



Small Communities Planning Program and 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program Eligibility Criteria Recommendations

Land Use Advisory Committee

Angela R. Torres and Merritt Clapp-Smith

July 17, 2025



Today's Agenda



Updates to Planning Assistance Programs

Analysis of Potentially Eligible Communities

Small Communities Planning Program

2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program

Funding Considerations

Next Steps

Analysis of Potentially Eligible Communities



Elements of Analysis

“On the Cusp”

- 3% variation in current population would NOT change who is eligible
- 3% variation in net tax capacity per capita would NOT change who is eligible

2024 Population

- In June, Met Council updated current population from 2023 to 2024
- Change impacted who was eligible based on population criteria and net tax capacity per capita criteria:
 - Grant eligible communities increased from 63 to 68
 - Small Communities Program eligible communities increased from 30 to 32

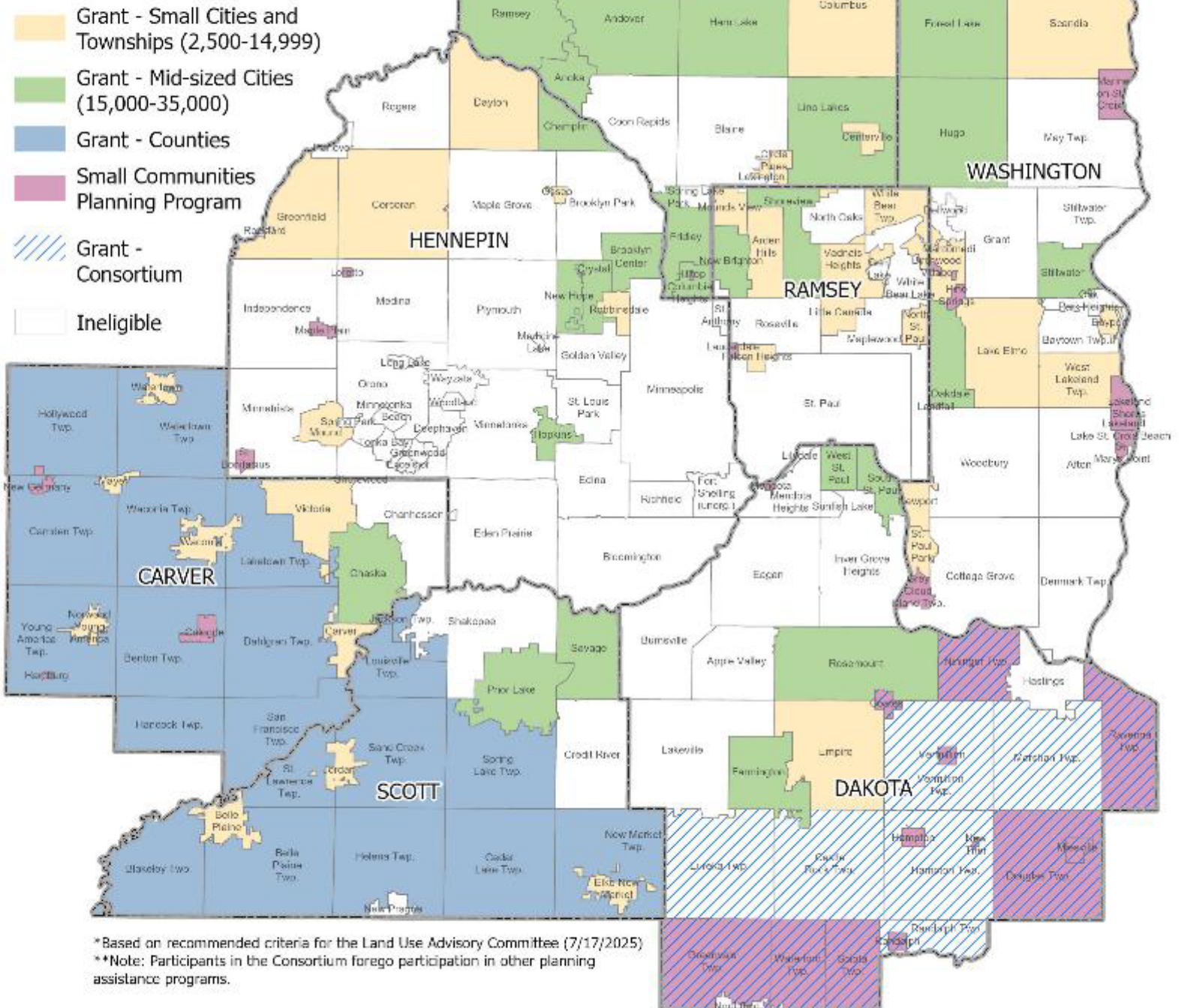
2025 Net Tax Capacity

- In late July, MN Dept of Revenue will release 2025 Net Tax Capacity data for communities
- In August, staff will update the eligibility analysis based on changes to Net Tax Capacity per Capita calculations
- It is VERY likely that list of eligible communities will change

** An additional 20 townships are served under the “County” grants to Scott and Carver.*

Analysis results

Recommendations for Small
Communities Planning Program
and 2050 Planning Assistance
Grant Eligible Communities
(7/17/2025)



2050 Small Communities Planning Program



Recommendations for 2050 Small Communities Program Eligibility Criteria

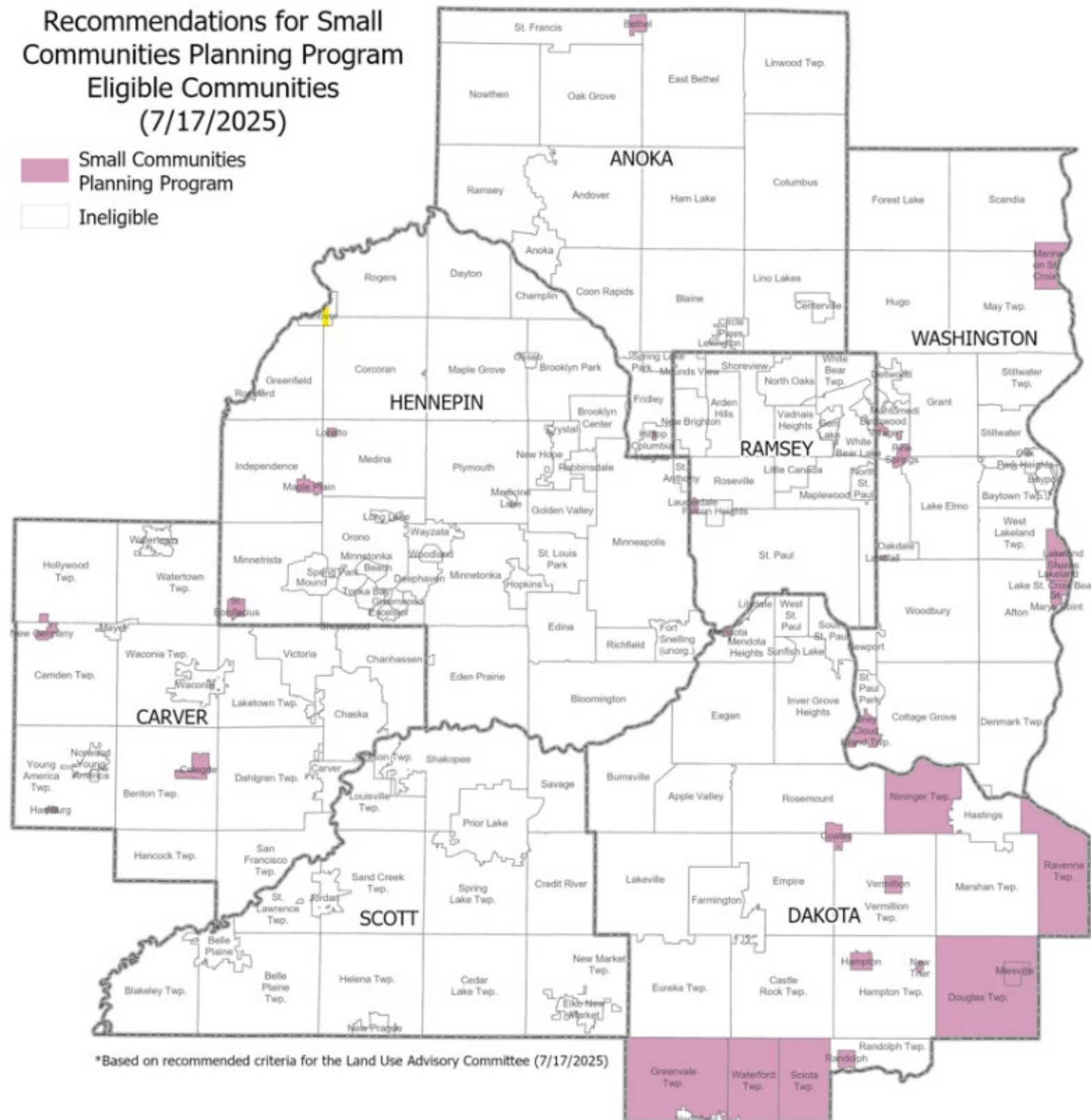
2050 Small Communities Program Recommendations

