



# Density and Land Use Approaches

Community Development Committee

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# 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

# Takeaways from Density Analysis

- 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

If minimum density requirements are increased



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

# 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

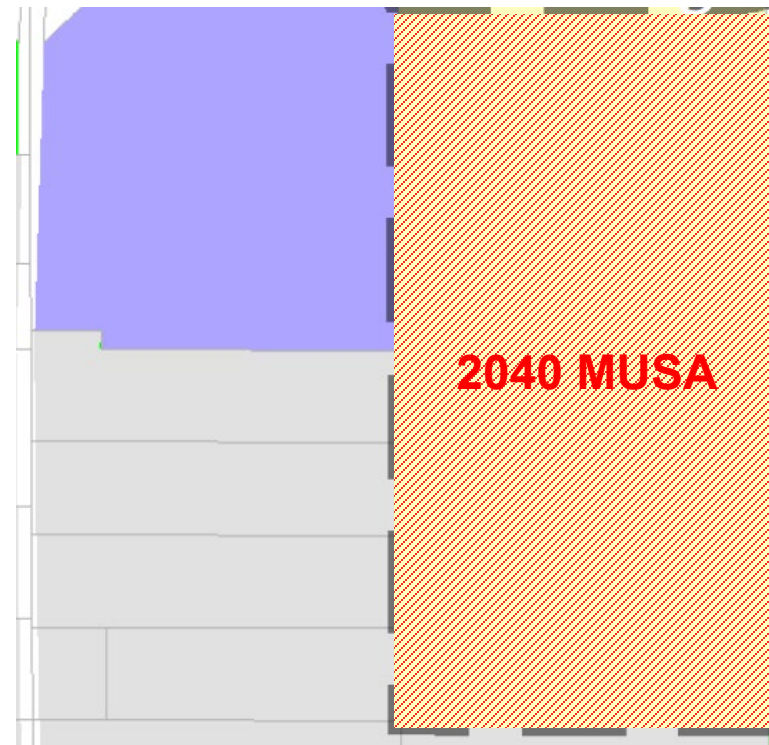
If minimum density requirements are increased



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

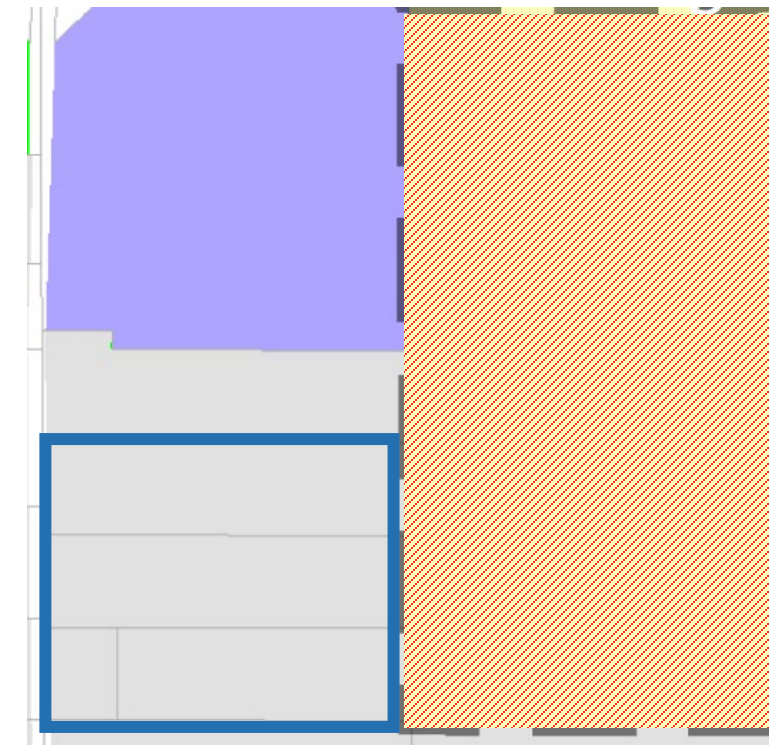



# Policy Approach: MUSA Expansion



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

If a proposal is outside of  
MUSA



 Proposed 2040 MUSA Expansion  
MUSA can be expanded if the proposal  
meets certain criteria adopted by the Council.

