

Land Use Policy

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Setting the Stage

The Twin Cities metropolitan area is a thriving region of interconnected places with a shared future. The region's assets are significant, and it is the Council's intent to not only be good stewards of those assets, but to capitalize upon them in our efforts toward prosperity, equity, livability, and sustainability. Among those assets are a diversified economy and numerous educational institutions; healthy downtown and suburban business centers; a vibrant arts and cultural community; abundant open space and natural resources; and a diversity of urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Over the last 40 years, the region has made significant investments in the regional systems of parks and trails, transportation, and wastewater treatment that support the built environment we have today. Because of fiscal, environmental, and political forces at all levels of government, the region is moving from a period of infrastructure expansion to one of maintenance, strategic investments, and getting the most out of what we already have. As a result of demographic and market changes, investment and intensification is occurring in the urbanized area; and though more slowly than in decades past, suburban communities on the edge are filling in. More communities are taking on the challenges and opportunities related to reuse, infill, and redevelopment; development along mixed use corridors; and the creation of walkable districts around transit.

The vision for the next 30 years is intended to be collaborative and strategic. *Thrive* provides a framework for the region to strengthen its competitive advantages and strive towards an equitable balance for the region's population. The land policies set forth in this chapter balance both urban and rural qualities to create the most viable atmosphere for a successful metropolitan community. The goal is to achieve a prosperous future for everyone in a region that is equitable, livable, and sustainable.

The vision within *Thrive* can only succeed through local and regional partnerships. Regional perspective does not displace local efforts, it depends on them. It is this integrated focus on which *Thrive* relies. The land use policies in this chapter are intended to support the *Thrive* vision, to maximize opportunities, achieve growth, and strengthen the region's economic competitiveness.

Land Use Policies

To build the foundation for a prosperous, livable, and sustainable future, the Council will set policy to guide land use and regional development:

1. **Orderly and Efficient Land Use:** Align land use, development patterns, and infrastructure to make the best use of public and private investment.
2. **Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources:** Conserve, restore, and protect the region's natural resources, including water resources.
3. **Housing Affordability and Choice:** Promote housing options to give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable, and affordable homes.
4. **Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice:** Sustain and improve a multi-modal transportation system to support regional growth, sustain regional economic competitiveness, and provide choices and reliability for the system's users.
5. **Economic Competitiveness:** Support a vibrant and globally competitive regional economy that creates opportunities for residents and employers.
6. **Building in Resilience:** Reduce the region's contributions to climate change and develop local resiliency to the impacts of climate change.

To realize the Thrive outcomes with this policy direction, the Council identifies land use strategies for local communities and the Council to implement. While individual strategies are linked to a specific policy in this DRAFT Land Use Policy

document, in practice many strategies can serve multiple purposes. For example, a strategy of focusing development around centers on transit and transportation corridors supports the policy of aligning land uses to make the best use of public and private investments, among other policies. Guiding development to targeted areas can reduce the development pressures in areas with high quality natural resources. This focus of development along transportation and transit corridors can also improve the efficiency of our transit system by building homes within easy access to the existing system. This method of development can also support other housing types to meet the needs lifestyle needs of a segment of the population that is seeking more urban living options.

We cannot focus on one policy alone to attain the outcomes identified in this plan. Instead, it will take a combination of strategies addressing all of the policies to set the stage for a successful future. While a policy may directly support some of the Council's desired outcomes more than others, all of the land use policies are interrelated and implementation must be integrated to move toward attaining the outcomes.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

POLICY: Align land use, development patterns, and infrastructure to make the best use of public and private investment.

Thrive Outcomes: Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability, Sustainability

Why is this important?

Orderly and efficient land uses set the foundation for a prosperous region. One of the tools that the Council uses to reach the outcomes is to set the framework for land use patterns and guide development in the region, as directed by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act¹. This means being fiscally-responsible by guiding land uses and development patterns that make the most of the region's investments in infrastructure. Putting growth where infrastructure already exists also reduces the need to add roads and expand the regional wastewater system to support the same growth elsewhere.

Making efficient use of land and capitalizing upon existing infrastructure also reduces outward development pressures in rural and natural resource areas. Planning for and supporting growth where infrastructure is already in place allows these rural areas to continue to maintain large tracts of natural resources, agricultural production, and a sparsely developed rural environment.

Aligning land uses, development patterns, and infrastructure also is important at the local level. Orderly and efficient does not just mean wise use of regional infrastructure, it also means planning livable neighborhoods connected to places to work and play. While traditionally planning has separated residential neighborhoods from commercial and industrial areas, residents still need to access these places to meet their daily needs and to get to work. Communities will need to continue to consider strategic locations for integrating different uses into neighborhoods and to make it easier for more people to access parks and places to pick up a bag of groceries without needing to rely on a car. While the orderly and efficient land use policy applies to all communities, the strategies to implement this policy are tailored to suit the different community types in the region (see Strategies for Geographic Planning Areas).

The region is able to provide cost-effective infrastructure and services when it is able to anticipate where, when, and to what extent regional growth will occur. The region establishes overall density expectations for communities based on their geographic planning area, as well as expectations near transit stations. Density thresholds are based on an understanding of future regional growth; market demand in different parts of the region; existing development patterns and redevelopment opportunities; and regional policies to support the concentration of higher density growth around transit stations. Because each community and its values are unique, precisely how and where density is accommodated is determined by each community.

¹ Minn. Stat. 473.145
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Council Strategies

- Advance the Metropolitan Council mission of ensuring orderly and economical development.
- Develop and update regional plans to manage forecasted growth by using regional systems and land efficiently.
- Coordinate major regional investment projects with local infrastructure and planning for development and redevelopment.
- Promote land use patterns that differentiate between urban and rural uses.
- Update regional plans for water supply and pursue environmentally sound and cooperative water reuse practices, conservation initiatives, joint planning, and implementation efforts to maximize surface water infiltration to recharge groundwater supplies.
- Coordinate wastewater conveyance projects with parks and trails system improvements.

Community Strategies

- Plan for development to support forecasted growth at appropriate densities, as articulated in the following community designation sections.
- Adopt and implement a Council-approved comprehensive plan.
- Maintain, replace, or expand local facilities and infrastructure to meet growth and development needs.
- Prepare local water supply, wellhead protection plans, and local water plans as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act
- Develop plans to improve conditions for and encourage walking and bicycling where appropriate.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

POLICY: Conserve, restore, and protect the region's natural resources, including water resources.

Thrive Outcomes: Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability, Sustainability

Why is this important?

An abundance of natural resources, particularly water, is one of the many reasons that the region is vibrant. Early in the region's history, the Mississippi River provided an important source of energy and transportation for the milling industries. Aside from the beauty and recreational value of the region's lakes and rivers, water is necessary to sustain life and economic activities. The region is home to a variety of natural habitats, ranging from wooded riverine habitats along the Minnesota and St. Croix Rivers to large wetland complexes like that in Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area to trout streams like Valley Creek in Washington County. As discussed earlier in Thrive, the DNR has identified Regional Significant Ecological Areas, which designates the high quality natural habitats around the region. This identification is a useful tool to guide agencies and local governments in coordinating their conservation and protection efforts.

Integrating natural resources into our development patterns helps to create livable neighborhoods and desirable places to visit. Incorporating natural areas and streets trees into neighborhoods adds to a community's sense of place, as well as providing opportunities to interact with the natural environment on a daily basis. Some of the natural areas can also increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and exercise, especially when integrated into the neighborhood.

The Council promotes land use patterns that integrate natural areas, both for their contributions to livability, but also to avoid costly projects to alleviate environmental impacts after development, such as infrastructure to manage stormwater. Protecting natural areas can help to recharge the region's aquifers for water supply, filter and slow stormwater runoff, and reduce flood damage. Trees in the urban area not only provide shade for neighborhoods and pedestrians, but also help to ameliorate the effects of the urban heat island, reduce stormwater runoff, and help to filter the air we breathe.

Groundwater Resources

While the Mississippi River supported the initial development of the region, plentiful groundwater accommodated the region's outward growth. Increasing reliance on groundwater over time, however, has become a significant issue. In parts of the region, groundwater levels are declining. In some cases, it is affecting, or has the potential to affect, lake levels. A pressing concern is the impact that future development might have on the reliability of groundwater as a water source.

In 2005, the Minnesota State Legislature authorized the Metropolitan Council to take on planning responsibilities for the regional water supply. The Council's goal, as articulated in the Master Water Supply Plan, is a sustainable water supply for current and future generations. To achieve this goal, the Plan identified two important issues to address: the unbalanced use of groundwater versus surface water resources

and the unplanned modification of important groundwater recharge areas. As illustrated in Figure 1, sustainable water use can be re-established through a better balance of groundwater and surface water, and through better management of vulnerable recharge areas.

Cities are responsible for planning their local water supply and obtaining permits from state agencies. These agencies, which protect the state's water resources and ensure safe drinking water, include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Because of the Metropolitan Council's planning work completed with the *Master Water Supply Plan*, the region now has a better understanding of the impact of development and water use on underground aquifers, as well as potential solutions to long-term sustainability. As communities plan for the future, it will be important for them to consider both the implications of their water supply for future growth and how their land use patterns affect water supply.

Soil Resources

Agriculture has been an important shaper and supporter of the development of the region. The abundance of rich soils close to the Mississippi River led to the development of early food milling companies like Pillsbury. Many of these early companies have grown to include some of the largest food and agricultural businesses in the world, including Cargill and General Mills. These companies employ more than 18,000 people in the region,

Figure 1. Sustainable Water Supply

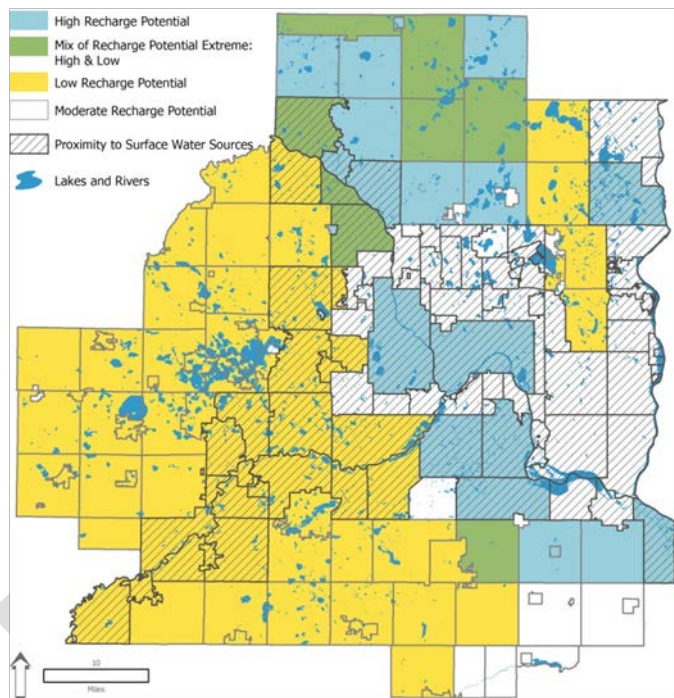


Figure 2. Prime Agricultural Land

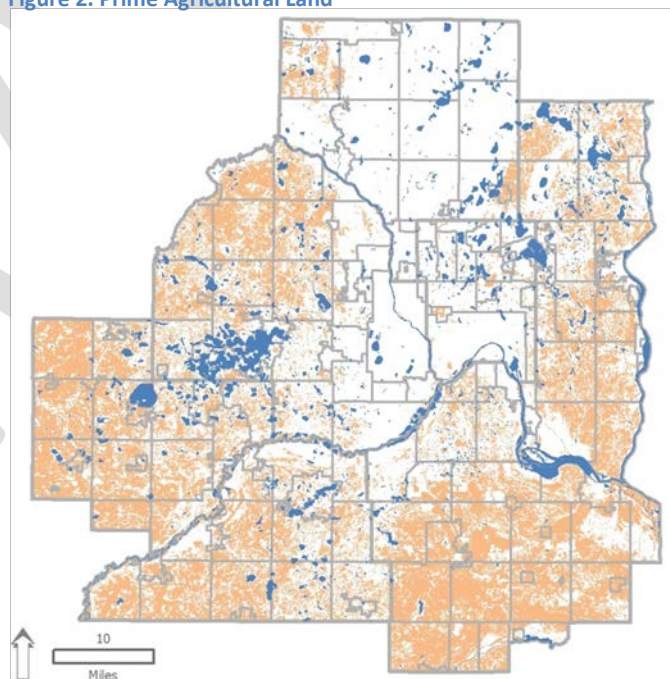
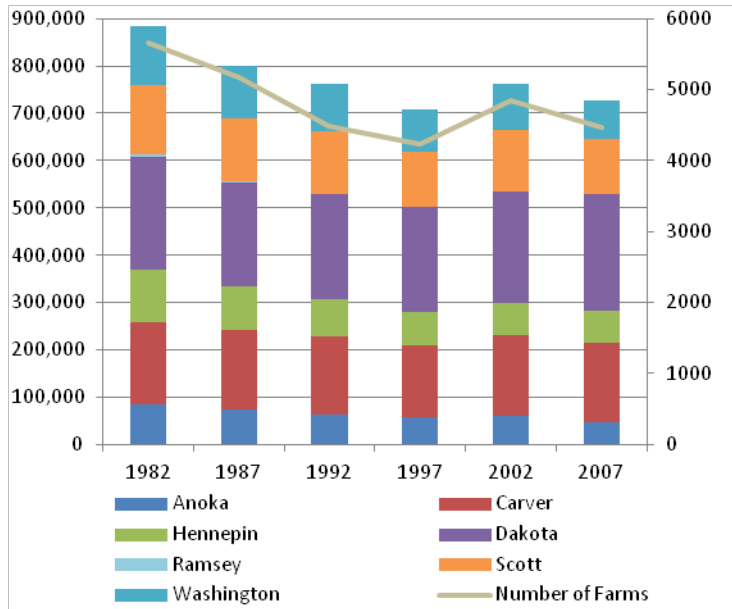


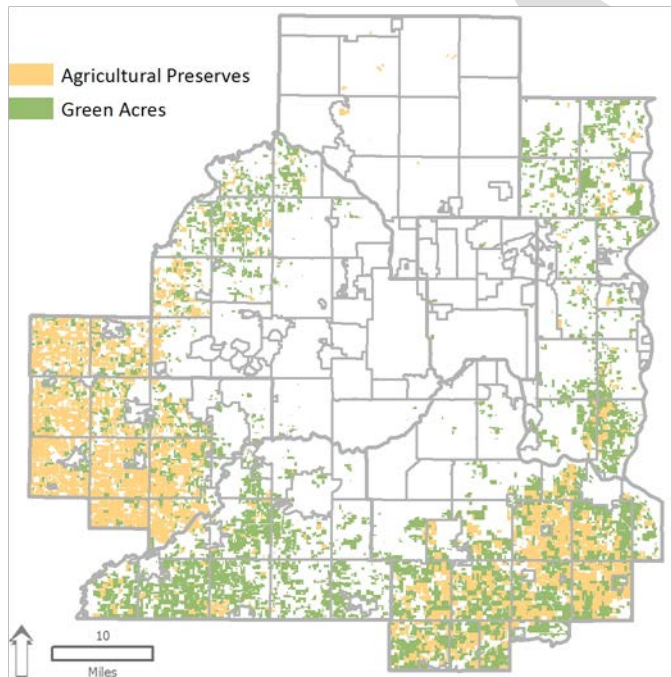
Figure 3. Total Farm Acreage & Number of Farms



with more than an additional 30,000 jobs in other parts of the world.² As shown in Figure 2, the region is a soil-rich environment, with prime agricultural soils dominating the rural landscape, particularly in Carver, Dakota, and Scott Counties. Prime agricultural soils are defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a division of the United States Department of Agriculture, in the Land Capability Classification. The Land Capability Classification designates soils as part of one of eight classes based on their characteristics including soil type, slope, location, depth, and texture among others. Classes I, II, and III are considered prime for cultivation.

Like in other metropolitan regions, farmland in the Twin Cities has experienced development pressures as the region has grown. Both the total number of farms and the total acreage in farms in the seven counties has declined over the last 30 years.³ There appears to be some leveling in both the acreage and number of farms since the late 1990s. This could be attributed to a number of reasons, including reduced outward pressures for development due to the downturn in the economy and enrollment in programs like the Agricultural Preserves Program and the Green Acres Program.

