elimination of parking minimums in zoning codes that may be requiring oversupply relative to what the market demands.

- Foster and implement good urban design through code regulations and design standards. Good urban design includes public infrastructure, such as the streetscape and public spaces, and private development including building form, mass and scale, building materials, and parking design and location.

These local government land use implementation elements can be applied to regional job concentrations, nodes along corridors, and areas identified as local centers in Comprehensive Plans. More details on these strategies and additional resources for local governments are available from Council staff and in the Land Use and Planning Resources Report.

Local Government Land Use Policies Supportive of Transit

The Transit Investment Plan includes a discussion of Transit Basics that describes what conditions are needed to support an effective transit system. An essential piece of this discussion is development patterns that occur locally and are planned and regulated by local governments. As documented in the introduction to this section, much of the region developed around cars and is not well suited to be served by local bus routes. The Transit Market Areas described in the Transit Investment Plan demonstrate that the urban core is best suited for all-day, frequent bus service, but Transit Market Areas I and II represents only about 6% of the region's land area despite generating the majority of transit trips. The challenge in serving other regional communities will be shaping land use plans to align with the potential for future transit service. The purpose of this section is to describe the elements of land use and development patterns that facilitate better transit service and describe how local governments should plan for these elements to set the stage for a market response that is leveraged to do more in response to the transit investment. National experience has shown that economic development around transit must have both strong local government support and market demand in order to be successful. Land use and local economic development support are critical factors in prioritizing transitway investments, where the level of investment is substantial and long-lasting.

Local communities can plan for an efficient land use and development pattern that supports local transit or transitways. This is characterized by the following factors that local governments can influence:

- Encourage population and activity density
- Design for a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Encourage a mixed-use land use pattern
- Develop an interconnected street network that maximizes pedestrian and bicycle access and route design
- Support travel options that encourage or compliment using transit
- Plan for linear growth in nodes along corridors

Similar to land use shaping the success of transit, transitways can be transformative for land use. These regional investments will need a strong partnership with local governments to support their success. Local governments will set the vision for land use around high-frequency bus and transitways and guide development and local infrastructure to implement this vision. The vision and commitment to this vision should be expressed in local comprehensive plans and/or station-area plans and supported by local government strategies and investments. While the investment in infrastructure for high-frequency bus service is not as substantial as most transitways, the investment in operating these services is significant. To leverage this continued regional investment, local governments will need to be strong partners in planning land use and development patterns in corridors that consider adjacent communities and potential connections to, or extensions of, existing transit service. Generally, these connections will be most feasible in areas within and adjacent to Transit Market Area II, as described in the Transit Investment Plan, although opportunities for suburb-to-suburb transit service could also be supported with strong local land use planning and implementation. An important emphasis for this type of service will be the focus on job concentrations described previously.

Table 4 provides details on density expectations for new residential or mixed-use development around transit stations and around high-frequency transit service using Thrive MSP 2040 community designations. Densities are described as the minimum average across all areas planned for new development and redevelopment within a station area or bus corridor, expressed as housing units per net acre. Additionally, the table provides an overview of other areas that local governments should be addressing through strategies that will support the density needed for transit and more detail is provided following the table.

Table 4: Local Government Land Use Planning Coordinated with Regional Transit Investments

	Thrive MSP 2040 Geographic Planning Areas			
Density for Transit Corridors Relative to Community Designation	**Urban Center**	**Urban**	**Suburban**	**Suburban Edge or Emerging Suburban Edge**
Residential Density Average near Transitway Stations (Light Rail, Commuter Rail, and Highway Bus Rapid Transit) – The region makes significant investments in transitways and local governments are partners in supporting these investments by allowing the market to maximize their potential. The figures below represent average net densities near existing and new transit stations for areas that are identified for new development or redevelopment with some form of housing (housing or mixed-use).				

