

Action Transmittal

TAC Planning Committee



Committee Meeting Date: August 16, 2023

Date: August 7, 2023

Action Transmittal: 2023-38

Smoothed Urban Area Boundary

To: Transportation Advisory Board
From: Technical Advisory Committee
Prepared By: David Burns, Planning Analyst, 651-602-1887
Jonathan Ehrlich, Senior Manager, Transportation Research 651-602-1408

Requested Action

The Metropolitan Council staff requests adoption of the proposed smoothed urban area boundary as shown on the attached map.

Recommended Motion

That the Transportation Advisory Board recommend adoption of the proposed smoothed urban area boundary as shown on the attached map.

Background and Purpose

Upon completion of each decennial census, the U.S. Census Bureau delineates and provides maps depicting the contiguous urban area boundary for metropolitan areas. These boundaries represent urban areas that meet certain population and distance thresholds to the core urban area. The urban area boundary must include all areas identified by the U.S. Census Bureau as urban but should also undergo a “smoothing” process to include identifiable features such as roadways and rivers, and to follow municipal boundaries. For urban areas with a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the MPO is charged with leading this process.

For the 2020 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau altered the methodology used to determine urban area boundaries. This resulted in some cities within the Council’s 7-county metropolitan planning area, most notably Stillwater, becoming separate urban areas but remaining within the planning area. Stillwater and all other urbanized communities within the 7-county region remain part of the Council’s planning area boundary defined under State statute and are still eligible for Regional Solicitation funding and other Council services.

Similarly, due to the fact that under adopted local practices all A-Minor Arterials within the MPO planning area are eligible for the Regional Solicitation, urban and rural distinctions have little effect on communities and roadways within the 7-county metro area. MnDOT and FHWA, however, do track and use total urban and rural system mileage and are therefore more concerned with the urban and rural classifications.

Among the more significant changes to the urban area boundary is the removal of Houlton, Wisconsin, from the urban area and thus from the planning area. There were also some minor boundary changes within the urbanized areas of Wright and Sherburne counties, which became part of the Council’s urbanized area after the 2010 census. Council staff met with staff

representing the counties and cities affected by these changes on June 12, and the area representatives have not indicated any concerns with the new boundaries. Since the proposed boundary was presented to the TAC Planning Committee, Council staff has received feedback from MnDOT and other local partners and have slightly revised the map.

The updated draft urban area boundary map is included. Due to some continuing and minor feedback received from partners, the draft map may be slightly altered as it goes through the TAC/TAB process.

Relationship to Regional Policy

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Twin Cities, the Council is required to perform the urban area smoothing process and adopt a smoothed urban boundary to comply with federal law.

Staff Analysis

The adjusted urban area boundary follows guidelines and best practices set forth by both MnDOT and FHWA. It includes all the urban areas as well as logical contiguous areas within the region. It has been reviewed and vetted by stakeholders, including MnDOT and representatives of Wright and Sherburne counties.

Committee Comments and Action

At its July 13, 2023, meeting, the TAC Planning Committee voted to recommend adoption of the proposed smoothed urban area boundary as shown on the attached map.