	Current Population (2024)	Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (metro median = 100%)	# of Communities Eligible by Criteria	Total # of Communities Eligible for the Program
General Eligibility Criteria	Under 500	Less/equal to 175% metro median	13	32
	OR			
	500 to 999	Less/equal to 150% metro median	11	
	OR			
	1,000 to 2,500	Less/equal to 125% metro median	8	

IMAGINE
2015

Metropolitan Council

Recommendations for Small
Communities Planning Program
Eligible Communities
(7/17/2025)



*Based on recommended criteria for the Land Use Advisory Committee (7/17/2025)

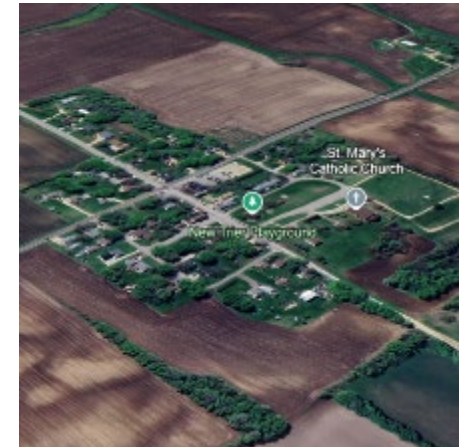
Program Considerations

Local Engineering Service Needs

- Wastewater System Plan
- Water Supply Plan
- Surface Water Management
- Service needs based on different community types:
 - Regional or local sewer service, or unsewered
 - Local water supplier, or not
 - Other agency planning requirements/ timelines (DNR, watersheds, etc.)

Local Planning Service Needs

- Future Land Use Plan
- Mapping Services
- Service needs based on assessment of minimum requirements for small communities and expected capacity for existing or new staff to provide Program support



Program Discussion

Questions

- Do the proposed eligibility criteria for the Small Communities Planning Program need any further adjustments?
- Do you need any additional analysis or information in order to take action on the Program eligibility criteria recommendations in September?



2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program



Recommendations for 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program Eligibility Criteria