# 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.

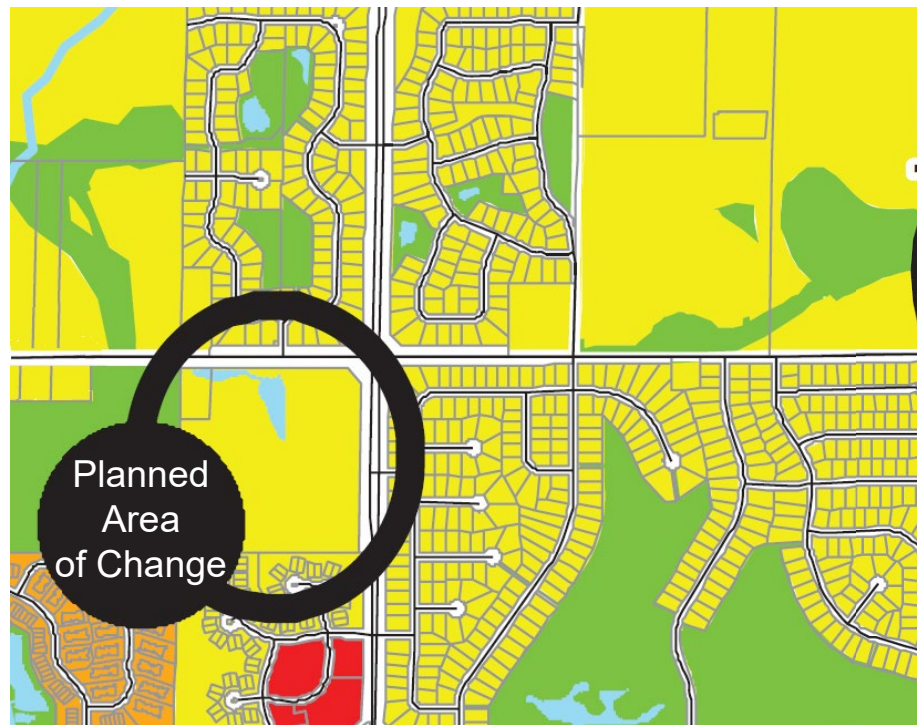
Calculate density requirements per decade rather than over the planning horizon.

Include all existing developments in density calculations.

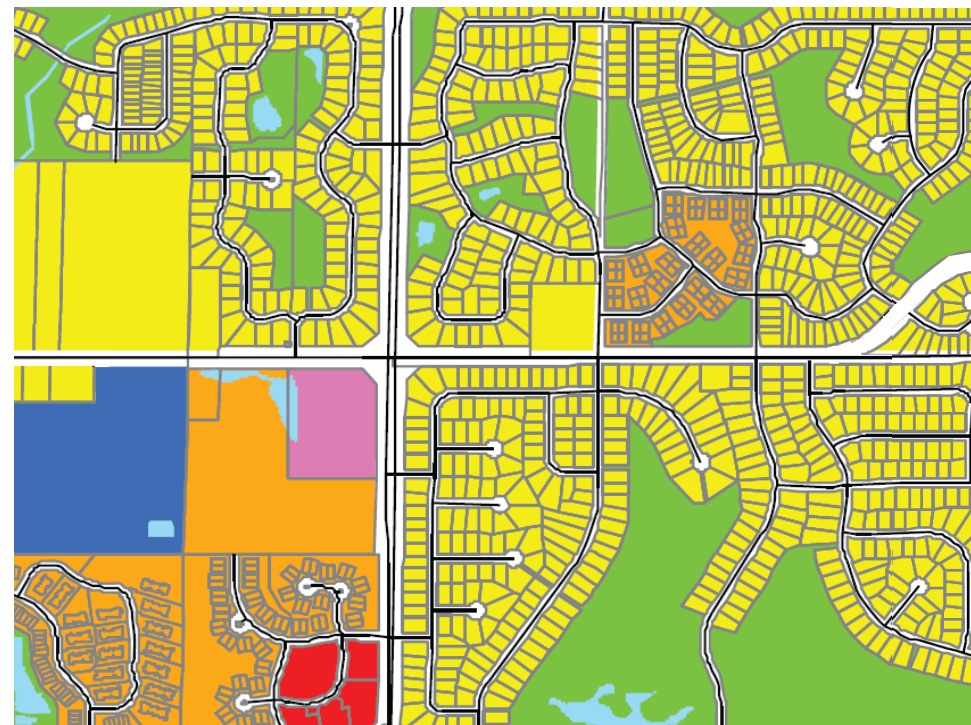
Establish a target density in addition to minimum density requirements.

Explore other incentives that advance regional goals as part of flexibility in meeting density requirements.

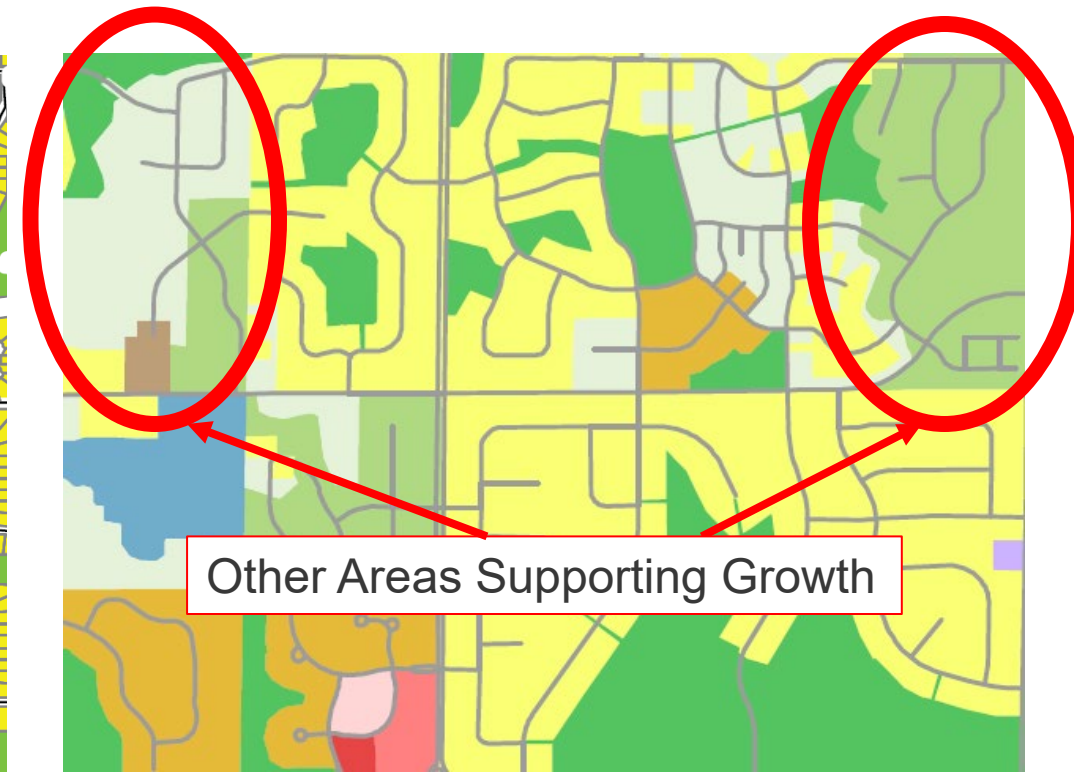
# Administrative Approach: All land guided to support growth



Area of change from  
2030 Future Land Use Map



2040 Future Land Use Map



Existing Land Use Map

# Administrative Approach: Meet Density Minimums Every Decade

Land Use	2018-2040 Change					
	Density Range		% Residential	Net Acres	Min Units	Max Units
	Min	Max				
Low Density Residential	3	6	100%	473.80	1,421	2,843
Medium Density Residential	6	12	100%	40.40	242	485
High Density Residential	12	40	100%	31.70	380	1,268
Mixed Residential	10	40	75%	141.30	565	5,652
<b>Total</b>				<b>695.60</b>	<b>2,609</b>	<b>10,248</b>
				<b>Overall Density</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>14.91</b>



