

Business Item

Community Development Committee



Committee Meeting Date: June 16, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: June 25, 2025

Business Item: 2025-149

City of Lake St. Croix Beach 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update, Review File 22399-1

District(s), Member(s):	District 11, Gail Cederberg
Policy/Legal Reference:	Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minn. Stat. § 473.175)
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Emma Dvorak, Senior Planner (651-602-1399) Angela R. Torres, Local Planning Assistance 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:

Recommendations of the Community Development Committee

1. Authorize Lake St. Croix Beach to place its 2040 Comprehensive Plan into effect.
2. Advise the City to:
 - a. Revise the City's forecasts downward as shown in Table 1 and establish revised 2050 forecasts as described in the attached Review Record.
 - b. Implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Regional Parks and Trails.

Advisory Comments

The following Advisory Comments are part of the Council action authorizing the City of Lake St. Croix Beach to implement its 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Plan).

Community Development Committee

1. As stated in the Local Planning Handbook, the City must take the following steps:
 - a. Adopt the Plan in final form after considering the Council's review recommendations as contained in the body of this report.
 - b. Submit one hard copy and one electronic copy of the Plan to the Council. The electronic copy must be submitted as one unified file.
 - c. Submit to the Council a copy of the City Council resolution evidencing final adoption of the Plan.
2. The Local Planning Handbook also states that local governments must formally adopt their comprehensive plans within nine months after the Council's final action. If the Council has recommended changes to the Plan, local governments should incorporate those recommended changes into the Plan or respond to the Council before "final adoption" of the comprehensive plan by the governing body of the local governmental unit. (Minn. Stat. § 473.864, subd. 1)
3. Local governments must adopt official controls as identified in their 2040 comprehensive plans and must submit copies of the official controls to the Council within 30 days after the official controls are adopted. (Minn. Stat. § 473.865, subd. 1)
4. Local governmental units cannot adopt any official controls or fiscal devices that conflict with their comprehensive plans or which permit activities in conflict with the Council's metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. §§ 473.864, subd. 2; 473.865, subd. 2). If official controls conflict with comprehensive plans, the official controls must be amended within 9 months following amendments to comprehensive plans (Minn. Stat. § 473.865, subd. 3).



Background

Lake St. Croix Beach is located in eastern Washington County. It is surrounded by the communities of Lakeland, St. Mary's Point, and Afton.

The City submitted its 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Plan) to the Council for review to meet the Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirements (Minn. Stat. §§ 473.851 to 473.871) and the Council's 2015 System Statement requirements.

The Metropolitan Council received the original Comprehensive Plan submittal on December 31, 2019. The plan was deemed incomplete for review and a letter was sent on January 22, 2020. The city resubmitted the 2040 Comprehensive Plan on October 31, 2022, which was found incomplete for review on November 22, 2022. The Council received supplemental information on March 24, 2025, and May 12, 2025. Council staff now finds the Plan complete for review. In accordance with state law, the Council has 120 days, or by Tuesday, September 9, 2025 to complete its formal review of the Plan.

Review Authority & Rationale

Minn. Stat. § 473.175 directs the Metropolitan Council to review a local government's comprehensive plan and provide a written statement to the local government regarding the Plan's:

- **Conformance** with metropolitan system plans
- **Consistency** with the adopted plans and policies of the Council
- **Compatibility** with the plans of adjacent governmental units and plans of affected special districts and school districts

By resolution, the Council may require a local government to modify its comprehensive plan if the Council determines that "the plan is more likely than not to have a substantial impact on or contain a substantial departure from metropolitan system plans" (Minn. Stat. § 473.175, subd. 1).

The attached Review Record details the Council's assessment of the Plan's conformance, consistency, and compatibility, and is summarized below.

Review Standard	Review Area	Plan Status
Conformance	Regional system plan for Parks	Conforms
Conformance	Regional system plan for Transportation, including Aviation	Conforms
Conformance	Water Resources (Wastewater Services and Surface Water Management)	Conforms
Consistency with Council Policy	<i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> and Land Use	Consistent
Consistency with Council Policy	Forecasts	Consistent
Consistency with Council Policy	<i>2040 Housing Policy Plan</i>	Consistent
Consistency with Council Policy	Water Supply	Consistent
Consistency with Council Policy	Community and Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS)	Consistent
Compatibility	Compatible with the plans of adjacent and affected governmental districts	Compatible

Thrive Lens Analysis

On Feb. 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in *Thrive MSP 2040*. The proposed 2040 comprehensive plan 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 outcomes identified in Thrive.

Funding

The Metropolitan Council awarded the City a Planning Assistance Grant of \$10,000 to complete its 2040 comprehensive plan. The first half of this grant (\$5,000) was paid to initiate the local planning process in January 2017. The City did not submit their Comprehensive Plan by the contract deadline, despite an extension to December 2021, and therefore chose to forfeit the second half of the grant payment.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.



REVIEW RECORD

City of Lake St. Croix Beach 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update

Review File No. 22399-1, Business Item No. 2025-149

The following Review Record documents how the proposed Plan meets the requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act and conforms to regional system plans, is consistent with regional policies, and is compatible with the plans of adjacent and affected jurisdictions.

Conformance with Regional Systems

The Council reviews plans to determine conformance with metropolitan system plans. The Council has reviewed the City's Plan and finds that it conforms to the Council's regional system plans for Regional Parks, Transportation (including Aviation,) and Water Resources.

Regional Parks and Trails

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

The Plan conforms to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* for the Regional Parks System element. Washington County is the Park Implementing Agency for Regional Parks System components in Lake St Croix Beach, for which the Plan accurately describes the Regional Parks System components.

Advisory Comment:

A planned interim regional trail segment now traverses the city north-south, adjacent to St. Croix Trail South / County Road 18. The Middle St. Croix Valley Regional Trail Search Corridor was proposed to be added to the Regional Parks and Trails System by Washington County in 2020. This system addition was approved by the Metropolitan Council in 2020. A long-range plan for this regional trail was developed by Washington County and approved by the Metropolitan Council in January 2024.

Future comprehensive plan updates for the City of Lake St. Croix Beach must describe, map, and label the Regional Parks and Trails System facilities located in its community, including the planned Middle St. Croix Valley Regional Trail.

The Met Council-approved Middle St. Croix Valley Regional Trail Long-Range Plan can be found here: [Middle St Croix Valley Regional Trail Master Plan | Washington County, MN - Official Website.](#)

Regional Transportation, Transit, and Aviation

Reviewer: Joseph Widing, Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) (651-602-1724)

The Plan conforms to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* (TPP) adopted in 2015. It accurately reflects transportation system components of the TPP and is consistent with Council policies regarding community roles, the needs of non-automobile transportation, access to job concentrations, and the needs of freight. The Plan is compatible with the plans of adjacent and affected governmental units.

Roadways

The Plan conforms to the Highway system element of the TPP. The Plan accurately reflects that there are no Principal Arterials within the City's boundaries. The Plan also accurately reflects the regional functional classification map of A-Minor Arterials as of the time it was produced (Washington County CSAH 18).

The Plan identifies all the required characteristics of the community's roadways, including existing and future functional class, right-of-way preservation needs, and existing and forecasted traffic volumes for Principal and A-Minor Arterials. Forecasting was done consistent with regional methodology. The Plan also includes guidelines on how access will be managed for Principal and A-Minor Arterials.

Transit

The Plan conforms to the Transit element of the TPP. The Plan acknowledges the City is within Transit Market Area V. The Plan is consistent with the policies of the Transit system element of the TPP. The Plan addresses community roles related to its Community Designation.

Aviation

The Plan conforms to Aviation system element of the TPP. There is no airport in the regional aviation system located near Lake St Croix Beach. The Plan notes bodies of water which are permitted for seaplane operations (St. Croix River). The Plan includes policies that protect regional airspace from obstructions.

Bicycling and Walking

The Plan is consistent with the Bicycling and Pedestrian chapter of the TPP. The Plan identifies and acknowledges the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN). There is one Tier 2 RBTN alignment within City boundaries along CSAH 18. The Plan notes that the county owns the facility while the city performs routine maintenance.

Freight

The Plan is consistent with freight policies of the TPP. The Plan notes there are no regional freight facilities or considerations in the community. The Plan identifies the single Minor Arterial (CSAH 18) which may see freight truck traffic.

Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs)

The Plan conforms to the TPP regarding TAZ allocations. The City's TAZ allocations for employment, households, and population appropriately sum to the Metropolitan Council's citywide forecast totals for all forecast years.

The City's planned land uses and areas identified for development and redevelopment can accommodate the TAZ forecasted allocations in the Plan, and at densities consistent with the community's Thrive designation and applicable TPP policies.