2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program Recommendations

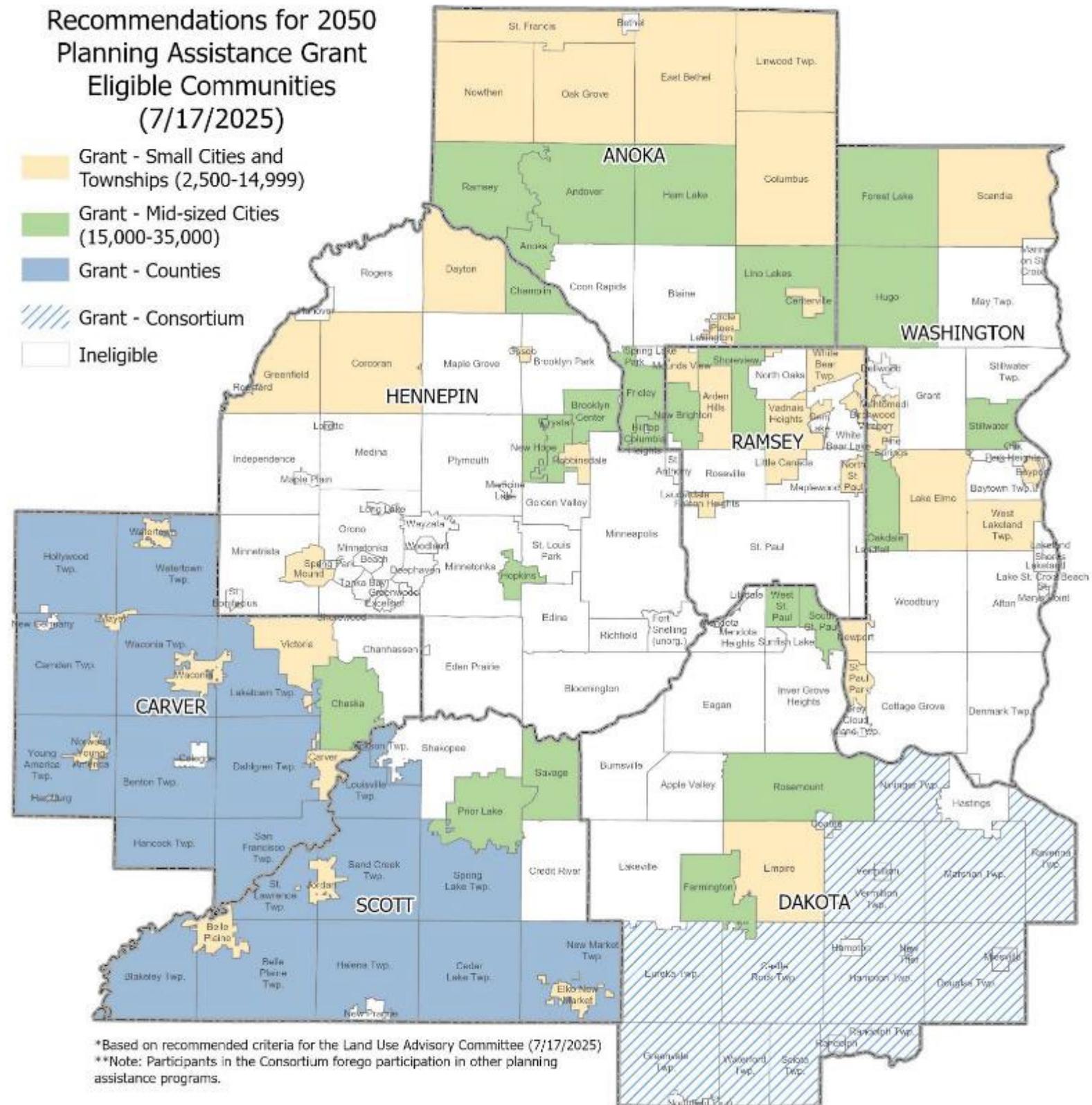
	Current Population	Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (metro median = 100%)	# of Communities Eligible by Criteria	# Eligible for Planning Assistance Grant
General Eligibility Criteria	2,500 to 14,999	Less/equal to 125% metro median	41	68
	OR			
	15,000 to 35,000	Less/equal to 100% metro median	27	
County or Consortium Eligibility Criteria	County with land use planning authority for townships within their jurisdiction		20	2 jurisdictions
	OR			
	Consortium of 5 or more Dakota County communities in the Rural Service Area working collaboratively on their comprehensive plan updates*		17	1 group

**Note: Participants in the Consortium forego participation in other planning assistance programs.*

Map of Recommendations for 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Eligible Communities

Recommendations for 2050 Planning Assistance Grant Eligible Communities (7/17/2025)

- Grant - Small Cities and Townships (2,500-14,999)
- Grant - Mid-sized Cities (15,000-35,000)
- Grant - Counties
- Grant - Consortium
- Ineligible



*Based on recommended criteria for the Land Use Advisory Committee (7/17/2025)
 **Note: Participants in the Consortium forego participation in other planning assistance programs.

Planning Grant Award Categories

2040 Grant Awards by Category

In the 2040 process, the amount of financial support provided by the grant program was based on three general categories:

- Sewered communities (\$32,000)
- Unsewered communities (\$20,000)
- Counties or consortium (\$84,000)

Questions

- Do you support the clarifications to the County/Consortium eligibility criteria?
- Do you support retaining the same award categories from the 2040 planning cycle?
- Do the proposed eligibility criteria for the 2050 Planning Grants Program need any further adjustment?
- Do you need any additional analysis or information in order to take action on the Program eligibility criteria recommendations in September?

Funding Considerations



Advancing regional goals

Regional Goal Focus

- Our region is equitable and inclusive.
- Our communities are healthy and safe.
- Our region is dynamic and resilient.
- We lead on addressing climate change.
- We protect and restore natural systems.