Community-wide Density Minimums Established in Thrive MSP 2040 (*LINK to* Thrive MSP 2040)	20 units per acre	10 units per acre	5 units per acre	3-5 units per acre
Fixed or Dedicated Right-of-Way Transitway Station-Area Density Expectations (within 10-minute walk or ½ mile area)	Minimum: 50 units per acre Target: 75-150+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 25 units per acre Target: 50-100+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 20 units per acre Target: 40-75+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 20 units per acre Target: 40-75+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)
Other BRT Transitway Station-Area Density Expectations (within 10-minute walk or ½ mile area)	Minimum: 25 units per acre Target: 40-75+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 12 units per acre Target: 25-50+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 10 units per acre Target: 20-40+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)	Minimum: 10 units per acre Target: 20-40+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)
Arterial BRT Density Targets (within 5-minute walk or ¼ mile area)	Minimum: 15 units per acre Target: 20-60+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)			
Residential Density Average for All Development near Transit Service (High-Frequency Bus) – These corridors will provide the highest levels of non-transitway bus service on urban and suburban arterials. Their success and ultimate implementation is dependent upon local development patterns that support high transit demand. The figures below represent average net densities on <u>new development or redevelopment with some form of housing</u> (housing or mixed-use).				
High-Frequency Bus Corridor Density Targets (within 5-minute walk or ¼ mile area)	Minimum: 10 units per acre Target: 15-60+ units per acre (LINK to Pics)			
Diversity of Activity at and around Transit Station Areas – Total activity is a vital measure of the potential for trip making and the total number of people and destinations near a transit station.				

Transitway Station-Area Activity Consideration (within 10-minute walk or ½ mile area)	In addition to planning for appropriate residential densities, local governments should consider planning for a level of total "activity" near stations that is supportive of transitway investments. Activity can include residential units or people, jobs, students, and retail and entertainment space that contribute to an overall level of activity. A guideline for minimum activity around a station that can be fully developed would be 7,000 total people, jobs, or students.
Other Land Use and Development Considerations near Transit and Transitway Stations – Density and activity are important, but there are other considerations in development patterns that are a part of the user experience in attracting transit riders to the system.	
Land Use and Development Planning and Implementation Best Practices	• Develop a walkable street network that maximizes pedestrian and bicycle access. • Design for a pedestrian -friendly environment where streets foster an inviting experience on the way to transit. • Plan for a mixed-use development pattern at stations and in corridors that complements overall corridor development. • Focus density in linear corridors and consider the relationship to adjacent communities and existing transit service. • Manage parking supply and provide for other options such as shared cars and bicycle facilities. • Maintain and increase affordable housing options. • Incorporate civic and public or semi-public spaces. • Protect and restore important natural resources in the station area. • Address barriers to private investment through the use of financing mechanisms for public infrastructure, site preparation, affordable housing, and other areas that require gap funding.

The implementation of Table 4 will occur through a partnership of the Council, regional transit providers, and local (city and county) governments. Local governments may discover, through local comprehensive planning efforts, issues or concerns that will need to be addressed. The Council is committed to working with local governments to plan for land use that acknowledges the challenges that a local community is experiencing while respecting the need of the region to be good stewards of public investments.

The transit investment plan includes factors that will consider the readiness and commitment of local governments to land use planning by using these guidelines when determining investment priorities. These considerations are also an important factor in federal New Starts and Small Starts project evaluation. Additional information can be found in the resource list.

Strategies for Local Government Land Use Planning Coordinated with Regional Transit Investments

The greatest influence on corridor development and readiness for transit service is having a long-range vision, community buy-in, and early community identification of potential supportive changes to land use patterns. Local governments should be proactive in planning for transit service so that their plans can help shape transit investment. This will promote land use integration with transit development for existing transit service, new service, and potential transitway station locations. Station-area and corridor planning assists local governments in preparing for and maximizing the economic development benefits of transit investments. Station-area plans need to take into account a variety of things that may include community transportation and circulation issues, urban design guidelines, and public infrastructure that will make for a quality transit-oriented development. These plans provide the means to coordinate land use and transportation at the community level and with other communities served by the corridor. Development potential may be influenced by the local role a station is intended to perform and its role in regional economy.

Encourage population and activity density. Overall community density sets the background pattern for transitway and high-frequency service and potential. Planning for minimum and target densities ensures that the market for development is not diminished by government regulation. Market demand will be an important factor in how much allowable development is realized and when. The effect of the overall development pattern in a community and along corridors is the critical factor. Effective density is also closely linked to a supportive local network of streets, sidewalks and bicycle pathways and to a mix of compatible uses (*LINK to* Community Designations).