Figure 4. Lands Enrolled in Agricultural Preserves and Green Acres Programs, 2013



The Agricultural Preserves Program (Minn. Stat. 473H) was enacted by the Legislature in 1980 with the purpose of maintaining “viable productive farm operations in the metropolitan area.”⁴ This program provides tax benefits for the land owners with properties of at least 40 acres in size, along with long-range planning protections in the comprehensive plans and ordinances from local governments to protect farming operations. The Green Acres Program, established in the late 1960s, provides similar land owner tax benefits, particularly to those with small parcels (at least 10 acres), but does not

include the restrictions in local land use plans and ordinances for properties to be eligible. Enrollment in these programs varies by county (Figure 4), but otherwise largely mirrors the locations of prime agricultural lands shown in Figure 1.

² Munnich, L., Dworin, J., Tilahun, N., Schmit, M. 2013. Minneapolis-St. Paul Regional Cluster Competitiveness Study. State and Local Policy Program, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.

³ Census of Agriculture. United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. www.agcensus.usda.gov Accessed November 2013.

⁴ Laws of Minnesota 1980, chapter 566, sec. 1.

Aggregate Resources

As development expanded, the region found that a key ingredient for development was under threat.⁵ Access to deposits of aggregate resources – crushed, rock, gravel, and sand – was being lost due to new development on or near the deposits. Aggregate resources are needed for construction not just of new roads and buildings, but also for maintenance and repair. Accessing these resources locally reduces the costs for local construction projects, compared to shipping resources from outside of the region. In considering staging areas for new development, it will be important for local communities to continue to plan for aggregate resource extraction where deposits remain accessible, as mapped in Minnesota Geological Survey Information Circular No. 46.⁶

Role of Regional Parks

It is difficult to overstate how much the regional park system supports the region's quality of life. In the 2012 annual survey of metropolitan residents, nearly half identified parks, trails or the natural environment as the most attractive feature of the region. The regional parks system provides recreational opportunities, and resources such as the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes or Lebanon Hills in Dakota County contribute to the preservation of important ecological and natural features. Increasingly, the regional park system is seen as an amenity to retain and attract new businesses and residents; and more people are using regional trails for transportation.

Through the collaboration with these partners, the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* sets the direction for protection and growth of the regional parks and trails system. The Metropolitan Council does not own or operate parks and trails, but through a variety of funds dedicated to parks, supports ten different regional park agencies. This system of regional recreational open space has been, and will continue to be, an important tool for the region in protecting high quality natural areas.

Council Strategies

- Integrate natural resource protection strategies into regional system plans for infrastructure investments.
- Collaborate with local, regional and state partners to expand the regional parks system, as appropriate, to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as high quality or of regional importance, consistent with the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
- Collaborate and convene with state, regional, and local partners to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources protection and the protection of the quality and quantity of the region's water resources and water supply.
- Work to maintain and improve the quality and availability of the region's water resources to support habitat and ecosystem health while providing for recreational opportunities, all of which are critical elements of our region's quality of life.
- Assure adequate and high quality ground and surface water supplies to protect public health and support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface and ground water use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge and other practices.
- Coordinate wastewater conveyance projects with parks and trails system improvements.
- Support implementation of volume reduction techniques such as infiltration or filtration for stormwater management.
- Maintain an up-to-date regional Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment (NRI/A) in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources.
- Provide technical assistance and tools for natural resources protection, conservation, and restoration.
- Promote the inclusion of best management practices for storm water management, habitat restoration, and natural resource conservation.

⁵ In 2001, the Minnesota Legislature amended the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (M.S. 473.859) to require local comprehensive plans to address aggregate deposits where they remain available.

⁶ The Council provides this information in digital format for use in GIS for local planning and analysis purposes.

Community Strategies

- Include goals, priorities, and natural resource conservation strategies in the local comprehensive plan to protect and enhance natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories.
- Prepare and implement local water supply plans in all communities with municipal water supply, and address water sustainability.
- Adopt source water (wellhead) protection ordinances to protect the region's water supply.
- Prepare and implement local water plans as required by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410, the Minnesota Land Planning Act, and the Metropolitan Council's Water Resources Policy Plan.
- Work with regional partners and regional park implementing agencies to identify, plan for, and acquire natural areas and resources prime for preservation and protection.
- Plan for aggregate resource extraction where deposits remain accessible.

Housing Affordability and Choice

POLICY: Promote housing options to give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable, and affordable homes.

Thrive Outcomes: Prosperity, Equity, Livability

Why is this important?

Communities throughout the region recognize the significance of housing quality, choice, and affordability. The region is expecting 458,000 new households by 2040. Many factors influence housing need such as the changing composition of families, household income, and an aging population. Housing is not only an issue for individuals and families, but it matters to businesses as well: a range of housing options helps to attract and retain the workers to the region.

One of the most significant ongoing challenges the region faces is racial concentrations of poverty in the region's core. High housing costs, low wages, historic racial segregation, and lack of opportunities work against livability and prosperity for many families. The region needs a trained, productive work-force to remain economically competitive, and workers of all income levels need a variety of housing options to suit their family and life-stage needs in areas with easy access to job opportunities.

There has been a surge in the demand for multi-family housing, particularly in the central cities, fueled by demographic changes and market interest in areas that are well-served by transit and amenities. Some communities are addressing a housing/jobs imbalance, recognizing that their future depends, in part, on better proximity to job choices. Because the housing and residential land use patterns are durable, lasting generations, new housing and redevelopment offers the opportunity to not only address market demands and unmet residential needs, but also to improve development patterns and connectivity for walking and bicycling. As further detailed in the [2040 Housing Policy Plan](#), communities will need to plan for a range of housing types to meet the needs of residents at varying income levels and life stages.

Council Strategies

- Provide guidance on the community's share of the regional affordable housing need to implement the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA).
- Negotiate lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA).
- Invest Council resources to assist communities and community projects that increase the variety of housing types and costs, appropriately mix land uses, increase transportation choices, and leverage private investment.
- Provide guidance and technical assistance to grant programs and application submittals for the Livable Communities Act (LCA) Programs that may establish, encourage, expand, or improve affordable housing options within Rural Centers.

- Promote the preservation of existing housing, especially affordable housing, to cost-effectively maintain affordability of housing stock.

Community Strategies

- Include a housing element and implementation program in local comprehensive plans that provide an assessment of the community's housing options and contains standards, plans, and goals for providing adequate housing opportunities to meet local and regional housing needs.
- Review local ordinances, policies, and partnerships to ensure that barriers to affordable or lifecycle housing are not inadvertently preventing or diverting affordable and lifecycle housing developments from locating within the community.
- Identify and analyze local market trends, location and condition of affordable units, availability of affordable units, and frequency of new affordable housing to better inform the Housing Action Plan as part of the local comprehensive plan.
- Develop plans and use local official controls and resources to preserve existing naturally-occurring and publicly-subsidized affordable housing stock, including manufactured home parks.
- Use local official controls and resources to facilitate development of a range of housing densities, types, and costs.
- Participate in the Livable Communities Act (LCA) Programs available to communities to be eligible for grant funding. Adopt lifecycle and affordable housing goals.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

POLICY: It is the Council's policy to sustain and improve a multi-modal transportation system to support regional growth, sustain regional economic competitiveness, and provide choices and reliability for the system's users.

Thrive Outcomes: Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability, Sustainability

Why is this important?

Transportation is pivotal to the region's economy and quality of life. *Thrive MSP 2040* recognizes that a competitive economy, and the economic and social well-being of the region's residents, requires a multi-modal transportation system that provides choice and reliability. The Metropolitan Council has a leadership role with regard to investments and services that enhance the mobility of people and freight, improve multi-modal access to regional destinations, and support reuse, infill, and redevelopment efforts. Concern about climate change is also pushing the region to address we might reduce carbon emissions from transportation.

The geographic planning areas described in the following section reflect the transportation system and the land use patterns that developed alongside it. Most of the region's job and activity centers (See Figure 6 under Economic Competitiveness) are located at the confluence of regional highways, transit, and/or rail service. In the more urbanized communities, transit use and bicycling represent significant shares of travel, but communities experience congestion and the economic and social costs of highway building. In suburban areas, transit use is less common, but plays an important role in commuting to the downtowns from park-and-ride facilities. In post-war suburban areas, shopping centers are evolving toward mixed-use concentrations of housing and jobs, which are easier to serve by transit.

Geographic patterns of development mean that different areas will have different challenges and opportunities related to each transportation mode. The region has a significant investment in the regional highway system and the areas that it serves. More recently, the region has been making significant investments in the development of a system of dedicated transitways including LRT. To ensure that the region prospers and responds to the economic needs of households and businesses, the Metropolitan Council will be good stewards of these regional investments. As detailed in the [2040 Transportation Policy Plan](#), this will include detailing land use development expectations to support transit investments, identifying cost-effective means of improving multi-modal access to

regional destinations, and improving mobility and reliability on the regional highway system, especially when it benefits movement and accessibility for freight, transit, carpools, and MnPass users.

Managing regional growth and travel demand requires a partnership between the region and its communities. Regional highways, transitways, and bikeways are planned and designed to provide faster travel over longer distances. Local transportation systems, on the other hand, play an important role at the beginning and end of these trips whether for automobiles, freight movement, bicycling and/or walking. A critical piece of local transportation planning is the development of interconnected local street networks. In many cases, the regional highway system, including county arterial roadways, are serving short trips that should be made on local roadways. Interconnected local streets with more direct routes also lay the foundation for better conditions for walking and bicycling. More direct routes, route alternatives, and a wider distribution of traffic also create opportunities for greater sharing of public right-of-way among different modes.

In particular, the development of the regional transit system depends on the development of local bicycle and pedestrian systems. Transit patrons may not own cars, and transit trips typically end on foot even if they began at a park-and-ride. Local pedestrian and bicycle planning is also critical for the development of regional job and activity centers, where intensification and diversification of land uses create economies of scale and an opportunity to make shorter local trips on foot or by bike. Local bicycle and pedestrian planning is also critical in more automobile-oriented parts of the region where sidewalk networks are essential to reach jobs for people who are transit-dependent. Regardless of the development pattern, communities can identify cost-effective opportunities to make biking and walking a more attractive alternative over time as redevelopment occurs and as roadways and right-of-way are planned, improved or reconstructed.

Council Strategies

- Oversee the planning of a multi-modal, interconnected regional transportation system in cooperation with state agencies, counties and local governments.
- Operate Metro Transit's system of buses and rail transit and coordinate other regional transit services to ensure a consistent and convenient user experience.
- Invest in transit services commensurate with efficient and effective standards established by Transit Market Areas defined in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Invest in the regional highway system in ways that improve safety, address bottlenecks, and better manage peak periods through managed lanes (e.g., HOV/HOT lanes) and transit service improvements.
- Support the management of access points to state and county road systems and emphasize construction of an interconnected local public street system.
- Invest in the development and improvement of regional trails and regional bicycle corridors as defined in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* to better connect communities and provide viable transportation options for commuting via alternative modes.
- Work with local, regional, and state partners to coordinate transportation, pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Encourage communities to plan and develop local trail connections to the regional parks system where appropriate. Ensure that transportation elements of local comprehensive plans provide for pedestrian and bicycle access to regional transit services, regional trails, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Invest in transportation improvements that support the export and mobility of freight by truck, rail, air, and barge.
- Coordinate with Metropolitan Airports Commission, the Federal Aviation Administration, MnDOT Aeronautics, and local communities to ensure that land uses and air space adjacent to the system of regional airports is protected from incompatible uses.

Community Strategies

- Consider travel modes other than the car at all levels of development (site plan, subdivision, comprehensive planning) to better connect and integrate choices throughout all stages of planning.

- Plan for and construct an interconnected system of local streets, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities that is integrated with the regional system.
- Adopt access management standards that support state and county highway access and mobility needs.
- Plan local roadway systems to minimize short trips on the regional highway system.
- Plan for compatible land uses and air space adjacent to the system of regional airports.
- Plan and develop an interconnected local transportation system that is integrated with the regional system.
- Participate on the Transportation Advisory Board and other forums to ensure that the metropolitan planning process and regional transportation system reflect local needs.
- Work with partners in communities, counties, and the region at large to coordinate transportation, pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections within and between jurisdictional boundaries.

Economic Competitiveness

POLICY: Support a vibrant and globally competitive regional economy that creates opportunities for residents and employers.

Thrive Outcomes: Prosperity, Equity, Livability

Why is this important?

While the nation recovers from the effects of this challenging economic period, the Twin Cities region has fared better than most of the nation’s metropolitan areas. As the nation’s unemployment rate rose above 8%, the Minneapolis-St. Paul area achieved lower unemployment than the national average and all but one other major metropolitan area⁷. With employment projected to grow 37% by 2040, the relative health and stability of the region has demonstrated our resilience and ability to remain economically competitive even during the most challenging times.

The region is home to a diverse and multi-talented economy, fueled by its high concentration of Fortune 500 companies and headquarters of numerous smaller firms. The 19 Fortune 500 companies themselves are diverse ranging from Target to Medtronic to Cargill. These companies are representative of the key industries driving the regional economy: headquarters and business services, health & life sciences, agriculture and water technology, innovation and technology, and financial services.⁸

Supporting our Job and Activity Centers

Jobs and major activity centers (such as airports and major shopping) are more concentrated in nodes than other land uses. Job-related land uses comprise only 6.3% of the region’s land area, while housing makes up the bulk of the land uses in the urban environment. More than half of the region’s 1.5 million jobs are located in centers, clustered on less than 2% of the land area of the region.⁹

As seen in Figure 5, the region’s four

Figure 5. Job and Activity Center Characteristics

Center Type	Jobs Job Acres Average Density	Share of Total Regional Jobs
Metropolitan Centers 50,000+ jobs and 50+ net job density or major regional activity center	247,868 2,994 <u>82.4 jobs/acre</u>	16%
Regional Centers 15,000-49,999 jobs and 10+ net job density	244,905 8,445 <u>29.0 jobs/acre</u>	16%
Subregional Centers 7,000-14,999 jobs and 10+ net job density	268,559 12,001 <u>22.4 jobs/acre</u>	18%
Regional Total	761, 332 jobs	50%

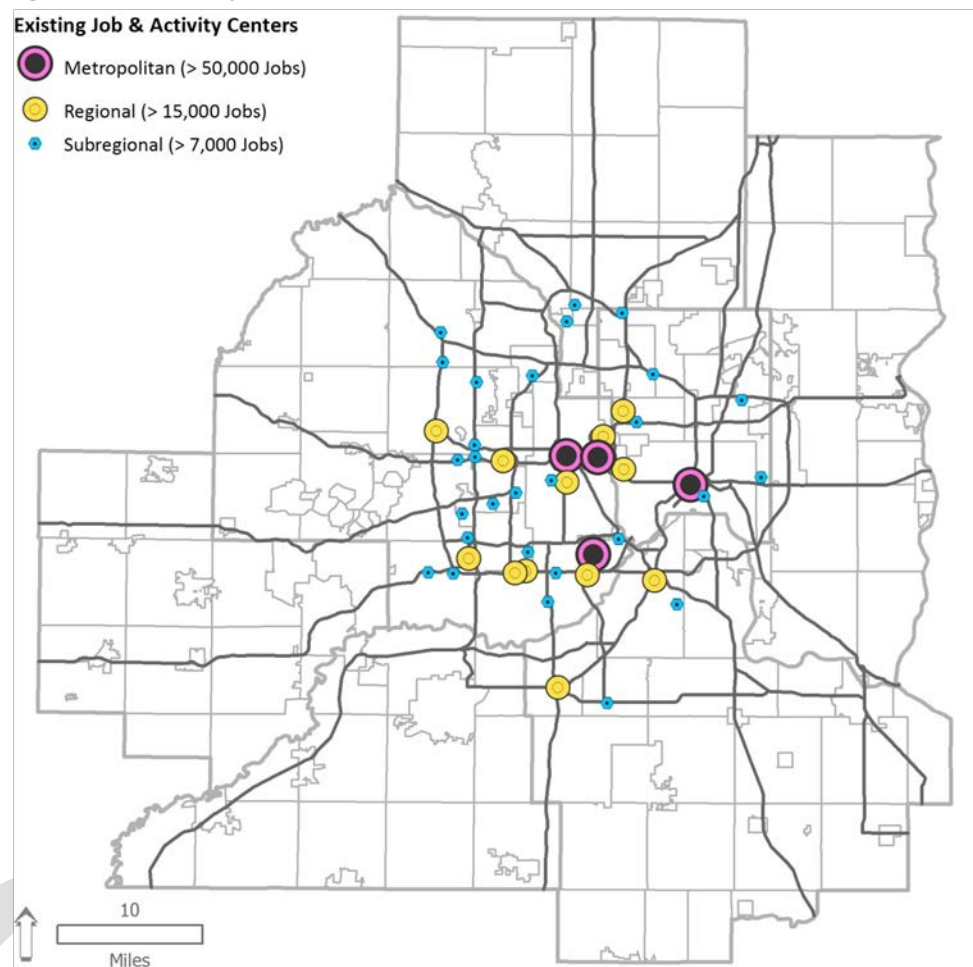
⁷ Unemployment averaged 5.5 percent in 2012. National unemployment rate averaged 8.1 percent in 2012. Twin Cities’ ranking is 2nd lowest among the 25 largest MSAs. (Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

⁸ “Key Industries in MSP”. *Greater MSP*. www.greatermSP.org

⁹ Analysis using data from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW, 2012) and the Metropolitan Council Generalized Land Use, 2010.

