

Business Item

Community Development Committee



Committee Meeting Date: June 6, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council: June 22, 2022

Business Item: 2022-128

City of Ramsey Urban Residential Low Density Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Review File No. 21819-3

District(s), Member(s):	District 3, Raymond Zeran
Policy/Legal Reference:	Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minn. Stat. § 473.175)
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Eric Wojchik, Planning Analyst (651-602-1330) Angela R. Torres, Local Planning Assistance Senior Manager (651-602-1566)
Division/Department:	Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached Review Record and take the following actions:

1. Authorize the City of Ramsey to place its comprehensive plan amendment into effect.
2. Find that the amendment does not change the City's forecasts.
3. Advise the City to implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Land Use.

Background

The City submitted the Establishment of Urban Residential Low Density comprehensive plan amendment on March 23, 2022. The amendment proposes to reguide 228 gross (160 net) acres from Low Density Residential to a new land use designation of Urban Residential Low Density. The amendment site is located between Nowthen Boulevard and Variolite Street, south of 175th Avenue, and north of Trott Brook. The purpose of the amendment is to accommodate 347 detached single family homes. This is the City's second amendment to its 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The site was subject to an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) identified as Trott Brook Crossing (Review File No. 22692-1) reviewed by the Council on October 28, 2021. The EAW identified a proposed development named Trott Brook Crossing on approximately 200.5 acres of land in the northern portion of the City of Ramsey, north of Trott Brook, east of Nowthen Boulevard NW. The project proposed to include as many as 275 single-family homes and parkland with tree preservation. At the time, the Council raised the issue that the current guided land use on the site, Low Density Residential (3-4 units per acre) is incompatible with the proposed development, which, at the time, amounted to 2.2 units per acre.

The City has since lowered that development density further with this proposal. In the Council's EAW review comments, the City was informed that the proposed development, at densities lower than 3 units per acre, is incompatible with planned land use and may represent an underutilization of the regional wastewater system. Underutilization of the wastewater system is a regional system conformance issue. Within the EAW, the document also asserts that the proposed project could not meet the density requirement while also meeting the City's minimum lot size requirements. The

Council advised the City that if a City ordinance or zoning conflicts with the approved comprehensive plan, the ordinance or zoning should be revised to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Rationale

The proposed amendment conforms to regional system plans, 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 consistent with 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 outcomes identified in Thrive.

Funding

None.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.



REVIEW RECORD

CITY OF RAMSEY

Establishment of Urban Residential Low Density Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Review File No. 21819-3, Business Item No. 2022-124

BACKGROUND

The City of Ramsey is located along the western border of Anoka County. It is surrounded by the communities of Nowthen, Oak Grove, Andover, Anoka, Champlin, Dayton, and Rogers.

Thrive MSP2040 (Thrive) designates Ramsey with an “Emerging Suburban Edge” community designation. The Council forecasts from 2020 to 2040 that the City will grow from 27,550 to 39,150 population and 9,600 to 13,500 households. The Council also forecasts that between 2020 and 2040, the City’s employment will increase from 6,900 to 8,400 jobs.

The Metropolitan Council reviewed the City of Ramsey 2040 Comprehensive Plan ([Business Item 2020-309 JT](#), Review File No. 21819-1) on December 9, 2020. This is the second comprehensive plan amendment since the 2040 Plan was reviewed.

REQUEST SUMMARY

The amendment proposes to revise the local comprehensive plan to reguide 228 gross (160 net) acres of Low Density Residential and create a new land use designation, Urban Residential Low Density, with a proposed density range of 1.5 to 4 units per acre. The site is located between Nowthen Boulevard and Variolite Street, south of 175th Avenue, and north of Trott Brook. The purpose of the amendment is to create a new land use category, assign a density range of 1.5 to 4 units per acre, and would include single-family detached houses.