Station area density minimums and targets are linked to community designations and their potential relative to existing development patterns. Compact, high density development increases the number of places within reach near a transit station. Higher densities also supply the potential ridership that can support more frequent transit service and a greater variety of routes. The result is more transportation options, less time on the road, reduced traffic congestion, and more transit-supportive development patterns. At the same time, well-designed compact development contributes to vibrant, economically healthy neighborhoods that offer a variety of goods and services, social gathering places, recreation and entertainment opportunities, and attractive character.

Each community along a transit corridor or future transit corridor needs to create its development context for the shared corridor. At stations along transitways or high-frequency bus routes, higher densities are appropriate to increase the overall corridor density and mix of uses that make for a strong transit corridor. In addition to planning for appropriate densities, local governments should consider planning for a level of total “activity” near stations that is supportive of transitway investments. Activity can include residential units, daytime time

population, jobs, students, and retail and entertainment space that contribute to an overall level of activity. A guideline for minimal activity would be 7,000 total people, jobs, or students.

Plan for a mixed-use development pattern. The region is implementing a regional transit system, around which significant regional growth is expected to occur. Density, alone, cannot ensure the success of a transitway. It is important for station areas to serve a diversity of uses, scaled to meet community needs and the station's role in corridor development. Communities along a corridor should coordinate local plans and development expectations (timing, uses and scale) with each other and with transit service providers High-intensity development within close proximity to transit investments can help accommodate expected growth.

Every transit journey starts with walking, so pedestrian-friendly station areas are necessary for every successful transitway. Towards this end, it is essential that local governments adopt measures in their comprehensive plans, station-area plans, and other local controls to prevent new or significantly expanded uses and building forms that are incompatible with transit use and human-scale design.

Table 5 lists uses that are generally considered to be detrimental to the goal of creating an active pedestrian environment.[1] New standalone uses in these categories must be prohibited in the area immediately surrounding the transit station (within one block of stations) in comprehensive plans, station-area plans, and other local land use controls. Table 5 also lists building forms that are generally considered to be detrimental to the goal of creating an active pedestrian environment. New construction exhibiting these design features must be prohibited in the area immediately surrounding the transit station (within one block of stations) in comprehensive plans, station-area plans, design standards, and other local land use controls.

Table 5 – Station-Area Land Use Controls Supporting an Active Pedestrian Environment

Recommendation	Uses	Design Features
Prohibit in the Area Immediately Surrounding Transit Stations	• Surface parking lots • Distribution warehouses • Personal storage facilities • Outdoor storage facilities • Salvage yards • Animal boarding • Motor vehicle sales • Motor vehicle fueling, servicing and repairs,	• Off-street parking located between the building and the sidewalk • Drive-thru lanes located between the building and the sidewalk • Opaque surfaces of any kind constituting more than 60% of any building surface

[1] *Pedestrian & Transit Oriented Design, Reid Ewing and Keith Bartholomew, Urban Land Institute, 2013. Figure 4-1, page 56.*

	including car washes	facing a street at eye level.

Pedestrian-friendly environments will possess many other design features as well. City block length, sidewalks, pedestrian level lighting, and street-oriented buildings are just some of the features that build a pedestrian- and transit-oriented district. A more complete description of desirable design features can be found in the Council's Guide for Transit-oriented Development.

Under Minnesota state law, existing uses are grandfathered in when local land use controls are changed, as long as they are not expanded. Consequently, they may continue to exist in their current form for many years. For this reason, it essential that local governments implement these minimum land use protections around transitway station areas and other transit centers as soon as they are identified during the determination of the Locally Preferred Alternative. A transit-oriented development overlay zoning district is one way of protecting against detrimental land uses and building forms on an interim basis until more detailed station-area plans and permanent local controls can be developed and adopted. Model TOD overlay district language can be found, as an example for local governments, in the Guide for Transit-oriented Development. Station-area plans and supportive zoning are to be developed and adopted during transitway engineering to guide development around transitway stations in a pattern that is supportive of transit investments.

