Density and Land Use Approaches

Community Development Committee
Raya Esmaeili, AICP and Angela Torres, AICP

February 20, 2024
Respect the relationship with land and water as a foundation for regional growth.

Orderly Growth and Efficient Infrastructure Investments

- Minimize the amount of land needed to accommodate regional growth
- Minimize urbanization of rural/agricultural uses
- Focus growth to maximize infrastructure investments
- Accommodate growth within the existing MUSA
- Accommodate forecasted growth and land supply identification by decade
- Maximize use of the existing built environment
- Direct growth away from sensitive ecosystems

Environmental and Cultural Resource Management

- Incorporate indigenous perspectives in land and water management
- Ensure sufficient water supply for community growth
- Urban design includes climate mitigation and adaptation
Density Analysis: What we know

Long-term impact

• The structure of a community remains for decades
• Past land use practices impact existing and future development patterns

There is a gap

• There is a gap between minimum density requirements and actual development
• Low-density land use patterns do impact infrastructure investments
• Despite higher density ranges developed in the past decade, overall developed density remains below planned minimum densities.

• Higher developed densities in the recent decade are insufficient to bring the overall density of development up to minimum planned densities.

• Despite some communities building at higher densities, very low densities are still being developed in other communities within the same community designation.

• Recent development trends in Suburban Edge communities are consistent with the planned 2040 densities.

• Overall developed density in Emerging Suburban Edge communities is lower than the minimum requirements.

• Platted density is higher than developed density, suggesting that many plats remain undeveloped.
Possible Land Use/Density Approaches

Density Policy Decisions

- Increase minimum density requirements
- Restrain MUSA expansion and establish criteria for when expansion would be authorized
- Establish a minimum density requirement for all new connections to the regional sewer system

Administrative Practices and Guidelines

- Consider all land guided to support growth, not just areas of change
- Calculate density requirements per decade rather than over the planning horizon
- Include all existing developments in density calculations
- Establish a target density in addition to minimum density requirements
- Explore other incentives that advance regional goals as part of flexibility in meeting density requirements
Density Policy Decisions

- Increase minimum density requirements.
- Restrain MUSA expansion and establish criteria for when expansion would be authorized.
- Establish a minimum density requirement for all new connections to the regional sewer system.
Policy Approach: Minimum Density Requirements

Community Designation: Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 3 du/ac
LDR: 800 acres @ 2-5 du/ac
MDR: 120 acres @ 5-14 du/ac
HDR: 55 acres @ 14-30 du/ac
Overall density= 3.0 du/ac

Community Designation: Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 4 du/ac
LDR: 600 acres @ 2-5 du/ac
MDR: 270 acres @ 5-14 du/ac
HDR: 105 acres @ 14-30 du/ac
Overall density= 4.1 du/ac

If minimum density requirements are increased
Policy Approach: Minimum Density Requirements

Community Designation: Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 3 du/ac
LDR: 800 acres @ 2-5 du/ac
MDR: 120 acres @ 5-14 du/ac
HDR: 55 acres @ 14-30 du/ac
Overall density= 3.0 du/ac

If minimum density requirements are increased

Community Designation: Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 4 du/ac
LDR: 800 acres @ 3-6 du/ac
MDR: 120 acres @ 6-14 du/ac
HDR: 55 acres @ 14-30 du/ac
Overall density= 4.0 du/ac
Policy Approach: MUSA Expansion

Community Designation: Emerging Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 3 du/ac
Planned 2040 density= 4 du/ac

If a proposal is outside of MUSA

MUSA can be expanded if the proposal meets certain criteria adopted by the Council.

Proposed 2040 MUSA Expansion
Policy Approach: Minimum Density for New Connections

Community Designation: Emerging Suburban Edge
Minimum Density Requirement: 3 du/ac

If a new connection is proposed

The proposed project has to be at least 3 du/ac.
Administrative Practices and Guidelines

- Consider all land guided to support growth, not just areas of change.
- Calculate density requirements per decade rather than over the planning horizon.
- Include all existing developments in density calculations.
- Establish a target density in addition to minimum density requirements.
- Explore other incentives that advance regional goals as part of flexibility in meeting density requirements.
Administrative Approach: All land guided to support growth

Area of change from 2030 Future Land Use Map

2040 Future Land Use Map

Existing Land Use Map

Other Areas Supporting Growth
### Administrative Approach: Meet Density Minimums Every Decade

#### 2018-2040 Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Density Range</th>
<th>% Residential</th>
<th>Net Acres</th>
<th>Min Units</th>
<th>Max Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>3 6 100%</td>
<td>473.80</td>
<td>1,421</td>
<td>2,843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Density Residential</td>
<td>6 12 100%</td>
<td>40.40</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>485</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Density Residential</td>
<td>12 40 100%</td>
<td>31.70</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Residential</td>
<td>10 40 75%</td>
<td>141.30</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>5,652</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>695.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,609</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,248</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Overall Density

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Density</strong></td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>14.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2018-2040 Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Density Range</th>
<th>% Residential</th>
<th>2018-2020 Net Acres</th>
<th>2018-2020 Min Units</th>
<th>2021-2030 Net Acres</th>
<th>2021-2030 Min Units</th>
<th>2031-2040 Net Acres</th>
<th>2031-2040 Min Units</th>
<th>Total Net Acres</th>
<th>Min Units</th>
<th>Max Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>3 6 100%</td>
<td>64.8 194</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>473.8</td>
<td>1,421</td>
<td>2,843</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Density Residential</td>
<td>6 12 100%</td>
<td>4 24</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>485</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Density Residential</td>
<td>12 30 100%</td>
<td>5 60</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>124.8</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Residential</td>
<td>4 30 75%</td>
<td>38 114</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>195.9</td>
<td>141.3</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>5,652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>111.8 392</strong></td>
<td><strong>375.4 1,336</strong></td>
<td><strong>247</strong></td>
<td><strong>880</strong></td>
<td><strong>695.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,609</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,248</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Overall Density

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Density</strong></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Density</strong></td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Density</strong></td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrative Approach: All Existing Developments

Existing Land Use

- Agriculture
- Large Lot Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Quasi Public

Future Land Use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Open Space
- Quasi Public

Areas of Change
Administrative Approach: Target Density

Table 1. Average Minimum Residential Density Requirements (dwelling units per acre)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right-of-Way Type</th>
<th>Transit Type</th>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Urban Center</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Suburban Edge / Emerging Suburban Edge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed or Dedicated Transitway</td>
<td>Light Rail Transit Commuter Rail Dedicated BRT</td>
<td>half-mile radius</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway Transitway (MnPass / HOV)</td>
<td>Highway BRT</td>
<td>half-mile radius</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Rights-of-Way</td>
<td>Arterial BRT</td>
<td>quarter-mile radius</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Bus Routes on High Frequency Network</td>
<td>quarter-mile along route</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Target Residential Densities (dwelling units per acre)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right-of-Way Type</th>
<th>Transit Type</th>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Urban Center</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Suburban Edge / Emerging Suburban Edge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed or Dedicated Transitway</td>
<td>Light Rail Transit Commuter Rail Dedicated BRT</td>
<td>half-mile radius</td>
<td>75-150+</td>
<td>50-100+</td>
<td>40-75+</td>
<td>40-75+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway Transitway (MnPass / HOV)</td>
<td>Highway BRT</td>
<td>half-mile radius</td>
<td>40-75+</td>
<td>25-50+</td>
<td>20-40+</td>
<td>20-40+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Rights-of-Way</td>
<td>Arterial BRT</td>
<td>quarter-mile radius</td>
<td>20-60+</td>
<td>20-60+</td>
<td>20-60+</td>
<td>20-60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Bus Routes on High Frequency Network</td>
<td>quarter-mile along route</td>
<td>15-60+</td>
<td>15-60+</td>
<td>15-60+</td>
<td>15-60+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrative Approach: Incentives

- Protection of natural resources, such as Regionally Significant Ecological Areas
- Compact development practices
- Affordable housing development
- Transit-oriented development
- Adaptive reuse for historic preservation
- Incorporation of energy-efficiency practices
- Green space contribution
- Other programs that advance regional goals
Discussion

Feedback

• How would you improve any of the proposed approaches to address both regional goals and potential local concerns?

• What other land use policy solutions would you recommend at a regional scale to address the challenges in realizing planned densities?

• Do you have any additional feedback?
Raya Esmaeili
Planning Analyst, Local Planning Assistance
raya.esmaeili@metc.state.mn.us
651.602.1616