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 MSP2040*, 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 2040 Plan on December 9, 2020 ([Business Item 2020-309](#), Review File No. 21819-1).
- The Lynwood Subdivision amendment was authorized by the Council on November 10, 2021 ([Business Item 2021-295](#), Review File No. 21819-2). The amendment reguided 27.5 acres from High Density Residential to Medium Density Residential to allow the development of attached townhomes.
- The Council reviewed the Trott Brook Crossing Project EAW (Review #22692-1) for this site on October 28, 2021. The EAW identified a proposed development on approximately 200.5 acres of land in the northern portion of the City of Ramsey, north of Trott Brook, east of Nowthen Blvd NW. The project proposed to include as many as 275 single-family homes.

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. Additional review comments are included below.

Regional Parks

Reviewer: Colin Kelly, Community Development (CD) – Regional Parks (651-602-1361)

The proposed amendment conforms to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP)*. There are no existing or planned Regional Parks System units within one-half mile of the proposed area of change. The nearest unit of the Regional Parks System – Rum River Central Regional Park - is approximately 3.1 miles east of the proposed change (Figure 1).

Wastewater Service

Reviewer: Roger Janzig, Environmental Services (ES) – Wastewater Planning and Community Programs (roger.janzig@metc.state.mn.us)

The proposed amendment conforms to the *2040 Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP)*. The Metropolitan Disposal System has adequate capacity for this project location.

Consistency with Council Policy

The amendment is consistent with Council policies for forecasts, land use, housing, sub-surface sewage treatment systems, and water supply. Additional review comments are detailed below.

Forecasts

Reviewer: Todd Graham, CD – Research (651-602-1322)

The City offers that the amendment does not affect the communitywide forecast. Council staff agree. The reguinding reduces housing capacity potential at this site; however, the City can still accommodate the approved Council forecast.

Thrive MSP 2040 and Land Use

Reviewer: Eric Wojchik, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1330)

The amendment is consistent with *Thrive MSP 2040 (Thrive)* and its land use policies. Thrive identifies the City as an Emerging Suburban Edge Community, which is required to plan for new development and redevelopment at an overall average minimum density of 3 units per acre. The City proposes to re-guide 228 gross (160 net) acres of land designated as Low Density Residential to the new guiding land use category of Urban Residential Low Density with a proposed density range of 1.5 to 4 units per acre. The anticipated type of housing will be 347 single family detached units. The density for the proposed development in the area proposed for reguinding would be approximately 2.16 units per acre.

The amendment submission stated that an event center will be part of future development (currently within the public park portion of the site area). However, the new Low Density Residential land use description does not include an event center as a permitted use within this land use category. Therefore, any such future development will be subject to a comprehensive plan amendment.

The area guided for Urban Residential Low Density is generally located between 175th Avenue Northwest on the north and 168th Avenue Northwest to the south, just north of the Trott Brook Trail



Corridor (Figure 2). Changes to the City’s residential density table are underlined below in Table 1. The new Urban Residential Low Density land use includes criteria by which the City Council can approve this land use locally. According to the amendment materials, a change to this land use will require compliance with a minimum of two of the criteria. These criteria are as follows:

1. Adequate sanitary sewer or water capacity does not exist to develop the property at the minimum density.
2. Previous subdivision of adjacent properties has provided limited access which restricts development potential.
3. Meeting the minimum density would not be feasible due to the existence of poor soils, wetlands, floodplain, topography, hydrology, or other limiting environmental condition.
4. Property is located within a Shoreland District, Scenic River District, Wellhead Protection Area, or Drinking Water Supply Management Area due to State requirements towards limiting impacts to the above noted items.
5. For infill type developments, the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood would not support development of the property at the minimum density. The property is adjacent to existing rural residential, large lot development, and the development of 3+ units per acre would not meet the character of the neighborhood.

As a result of the amendment, the City’s overall density decreases from 3.1 units per acre to 2.9 units per acre.