Develop an interconnected street network that maximizes pedestrian and bicycle access and simple route design. Local connectivity for pedestrians and bicycle access along with streetscape are important factor for determining housing and job densities. A network of complete streets that are friendly to all modes with streetscape and street-level design standards or guidelines should be standard around stations and provide the necessary local system of access. Transit riders need safe and convenient routes to get to and from transit. Riders will typically walk one-half mile (about a 10-minute walk for most people) to and from transit.

Design for a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment. Street design guidelines should be adopted that improve the user experience for pedestrians and bicyclists by calming traffic, narrowing crossings, and improving the amenities and design of areas along and abutting the street. Design guidelines may also need to consider unique or flexible ways to accommodate freight traffic in and through these areas.

Accommodate freight movements. The design of station areas will also need to accommodate trucks that bring freight and goods into walkable, mixed-use areas. Transit-oriented developments can be served without creating unsafe conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists by designing in "back-door" service areas and secondary streets and alleys to separate truck movements from the main flow of pedestrian traffic, and by designing specific streets to accommodate the appropriate controls and vehicles for the anticipated levels of truck traffic.

Manage parking supply and support travel options. While inclusive of the car, TOD is about combining compact development composed of a variety of uses and access modes. To improve the efficiency of land use, minimum densities should be followed in conjunction with a parking strategy. The strategy should consider reduced parking ratios, shared parking programs, eliminating parking minimums that require more supply than is demanded, and parking design guidelines.

Maintain and increase affordable housing options. Plans for station areas and stop need to incorporate policies for mix of uses. This includes policies for a variety of housing types and affordability levels. As Station Area and corridor plans evolve from vision and development concepts to formally adopted elements of the local comprehensive plan, each stage needs to consider strategies to preserve existing housing affordability and the inclusion of affordable units in new residential projects. Guidance on how to develop effective affordable housing strategies go to *LINK to Metropolitan Council Housing Policy.*

Incorporate civic and public spaces. Integrate public art and civic spaces and facilities that reflect community history and culture into station areas and include community gathering spaces use. Parks and green space are also important to include.

Protect and restore important natural resources. Important natural resources around a transit station or in a transit corridors are important to protect or restore, especially when increased development intensity will put pressure on natural areas. Exploring increased density on developable land will help protect important natural resources while providing valuable access to green space in dense areas.

Address barriers to leverage private market investment. Consider the use of financing mechanisms for public infrastructure, site preparation, affordable housing, and other areas that require gap funding to support regional and local goals for station area development.

Council Programs Supporting Transit-Oriented Development

The Metropolitan Council has programs and policies that can assist local governments in achieving the land use policies in Thrive MSP 2040 and the Transportation Policy Plan. The Livable Communities Act funds community investment that revitalizes economies, creates affordable housing, and links different land uses and transportation. LCA's voluntary, incentive-based approach leverages partnerships and shared resources to help communities achieve their regional and local goals. The Council awards grants through four categories:

- *Tax base revitalization account*: Cleans up contaminated sites for redevelopment that creates jobs and/or produces affordable housing.
- *Livable communities demonstration account*: Supports development and redevelopment that links housing, jobs, and services and demonstrates efficient and cost-effective use of land and infrastructure.

- *Local housing initiatives account*: Produces and preserves affordable housing choices for low to moderate incomes.
- *Transit oriented development*: Catalyzes development around light rail, commuter rail, and high frequency bus stations.

More information on these grant programs is available through Council's Community Development department.

The Council also recently created a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy in late 2013 to provide a framework for the Council to play a leadership role in planning and implementing TOD throughout the region. A TOD department was also created to support the implementation of this policy.

Potential Constraints to Transit-Supportive Land Use

There are a number of potential constraints to development potential around transit investments. These constraints will need to be discussed in collaboration with local governments to the extent that they may inhibit the feasibility of planning for intensive land use. Examples of these constraints include:

- Market Potential – Local governments and the region are able to set the stage for development by doing land use planning, making investments in infrastructure, and providing other forms of support. However, the most important component of land development is market potential, which takes into account a number of other factors beyond planning and infrastructure. Many of these factors cannot be controlled by government, although it is helpful to understand these constraints when doing planning. Market studies that are community-specific, corridor-specific, or even broader, are encouraged.
- Developable Land – The potential for transformation around station areas will be limited by the amount of developable or redevelopable land. This may depend on site configurations, barriers to transit access, external factors such as major utility lines or natural resources areas, or other potential constraints that will depend on local conditions.