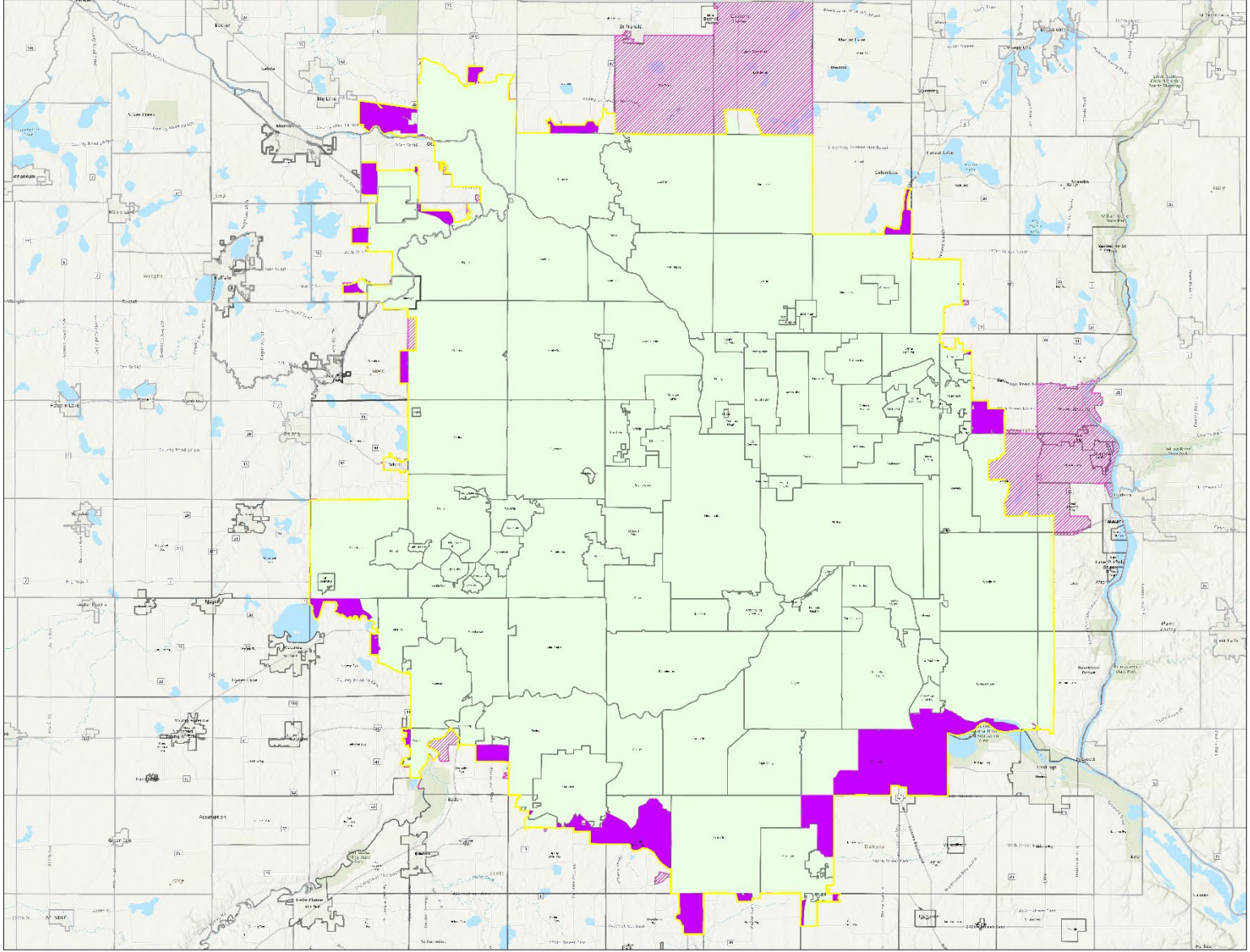
At its August 2, 2023, meeting, the Technical Advisory Committee voted to recommend adoption of the proposed smoothed urban boundary with the following changes included:

- Updating the boundary around the City of Shakopee.
- The boundary in Louisville Township will be adjusted to match the adjusted smoothed area urban boundary as discussed with Scott County staff and be properly reflected on the map.

Routing

| To | Action Requested | Date Completed (Scheduled) |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------|
| TAC Planning | Review & Recommend | July 13, 2023 |
| Technical Advisory Committee | Review & Recommend | August 2, 2023 |
| Transportation Advisory Board | Review & Recommend | <i>August 16, 2023</i> |
| Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee | Review & Recommend | <i>August 28, 2023</i> |
| Metropolitan Council | Review & Adopt | <i>September 13, 2023</i> |