The City of Ramsey participates in the Council’s Plat Monitoring program. The purpose of the Program is to track and monitor residential development patterns on the region’s developing edge, including the number of units and acres platted. Consistent with the Council’s Metropolitan Urban Services Area (MUSA) Implementation Guidelines, the Council applies the platted density to the density calculation to give credit to communities, like Ramsey, are developing over the minimum density for various residential land uses. Given the City’s participation in the Plat Monitoring program, Council staff can apply this developed density to the overall community density total. With this amendment, including Plat Monitoring information, the City’s overall community wide density is 3.6 units per acre, which meets the 3 units per acre minimum. Therefore, the City remains consistent with regional land use policy and conforms to the regional wastewater system.

Table 1 Planned Residential Density, City of Ramsey

Category	Density		Net Acres	2018-2040 Change	
	Min	Max		Min Units	Max Units
Urban Residential Low Density	<u>1.5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>241</u>	<u>642</u>
Low Density Residential	3	4	936	2,809	3,746
Medium Density Residential	4	6	77	308	463
High Density Residential	8	15	2	16	30
Mixed Use*	5	75	33	165	2,471
	TOTALS		1,209	3,539	7,352
	Overall Planned Density			<u>2.9</u>	6.1
	Plat Monitoring Program (PMP) (2020-2022)		929	4,146	
	Total Planned and PMP		2,070	7,685	
	Overall Density with PMP			<u>3.6</u>	

Advisory Comments

1. The amendment references a future event center. However, the Urban Residential Low

Density land use does not include other uses within its description as allowable uses. If the City plans a portion of the site for a future event center, this will require a comprehensive plan amendment to an appropriate land use.

2. Without the application of Plat Monitoring Program, the City's planned land use is below 3 units per acre. The City should identify areas to guide at higher residential densities within the City to reduce the potential for limited flexibility or potential future system conformance issues.
3. The Urban Residential Low Density land use is a discrete land use within the comprehensive plan; therefore, any proposal for expansion of this land use will require a comprehensive plan amendment authorized by the Metropolitan Council. As noted above, expansion of this land use may increase the potential for future system conformance issues.
4. The criteria that the City Council identified for application of the Urban Residential Low Density land use are too flexible to ensure limited use of this land use. The need to meet three criteria would make application of the land use more closely tied to site and infrastructure constraints. Moreover, the use of the final criterion is too subjective and permissive and should be reconsidered as it supports expansion of the rural residential development pattern which is inconsistent with regional land use policy.

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

The proposed amendment is compatible with the plans of adjacent jurisdictions. 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 Regional Systems
- Figure 2: Location Map Showing Community Designations
- Figure 3: Existing and Proposed Land Use Guiding



Figure 1. Location Map Showing Regional Systems

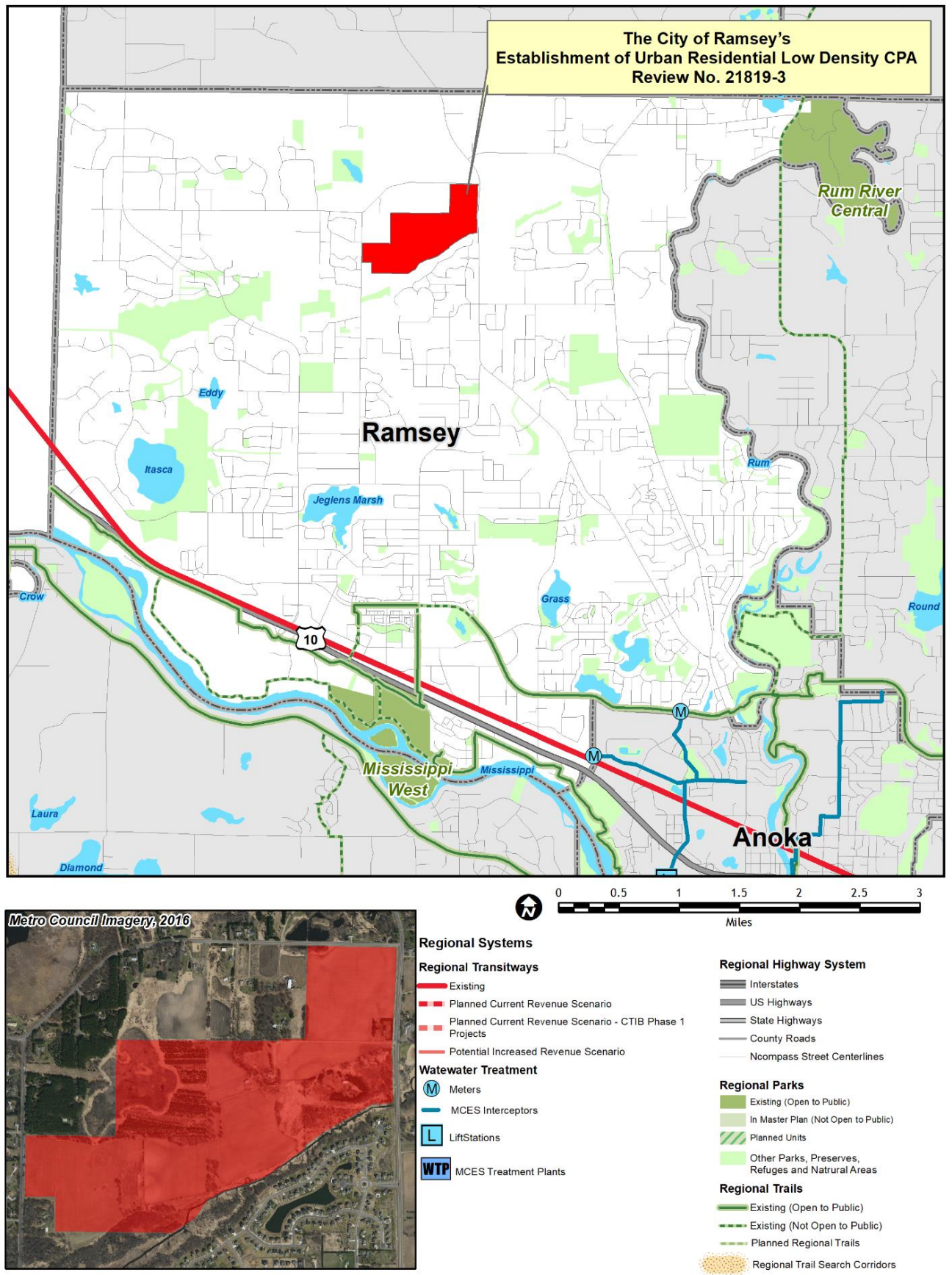
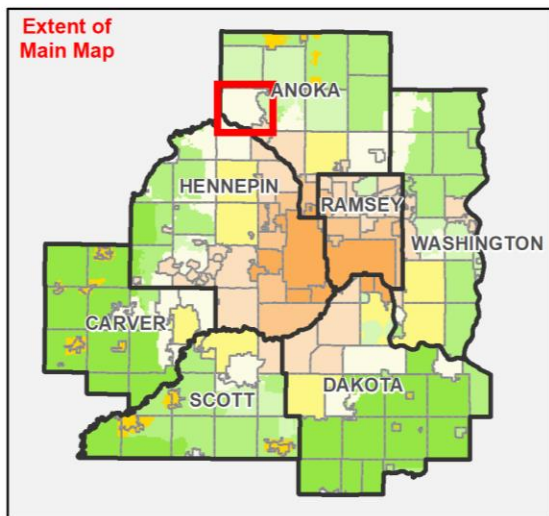
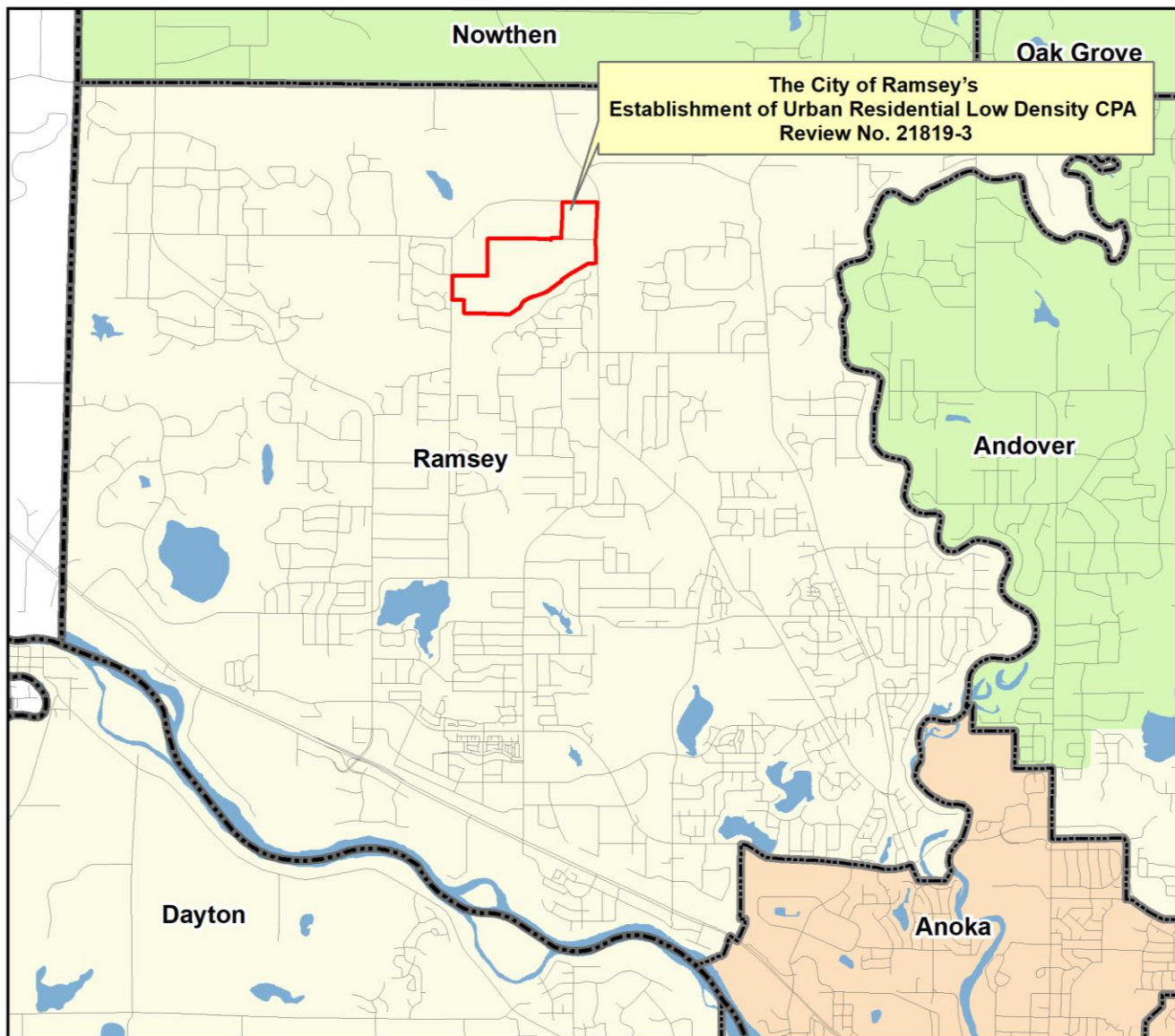


Figure 2. Location Map Showing Community Designations



ThriveMSP 2040 Community Designations

- Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Suburban Edge
- Suburban
- Urban
- Urban Center
- Ncompass Street Centerlines



Figure 3. Existing and Proposed Land Use Guiding