Metropolitan Centers contain more than 50,000 jobs each, or about 16% of all the jobs in the region. Another 16% of the region's jobs are clustered in twelve Regional Centers, which have between 15,000 and 50,000 jobs each. Nearly 18% of jobs are located Subregional Centers, which each contain at least 7,000 jobs at densities of at least 10 jobs per acre. While half of the region's job are located in these larger centers, other smaller-scale community centers are scattered throughout the region, serving local shopping and convenience needs. These community and local centers serve local daily needs, and in some cases to provide connections to the larger metropolitan area. Many of these community centers continue to grow, change, and attract new business. In some cases, community centers are attracting large companies, and may surpass the job threshold identified for a Subregional Center.

Figure 6. Job & Activity Centers



Like other metropolitan areas, following the construction of the metropolitan highway system, different jobs began to decentralize from the urban core and move to suburban locations with great highway access. As shown in Figure 6, all of these centers are well served by the metropolitan highway system, with the more centrally-located centers having high levels of transit service.

This clustering has many implications both for regional and local planning and for supporting an economically vibrant region. Workers' residences are considerably less concentrated than jobs are in the region, so it is imperative to plan for ensuring access to employment and to address localized housing needs. Businesses also rely on the transit and transportation networks, not just to bring their employees to work, but also in receiving and distributing goods and services, and in linking to other related businesses and industries.

These concentrated centers require significant regional infrastructure including wastewater, transportation, and transit, but also rely on local infrastructure investments in access and connectivity like sidewalks, parking, water, parks, and trails. Significant regional and local investment has already been made in these areas, so building on these investments to take advantage of new opportunities in these centers to adapt, reuse, or redevelop properties, to improve local pedestrian access, and to support improved transit service is imperative to the continued success of these centers, to get the most of our regional investments, and to align with the orderly and economical development of the region.

Council Strategies

- Collaborate with and convene partners and regional stakeholders to develop a shared vision, strategic priorities to advance economic competitiveness in the region, and ways to leverage the region's economic assets.
- Convene those interested in economic competitiveness to continue discussions and further strategies towards increasing the region's appeal to the national and international business community.
- Provide technical assistance to help local communities better understand their contributions to the regional economy; provide information, research, and analysis on economic competitiveness.
- Conduct research to understand future land demand and supply needs to maintain and support future regional growth of manufacturing and other sectors that are export industries for the region.
- Conduct research into global economic competitiveness, including how the Metropolitan Council's systems and grant programs can improve conditions for innovation and growth as well as attracting talent.
- Convene regional discussion and coordination of partners that address workforce development, community development, economic development, and marketing of MSP.
- Support local and regional efforts to develop climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to remain economically competitive.
- Invest in regional amenities and services, including transit, regional parks and trails and bikeways to reinforce the region's suburban communities as an attractive place to locate and do business.

Community Strategies

- Consider completing a community-based market analysis to better understand the market conditions.
- Consider addressing economic competitiveness in comprehensive plan, acknowledging both locally and regionally significant economic places.
- Preserve sites for river and rail-dependent manufacturing and freight transportation.

Building in Resilience

POLICY: Reduce the region's contributions to climate change and develop local resiliency to the impacts of climate change.

Thrive Outcomes: Stewardship, Prosperity, Livability, Sustainability

Why is this important?

Whether its flooded farmlands, modified growing seasons, rising energy costs, or storm sewer systems overloaded from a summer storm, climate change impacts local resources. Communities can adapt to climate change or mitigate its impacts through a variety of energy reduction measures, developing in a more compact land use patterns, reducing automobile dependency, and improving the resiliency of the existing built and natural environment. Taking these measures ensures that communities are better prepared to deal with more frequent extreme weather events and other expected climate impacts that can drain limited local resources.

In its most simplified form, responding to climate change constitutes reducing energy use. Local government budgets are leaner than ever and addressing climate change as a means to reduce energy costs is an approach more and more common by communities faced with fiscal constraints. This can mean many things and some innovative ideas have surfaced on how and where to reduce costs. For example, the City of Falcon Heights began with implementing improvements to its solid waste operations, then instituting lighting retrofits throughout the City, adopting a new recycling program, and exploring solar power, all implemented as cost saving measures.

Addressing climate change also means reducing that result from the pattern of regional development. Redevelopment or renovation of existing buildings for new uses is more energy-efficient than new development and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Compact redevelopment near regional job and activity centers or

transit is likely to result in fewer emissions from transportation. Growth at the edge of the region that includes interconnected streets and walkable/bikeable destinations nearby will also result in fewer emissions from travel.

Effective land use planning provides a community with the tools needed to better address climate change locally. Encouraging land use policies that create a more compact land use pattern can ultimately reduce energy consumption, protect public investments in infrastructure, protect habitat and open space, provide benefits to public health, and create a more sustainable community. Innovative land use policies can create a more compact region resulting more efficient use of our infrastructure investments, cost-effective extension of urban services, and preservation of natural or agricultural areas within the region.

Council Strategies

- Substantially reduce energy consumption at Metropolitan Council facilities, and provide information to the public and partners to lead by example
- Improve the efficiency of the Metropolitan Council vehicle fleet, including Metro Transit buses.
- With regional infrastructure, planning, and operations, increase efforts to minimize greenhouse emissions, and reduce water use, and energy consumption.
- Identify and address potential vulnerabilities in regional systems as a result of increased frequency and severity of storms and heat waves. Maintain dikes, emergency generators, and response plans for Council facilities facing extreme weather.
- Convene regional discussions about goals for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Encourage preparation of adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency responses to climate change as part of the comprehensive plan update.
- Develop, collect, and disseminate information about climate change, including energy and climate data, the next generation of the Regional Indicators data, and a regional greenhouse gas inventory.
- Prepare information and data, and provide technical assistance to communities in integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies as part of local comprehensive plans.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with experts in climate change to better assist and inform local communities on how to best evaluate and develop local climate changes strategies.
- Encourage communities to participate in regional programs which support efforts to inform, plan for, mitigate, adapt, and respond to climate change issues of local significance like greenhouse gas reduction, water conservation, stormwater management adaptation, use of alternative fuels, infrastructure planning, and hazard mitigation planning.
- Provide, or collaborate with partners to provide, technical references and resources for communities seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change, in their own facilities and in their communities, including but not limited to stormwater, wastewater and water supply management practices, transit and land-use planning, etc.

Community Strategies

- Address climate change mitigation and adaptation throughout the local comprehensive plan.
- Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, and emission of greenhouse gases.
- Ensure access to solar energy by addressing it in local comprehensive plans and ordinances.
- Identifying local measures to address impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure systems as a result of more frequent or severe weather events.
- Identify mitigation and adaptation and infrastructure resiliency strategies to protect against potential negative impacts of events associated with more frequent or severe weather events.
- Identify local initiatives as cost saving measures that may, as a result, lower energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve water supply, reduce municipal waste, and increase participation in recycling programs, for example.

Participate in programs that evaluate city practices and provide technical support, such as the MPCA's GreenSteps program and the Regional Indicators Initiative.

Strategies for Geographic Planning Areas

The region consists of a range of communities, from the agricultural areas to the urban center, and the Council applies different policies tailored to this range of communities. *Thrive MSP 2040* sets the visionary strategic direction for incorporating and implementing regional development goals in local comprehensive plans. This direction provides specific land use and development strategies for implementation, but provides flexibility for communities to determine how best to align with regional policies and work toward the regional outcomes while still accomplishing local goals. The Council recognizes that variation exists in development patterns, neighborhoods, and land uses within each community. Through its comprehensive plan, each community determines how to implement the regional land use and development strategies in a manner that best meets local goals and suits the variation within their community.

The Council assigns a *community designation* to each city and township. This designation indicates the overall state of development and regional issues faced by that community. Strategies addressing issues specific to different types of communities are grouped under the community designations, while common strategies are found earlier in this chapter.

The community designations are also used to guide forecasted growth to areas that have urban infrastructure in place and capacity to accommodate development or redevelopment, to establish land use expectations for different planning areas, and to outline the roles of the Council and the individual communities and strategies for accommodating projected levels of growth. The community designations set overall densities that planned development patterns of a community can be expected to achieve, along with describing the factors that communities are to consider incorporating into their local planning processes.

Recognizing the variety in landscapes, communities, and across the region, the Council is setting the strategic direction using community designations and policy layers that are primary factors affecting growth and development in the region today. These community designations continue the longstanding history of distinguishing between the Urban and Rural Service Areas while adding policy layers to form the geographic planning areas that will guide the strategic direction for the orderly and efficient development of the region (see Figure 7).

Urban and Rural Service Areas

The Council has distinguished between rural and urban areas with the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) as a means to manage land consumption, to deliver efficient regional services, and to preserve valued rural and agricultural areas. Examples of regional services differentiated in this manner include metropolitan wastewater services, the regional highway system, and the regular route transit system. In the rural service area, high development densities typically seen in urban and suburban areas have been discouraged to ensure the orderly development of the region and the efficient use of regional investments and to protect agricultural land, natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources, and rural areas.

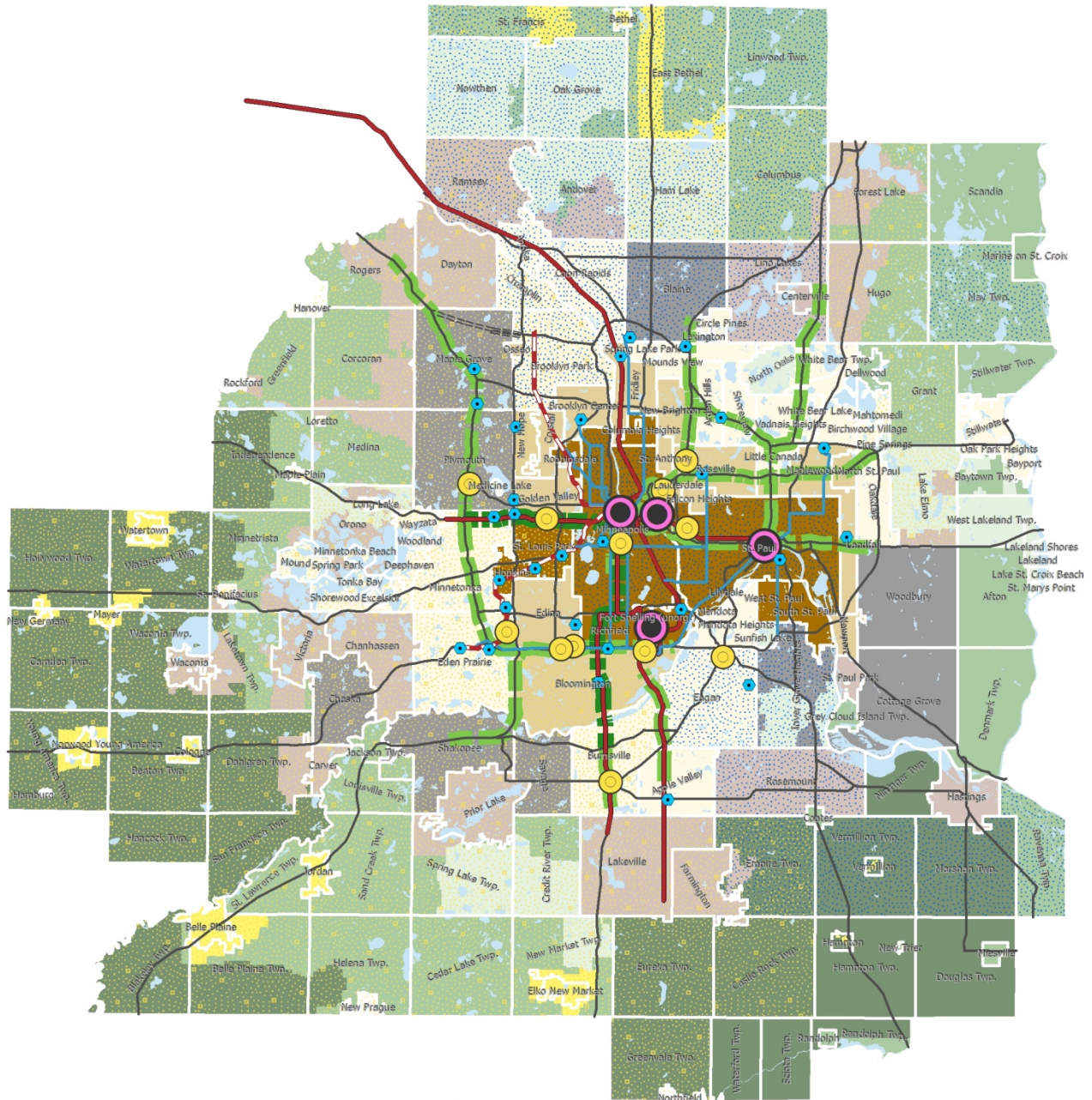
About half of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area land is within the Rural Area. These areas include a range of uses including cultivated farmland, vineyards, hobby farms, gravel mines, woodlands, small towns, scattered and clustered housing, open spaces and significant expanses of the region's natural resources. Aside from the investments in the regional parks system, investments in regional service are limited in the Rural Area. To protect the vital agricultural lands and natural amenities, and to recognize the desire for rural and small-town residential choices, the Rural Area is divided into four community designations: Agricultural Area, Diversified Rural Area, Rural Residential, and Rural Center.

While the Urban Area constitutes about half of the land in the region, about XX% of the population lives in this area. The Urban Service Area has the highest level of investment in regional and local services, including regional wastewater services. The Urban Area includes a diverse set of communities ranging from the urban cores of downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul to the developing communities planning for staged growth and expansion with varying challenges and expectations for growth. These communities include a variety of residential

neighborhoods, housing types, and densities, along with a varying mix of commercial and industrial areas that developed at different times in the region's history to serve different development patterns and needs. The Council will continue to provide these regional services and will work with local communities to support growth that best capitalizes on regional infrastructure and systems. The Urban Service Area is divided into five community designations: Urban Center, Urban, Suburban, Suburban Edge, and Emerging Suburban Edge.

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Figure 7. Geographic Planning Areas



Proposed Planning Area Designation Existing Job & Activity Centers

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

- Major (> 50,000 Jobs)
- Regional (> 15,000 Jobs)
- Subregional (> 7,000 Jobs)

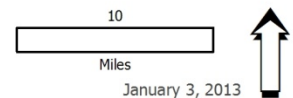
Groundwater Recharge Potential

- High Recharge Potential
- Mix of Recharge Potential Extreme: High & Low
- Low Recharge Potential

Transportation Corridors

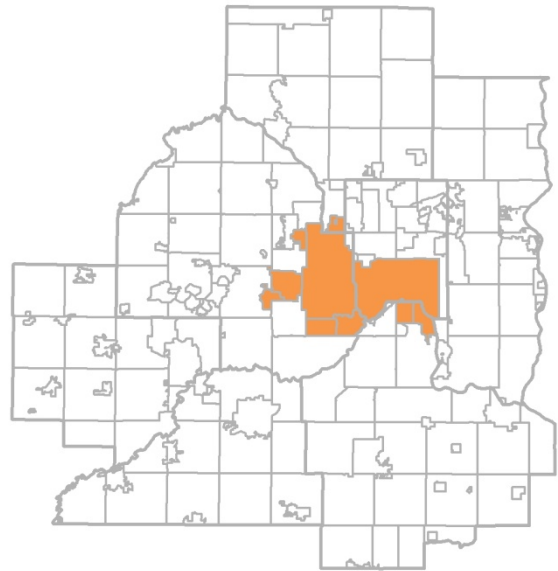
- Metropolitan Highway System
- Future Metropolitan Highway System
- Completed Transitway
- Developing Transitway*
- Arterial BRT
- Existing Managed Lane
- Future Managed Lane

* Locally Preferred Alternative shown in the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan



Urban Center

The Urban Center includes the largest, most centrally-located and most economically diverse places of the region. The Urban Center includes the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul and a number of adjoining communities that share similar characteristics. This area includes the central business districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the University of Minnesota, and large, diversifying industrial areas. It also includes the most visited regional parks, such as the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and Como Regional Park, and is home to the region's premiere cultural resources. While the Urban Center includes some of the wealthiest and most historically significant neighborhoods, like Summit Avenue, it also includes areas most challenged by poverty, including racial concentrations of poverty.



Downtown Minneapolis is a significant regional center of finance and business services; downtown St. Paul is the seat of state government; and centrally-located industrial concentrations are well-connected to export markets by river, railroad, highway, and air travel. Investments in transit and amenities have strengthened the Urban Center as an attractive place to invest, live, and do business. Development challenges for the Urban Center include pollution cleanup costs, land availability for development and infrastructure improvements, congestion, conflicting or competing land uses, and the costs of retrofitting, replacing, or introducing new infrastructure.

Neighborhoods throughout the Urban Center grew outward along a system of streetcars. Because of more limited automobile use during their initial development, neighborhoods are more conducive for transit use and walking for daily needs. Despite the many transformations in transportation and technology, travel by transit, walking and bicycling remains common here. Streets are narrower and more interconnected, sidewalks are common; and buildings are oriented toward pedestrians, with smaller-scale commercial uses often within a short walking distance. These characteristics, as well as housing affordability, make the Urban Center an attractive location for many households. Redevelopment, reinvestment, and intensification are occurring in areas where people have multiple transportation options and commercial, cultural, and recreational amenities are nearby.

The Council supports the Urban Center through a variety of ways that include investments in transit infrastructure, transit services, highways, regional sewer systems, the regional parks system, and programs that support redevelopment. In turn, the Council works with communities to plan for and accommodate growth and reinvestment that support the region's economy and meet the housing needs of its residents.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Maintain and make improvements to regional infrastructure to support adaptive reuse, infill development and redevelopment.
- Support local planning and implementation efforts to focus growth in and around regional transit, as articulated in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Provide technical assistance to communities undertaking planning efforts around job and activity centers and regional investments.
- Coordinate regional infrastructure and program funding with other efforts designed to address regional concentrations of poverty.

- Assure adequate and high quality ground and surface water supplies to protect public health and support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface and ground water use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge and other practices.
- Provide efficient and high quality regional wastewater infrastructure and services.
- Pursue wastewater reuse where economically feasible as a means to promote sustainable water resources.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Community Role

- Plan for forecasted population and household growth at average densities of at least 20 units per acre, and target opportunities for more intensive development near regional transit investments, at densities and in a manner articulated in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Identify areas for redevelopment, particularly areas that are well-served by transportation options and nearby amenities, and which contribute to better proximity between jobs and housing.
- Identify opportunities for land assembly to prepare sites that will attract future private reinvestment, especially in racially concentrated areas of poverty.
- In collaboration with other regional partners, lead major redevelopment efforts, such as the Ford Plant site.
- Guide opportunities for more intensive development near regional transit investments, at densities and in a manner articulated in the Transportation Policy Plan.
- Lead detailed land use planning efforts around regional transit stations, job and activity centers, and other regional investments.
- Plan for and program local infrastructure needs (e.g., roads, sidewalks, sewer, water, surface water), including those needed to accommodate future growth and implement local comprehensive plans.
- Prepare local water supply and wellhead protection plans as required by the MLPA. Partner with other water supply providers to explore options to reduce dependence on groundwater.
- Reduce inflow and infiltration into the local sanitary sewer system.
- Consider the role of railroads in promoting economic activity and identify an adequate supply of land in comprehensive plans to meet existing and future demand for users requiring rail access.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Integrate natural resource conservation and restoration strategies into regional system plans and capital projects.
- Collaborate with local, regional and State partners to expand the regional park system to conserve, maintain and connect natural resources identified as high quality or of regional importance, consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- Support the reclamation of lands, including contaminated land, for redevelopment and the restoration of natural features and function.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater treatment system.
- Promote multi-modal access to regional parks, trails and the transit network, where appropriate.

Community Role

- Integrate natural resource conservation and restoration strategies into comprehensive plan.
- Adopt and enforce ordinances related to stormwater management, erosion control and protection of other natural resources.
- Adopt and implement best management practices for abating, preventing and reducing point and nonpoint source pollution.
- Adopt and implement ordinances and programs related to the maintenance of individual sewage treatment systems.

- Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.
- Develop programs that encourage the implementation of natural resource conservation and restoration.
- Develop programs that encourage stormwater management, treatment, and infiltration.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow (I/I) into the regional wastewater treatment system. Participate in I/I grant programs as available.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Convene regional and local housing stakeholders to refine policies and develop programs to respond to the housing needs of low-income households throughout the region.
- Re-invest in and expand regional systems to support redevelopment in communities that partner in the preservation and expansion of housing choices.

Community Role

- Designate land in the comprehensive plan to accommodate household growth forecasts and meet the community's share of the region's affordable housing need through redevelopment at a range of densities.
- Plan for an adequate supply of affordable housing along regional transit stations. Address the relationship of local industries to the affordability of housing in the community.
- Adopt lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA).
- Utilize state and regional sources of grant funding and/or financing to increase the feasibility of developing new lifecycle and affordable housing.
- Develop or utilize programs to preserve the existing stock of naturally-occurring affordable housing.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Ensure that local roadway systems are planned in ways that minimize short trips on the regional highway system.
- Ensure that local infrastructure and land uses are planned in ways that are consistent with managing access along the regional highway system and capitalizing on investments in the regional transit system.
- Invest in transit improvements in corridors that serve existing transit demand and that can effectively guide a significant level of future growth.
- Ensure that local comprehensive plans accommodate growth in and around transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and station typologies identified in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Support access to, and the future growth of, regional intermodal freight terminals as identified in the TPP.

Community Role

- Participate on the Transportation Advisory Board and other forums to ensure that the metropolitan planning process and regional transportation system reflect local needs.
- Develop comprehensive plans that accommodate growth in and around regional transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and the station typologies (e.g., land use mix, density levels) identified in the *Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Develop local policies, plans, and practices that improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including access to regional transit services, regional trails, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Consider implementation of travel demand management (TDM) policies and ordinances that encourage use of travel options and decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicle travel.

- Engage private sector stakeholders that depend on or are affected by the local transportation system.
- Adopt development requirements that improve the user experience, circulation, and access for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Adopt Complete Streets policies that improve safety and mobility for all road users.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Prioritize regional investment in places that are drivers of economic innovation and growth for the region.
- Prioritize regional investments that improve access to national and international markets by regional and state businesses.
- Ensure that regional growth is managed in efficient ways that allow for a variety of choices in location and transportation for businesses and residents.
- Support a variety of freight transport to better connect the region with state, national, and international markets.
- Support the cleanup of contaminated land for new industry, including manufacturing and other sectors that are export industries for the region.
- Promote the intensification of existing job and activity centers and the creation and growth of regional job clusters.
- Support the establishment of local and sub-regional water supply systems based on a sustainable balance of surface and ground water sources.
- Support cost-effective sub-regional infrastructure investments in efforts to promote sustainable water use and protect the region's water supplies.
- Invest in regional amenities and services, including transit, regional parks and trails and bikeways to reinforce the Urban Center as an attractive place to locate and do business.
- Invest in regional transportation improvements that better connect workers in racially concentrated areas of poverty with job training and living wage employment.
- Lead regional discussions about racial equity and opportunity among stakeholders involved in community, economic, and workforce development.

Community Role

- Identify appropriate areas for business and industrial expansion, considering access by rail, truck, plane, and barge.
- Protect land supply for industrial manufacturing and freight transportation needs from incompatible uses.
- Plan for land uses where appropriate that support the growth of export-oriented businesses, important regional economic clusters, and family wage jobs.
- Participate in programs that promote entrepreneurial activity and business development.
- Support the cleanup and re-use of contaminated land by utilizing regional, county, and local funding programs and financing tools.
- Collaborate with educational institutions and organizations involved in community development, economic development, and workforce development.
- Identify local land supply and transportation needs for the expansion of business that involved in production, distribution, repair, and logistics.
- Develop and participate in workforce development programs that target racially concentrated areas of poverty.
- Preserve, remediate contamination, and re-purpose industrial base for higher intensity employment and new industries.
- Conduct small area planning efforts to preserve locations for employment, manage growth, and minimize land use conflicts.

- Preserve sites for river and rail-dependent manufacturing and freight transportation.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

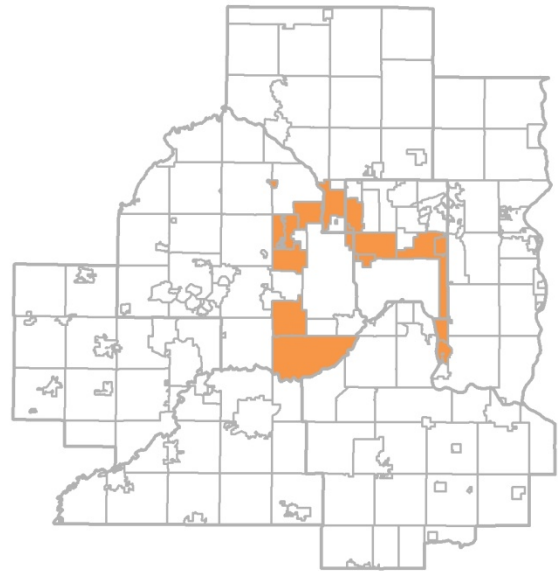
- Reduce inflow and infiltration of extraneous clear water into the regional sanitary sewer system.
- Provide water supply research and planning information to communities.
- Invest in regional transportation infrastructure and services that increase the share of trips made by transit, carpools, and non-motorized means and guide development patterns that support this.
- Implement an urban forestry assistance program.

Community Role

- Identify and address potential vulnerabilities in local infrastructure as a result of increased frequency and severity of storms and heat waves.
- Participate in federal, state, and local utility programs that incentivize the implementation of wind and solar power generation.
- Consider making a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program available for conservation and renewable energy.
- Consider subscribing to community solar gardens for municipal electric load, or providing sites for gardens.
- Adopt local policies and ordinances that encourage land development that supports travel demand management (TDM) and use of travel options.
- Consider development standards that increase vegetative cover and increase the albedo (reflective quality) of surfaces.
- Participate in urban forestry grant programs as available.

Urban

The Urban Area includes communities that primarily developed during the wave of economic prosperity that followed World War II. These communities represent a transition toward the development age dominated by the influence of the automobile. They experienced rapid development during the baby boom years, which lasted for nearly 20 years until the economic recession of 1973-1975. They include communities that are associated with most of the early major indoor shopping malls, and include Brooklyn Center, Edina, Roseville, and Maplewood. In general, highway and rail accessibility near those locations meant that these parts of the region also became centers of office, institutional, and industrial uses. The Urban Area includes considerable growth and development along highways, with the most significant concentrations along I-494 in Bloomington and Edina.



Development patterns in these communities relate to both the Urban Center that they adjoin as well as to new freeways that accelerated further automobile-oriented growth. These communities are directly served by freeways that consist of the pre-interstate system of U.S. Highways (e.g., 100, 36, 61, etc.). Between 1959 and 1969, there was as much freeway capacity created in ten years as would be constructed during the next 30-year period. In many cases, county roadways and local streets extend from their counterparts in the Urban Center, but changes begin to occur that respond to greater reliance on the car. Streets are wider and include more curves. Lots are larger, parking is plentiful, streets no longer have alleys, sidewalks are less common, and driveways are accessed via the street. In many cases, local streets do not intersect with higher volume roadways as more emphasis is placed on traffic movement and circulation.

Over time, transit service has been extended into these communities from local routes originating in the Urban Center. Some new services were introduced such as circulator services often centered on the regional malls and express buses serving major park-and-rides that transport commuters to the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul. In locations throughout the Urban Area, communities have been developing in ways that accommodate a greater mix of uses, incorporating better facilities for pedestrian and bicyclists, and laying the groundwork for pedestrian-friendly districts and improved transit services. Examples include the Penn-American District in Bloomington and the I-394 Mixed Use District in Golden Valley.

The Council supports the Urban Area through a variety of ways that include investments in transit infrastructure, transit services, highways, regional sewer systems, the regional parks system, and programs that support redevelopment. In turn, the Council works with communities to plan for and accommodate growth and reinvestment that support the region's economy and meet the housing needs of its residents.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Maintain and make improvements to regional infrastructure to support adaptive reuse, infill development, and redevelopment.
- Support local planning and implementation efforts to accommodate growth in and around regional transit, as articulated in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Coordinate regional infrastructure and program funding with other efforts designed to address regional concentrations of poverty.

- Provide technical assistance to communities undertaking planning efforts around job and activity centers and regional investments.
- Assure adequate and high quality ground and surface water supplies to protect public health and support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface and ground water use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge and other practices.
- Provide efficient and high quality regional wastewater infrastructure and services.
- Pursue wastewater reuse where economically feasible as a means to promote sustainable water resources.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Community Role

- Accommodate forecasted population and household growth at average densities of at least 10 units per acre, and target opportunities for more intensive development near regional transit investments, at densities and in a manner articulated in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Identify areas for redevelopment, particularly areas that are well-served by transportation options and nearby amenities, and which contribute to better proximity between jobs and housing. . In collaboration with other regional partners, lead major redevelopment efforts, such as the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) site.
- Lead detailed land use planning efforts around regional transit stations, job and activity centers, and other regional investments.
- Plan for and program local infrastructure needs (e.g., roads, sidewalks, sewer, water, surface water), including those needed to accommodate future growth and implement local comprehensive plans.
- Prepare local water supply and wellhead protection plans as required by the MLPA. Partner with other water supply providers to explore options to reduce dependence on groundwater.
- Reduce inflow and infiltration into the local sanitary sewer system.
- Consider the role of railroads in promoting economic activity and identify an adequate supply of land in comprehensive plans to meet existing and future demand for users requiring rail access.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Integrate natural resource conservation and restoration strategies into regional system plans and capital projects.
- Collaborate with local, regional and State partners to expand the regional park system to conserve, maintain and connect natural resources identified as high quality or of regional importance, consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- Support the reclamation of lands, including contaminated land, for redevelopment and the restoration of natural features and function.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater treatment system.
- Promote multi-modal access to regional parks, trails and the transit network, where appropriate. Support the continued development of the regional trail system.

Community Role

- Integrate natural resource conservation and restoration strategies into comprehensive plan.
- Adopt and enforce ordinances related to stormwater management, erosion control, and protection of other natural resources.
- Adopt and implement best management practices for abating, preventing and reducing point and nonpoint source pollution.
- Adopt and implement ordinances and programs related to the maintenance of individual sewage treatment systems.

- Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.
- Develop programs that encourage the implementation of natural resource conservation and restoration.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow (I/I) into the regional wastewater treatment system. Participate in I/I grant programs as available.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Convene regional and local housing stakeholders to refine policies and develop programs to respond to the housing needs of low-income households throughout the region.
- Re-invest in and expand regional systems to support redevelopment in communities that partner in the preservation and expansion of housing choices.

Community Role

- Designate land in the comprehensive plan to accommodate household growth forecasts and meet the community's share of the region's affordable housing need through redevelopment at a range of densities.
- Plan for an adequate supply of affordable housing along regional transit stations. Address the relationship of local industries to the affordability of housing in the community.
- Adopt lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA).
- Utilize state and regional sources of grant funding and/or financing to increase the feasibility of developing new lifecycle and affordable housing.
- Develop or utilize programs to preserve the existing stock of naturally-occurring affordable housing.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Ensure that local roadway systems are planned in ways that minimize short trips on the regional highway system.
- Ensure that local infrastructure and land uses are planned in ways that are consistent with managing access along the regional highway system and capitalizing on investments in the regional transit system.
- Invest in transit improvements in corridors that serve existing transit demand and that can effectively guide a significant level of future growth.
- Ensure that local comprehensive plans accommodate growth in and around transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and station typologies identified in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Provide regional transit services to serve dense corridors and nodes where local communities are adapting local policies to improve the success of transit.
- Support access to, and the future growth of, regional intermodal freight terminals as identified in the TPP.

Community Role

- Develop comprehensive plans that accommodate growth in and around regional transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and the station typologies (e.g., land use mix, density levels) identified in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Develop local policies, plans, and practices that improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including access to regional transit services, regional trails, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Participate on the Transportation Advisory Board and other forums to ensure that the metropolitan planning process and regional transportation system reflect local needs.

- Consider implementation of travel demand management (TDM) policies and ordinances that encourage use of travel options and decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicle travel.
- Engage private sector stakeholders that depend on or are affected by the local transportation system.
- Adopt development requirements that improve the user experience, circulation, and access for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Adopt Complete Streets policies that improve safety and mobility for all road users.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Prioritize regional investment in places that are drivers of economic innovation and growth for the region.
- Prioritize regional investments that improve access to national and international markets by regional and state businesses.
- Ensure that regional growth is managed in efficient ways that allow for a variety of choices in location and transportation for businesses and residents.
- Support a variety of freight transport to better connect the region with state, national, and international markets.
- Support the cleanup of contaminated land for new industry, including manufacturing and other sectors that are export industries for the region.
- Support the intensification of existing job and activity centers in the Urban area and the creation and growth of regional job clusters.
- Support the establishment of local and sub-regional water supply systems based on a sustainable balance of surface and ground water sources.
- Support cost-effective sub-regional infrastructure investments in efforts to promote sustainable water use and protect the region's water supplies.
- Invest in regional amenities and services, including transit, regional parks and trails and bikeways to reinforce the Urban area as an attractive place to locate and do business.
- Invest in regional transportation improvements that better connect workers in racially concentrated areas of poverty with job training and living wage employment.
- Lead regional discussions about racial equity and opportunity among stakeholders involved in community, economic, and workforce development.

Community Role

- Identify appropriate areas for business and industrial expansion, considering access by rail, truck, plane, and barge.
- Support the cleanup and re-use of contaminated land by utilizing regional, county, and local funding programs and financing tools.
- Preserve, remediate contamination, and re-purpose industrial base for higher intensity employment and new industries.
- Protect land supply for industrial manufacturing and freight transportation needs from incompatible uses.
- Identify local land supply and transportation needs for the expansion of business that involved in production, distribution, repair, and logistics.
- Plan for land uses where appropriate that support the growth of export-oriented businesses, important regional economic clusters, and family wage jobs.
- Participate in programs that promote entrepreneurial activity and business development.
- Collaborate with educational institutions and organizations involved in community development, economic development, and workforce development.
- Develop and participate in workforce development programs that target racially concentrated areas of poverty.

- Conduct small area planning efforts to preserve locations for employment, manage growth, and minimize land use conflicts.
- Preserve sites for river and rail-dependent manufacturing and freight transportation.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

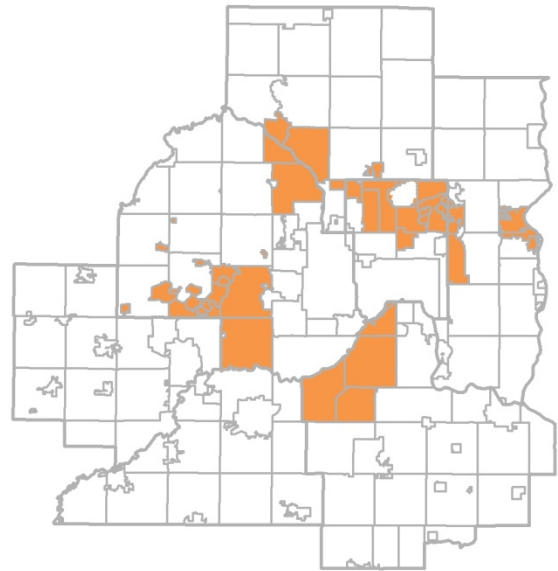
- Reduce inflow and infiltration of extraneous clear water into the regional sanitary sewer system.
- Provide water supply research and planning information to communities.
- Invest in regional transportation infrastructure and services that increase the share of trips made by transit, carpools, and non-motorized means and guide development patterns that support this.
- Implement an urban forestry assistance program.

Community Role

- Identify and address potential vulnerabilities in local infrastructure as a result of increased frequency and severity of storms and heat waves.
- Ensure access to solar energy by addressing it in local comprehensive plans and ordinances.
- Participate in federal, state, and local utility programs that incentivize the implementation of wind and solar power generation.
- Consider making a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program available for conservation and renewable energy.
- Consider subscribing to community solar gardens for municipal electric load, or providing sites for gardens.
- Adopt local policies and ordinances that encourage land development that supports travel demand management (TDM) and use of travel options.
- Consider development standards that increase vegetative cover and increase the albedo (reflective quality) of surfaces.
- Participate in urban forestry grant programs as available.

Suburban

The Suburban Area represents a more recent period of development, much of which occurred during periods of economic expansion in the 1980's and 90's as the baby boomers formed families and entered their prime earning years. Many of these communities fall along or are outside the I-694/494 beltway, or along the I-35W/35E corridors. They also include places that were once resort destinations connected from the Twin Cities by streetcar, and include communities along Lake Minnetonka, White Bear Lake and the St. Croix River. Many of the region's largest employers are located in regional and sub-regional employment centers, and include Thomson Reuters in Eagan, General Mills in Golden Valley and Land O'Lakes in Arden Hills.



The period of growth in the Suburban Area involved significant amounts of land at lower development densities. In addition to high automobile ownership rates in these areas, the character of these communities is influenced by their rural past as well as by more recent environmental and planning regulations that shaped their development. Natural features are commonly incorporated into development; and many residential subdivisions include cul-de-sacs. Some of the large regional parks are located in these communities, such as Bunker Hills Regional Park in Coon Rapids and Andover as well as Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan and Apple Valley. Retail areas often include big box stores and multi-tenant retail developments. Because of this more recent development pattern, walking or bicycling for daily travel is less common, but trails are often used for recreation and commuting. Transit service is generally less effective in this area but there is demand for express bus service from park-and-rides to regional destinations.

As the Suburban Area has grown and as market preferences have evolved, many of these communities are focusing attention on developing a greater sense of place where community residents and others can gather. These include town centers like downtown Stillwater, Burnsville's Heart of the City, Minnetonka's Village Centers, downtown White Bear Lake, and Apple Valley's downtown. These locations are intended to be more walkable and include a mix of retail, higher density housing; and civic, institutional, and open space amenities. They often incorporate suburban transit circulator buses and park-and-rides for express service to downtown.

The Council supports the Suburban Area through a variety of ways that include investments in transit infrastructure, transit services, highways, regional sewer systems, the regional parks system, and programs that support redevelopment. In turn, the Council works with communities to plan for and accommodate growth and reinvestment that support the region's economy and meet the housing needs of its residents.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Maintain and make improvements to regional infrastructure to support adaptive reuse, infill development, and redevelopment.
- Support local planning and implementation efforts to accommodate growth in and around regional transit, as articulated in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Coordinate regional infrastructure and program funding with other efforts designed to address regional concentrations of poverty.
- Provide technical assistance to communities undertaking planning efforts around job and activity centers and regional investments.

- Assure adequate and high quality ground and surface water supplies to protect public health and support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface and ground water use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge and other practices.
- Provide efficient and high quality regional wastewater infrastructure and services.
- Pursue wastewater reuse where economically feasible as a means to promote sustainable water resources.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Community Role

- Accommodate forecasted population and household growth at average densities of at least 5 units per acre, and target opportunities for more intensive development near regional transit investments, at densities and in a manner articulated in the Transportation Policy Plan.
- Identify areas for redevelopment, particularly areas that are well-served by transportation options and nearby amenities, and which contribute to better proximity between jobs and housing. Lead major redevelopment efforts.
- Lead detailed land use planning efforts around regional transit stations, job and activity centers, and other regional investments.
- Plan for and program local infrastructure needs (e.g., roads, sidewalks, sewer, water, surface water), including those needed to accommodate future growth and implement local comprehensive plans.
- Prepare local water supply and wellhead protection plans as required by the MLPA. Partner with other water supply providers to explore options to reduce dependence on groundwater.
- Reduce inflow and infiltration into the local sanitary sewer system.
- Consider the role of railroads in promoting economic activity and identify an adequate supply of land in comprehensive plans to meet existing and future demand for users requiring rail access.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Integrate natural resource protection, conservation, and restoration strategies into regional system plans and capital projects.
- Collaborate with local, regional and State partners to expand the regional park system to conserve, maintain and connect natural resources identified as high quality or of regional importance, consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- Support the reclamation of lands, including contaminated land, for redevelopment and the restoration of natural features and function.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater treatment system.
- Promote multi-modal access to regional parks, trails and the transit network, where appropriate. Support the continued development of the regional trail system.

Community Role

- Integrate natural resource protection, conservation, and restoration strategies into comprehensive plan.
- Adopt and enforce ordinances related to stormwater management, erosion control, and protection of other natural resources. Integrate natural resources protection strategies into local development ordinances.
- Adopt and implement best management practices for abating, preventing, and reducing point and nonpoint source pollution.
- Adopt and implement ordinances and programs related to the maintenance of individual sewage treatment systems.
- Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.
- Develop programs that encourage the implementation of natural resource conservation and restoration.

- Develop programs that encourage stormwater management, treatment, and infiltration.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow (I/I) into the regional wastewater treatment system. Participate in I/I grant programs as available.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Convene regional and local housing stakeholders to refine policies and develop programs to respond to the housing needs of low-income households throughout the region.
- Re-invest in and expand regional systems to support redevelopment in communities that partner in the preservation and expansion of housing choices.

Community Role

- Designate land in the comprehensive plan to accommodate household growth forecasts and meet the community's share of the region's affordable housing need through redevelopment at a range of densities.
- Plan for an adequate supply of affordable housing along regional transit stations. Address the relationship of local industries to the affordability of housing in the community.
- Adopt lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA).
- Utilize state and regional sources of grant funding and/or financing to increase the feasibility of developing new lifecycle and affordable housing.
- Develop or utilize programs to preserve the existing stock of naturally-occurring affordable housing.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Ensure that local roadway systems are planned in ways that minimize short trips on the regional highway system.
- Ensure that local infrastructure and land uses are planned in ways that are consistent with managing access along the regional highway system and capitalizing on investments in the regional transit system.
- Invest in transit improvements in corridors that serve existing transit demand and that can effectively guide a significant level of future growth.
- Ensure that local comprehensive plans accommodate growth in and around transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and station typologies identified in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Provide regional transit services to serve dense corridors and nodes where local communities are adapting local policies to improve the success of transit.
- Support access to, and the future growth of, regional intermodal freight terminals as identified in the TPP.

Community Role

- Develop comprehensive plans that accommodate growth in and around regional transit stations and near high-frequency transit services, commensurate with planned levels of transit service and the station typologies (e.g., land use mix, density levels) identified in the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- Develop local policies, plans, and practices that improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including access to regional transit services, regional trails, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Seek opportunities to improve local street and walkway connections to improve access for local trips.
- Participate on the Transportation Advisory Board and other forums to ensure that the metropolitan planning process and regional transportation system reflect local needs.
- Consider implementation of travel demand management (TDM) policies and ordinances that encourage use of travel options and decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicle travel.

- Engage private sector stakeholders that depend on or are affected by the local transportation system.
- Adopt development requirements that improve the user experience, circulation, and access for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Adopt Complete Streets policies that improve safety and mobility for all road users.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Prioritize regional investment in places that are drivers of economic innovation and growth for the region.
- Prioritize regional investments that improve access to national and international markets by regional and state businesses.
- Ensure that regional growth is managed in efficient ways that allow for a variety of choices in location and transportation for businesses and residents.
- Support a variety of freight transport to better connect the region with state, national, and international markets.
- Support the cleanup of contaminated land for new industry, including manufacturing and other sectors that are export industries for the region.
- Support the intensification of existing job and activity centers in the Suburban area and the creation and growth of regional job clusters.
- Support the establishment of local and sub-regional water supply systems based on a sustainable balance of surface and ground water sources.
- Support cost-effective sub-regional infrastructure investments in efforts to promote sustainable water use and protect the region's water supplies.
- Invest in regional amenities and services, including transit, regional parks and trails and bikeways to support the Suburban area as an attractive place to locate and do business.
- Invest in regional transportation improvements that better connect workers in racially concentrated areas of poverty with job training and living wage employment.
- Lead regional discussions about racial equity and opportunity among stakeholders involved in community, economic, and workforce development.

Community Role

- Identify appropriate areas for business and industrial expansion, considering access by rail, truck, plane, and barge.
- Support the cleanup and re-use of contaminated land by utilizing regional, county, and local funding programs and financing tools.
- Preserve, remediate contamination, and re-purpose industrial base for higher intensity employment and new industries.
- Protect land supply for industrial manufacturing and freight transportation needs from incompatible uses.
- Identify local land supply and transportation needs for the expansion of business that involved in production, distribution, repair, and logistics.
- Plan for land uses where appropriate that support the growth of export-oriented businesses, important regional economic clusters, and family wage jobs.
- Participate in programs that promote entrepreneurial activity and business development.
- Collaborate with educational institutions and organizations involved in community development, economic development, and workforce development.
- Develop and participate in workforce development programs that target racially concentrated areas of poverty.
- Conduct small area planning efforts to preserve locations for employment, manage growth, and minimize land use conflicts.

- Preserve sites for river and rail-dependent manufacturing and freight transportation.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

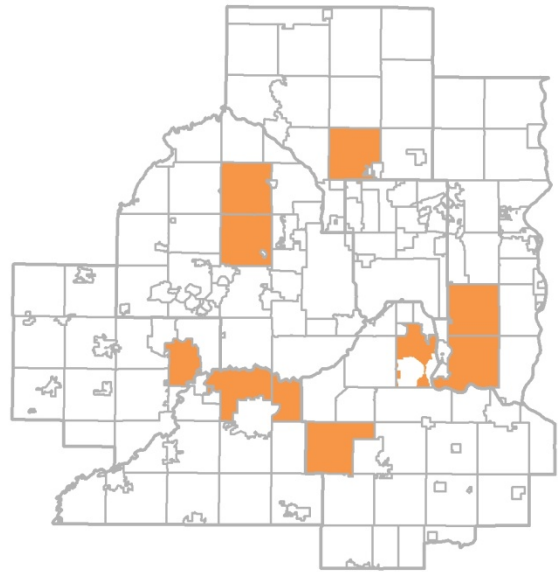
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Community Role

- Identify and address potential vulnerabilities in local infrastructure as a result of increased frequency and severity of storms and heat waves.
- Ensure access to solar energy by addressing it in local comprehensive plans and ordinances.
- Participate in federal, state, and local utility programs that incentivize the implementation of wind and solar power generation.
- Consider making a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program available for conservation and renewable energy.
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- Adopt local policies and ordinances that encourage land development that supports travel demand management (TDM) and use of travel options.
- Consider development standards that increase vegetative cover and increase the albedo (reflective quality) of surfaces.
- Participate in urban forestry grant programs as available.

Suburban Edge

Many of these communities were developed after the 1970s, experiencing significant growth during the 1990s. They include no significant agricultural areas and have a more urban character. The majority of Suburban Edge communities are more than 40% developed, indicating concentrated areas of development with land available for future development. This also signifies the availability of open space and opportunities to protect natural resources prior to development. Therefore, Suburban Edge communities have the opportunity to strategically plan for future development while protecting natural areas and preserving water supply in a sustainable manner. With water supply issues facing many of these communities, planning efforts should be focused on how to protect water supply resources and on identification of viable alternative sources of water. A few of the Suburban Edge communities include regional or sub-regional job and activity centers, like Maple Grove's The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes, but most are home to more local and small scale centers that serve the local population, like downtown Cottage Grove. Meanwhile, these communities are in close proximity to other job and activity centers within the Suburban and Urban areas which provide opportunities to create and improve connections among these areas in terms of transportation, transit, and trails.