The constraints are not an exhaustive list, nor do they all exist throughout the region. They are potential considerations for the realistic implementation of the land use policies in the Transportation Policy Plan.

Transitway Commitments and the Timing of Land Use Planning

It is important to acknowledge that many communities will require significant retrofitting in order to achieve development results that are supportive of transit. Transitways require a substantial planning process that can leave local governments with uncertainty about specific

project details, such as station locations, and the timing of investments. The process of planning land use and transit investments will be iterative. However uncertain transit investments are, land use planning represents a long-term outlook that also informs transit planning. The following table describes the things local governments can do prior to a transit commitment (such as a Locally Preferred Alternative). Once a transitway or high-frequency route is in the Transportation Policy Plan, the expectations become more explicit, as described in Table 4.

Table 5: Local Government Land Use Planning Relative to Transit Commitment

Local Comprehensive Plan Element	Prior to Transit Commitment	After Transit Commitment
Land Use	• Set vision for potential/future transit corridors with goals for land use patterns that can grow into transit-supportive densities and nodes of activity. • Guide medium- and high-density housing and mixed-use to areas along these corridors. • Consider potential transit alignments. • Work with agencies leading transit planning to identify important existing and planned transit opportunities.	• Adopt station area or corridor plans with an investment and regulatory framework to guide implementation. • Set density levels for new development that conform with minimums in the Transportation Policy Plan and opportunities for targeting higher densities.
Local Transportation	• Adopt community-wide policies for complete streets and pedestrian facilities and bicycle facilities. • Identify needed local transportation improvements to support land use vision in Comprehensive Plan.	• Implement identified segments that provide an interconnected local transportation network serving the station or corridor. • Adopt transit-oriented development policies to guide development, including travel demand management.

This plan describes some general considerations for local governments doing this type of planning, but the Council will provide more specific guidance through an update of the Transit-Oriented Development Guide, the Local Planning Handbook, and other tools and resources. The following section includes some potential interim resources for planning around transit.

Resource List for Land Use Planning Around Transit

Transit-Oriented Development Planning Resources:

- Municipal Resource and Service Center of Washington. Transit-Oriented Development: TOD – Guides, Studies, and Articles; TOD and Market Forces; TOD Programs; TOD Plan

and Ordinance Examples; Financing TOD
http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/transpo/transitdev.aspx
- Growing Station Areas—The Variety and Potential of Transit Oriented Development in Metro Boston. Metropolitan Planning Council. June 2012.
http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/MAPC-TOD-Report-FINAL-web-reduced-size.pdf

Transit Overlay Zones (including parking requirement bonus reductions):
- Housing Innovations Program. Featured Tool: Transit Development Overlays
http://www.psrc.org/assets/6675/hip_tod_overlay.pdf

Affordable Housing:
- Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit—Increasing Affordability With Location Efficiency. Center for Transit-Oriented Development.
http://reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/091030ra201mixedhousefinal.pdf

Corridor Planning:
- TOD 203. Transit Corridors and TOD—Connecting the Dots. Center for Transit-Oriented Development *RA_203_corridorsFINAL3.pdf*

Shared Parking:
- Portland Metro. Shared Parking
http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/PortlandMetro_sharedparkingreport.pdf

Travel Demand Management:
- Denver Regional Council of Governments. DRCOG Regional TDM Short Range Plan (2012-2016) June 2012.
https://www.drcog.org/index.cfm?page=TravelDemandManagement(TDM)

Complete Streets:
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments. Complete Streets Resource Toolkit
http://www.sacog.org/complete-streets/toolkit/START.html

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Bike and pedestrian infrastructure is most commonly provided by local governments and often integrated with local land use development. Local governments should consider the regional role of these local systems when doing comprehensive planning and implementing plans.

Bicycle Considerations

Bicycle infrastructure is an important consideration for both on-street and off-street options where bicycle travel is encouraged. Local governments should consider complete streets policies for all roads in their jurisdiction as a tool to not exclude bicycles in the design of streets. In addition to serving local travel, local bicycle systems should provide important connections to regional systems including: