

RESILIENCE— WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Building in Resiliency is identified in *Thrive MSP 2040* as one Council's land use policies to build the foundation for a prosperous, equitable, livable, and sustainable future. With this policy, we encourage resiliency by promoting sensitive land use and development patterns to contribute toward achieving Minnesota's adopted greenhouse gas emission goals at a regional scale, and to develop local resiliency to the impacts of climate change. Through *Thrive MSP 2040*, we have committed to using climate change as a lens through which to examine our work, and we encourage you to do the same.

Sustainability is one of *Thrive MSP 2040*'s five **key outcomes** for the region to strive for over the next decades. For the Metropolitan Council, Sustainability means protecting regional vitality for future generations by preserving our capacity to maintain and support our region's well-being and productivity.

For cities to enhance sustainability for local residents and businesses, the Update might include many different approaches not limited to:

- natural resource protection and rehabilitation,
- stormwater management,
- access to healthy food,
- affordable housing,
- water conservation

Climate change is a sustainability consideration. Climate change affects land use planning activity. The growing frequency and large-scale impact of severe weather events demonstrate the importance of planning for resilience. The risks and costs of not preparing for significant climatic events have been seen through experiences, such as the 2010 flooding in Scott County, with over \$14 million of infrastructure repair and replacement.

Responding to climate change takes three approaches: mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. Mitigation strategies focus on minimizing contributions to climate change—for example, reducing energy use that leads to greenhouse gas emissions. Adaptation strategies focus on how to change policies and practices to adjust to the effects of climate change. Resilience strategies recognize the difficulty of predicting what the impacts of climate change will be and emphasize increasing our flexibility to thrive and prosper regardless of how climate change develops.



Renegade rollercoaster at Valley Fair submerged in floodwater, 2011
Source: MPR News

HOW THE COUNCIL'S POLICIES SUPPORT RESILIENCE

The Council's policies support the orderly and economical growth of the region and encourage land use policies that create a more compact land use pattern that can reduce energy consumption, protect public investments in infrastructure, lessen development pressures on habitat and open space, provide benefits to public health, and create more sustainable communities.

In regional guidance, the Council's Sustainability efforts including promoting the wise use of water, providing leadership, information, and technical assistance to support local governments' consideration of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, and operating the region's wastewater treatment and transit systems sustainably.

The Council explores ways to reduce energy consumption, protect public investments, and reduce expenses to tax payers. Just a few examples include:

- Waste reduction at all Council facilities,
- Conversion of gas burners at the Metro Plant (saving over \$1.5 million dollars per year),
- Installation of solar panels at wastewater treatment facilities, bus maintenance garages and the Heywood transit campus saving electrical costs, and
- Upgrades to energy efficiency at all council buildings.

INTEGRATING RESILIENCE INTO LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

The Council encourages communities to plan for adaption, mitigation, and resiliency to climate change as part of your comprehensive plan update. Your community may already be addressing changes that will have a positive effect on the environment. The Local Planning Handbook [Resilience section](#) offers ideas, planning analysis, and technical resources to integrate sustainability and resiliency into your comprehensive plan update. The Handbook also expands the resources available to address the Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirement to ensure that the local comprehensive plans and ordinances protect and enable the development of solar resources and consider the use of other alternative energy sources.

For building in resiliency into local planning, communities are also encouraged to:

- Implement compact development patterns and create more connected places to reduce auto-dependency and related generation of greenhouse gases.
- Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, emission of greenhouse gases;
- Identify local mitigation and adaptation strategies and infrastructure resiliency plans to protect against potential negative impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure that result from more frequent or severe weather events.
- Participate in programs that evaluate and share city sustainability practices, such as GreenStep Cities and the Regional Indicators Initiative.
- Consider development or use community solar gardens.



These efforts help build the foundation for a prosperous, equitable, livable, and sustainable future for communities and the region.

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