

HOW TO REQUEST A FORECAST CHANGE

LOCAL PLANNING HANDBOOK

The Metropolitan Council updates its regional and local forecasts of population, households and employment at least once a decade. The Council's local forecasts reflect real estate market demand in the residential and nonresidential sectors, constrained by local land use controls. Planned land use, planned development intensity and staging define what is possible in a local area; however, projected market demand could be less than that maximum possibility.

Between major updates, local forecasts can be reexamined and revised to better fit local plans, consistent with regional system plans. Typically these interim revisions are initiated through Comprehensive Plan Updates or Plan Amendments.

Communities can request a forecast change by including their preferred forecasts in the Plan Update or Plan Amendment (typically as a table in the Land Use chapter). Requested forecast changes must be related to planned land use, expected activity patterns, planned development intensity, or staging. All other forecast-related content within the document (e.g. sewer-service forecasts, transportation analysis zone forecasts) should be consistent with these city-preferred forecasts.

Council staff will evaluate community forecasts based on the latest available data and any other information communities provide in support of a forecast change. We will also review if the forecast revision causes any system departures or impacts. Based on this review, Council staff will recommend action on local forecasts in the staff report on the Comprehensive Plan Update or Amendment. Local forecast changes are approved together with actions on reviewed Comprehensive Plan Updates or Amendments.

BEST PRACTICES

Discuss prospective forecast changes with staff ahead of time. Communities should consider discussing forecast revisions with their sector representatives early in the Comprehensive Planning Update or Amendment process. Communities can send sector representatives information regarding their forecast before they submit their Update or Amendment. This will allow Council staff to identify any concerns. Council staff will communicate these concerns back to communities, minimizing the need for revisions or re-submittals later.

Provide information about why your community's forecast should change. Your request for a forecast revision should explain why revision is needed. Requested forecast changes must be related to planned land use, expected activity patterns, planned development intensity, or staging. Examples of information communities can provide include:

- A list of known, certain development projects, including what type of development, where, and how many housing units or commercial/industrial space each project includes
- Description of developments not captured by the decennial Census or the Council's Building Permit Survey
- A discussion of changes in local planned land use since the last Comprehensive Plan Update that might change the type or amount of local growth
- Identification of redevelopment areas, and how many new housing units or commercial/industrial space your community expects added in these areas
- Maps of land that is permanently preserved or undevelopable, especially for local plans in which residential land guidance is a default or "holding" categorization for land use not elsewhere classified (e.g. greenspace or cemeteries guided as residential land use)
- Information about the maximum number of housing units possibly or likely in the community (especially for communities requesting lower forecasts)
- Discussion of other factors (e.g. recent or emerging growth trends) that demonstrate a need for forecast changes)

Communities can provide this information during early discussions with their sector representatives, or in their Update or Amendment's discussion of their preferred forecasts.

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