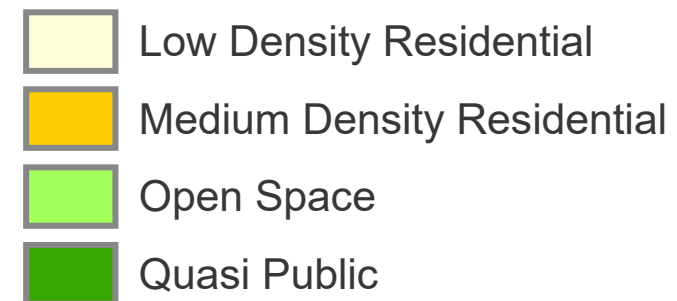
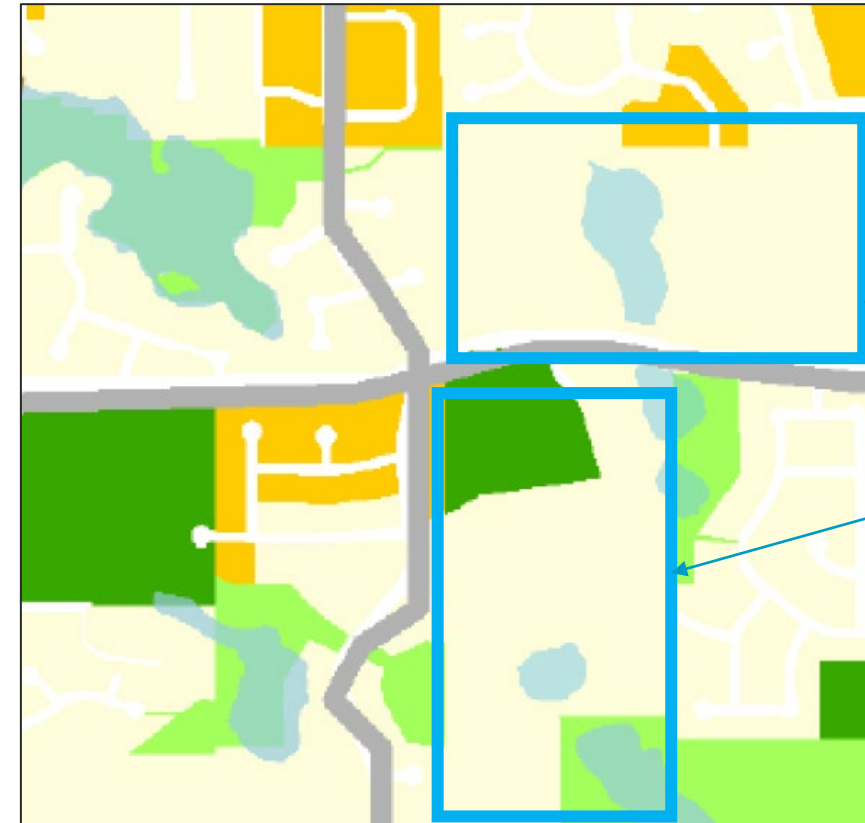
Land Use	2018-2040 Change											
	Density Range		% Residential	2018-2020		2021-2030		2031-2040		Total	Min Units	Max Units
	Min	Max		Net Acres	Min Units	Net Acres	Min Units	Net Acres	Min Units			
Low Density Residential	3	6	100%	64.8	194	253	759	156	468	473.8	1,421	2,843
Medium Density Residential	6	12	100%	4	24	21.1	127	15.3	91.8	40.4	242	485
High Density Residential	12	30	100%	5	60	16.3	196	10.4	124.8	31.7	380	1,268
Mixed Residential	4	30	75%	38	114	85	255	65.3	195.9	141.3	565	5,652
<b>Total</b>				<b>111.8</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>375.4</b>	<b>1,336</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>695.6</b>	<b>2,609</b>	<b>10,248</b>
					<b>Overall Density</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>		<b>3.8</b>	<b>14.9</b>	

# Administrative Approach: All Existing Developments

Existing Land Use



Future Land Use



Areas of Change

# Administrative Approach: Target Density

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

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

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

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

# 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?



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