Opportunity Areas

Regional Goal Frameworks

- Equity
- Environmental Justice
- Anti-Displacement
- Community Centered Engagement
- Commitments to American Indian communities in the region

Questions

- Are there other regional issues that you want to incentivize? What issues would your community focus on?
- What level of financial incentive (with planning grant) would it take for your community to participate?

Incentivizing an efficient process

Challenges

- The Council must adhere to Minn. Stat. §15.99 which requires a formal response on the comp plan within 15 business days of receipt.
- Increases opportunities for errors which can have system impacts and strain relationships with local governments.
- Limits staff's ability to assist local governments

Outcomes

- Allows a staggered deadline approach to spread out comp plan submissions
- Increases efficiency and accuracy in plan reviews.
- Allows Council staff to better serve local governments and continue high levels of service throughout the planning process
- Supports better relationships with local governments

Questions

- What might limit the ability for your community to plan for submission prior to the deadline of December 31, 2028?
- Is the proposed amount sufficient to incentivize early submission in your community?

Small Communities Planning Program

Local Cost-Share Discussion

Engineering Service Needs

Engineering services considerations:

- Regional sewer service, local sewer service, or unsewered
- In the MUSA, or not
- Local water supplier, or not
- Watershed Districts
- Impaired waters
- Other agency planning requirements / timelines (DNR, watersheds, etc.)

Assumptions

- Program funds sewer and water supply planning for minimum requirements only
- Local responsibility for completion of the SWMPs allows communities to contribute financially to their plan completion (local cost-share)
- Many communities adopt local watershed plans by reference
- SWMP timeline is different than comprehensive plans

Questions

How would you recommend distributing funding for engineering services?

- Is it acceptable to expect local governments to locally fund their surface water management plans?
- Is there a different way you might suggest breaking out financial responsibilities?
- Outside of additional funding, are there other suggestions on how to define which portion of the local engineering costs would be provided as part of the Small Communities Program?

Funding Scenarios

2050 Planning Assistance Grant Program Funding Scenarios

# of Participants* Community type	Scenario A		Scenario B		Scenario C	
	2040 Plan Levels	Total	Inflation- Adjusted	Total	Adjusted for Programs	Total
63 Sewered	\$ 32,000	\$ 2,016,000	\$ 43,000	\$ 2,709,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 2,520,000
5 Unsewered	\$ 20,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 135,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 125,000
3 Counties/Consortium	\$ 84,000	\$ 252,000	\$ 112,000	\$ 336,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 330,000
71		\$ 2,368,000		\$ 3,180,000		\$ 2,975,000

**Based on recommended criteria from 7/17/25*

Overall Budget Considerations

2050 Planning Assistance Programs General Budget

	Overall Budget	Overall Programmatic Need Assumptions		Adjusted Programmatic Need Assumptions	
Small Communities	With Grants	\$ 1,290,000	Sewer & Water Plans only	\$ 1,290,000	Sewer & Water Plans only
Planning Assistance Grants	\$ 4,300,000	\$ 3,180,000	Grants Scenario B	\$ 2,975,000	Grants Scenario C
Incentive Grants	\$ 470,000	\$ 994,000	@ \$7,000 each	\$ 497,000	50% Participation @ \$7,000 each
	\$ 4,770,000	\$ 5,464,000	Total	\$ 4,762,000	Total
		\$ (694,000)	Difference	\$ 8,000	Difference

Funding Scenarios and Budget Considerations Discussion



Questions

- Do you have a preferred funding scenario? Are there other scenarios that you want to consider?
- What additional information might you want to review to consider the overall programmatic need and adjusted programmatic need options?
- Are there other options you want to consider?

Next Steps



Next Steps



Preparing to take action

- The Committee is tentatively planned to make a formal recommendation for the eligibility criteria for both the Small Communities Planning Program and the 2050 Planning Assistance Grants Program as a Business Item for consideration at the September 17, 2025, Committee meeting.
- If desired, the discussion on approaches to specific grant award categories, and funding considerations can continue separately from the eligibility criteria discussion or staff can include recommendations for these with the eligibility criteria in September.
- Staff will bring back additional information as directed at the July meeting related to:
 - programs that advance regional goals and incentivize an efficient review process
 - Small Communities Planning Program local cost-share options
 - funding considerations and adjusted programmatic needs

Thank you

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