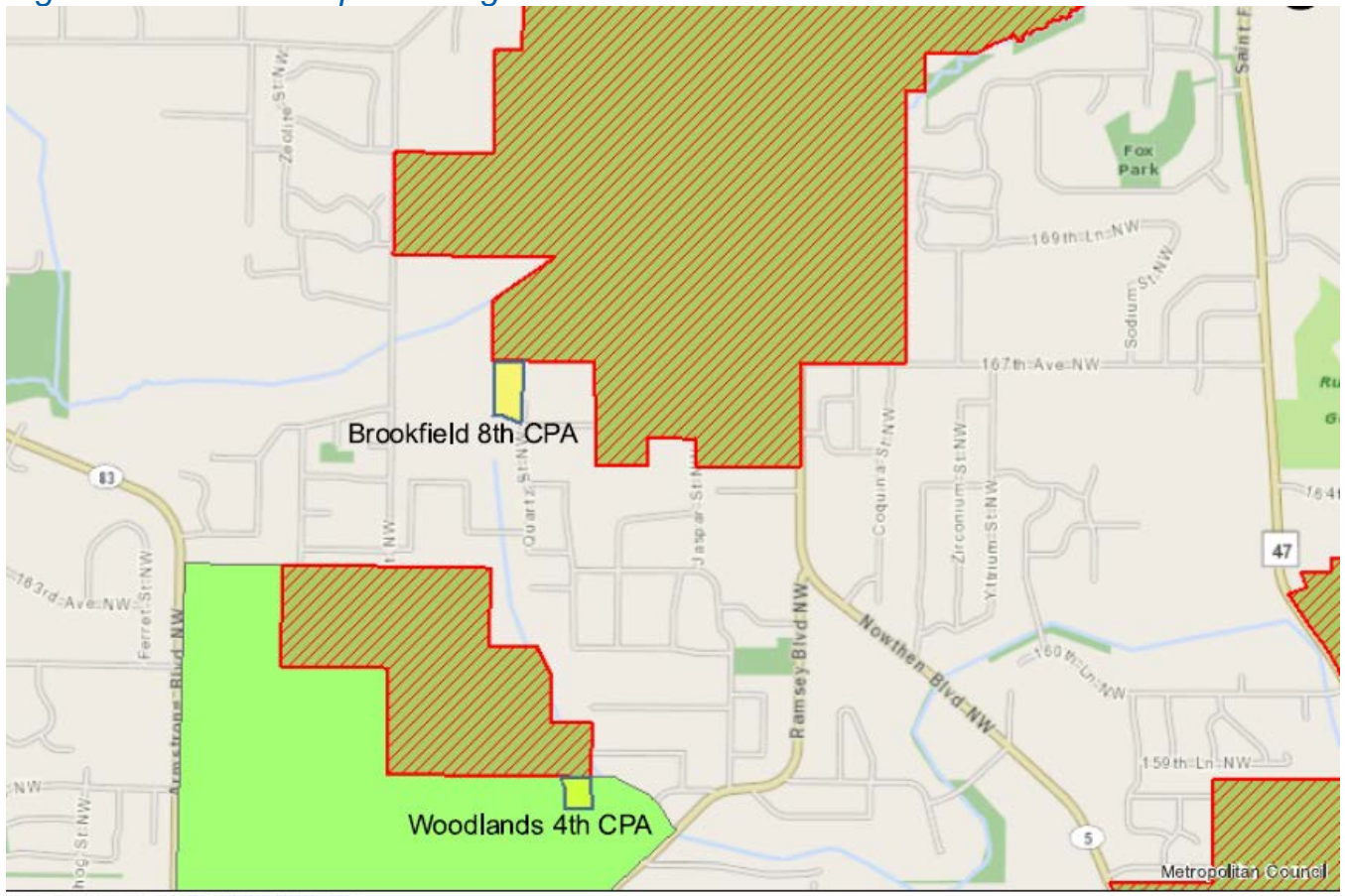
Woodlands 4th Addition: Existing Future Land Use

Figure 4: Proposed Planned Land Use, Post-Amendment





Woodlands 4th Addition: Proposed Future Land Use

Figure 5: Location Map Showing 2030 MUSA



Long Term Service Area Current

-  Metro
-  Potential Metro