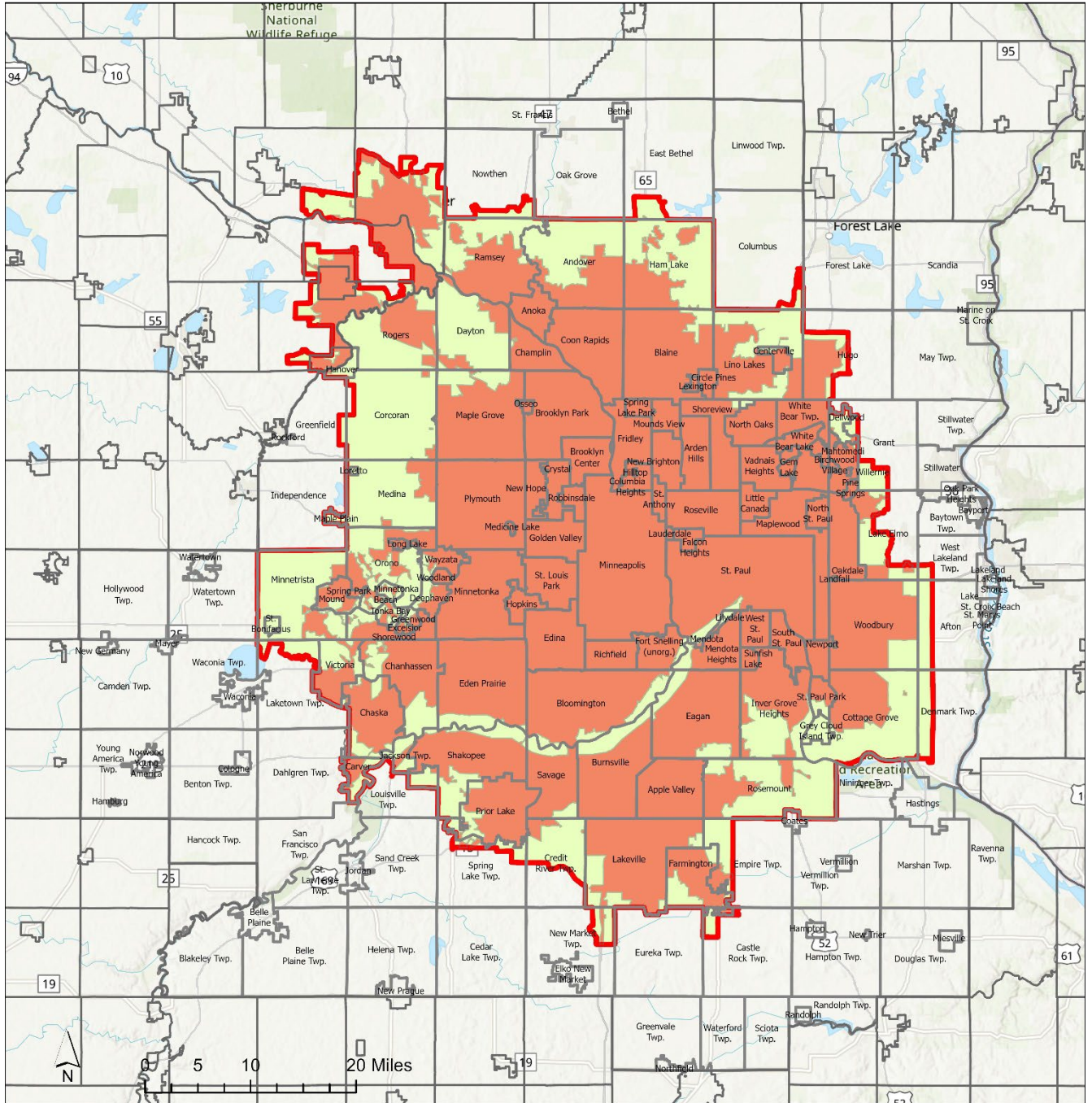







2023 Smoothed UZA
**Urbanized Area
Change**
2013 to 2023

- Added UZA in 2023
- Removed UZA in 2023
- 2023 DRAFT Smooth UZA Metro
- City and Townships

2023 Smoothed Urbanized Area



-  2023 Smoothed Urbanized Area
-  2020 Census Required UZA Areas
-  2020 City & Township Areas

DRAFT