Water Resources

Wastewater Services

Reviewer: Kyle Colvin, Environmental Services (ES) – Wastewater Planning and Community Programs (651-602-1151)

The Plan conforms to the *2040 Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP)*. The Plan represents the City's guide for future growth and development through the year 2040. The City is entirely provided wastewater service through the use of individual private subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS). The Plan indicates continued wastewater services will be provided through the use of SSTS through 2040.

The Plan does not propose or anticipate requesting connection to the Regional Wastewater Disposal System within the 20-year planning period; therefore, the City is not required to submit for approval of a Tier II Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan.

The Metropolitan Council does not have plans to provide regional wastewater services to the community within the 2040 planning period.

Surface Water Resources

Reviewer: Steve Christopher, ES – Water Resources (651-602-1033)

The Plan is consistent with Council policy requirements and conforms to the Council's WRPP for local surface water management. The City lies within the oversight boundary of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization (MSCWMO) and the Valley Branch Watershed District (VBWD). The City submitted a draft Local Water Management Plan (LWMP) update in January of 2019. Council staff reviewed and commented on the draft LWMP to the City and watershed management organizations in January of 2019. The LWMP was approved by the MSCWMO on November 8, 2018, and VBWD on January 23, 2020. The Plan includes the LWMP in the Appendix.

Consistency with Council Policies

The Council reviews plans to evaluate their apparent consistency with the adopted plans of the Council. Council staff have reviewed the City's Plan and find that it is consistent with the Council's policies, as detailed below.

Forecasts

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

The Plan is consistent with regional policy. A revised households and population forecast appears on page 13. Council staff and the City have agreed to this revision. No households growth is planned, given a lack of residential land supply. The revised forecast is highlighted and underlined in the table below.

Advisory Comment:

Met Council will forecast 470 households and 1,010 population in 2040 and 2050. Met Council will revise its published households and population forecast in the *Imagine 2050* plan simultaneous with action on this Plan.

Table 1. Metropolitan Council Lake St. Croix Beach Forecasts

	Census 2020	Estimated 2023	System Statement Forecast			Revised Forecast		
			2020	2030	2040	2020	2030	2040
Population	1,043	1,037	1,060	1,090	1,090	<u>1,043</u>	<u>1,020</u>	<u>1,010</u>
Households	470	472	480	500	500	<u>470</u>	<u>470</u>	<u>470</u>
Employment	110	277 (2022)	150	160	160	150	160	160

Thrive MSP 2040 and Land Use

Reviewer: Emma Dvorak, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1399)

The 2040 Plan is consistent with *Thrive MSP 2040* and its land use policies. The Plan acknowledges the Thrive community designation of Rural Residential (Figure 2). Thrive describes Rural Residential communities as having residential patterns characterized by large lots and do not have plans to provide urban infrastructure, such as centralized wastewater treatment. Many of these communities have topographical development limitations and a development pattern with lot sizes that generally range from 1-2.5 units per acre.

Rural Residential communities are expected to discourage future development of rural residential patterns and where opportunities exist, plan for rural development at densities that are not greater than 1 unit per 10 acres, which is acknowledged in the Plan. The Plan represents no change in the development pattern from the 2030 Plan and guides residential land at an average density of approximately 1.68 acres per unit. The City is fully built out and does not anticipate development proposals that would decrease density.

The City of Lake St Croix Beach is a small rural community along the banks of the St. Croix River. The existing land uses in Lake St Croix Beach are predominately residential (48%), Parks and Recreation (4%) and Public/Semi Public (2%). 43% of the area within the community boundary is under the ordinary high water level.

Land use in Lake St. Croix Beach is primarily fully developed small lot, single family residential land use. A few commercial uses are concentrated along CSAH 18. The City has nearly one mile of Bluffland/Shoreland Park in the Lower St. Croix River National Scenic Riverway East of Riviera Avenue South, including a swimming beach, picnic pavilion, playground, a limited number of watercraft mooring places, and visitor parking. There is limited available vacant land and the population has remained relatively steady since 1990.

Housing

Reviewer: Olivia Boerschinger, CD – Housing (651-602-1327)

The Plan is consistent with the *Housing Policy Plan*. As of 2016, the City has more than 500 homes including close to 40 multifamily units and approximately 470 single-family homes. Roughly

100 homes are rented. Nearly 400 housing units are currently affordable to households earning under 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), however, just over 80 households earning 80% of AMI or below are paying more than 30% of their income toward housing costs. Notably, there are 11 units affordable to households with income at or below 30% AMI and about 10 cost burdened households with incomes at or below 30% AMI.