Many of these growing communities have had steady rates of building, even during the downturn in the economy in the late 2000s. A mix of residential densities provide advantages for use of regional resources and available land to create momentum for the expansion of strong local job centers and transit options for the growing population. Suburban Edge communities are expected to achieve net residential densities of 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre for efficient use of regional investments and the regional wastewater system. Currently, density ranges in Suburban Edge communities fall in the mid-range of the required 3 to 5 units per acre and have a tendency to include more of a mix of uses and a variety of residential densities.

Proximity to the more urban areas, availability of developable land, and consistent growth trends present an opportunity for provision of workforce housing in Suburban Edge communities. Thus, strategic location of future development that is closer to intersections of existing urban services and infrastructure is an important consideration to take advantage of these resources and use regional investments efficiently.

Most of these communities have access to regional trails and include some existing residential neighborhoods with sidewalks and connection to trails. The development patterns prevalent in these communities are characterized by neighborhoods with cul-de-sacs and limited access to major thoroughfares for traffic movement. Addressing walkability and expanding local trail networks is important for residential neighborhoods in order to increase connectivity in existing and new neighborhoods. These challenges in connectivity and urban form are the most significant barriers to creating communities where regional transit services can be successful, despite the level of demand for such services.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Plan, coordinate and invest in regional infrastructure to support the forecasted growth by and beyond 2040, and consider potential expansion of urban services boundaries, when appropriate
- Invest Council resources to accommodate regional growth while providing and maintaining efficient regional services and systems.

- Support and work with communities to plan staged development and establish strategies that promote efficient use of available land and infrastructure over time.
- Promote development patterns that protect natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources and our water supply.
- Support local efforts and policies to plan for growth that efficiently uses transportation and transit infrastructure and regional services.
- Promote land use patterns with clear distinctions between urban and rural areas to protect land and natural resources for agricultural viability.
- Provide technical assistance to communities on land use strategies and staged development to inform the local comprehensive planning process.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Community Role

- Plan and stage development to accommodate forecasted growth through 2040 and beyond at overall net densities of at least 3-5 dwelling units per acre in the community. Aim the higher density developments in areas with better access to regional sewer and transportation infrastructure, connections to local commercial activity centers, transit facilities, and recreational amenities.
- Plan land use patterns that consider water supply, water infiltration and groundwater recharge areas to protect the region's water supply.
- Promote land use and development patterns that increase opportunities for walking and biking.
- Incorporate best management practices for stormwater management, natural resources conservation and restoration in planning processes.
- Ensure the efficient use of land when planning for and approving new developments and redevelopment projects.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Provide technical assistance to communities regarding natural resources restoration and preservation as part of local planning efforts and in the development of local ordinances.

Community Role

- Complete local natural resources inventories, prioritize areas to protect, and integrate natural resources conservation into local ordinances.
- Conserve natural resources and protect vital natural areas when designing and constructing local infrastructure and planning land use patterns.
- Adopt and implement best management practices for protection of natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources and the preservation of water supply.
- Explore alternative water supply sources to ensure adequate water resources beyond 2040.
- Encourage site planning that incorporates natural areas as part of site development and redevelopment.
- Integrate water sustainability and protection of groundwater recharge areas into local plans. Consider how development, irrigation, reductions in infiltration and inflow, and increased surface runoff impact groundwater recharge and consider conservation strategies and best management practices to mitigate these practices and use water supply in a sustainable manner.
- Prepare and implement local water supply plans.
- Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Provide guidance on each community's share of the regional affordable housing need to implement the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA).
- Negotiate lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA)
- Invest resources in assisting communities to develop ordinances and projects that respond to changing market and demographic trends and provide a variety of housing types and costs, a mix of and uses, increase transportation choices, and leverage private investment.
- Promote housing developments that encourage accessible and diverse communities.
- Help inform and provide guidance for local comprehensive plans based on regional resources and investments. Provide programs which assist communities with funding for affordable housing.
- Provide technical assistance through the Livable Communities Act (LCA) for submittal of grant applications for affordable housing.

Community Role

- Identify and analyze local markets, location, condition and availability of affordable units, both publicly-subsidized and naturally-occurring, to inform the local Housing Action Plan as part of the local comprehensive plan.
- Adopt and use local official controls that will allow a variety of housing densities, types, and costs to respond to development and employment needs.
- Consider participating in the Council's LCA program and partnering with other agencies, such as local housing and redevelopment authorities, to seek funding opportunities to support local affordable housing needs.
- Develop and implement comprehensive plans that provide land appropriate for a variety of affordable housing and lifecycle housing options.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Plan for a regional highway system and an interconnected transit system.
- Provide transit links, where needed, based on available resources and demand to improve connections between residents, workplaces, entertainment, and services.
- Operate Metro Transit's system of buses and rail transit and coordinate other regional transit services to ensure a consistent and convenient user experience. Invest in transit services commensurate with efficient and effective standards established by Transit Market Areas defined in the Transportation Policy Plan, including Transit Link dial-a-ride and express bus services.
- Invest in high capacity transit and transportation improvements that support more reliable access to and from Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities.
- Plan transit facilities in areas where land use is not intense enough to support transit, such as park and rides, to accommodate growth and encourage the use of public transportation to regional centers.
- Invest in the development and improvement of regional trails and regional bicycle corridors to better connect communities and provide viable transportation options for commuting via alternative modes.
- Work with state agencies, counties and local governments to provide assistance in planning for freight transportation to connect the rural and urban areas' markets and resources.
- Encourage the planning and development of local trail connections to the regional parks system as appropriate

Community Role

- Plan and develop an interconnected local transportation system that is integrated with the regional system and appropriate for capacity in a Suburban Edge community.
- Implement access management standards for development along the regional highway system.

- Develop local policies, plans, and practices that improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including access to regional transit services, regional trails with improved pedestrian connections, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Guide opportunities for intensive development into corridors or nodes along corridors (e.g. transitways, transit centers, park-and-rides).
- Plan transit facilities to better incorporate alternative mode connections, such as trails and sidewalks, for facilities serving locations where commuters have to travel greater distances to complete their trip.
- Work with partners in communities and counties to overcome barriers to transportation and to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections across jurisdictional boundaries.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Promote local planning around key intersections, regional infrastructure, and business needs.
- Support a variety of freight transport to better connect the region with state, national, and international markets.
- Provide assistance to communities in identifying industry clusters and planning for economic growth.
- Encourage support for development of workforce housing to provide options for lifecycle and affordable housing.
- Provide technical assistance, best practices, and guidance to Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities desirous of including an element on Economic Competitiveness in their local comprehensive plans.
- Partner and collaborate with experts in workforce and economic development to complement the Council's role in community development.
- Convene interested partners to further strategies towards increasing regional competitiveness and include discussion of how Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities can contribute to the region's overall economic growth.
- Support cost-effective sub-regional water supply infrastructure investments to promote sustainable water use and protect the region's water supplies.

Community Role

- Consider how local efforts to focus economic development strategies along existing commercial centers (historic downtowns or commercial corridors) can contribute to the region's overall economic competitiveness through enhanced integration of local and regional planning efforts.
- Consider developing an Economic Competitiveness element to the local comprehensive plan which includes a local market trend analysis, identifies opportunities for adaptive reuse, infill, and redevelopment, and plans for local job and activity centers.
- Identify important multi-modal intersections, alternative freight routes, key intersections, and other existing opportunities that may contribute to local and regional economic competitiveness.
- Partner with adjacent communities and businesses to strengthen economic relationships through subregional employment centers.
- Strengthen the regional role of Suburban Edge Communities by participating in relevant regional initiatives and working groups.
- Consider best practices for workforce housing to retain employees of local employment centers within the Suburban Edge communities.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

- Plan for and actively work towards improving the resiliency of regional infrastructure and facilities.
- Provide technical assistance and resources to communities in preparation of adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency strategies for addressing climate change issues as part of the comprehensive plan updates.

- Encourage preparation of a Hazard Mitigation Plan to respond efficiently and effectively to severe weather events.
- Support measures and strategies by local governments for the use of alternative energy sources and renewable energy to reduce environmental impacts and carbon footprint.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater system.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with experts in climate change to better assist and inform local communities on how to best evaluate and develop local climate change strategies.
- Encourage communities to participate in regional programs which support efforts to inform, plan for, mitigate, adapt and respond to climate change issues of local significance like greenhouse gas reduction, water conservation, stormwater management adaptation, use of alternative fuels, infrastructure planning, and hazard mitigation planning.

Community Role

- Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, and emission of greenhouse gases.
- Identify local measures to address impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure systems as a result of more frequent or severe weather events.
- Identify mitigation and adaptation strategies and infrastructure resiliency plans to protect against potential negative impacts of events associated with more frequent or severe weather events.
- Implement compact development patterns and creating more connected places to reduce auto-dependency and related GHG emissions.

Emerging Suburban Edge

Newer and still developing communities, the majority of Emerging Suburban Edge communities are less than 40% developed. These communities have a mix of residential, rural, and agricultural areas, are adjacent to Suburban Edge and Rural communities, and often comprise more than one geographic planning area. Typically having lower density single family neighborhoods with small downtown service centers, the growth pattern in these communities is indicative of a changing landscape from rural to a fusion of rural at the suburban edge.

Emerging Suburban Edge communities have access to regional wastewater services (either municipally-owned or regional services), access to the Metropolitan Highway System, and include existing or planned regional parks system facilities.

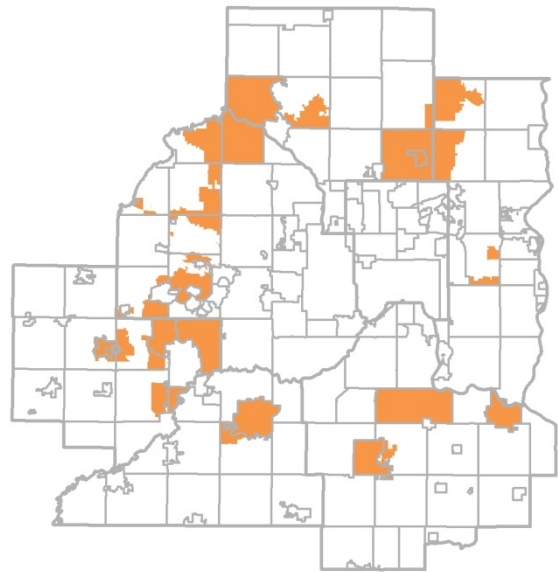
Although these communities have some redevelopment potential in older areas of the community like an historic downtown district, the focus is generally on greenfield development. Greenfields present opportunities to integrate natural resource preservation into site planning prior to development. Some of these communities have land available within their jurisdiction staged for future development, while others are expanding through orderly annexation agreements with neighboring townships. This mix of uses, availability of undeveloped land, and very rich access to natural resources is a characteristic unique to Emerging Suburban Edge communities.

The Emerging Suburban Edge communities provide a variety of commercial activities along the main transportation corridors and most encompass historic small downtowns with small town characteristics. Their commercial areas focus on individual large employers mostly serving the local population with smaller scale activity centers, rather than clusters of employers found in regional or sub-regional job and activity centers. These communities benefit from the proximity to more developed areas and local and sub-regional job centers in the neighboring Suburban Edge communities while retaining their local rural character and protecting natural resources. As a result, they provide local level connectivity and proximity to access regional infrastructure and transit options.

Some of these communities have planned for and staged growth outside of their current boundaries through agreements with their neighboring townships. While growth in recent years has slowed, these communities are poised to respond to a steady recovery in residential development. Density ranges in Emerging Suburban Edge communities tend to be in the lower range of the required net residential density of 3-5 dwelling units per acre. New developments are typically built in a traditional suburban pattern, characterized by large curving streets, limited through roadways, and auto-centric street design.

Strategically located between Suburban Edge and Rural communities, the Emerging Suburban Edge communities are able to offer connections to urban amenities while still in proximity to open spaces and a rural lifestyle. This location advantage, along with the amount of undeveloped land available, positions these communities for use of existing connections between freight transportation and rail lines. Freight and rail services in these locations can help boost agricultural activities and regional industry clusters by providing improved access and connect rural areas with more centrally located communities.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.



Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Plan, coordinate, and invest in regional infrastructure to support the forecasted growth by and beyond 2040, and consider potential expansion of urban services boundaries, when appropriate.
- Invest Council resources to accommodate regional growth while providing and maintaining efficient regional services and systems.
- Support and work with communities to plan staged development and establish strategies that promote efficient use of available land and infrastructure over time.
- Promote development patterns that protect natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources and our water supply.
- Support local planning efforts and policies to accommodate growth that makes efficient use of transportation and transit infrastructure and regional services.
- Promote land use patterns with clear distinctions between urban and rural areas to protect land and natural resources for agricultural viability.
- Provide technical assistance to communities on land use strategies and staged development to inform the local comprehensive planning process.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Community Role

- Plan and stage development to accommodate forecasted growth through 2040 and beyond at overall net densities of at least 3-5 dwelling units per acre in the community. Aim the higher density developments in areas with better access to regional sewer and transportation infrastructure, connections to local commercial activity centers, transit facilities, and recreational amenities.
- Identify and protect adequate supply of land to accommodate growth for future development beyond 2040, with regards to agricultural viability and natural and historic resources preservation.
- Plan for sustainable water supply options and groundwater recharge areas to promote development in accordance to natural resources protection and efficient use of land.
- Promote land use and development patterns that increase opportunities for walking and biking.
- Incorporate best management practices for stormwater management, natural resources conservation and restoration in planning processes.
- Plan for local infrastructure needs including those needed to support future growth.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Provide technical assistance to communities regarding natural resources restoration and preservation as part of local planning efforts and in the development of local ordinances.

Community Role

- Complete local natural resources inventories, prioritize areas to protect, and integrate natural resources conservation into local ordinances.
- Conserve natural resources and protect vital natural areas when designing and constructing local infrastructure and planning land use patterns.
- Adopt and implement best management practices for protection of natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources and the preservation of water supply.
- Explore alternative water supply sources to ensure adequate water resources beyond 2040.
- Encourage site planning that incorporates natural areas as part of site development and redevelopment.
- Integrate water sustainability and protection of groundwater recharge areas into local plans. Consider how development, irrigation, reductions in infiltration and inflow, and increased surface runoff impact groundwater recharge and consider conservation strategies and best management practices to mitigate these practices and use water supply in a sustainable manner.

- Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Provide guidance on each community's share of the regional affordable housing need to implement the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA).
- Negotiate lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA)
- Invest resources in assisting communities to develop ordinances and projects that respond to changing market and demographic trends and provide a variety of housing types and costs, a mix of and uses, increase transportation choices, and leverage private investment.
- Promote housing developments that encourage accessible and diverse communities.
- Help inform and provide guidance for local comprehensive plans based on regional resources and investments. Provide programs which assist communities with funding for affordable housing.
- Provide technical assistance through the Livable Communities Act (LCA) for submittal of grant applications for affordable housing.

Community Role

- Identify and analyze local markets, location, condition and availability of affordable units, both publicly-subsidized and naturally-occurring, to inform the local Housing Action Plan as part of the local comprehensive plan.
- Adopt and use local official controls that will allow a variety of housing densities, types, and costs to respond to development and employment needs.
- Consider participating in the Council's LCA program and partnering with other agencies, such as local housing and redevelopment authorities, to seek funding opportunities to support local affordable housing needs.
- Develop and implement comprehensive plans that provide land appropriate for a variety of affordable housing and lifecycle housing options.
- Plan for future staged growth through 2040 and beyond to accommodate a variety of housing choices based on local needs.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Plan for a regional highway system and an interconnected transit system.
- Provide transit links, where needed, based on available resources and demand to improve connections between residents, workplaces, entertainment, and services.
- Operate Metro Transit's system of buses and rail transit and coordinate other regional transit services to ensure a consistent and convenient user experience. Invest in transit services commensurate with efficient and effective standards established by Transit Market Areas defined in the Transportation Policy Plan, including Transit Link dial-a-ride and express bus services.
- Invest in high capacity transit and transportation improvements that support more reliable access to and from Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities.
- Plan transit facilities in areas where land use is not intense enough to support transit, such as park and rides, to accommodate growth and encourage the use of public transportation to regional centers.
- Invest in the development and improvement of regional trails and regional bicycle corridors to better connect communities and provide viable transportation options for commuting via alternative modes.
- Work with state agencies, counties and local governments to provide assistance in planning for freight transportation to connect the rural and urban areas' markets and resources.
- Encourage the planning and development of local trail connections to the regional parks system as appropriate.