The Plan identifies existing housing needs including ongoing maintenance and reinvestment in aging housing stock, variety of housing types for all stages of life, and housing that is affordable to a range of income levels, especially low- and moderate-income households. The City does not currently have any publicly subsidized housing.

The City does not have an allocation of affordable housing need in the 2021-2030 decade, as it is not expected to experience any sewer-serviced growth.

The housing implementation plan component of the Plan describes that the City will partner with the Washington County Community Development Agency to meet their needs.

Water Supply

Reviewer: Lanya Ross, ES – Water Resources (651-602-1803)

The community does not own or operate a municipal community public water supply system. The Plan is consistent with WRPP policies related to water supply, including the policy on sustainable water supplies, the policy on assessing and protecting regional water resources, and the policy on water conservation and reuse.

Community and Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS)

Reviewer: Kyle Colvin, ES – Engineering Programs (651-602-1151)

As of 2016 approximately 83% of the City's homes are connected to the municipal water system. Washington County records show that there are approximately 470 SSTS in operation in the City. Washington County Development Code, Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems Regulations, Ordinance No. 206 dated June, 2018 regulates design, installation, use and maintenance of individual subsurface sewage treatment systems, and private treatment plants (cluster systems) so as to prevent contamination of the surface and groundwater within the city.

Special Resource Protection

Solar Access Protection

Reviewer: Emma Dvorak, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1399)

The Plan is consistent with statutory requirements (Minn. Stat. § 473.859) and Council policy regarding planning for the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA). The Plan includes the required solar planning elements. The City supports private/personal installations and considers the systems as a contributor to the City's green network.

Aggregate Resources

Reviewer: Emma Dvorak, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1399)

The Plan is consistent with the Council's aggregate resources inventory information contained in *Minnesota Geological Survey Information Circular 46*. Because the community is fully developed, a map of aggregate resources is not required. Many of these aggregate resources are located under existing residential developments, which would prevent their extraction.

Historic Preservation

Reviewer: Emma Dvorak, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1399)

The Plan appropriately addresses historic preservation within the community. Though no properties are part of the National Historic Register, the Plan includes an appendix (Appendix B) listing properties of historical importance or character, and their significance to the community. The City has taken steps to encourage awareness of its historical heritage by holding an annual Heritage Day celebration, and encouraging residents to maintain historical structures to preserve the historical architectural and cultural appeal. Washington County has begun a historic preservation project, in which the City is involved. The Plan establishes a goal to honor the history of the City and the aesthetics of the St. Croix River Valley and will work with interested parties in

retaining historically significant properties in the community.

Plan Implementation

Reviewer: Emma Dvorak, CD – Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1399)

The Plan includes a description of and schedule for any necessary changes to the capital improvement program, the zoning code, the subdivision code, the SSTS code, and the housing implementation program.

The Plan, with supplemental materials, describes the official controls and fiscal devices that the City will employ to implement the Plan. Specific implementation strategies are contained in individual chapters of the Plan, with capital improvements planning detailed in the appendix.

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

The proposed Plan 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.

Documents Submitted for Review

In response to the 2015 System Statement, the City of Lake St. Croix Beach submitted the following documents for review:

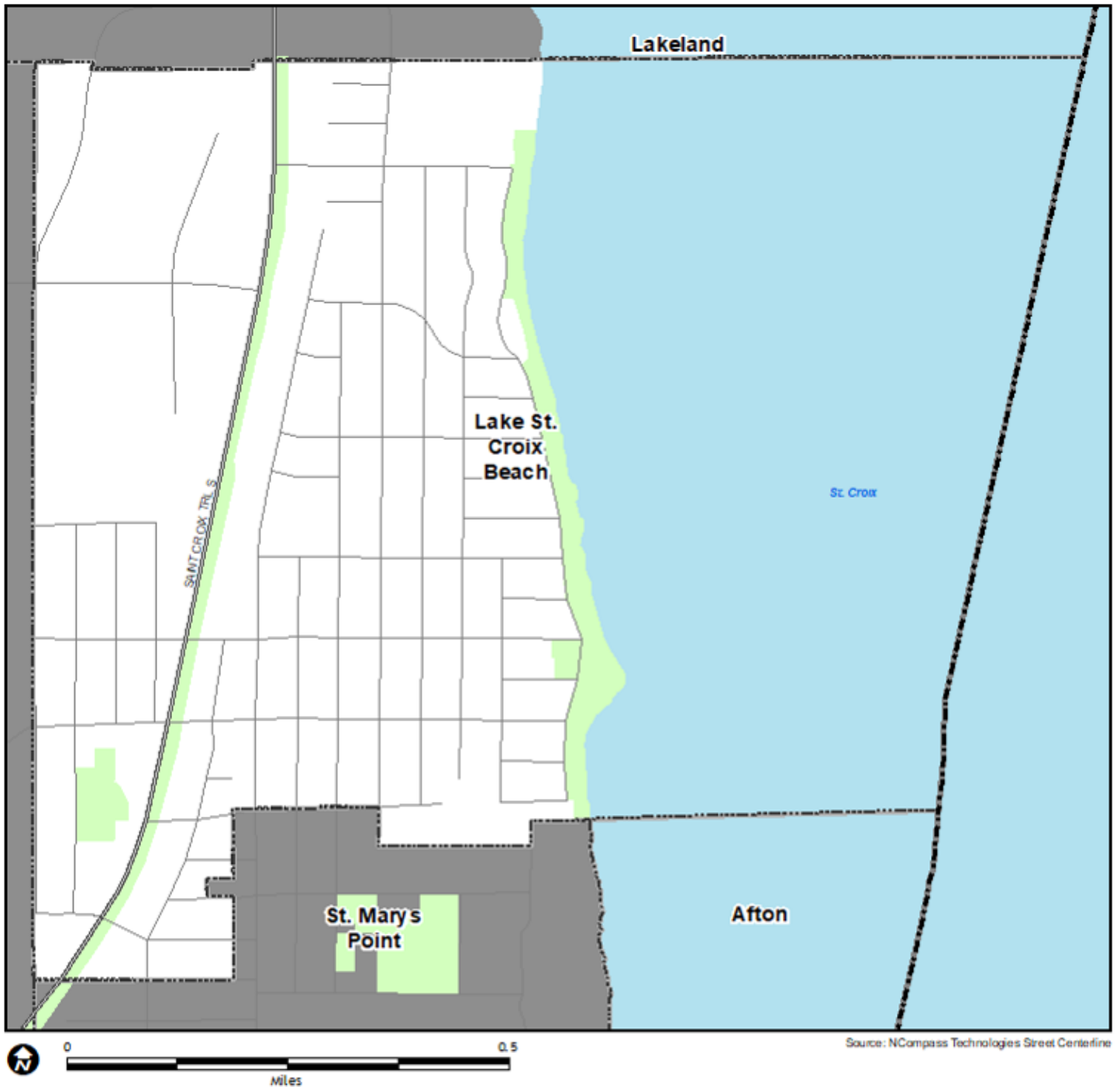
- December 31, 2019: Lake St Croix Beach 2040 Plan
- October 31, 2022: Lake St Croix Beach 2040 Plan Resubmitted
- March 24, 2025: Lake St Croix Beach 2040 Plan Resubmitted
- May 12, 2025: Supplemental Information received

Attachments

- Figure 1: Location Map with Regional Systems
Figure 2: Thrive MSP 2040 Community Designations
Figure 3: Existing Land Use and 2040 Planned Land Use



Figure 1. Location Map with Regional Systems



Source: NCompass Technologies Street Centerline

Regional Systems

Transportation

Transitways
2040 Transportation System Policy - adopted January 2015

- Existing
- Planned Current Revenue Scenario
- Planned Current Revenue Scenario - CTIB* Phase 1 Projects
- Potential Increased Revenue Scenario

Regional Highway System

- Existing Principal Arterials
- Planned Principal Arterials
- Existing Minor Arterials
- Planned Minor Arterials
- Existing Other Arterials
- Planned Other Arterials

Recreation Open Space

Regional Parks

- Existing (Open to Public)
- In Master Plan (Not Open to Public)
- Planned Units