Community Role

- Plan and develop an interconnected local transportation system that is integrated with the regional system and appropriate for capacity in an Emerging Suburban Edge community.
- Implement access management standards for development along the regional highway system.
- Develop local policies, plans, and practices that improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including access to regional transit services, regional trails with improved pedestrian connections, and regional bicycle corridors.
- Guide opportunities for intensive development into corridors or nodes along corridors (e.g. transitways, transit centers, park-and-rides).
- Plan transit facilities to better incorporate alternative mode connections, such as trails and sidewalks, for facilities serving locations where commuters have to travel greater distances to complete their trip.
- Work with partners in communities and counties to overcome barriers to transportation and to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections across jurisdictional boundaries.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Promote local planning around key intersections, regional infrastructure, and business needs.
- Support a variety of freight transport to better connect the region with state, national, and international markets.
- Provide assistance to communities in identifying industry clusters and planning for economic growth.
- Encourage support for development of workforce housing to provide options for lifecycle and affordable housing.
- Provide technical assistance, best practices, and guidance to Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities desirous of including an element on Economic Competitiveness in their local comprehensive plans.
- Partner and collaborate with experts in workforce and economic development to complement the Council's role in community development.
- Convene interested partners to further strategies towards increasing regional competitiveness and include discussion of how Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge communities can contribute to the region's overall economic growth.
- Support cost-effective sub-regional water supply infrastructure investments to promote sustainable water use and protect the region's water supplies.

Community Role

- Consider how local efforts to focus economic development strategies along existing commercial centers (historic downtowns or commercial corridors) can contribute to the region's overall economic competitiveness through enhanced integration of local and regional planning efforts.
- Consider developing an Economic Competitiveness element to the local comprehensive plan which includes a local market trend analysis, identifies opportunities for adaptive reuse, infill, and redevelopment, and plans for local job and activity centers.
- Identify important multi-modal intersections, alternative freight routes, key intersections, and other existing opportunities that may contribute to local and regional economic competitiveness.
- Consider development of local employment, community, and activity centers that complement subregional employment centers in adjacent or nearby communities and work with adjacent jurisdictions and businesses to strengthen economic relationships.
- Consider participating in regional initiatives and working groups to bring regional focus to the role of Emerging Suburban Edge communities.
- Consider best practices for developing workforce housing to attract employees of employment centers within, near, or adjacent to Emerging Suburban Edge communities.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

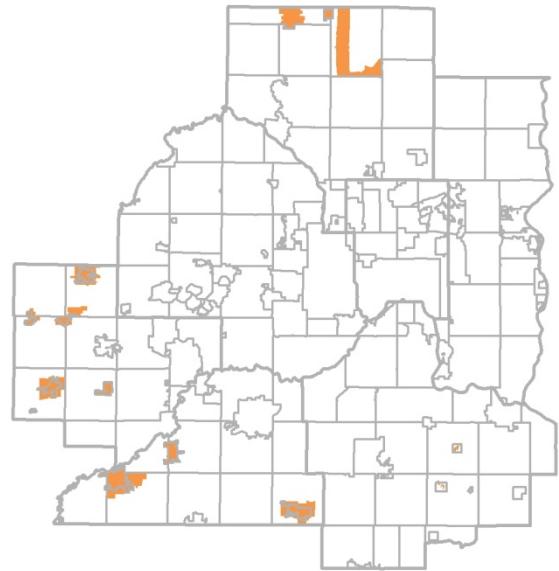
- Plan for and actively work towards improving the resiliency of regional infrastructure and facilities.
- Provide technical assistance and resources to communities in preparation of adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency strategies for addressing climate change issues as part of the comprehensive plan updates.
- Encourage preparation of a Hazard Mitigation Plan to respond efficiently and effectively to severe weather events.
- Support measures and strategies by local governments for the use of alternative energy sources and renewable energy to reduce environmental impacts and carbon footprint.
- Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater system.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with experts in climate change to better assist and inform local communities on how to best evaluate and develop local climate change strategies.
- Encourage communities to participate in regional programs which support efforts to inform, plan for, mitigate, adapt and respond to climate change issues of local significance like greenhouse gas reduction, water conservation, stormwater management adaptation, use of alternative fuels, infrastructure planning, and hazard mitigation planning.

Community Role

- Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, and emission of greenhouse gases.
- Identify local measures to address impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure systems as a result of more frequent or severe weather events.
- Identify mitigation and adaptation strategies and infrastructure resiliency plans to protect against potential negative impacts of events associated with more frequent or severe weather events.
- Implement compact development patterns and creating more connected places to reduce auto-dependency and related GHG emissions.

Rural Center

Rural Centers are local commercial, employment, and residential activity centers serving the rural areas in the region. These small towns are surrounded by agricultural lands and serve as centers of commerce to those surrounding farm lands and the accompanying population. Although smaller in scale than urban communities, Rural Centers provide similar development patterns and locally accessible commercial services for the surrounding area. These communities have wastewater treatment services, some municipally-owned and others connected to the regional system provided by the Metropolitan Council. The availability of either local or regional wastewater treatment supports land uses and development patterns in these communities, and distinguishes them from smaller communities.



Rural Centers provide a range of services appropriate to serve a limited population within a compact geographical area. Characteristics of these communities include areas of a mix of housing densities, strong commercial service districts in a traditional downtown district or along transportation corridors, and residential neighborhoods surrounded by farmland and agri-businesses. Growth in Rural Centers should be orderly and economical so as to best utilize existing infrastructure and investment prior to extension of new services outside of Rural Centers. This includes developing at densities that support that investment.

At times, Rural Centers can be spatial connections to other communities in the region, particularly those that are well served by existing transportation infrastructure such as in Scott County along US 169. Largely situated along the edges of the seven-county region, these Rural Centers are often visited by travelers with a destination in another part of the region. This spatial connection to other locations in the region supports the commercial and activity functions of Rural Centers and provides growth opportunities unique to these communities.

Other Rural Centers are located within expansive agricultural townships supporting a vibrant farm economy, such as in Carver County. Rural Centers are located primarily throughout Carver and Scott Counties, with some Rural Centers also present in Anoka, and Dakota Counties.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Promote land use patterns that clearly differentiate between urban and rural uses.
- Attain a balance of urban and rural uses to retain the viability of the agricultural economy and direct growth towards Rural Centers as is appropriate.
- Encourage innovative approaches to development where existing infrastructure and capacity are able to support increased residential densities.
- Partner with local jurisdictions to work towards the orderly expansion of Rural Centers in a manner that efficiently uses infrastructure and encourages growth where infrastructure capacity exists while preserving prime agricultural soils and surrounding low density residential uses.
- Consider long range potential for improvements to regional infrastructure to support expected growth at residential densities of 3-5 units per acre or more.
- Provide technical assistance to Rural Centers to work towards the goals of the community and the region together.

Community Role

- Plan for forecasted population and household growth at densities of at least 3-5 units per acre.
- Strive for higher density commercial uses and compatible higher density residential land uses in the commercial core of the community to ensure efficient uses of existing infrastructure investments.
- Work with adjacent jurisdictions to execute orderly annexation agreements where forecasted growth exceeds land capacity within existing city boundaries.
- Work to focus forecasted growth in areas with existing infrastructure capacity to protect existing farm land and prime agricultural soils for the long term.
- Adopt ordinances that time development with infrastructure availability.
- Identify areas that will accommodate post-2040 growth forecasts and implement strategies to preserve these areas for future growth. Plan for necessary infrastructure improvements.
- Plan for and program local infrastructure needs, including those needed to support future growth and implement local comprehensive plans.
- Partner with local communities to improve land use patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

See Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources policy discussion in Land Use Policy Introduction.

Community Role

See Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources policy discussion in Land Use Policy Introduction.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

- Provide guidance on the community's share of the regional affordable housing need to implement the Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA).
- Negotiate lifecycle and affordable housing goals to implement the Livable Communities Act (LCA).
- Invest Council resources to assist communities and community projects that increase the variety of housing types and costs, appropriately mix land uses, increase transportation choices, and leverage private investment.
- Provide technical assistance to communities to complete a housing action plan which includes policies and implementation strategies within the local comprehensive plan that result in viable affordable and lifecycle housing development projects in Rural Center communities.
- Provide guidance and technical assistance to grant programs and application submittals for the Livable Communities Act (LCA) Programs that may establish, encourage, expand, or improve affordable housing options within Rural Centers.

Community Role

- Review local ordinances, policies, and partnerships to ensure that barriers to affordable or lifecycle housing are not inadvertently preventing or diverting affordable and lifecycle housing developments from locating within the community.
- Identify and analyze local market trends, location and condition of affordable units, availability of affordable units, and frequency of new affordable housing to better inform the Housing Action Plan as part of the local comprehensive plan.
- Develop plans and use local official controls and resources to preserve existing naturally-occurring and publicly-subsidized affordable housing stock, including manufactured home parks.
- Participate in the Livable Communities Act (LCA) Programs available to communities to be eligible for grant funding.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Plan regional infrastructure consistent with a rural level of service.
- Explore transit links to urban areas based on demand and the availability of resources.
- Plan transit facilities to better incorporate alternative mode connections for facilities serving locations where commuters have to travel greater distances to complete their trip.
- Support the limiting of access points to state and county road systems and emphasize construction of an interconnected local public street system.
- Work with local, regional, and State partners coordinate transportation, pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Encourage communities to plan and develop local trail connections to the regional parks system where appropriate.

Community Role

- Incorporate alternative modes of travel in addition to traditional transportation options within not only the community but neighborhoods as well.
- Consider travel modes other than the car at all levels of development (site plan, subdivision, comprehensive planning) to better connect and integrate choices throughout all stages of planning.
- Plan for and construct an interconnected system of local streets, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.
- Adopt access management standards that support state and county highway access and mobility needs.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Encourage communities to support a range of housing opportunities for those interested in a more rural lifestyle.
- Provide technical assistance, best practices, and guidance for Rural Center communities interested in including an element on economic competitiveness in their comprehensive plan updates.
- Partner with experts in workforce and economic development to complement the Council's role in community development.
- Convene those interested in economic competitiveness to continue discussions and further strategies towards increasing the region's appeal to the national and international business community and include discussion of how Rural Centers can contribute to the region's economic competitiveness.

Community Role

- Consider best practices for providing housing opportunities to support local employment and community needs.
- Consider identifying key intersections that accommodate connections between rail and highway infrastructure that could serve an intermodal purpose.
- Consider how land uses adjacent to key intersections could provide access for trucking, freight, barge, shipping, or warehousing purposes that may strengthen or bolster the local economy.
- Consider completing a community-based market analysis to better understand the market conditions.
- Consider developing an Economic Competitiveness element to the local comprehensive plan.

Building in Resiliency

Council Role

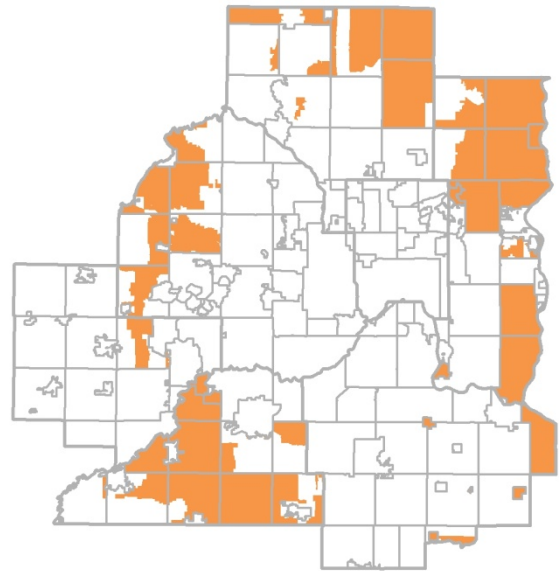
See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in Land Use Policy Introduction.

Community Role

See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in Land Use Policy Introduction.

Diversified Rural

Located adjacent to the developing edge of the Urban Area, Diversified Rural areas are found largely in Washington County, northern Anoka County, and southern Scott County, with areas in northwestern Hennepin County, and small areas in Dakota County. The Diversified Rural areas are home to a variety of farm and non-farm land uses that include very large-lot residential and clustered housing, with agricultural and hobby farm uses intermingled among them. Large areas of high quality natural resources are also located in these communities with some of these natural areas protected in state lands and regional parks, like Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area in Anoka County and Carver Park Reserve in Carver County.



While these communities contain a mix of uses, large portions of communities in the Diversified Rural area also contain prime agricultural soils, located primarily in Scott and Washington counties. While these communities are not designated as Agricultural communities, the Council supports the preservation of all agricultural land to protect the region's economy, provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production. Agricultural uses in Diversified Rural communities benefit from their proximity to the urban areas and small towns, but face challenges to their long-term continued use, including incompatible uses developing nearby and increased development pressures.

The Council supports the continued planning for and investment in the regional parks system in the Diversified Rural area to serve the residents of the region. Many communities have implemented local natural resource and open space protection measures such as easement acquisition, parkland dedication, and clustered development ordinances. The Council discourages urban levels of residential development to avoid the premature demand for expansion of metropolitan systems and other urban public services. Regional investments in infrastructure, such as roads and wastewater treatment, will focus on rural levels of service, while recognizing the need to include transportation infrastructure consistent with market access and the business needs of the area. Some Diversified Rural communities are also located within the Long-Term Service Area for the Regional Wastewater System (*2040 Water Resources Policy Plan*). These areas are designated to ensure land availability to accommodate growth post-2040 and the edge of the urbanizing area. The remaining Diversified Rural communities are considered long-term rural areas.

There is a portion of the region's population that is interested in rural and small town living. For communities in the Diversified Rural area, the Council supports the clustering of homes to meet that demand, but done in a manner that protects high quality and locally-prioritized natural areas and open spaces, and also preserves lands for potential future post-2040 urban development. In August 2008, the Council adopted [Flexible Residential Development Ordinance Guidelines for the Diversified Rural Area](#) that describe the factors that communities should take into account if they are considering allowing residential development at densities greater than one unit per 10 acres. Including the following points:

1. Include the need to reserve land resources for efficient future urban development as part of the ordinance purpose.
2. Identify the land characteristics required to support future urbanization.
3. Allow no more than 25% of the developable land in a project to be developed, reserving larger future urbanization parcels.
4. Protect future urbanization parcels with temporary development agreements, easements, or deed restrictions.
5. Provide for the rezoning of the future urbanization parcels to a residential zoning classification at densities consistent with Council policy at such time that urban services are available.

6. Encourage the use of community wastewater treatment systems to serve the temporary cluster.

For those communities on the edge of the urbanizing area, designated as a Long-Term Service Area for the Regional Wastewater System, a cluster ordinance should be developed and implemented to provide for interim land uses without precluding the opportunity for future urban-density development.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Work with communities to plan development patterns that will protect natural resources, preserve areas where post-2040 growth can be provided with cost-effective and efficient urban infrastructure, and accommodate forecasted growth through 2040 without the provision of regional urban services.
- Provide technical assistance regarding alternative wastewater treatment systems and share specific information about the performance of such systems in the region.
- Support the MPCA's regulatory approach to community treatment systems, which requires permits for systems that generate at least 10,000 gallons per day of wastewater (about 35 homes).
- Advocate that the local community be the permit holder for alternative wastewater treatment systems to ensure long-term accountability for the proper functioning and maintenance of systems.
- Promote development practices and patterns that protect the integrity of the region's water supply and the quality and quantity of water resources.

Community Role

- Accommodate growth not to exceed forecasts and in patterns that do not exceed 4 units per 40 acres.
- Preserve areas where post-2040 growth can be provided with cost-effective and efficient urban infrastructure.
- Accommodate growth without requiring the provision of regional urban services.
- Protect the rural environment through local oversight of the management and maintenance of alternative wastewater treatment systems to avoid the environmental and economic costs of failed systems.
- Ensure financial and environmental accountability for installation, maintenance, remediation, and management of any permitted private wastewater system.
- Consider implementing conservation subdivision ordinances, cluster development ordinances, or environmental protection provisions in local land use ordinances.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Provide technical assistance and tools for resource protection, such as best management practices regarding the use of conservation easements and clustered development ordinances.