Regional Trails

- Existing (Open to Public)
- Existing (Not Open to Public)
- Planned

Wastewater

- Meters
- Lift Stations
- MCES Interceptors
- MCES Treatment Plants

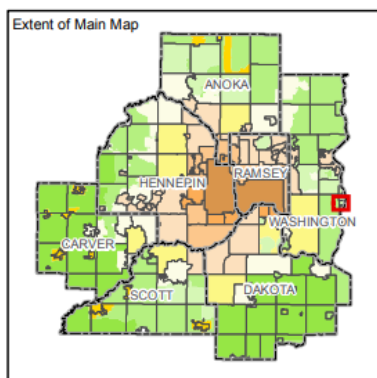
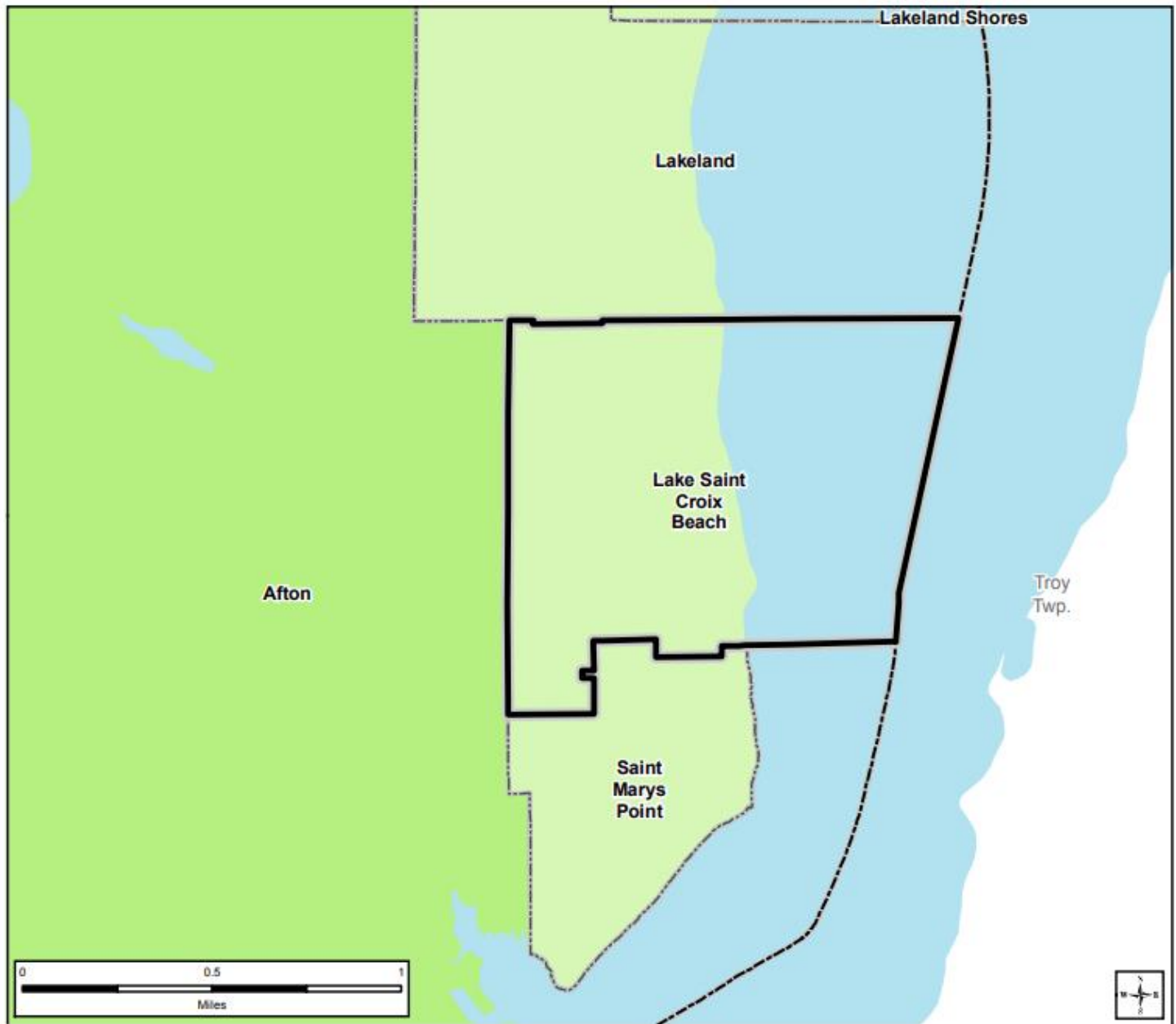
Regional Park Search Areas and Regional Trail Search Corridors

- Boundary Adjustment
- Search Area
- Regional Trail Search Corridors

- Local Streets
- Existing State Trails
- Other Parks, Preserves, Refuges and Natural Areas

* Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)

Figure 2. Thrive MSP 2040 Community Designations



Community Designation

Urban Center - Core City	Rural Center
Urban Center	Diversified Rural
Urban	Rural Residential
Suburban	Agricultural
Suburban Edge	Outside Council planning authority
Emerging Suburban Edge	

	County Boundaries
	City and Township Boundaries
	Lakes and Major Rivers

Figure 3. Existing Land Use and 2040 Planned Land Use