Community Role

- Conserve, maintain, and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories.
- Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into development plans.
- Plan development patterns that incorporate the protection of natural resources.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

See Housing Affordability and Choice policy discussion in the Land Use Policy introduction.

Community Role

See Housing Affordability and Choice policy discussion in the Land Use Policy introduction.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Plan regional transportation infrastructure consistent with a rural level of service.
- Support the management of access points to state and county road systems and emphasize construction of a local public street system where needed.
- Encourage communities to plan and develop local trail connections to the regional parks system where appropriate.

Community Role

- Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure, including trails, sufficient to meet local needs.
- Adopt access management standards that meet state and county highway access and mobility needs.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Where appropriate, promote the use of the Green Acres and Agricultural Preserves programs to preserve prime agricultural soils and maintain agricultural uses as a long-term primary land use.
- Support agriculture as a primary long-term use to protect the region's agricultural economy, to provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production.
- Support connections between the Diversified Rural communities and other portions of the region that promote safe travel and ensure efficient transportation of agricultural products.

Community Role

- Identify and protect locally important agricultural areas, in addition to prime agricultural lands, to provide a range of economic opportunities.
- Support existing agricultural uses as primary long-term land uses and consider allowing agricultural-supportive land uses in local comprehensive plans.
- Support local property enrollment in the Agricultural Preserves and Green Acres programs.
- Consider opportunities for smaller-acreage agricultural operations to support food production for local markets.

Building in Resiliency

Council Role

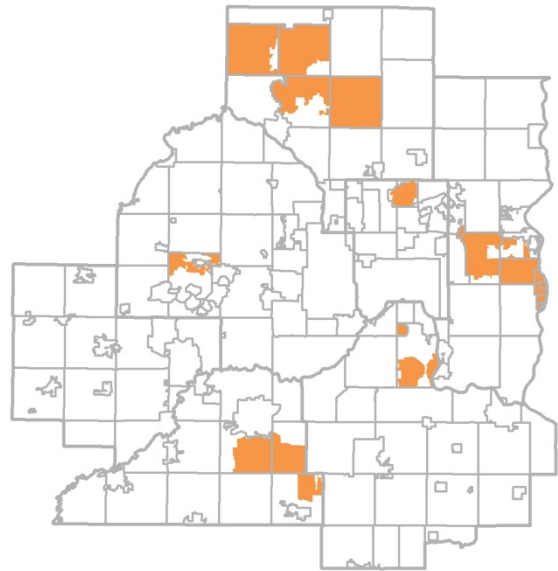
See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in the Land Use Policy introduction.

Community Role

See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in the Land Use Policy introduction.

Rural Residential

Rural Residential areas have existing densities of 2.5 acres or less and do not have plans to provide urban infrastructure, such as centralized wastewater treatment. Nineteen communities have a Rural Residential designation, with the greatest number located in Washington and Anoka Counties. In Washington County, the Rural Residential communities are primarily along the St Croix River. Many of these communities were developed in the 1950-1970s, have topographic development limitations, and a historic development pattern with lot sizes that generally ranged from 1- 2.5 units/acres and therefore, do not support economical extension of wastewater services. In Anoka County, the Rural Residential areas include communities which have a large number of wetlands and existing densities of 2.5 acres or less. These areas are typically a portion of a community and the remaining part of the community is usually Emerging Suburban Edge, Suburban Edge, or Diversified Rural. Some communities are split between these designations where wastewater services are available (Suburban Edge, Emerging Suburban Edge, and the Rural Residential areas where wastewater services is not planned to be provided.



In most cases, the Rural Residential area is existing single-family residential housing within a residential portion of a community. If the Rural Residential area includes the whole community, other uses typically have developed such agricultural uses, including sod farming and horticulture, as well as commercial uses to serve local needs, and commercial and light industrial along transportation corridors.

Rural Residential development precludes providing urban infrastructure in an effective, connected, and efficient manner. Rural Residential development does not advance the Metropolitan Council mission of ensuring orderly and economical development and in some cases, increases the potential for damage to the environment. These areas need to accommodate minimal growth while protecting natural areas and water quality and quantity and ensuring sufficient public infrastructure. Therefore, the Council discourages addition or expansion of the Rural Residential areas. The Rural Residential areas in the region are expected to be limited to those existing areas which have historic development patterns on lots that are 2.5 acres or less.

The Council encourages adoption of ordinances that allow residential clustering in order to protect sensitive natural resources and water resources and to integrate infiltration for water supply. Communities are encouraged to consider the Council's *Flexible Residential Ordinance Development Guidelines* in developing these alternative development ordinances.

Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Encourage rural development patterns that will protect natural resources, preserve areas where post-2040 growth can be provided with cost-effective and efficient urban infrastructure.
- Discourage future development of rural residential patterns (unsewered lots 2.5 acres or less) and encourage rural development at densities that are not greater than 1 unit per 10 acres.
- Work with communities to plan development patterns that will protect natural resources and water quality and quantity, and maintain existing contiguous lots that are 10 or more acres in size.

- Encourage the use the Council's *Flexible Residential Development Guidelines* and adoption of ordinances that provide for residential clustering and protection of sensitive natural resources.
- Support the MPCA's regulatory approach to community treatment systems, which requires permits for systems that generate at least 10,000 gallons per day of wastewater (~35 homes).
- Require proper management of subsurface treatment systems (SSTS), consistent with MN Rules Chapter 7080, to minimize impacts on surface water, ground water, and public health.
- Advocate that the local community be the permit holder for alternative wastewater treatment systems to ensure long-term accountability for the proper functioning and maintenance of systems;
- Provide technical assistance regarding alternative wastewater treatment systems and share information about the performance of these systems in the region.
- Provide technical assistance to communities to plan for adequate land availability to address current needs and forecasted growth using development practices that protect the quantity and quality of the region's surface and groundwater resources and natural resources identified in regional or local inventories.

Community Role

- Plan and develop interconnected local streets, adequate storm water infrastructure, adequate water supply, and properly managed subsurface sewage treatment systems to accommodate local growth forecasts.
- Plan land use patterns that facilitate groundwater recharge, reuse, and reduce per capita water use to protect the region's water supply.
- Consider implementing conservation subdivision ordinances, cluster development ordinances, and environmental protection provisions in local land use ordinances.
- Incorporate current MPCA regulations (MN Rules Chapter 7080) as part of a program for managing subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) in the comprehensive plan and implement the standards in issuing permits. Describe the conditions under which the installation of SSTS will be permitted and the areas not suitable for public or private systems.
- Protect the rural environment through local oversight of the management and maintenance of SSTS to avoid the environmental and economic costs of failed systems. Proactively explore options to address failing septic systems.
- Ensure financial and environmental accountability for installation, maintenance, remediation, and management of any permitted private wastewater system.
- Promote best management practices for stormwater management, habitat restoration, and natural resource conservation in development plans and projects.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Advance water sustainability through policies for assessing and protecting water supplies.
- Advance water sustainability through policies for surface water management, wastewater, and SSTS.

Community Role

- Accommodate growth while protecting the environment and natural resources. Encourage the placement of housing that protects significant natural resources.
- Adopt Subsurface Sewage Treatment System management ordinances and implement maintenance programs, consistent with current Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Rules 7080.
- Adopt conservation subdivision ordinances, cluster development ordinances, flexible development ordinances, and include environmental protection in land use ordinances.
- Encourage the use of environmentally-sensitive development techniques, such as surface water management best management practices that capture and filter stormwater.

Affordable Housing and Choice

Council Role

See Affordable Housing and Choice policy discussion in Land Use Policy introduction.

Community Role

- Use local official controls and resources to preserve existing naturally-occurring affordable housing, including manufactured home parks.

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Plan for a regional transportation infrastructure consistent with rural level of service.
- Support the limiting of access points to state and county road systems and emphasize construction of an interconnected local public street system.
- Encourage communities to plan and develop local trail connections to the regional parks system.

Community Role

- Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure, including trails, sufficient to meet local needs.
- Plan and develop an interconnected local street system.
- Adopt improved design techniques for access management that meets access and mobility needs.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Support connections between the rural residential areas and other portions of the region that promote safe travel and ensure efficient distribution of freight.

Community Role

See Economic Competitiveness policy discussion in Land Use Policy introduction.

Building in Resiliency

Council Role

See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in Land Use Policy introduction.

Community Role

See Building in Resiliency policy discussion in Land Use Policy introduction.

Agricultural Area

The Agricultural Areas cover over 400,000 acres that cover prime agricultural soils and are planned and zoned for long-term agricultural use. These areas are mostly found in Carver, Dakota, and Scott Counties. Agricultural Areas are home to the bulk of contiguous lands enrolled in the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves and Green Acres Programs or cultivated for commercial agricultural purposes.

The Council supports the preservation of agricultural land to protect the region's agricultural economy, provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production. These long-term uses support the region's economic competitiveness as they provide opportunities for local agricultural- and food-based industry clusters and production for local food consumption. The market value of the agricultural products produced in the region has nearly doubled since the early 1980s (Figure 8)¹⁰.

The preservation of long-term agricultural uses and the integration of best management practices in farm operations also contribute to regional sustainability. The incorporation of best management practices, such as conservation tillage and carbon sequestration, can improve soil fertility, reduce soil erosion, and improve overall soil and water quality¹¹. Long-term agricultural uses can also contribute to the region's air quality by reducing local food transportation distances and related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The Council discourages urban levels of development in rural areas to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands and to avoid the premature demand for expansion of metropolitan systems and other urban public services. Regional investments in infrastructure such as roads and wastewater treatment will focus on rural levels of service, while recognizing the need to include transportation infrastructure consistent with market access and the agricultural needs of the area.

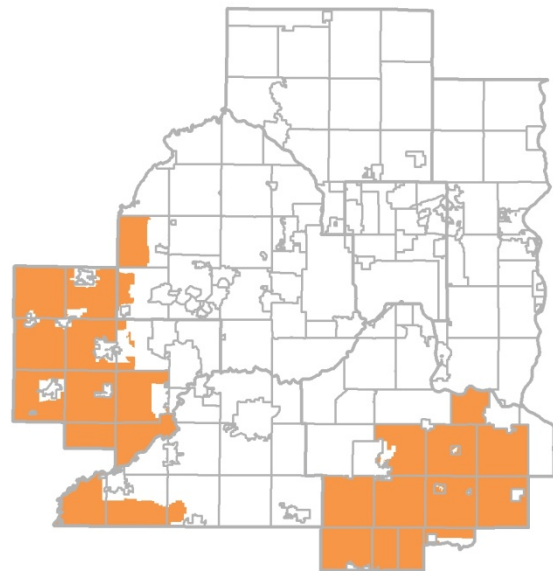
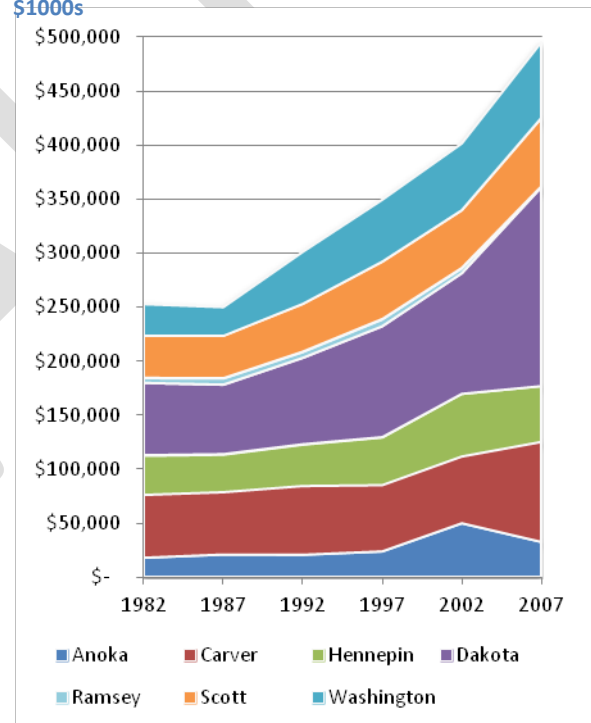


Figure 8. Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold, in \$1000s



Brief summary of the amount of growth expected to be accommodated in the area to be placed here.

Orderly and Efficient Land Use

Council Role

- Promote the use of the Agricultural Preserves and Green Acres programs to preserve prime agricultural soils and land uses by supporting local efforts that maintain agricultural land uses through 2040.

¹⁰ Census of Agriculture. United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. www.agcensus.usda.gov Accessed November 2013.

¹¹ Land Stewardship Project. 2008. How Farms Can Improve Water Quality. http://landstewardshipproject.org/repository/1/190/fact_sheet_7_improve_farms.pdf

- Partner with communities to plan for post-2040 development growth in a manner that protects farmland and the regional agricultural economy while accommodating efficient expansion of regional urban infrastructure in areas where forecasts project market demand.

Community Role

- Limit residential development and adopt zoning ordinances and/or other official controls to maintain residential densities no greater than 1 housing unit per 40 acres.
- Support enrollment in the Agricultural Preserves program to preserve prime agricultural soils and agricultural land uses.
- Maintain agricultural land uses through at least 2040 as a primary long-term use to preserve prime agricultural lands and to preserve land for efficient expansion of post-2040 regional infrastructure where appropriate.
- Manage land uses to prevent the premature demand for extension of urban services, and so that existing service levels (on-site wastewater management, gravel and other local roads, etc.) will meet service needs.
- Promote best management practices for agricultural activities in order to protect the integrity of the region's water supply and the quality and quantity of water resources.
- Develop and implement strategies for protecting farmlands, such as exclusive agricultural zoning, agricultural security districts, and lower residential densities such as 1 housing unit per 80 acres.

Protecting a Wealth of Natural Resources

Council Role

- Promote agricultural practices that protect the region's water resources, including both surface water resources and groundwater resources.
- Provide information to communities about how to incorporate environmentally sensitive development techniques into farm-related construction.

Community Role

- Promote best management practices for agricultural activities in order to protect the quality of the local and regional surface and groundwater resources.
- Encourage the use of environmentally-sensitive development techniques in farm-related construction, such as surface water management best management practices that capture and filter stormwater.

Housing Affordability and Choice

Council Role

See Housing Affordability and Choice policy discussion in Land Use Policy Introduction.

Community Role

- Develop and implement comprehensive plans that provide land appropriate affordable and lifecycle housing options appropriate to the services available in the Agricultural Area.
- Adopt local housing goals and develop housing implementation plans.
- Use local official controls and resources to preserve existing naturally-occurring affordable housing

Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice

Council Role

- Support MnDOT and counties in planning regional highway infrastructure consistent with market access and the agribusiness needs of the area.
- Support the management of access points to state and county road systems and construction of a local public street system where needed.

Community Role

- Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure sufficient to serve local and agricultural needs.
- Adopt access management standards that meet state and county highway access and mobility needs.

Economic Competitiveness

Council Role

- Support agriculture as a primary long-term use to protect the region's agricultural economy, to provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production.
- Support connections between the agricultural areas and other portions of the region and beyond that promote local agribusiness, promote safe travel, and ensure efficient distribution of freight.
- Promote the use of the Green Acres and Agricultural Preserves programs to preserve prime agricultural soils and maintain agricultural uses as a long-term primary land use.

Community Role

- Support agricultural uses as primary long-term land uses and consider allowing agricultural-supportive land uses in local comprehensive plans.
- Consider opportunities for smaller-acreage agricultural operations to support food production for local markets.
- Implement programs and best management practices that conserve and enhance soil and water resources to ensure their long-term quality and productivity.
- Identify and protect locally important agricultural areas, in addition to prime agricultural lands, to provide a range of economic opportunities.

Building in Resilience

Council Role

- Partner with state agencies to identify potential impacts to (agricultural) systems and economies resulting from increased occurrences of extreme weather events.
- Collaborate with regional experts on climate change to identify and communicate potential adaptation and mitigation measures to reduce impacts and preserve and protect the region's agricultural resources.
- Provide resources and information on carbon emission reductions, best practices, and climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies for Agricultural Areas.

Community Role

- Assess potential challenges and opportunities of climate change in the Agricultural Area as well as opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Implement changes as feasible.