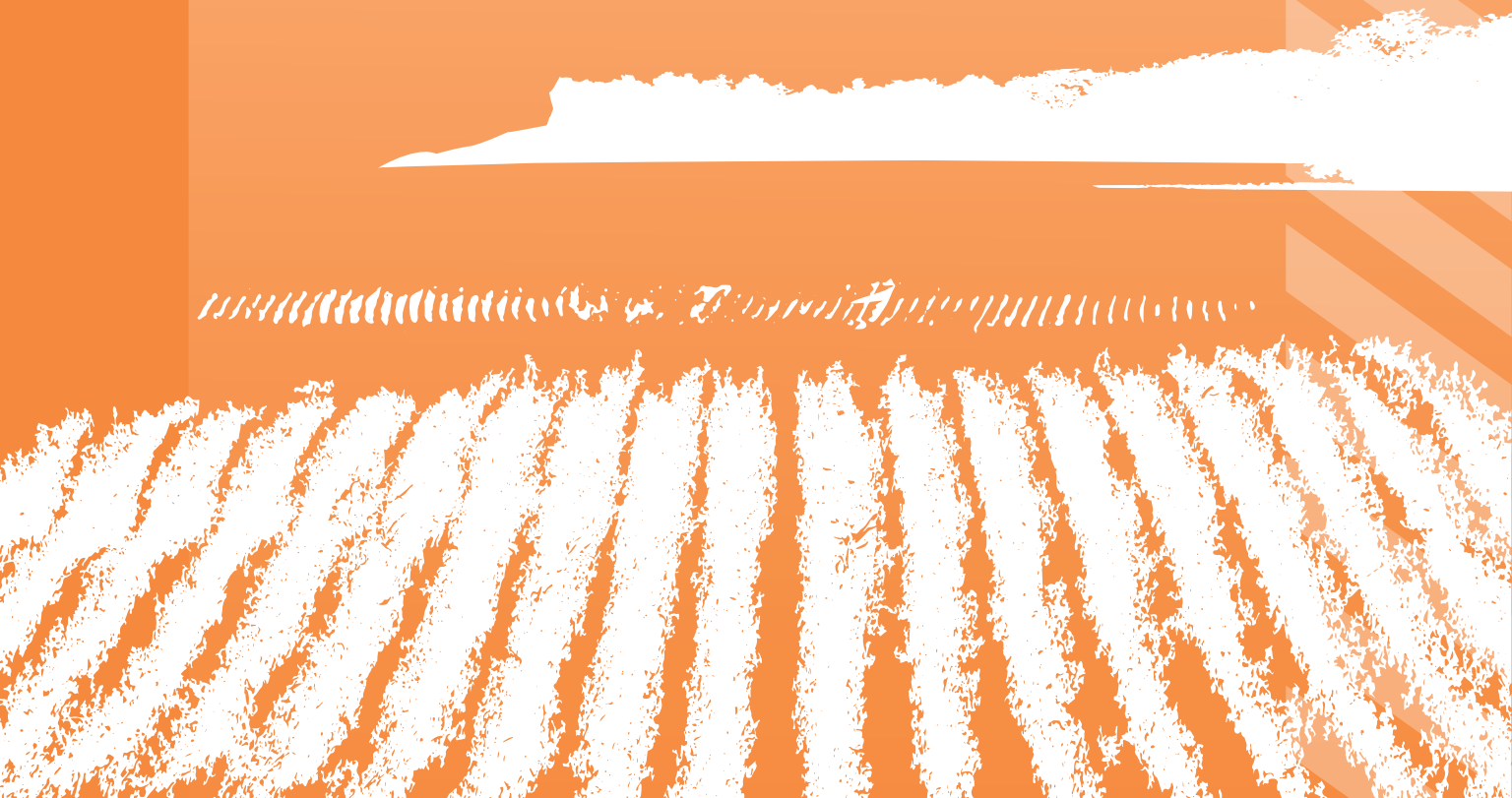


2040





Community Designations

The previous sections of *Thrive MSP 2040* set forth outcomes and principles to guide regional policies, investment, and activities. This section translates those overall ideas into specific land use policies and strategies tailored to different groups of communities. These community designations are used to plan and implement regional policies at the local level through comprehensive plans.

The seven-county region contains a wide range of communities, from farming-based townships to densely developed downtown neighborhoods. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, the Council uses community designations to group communities with similar characteristics in order to more effectively target its policies.

The Council uses these community designations to:

- Guide regional growth and development to areas that have urban infrastructure in place and the capacity to accommodate development and redevelopment.
- Establish land use expectations, including overall densities and development patterns, for different community designations.
- Outline the respective roles of the Council and the individual communities and strategies for planning for forecasted growth.

The Council assigns a community designation to each city and township on the basis of existing development patterns, common challenges, and shared opportunities. Specific characteristics used to define the community designations include:

- Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA)
- The percentage of developable land committed to urban uses
- The age of the housing stock, which is a proxy for age of infrastructure and general development patterns
- Intersection density, which indicates connectivity, urban form, and accessibility
- The Long-term Wastewater Service Area

Intersection density and the age of housing together describe the character of the overall development patterns.

Although the characteristics of a community designation may not apply to every part of every community, the designation represents the dominant character of each community. Some communities have more than one designation because land use policies differ for the portions of the community with and without current or planned regional sewer service.

Community designations describe the predominant character, development challenges and opportunities in each community—all of which may evolve as development patterns change. The Council encourages communities to plan and build towards the development patterns of the community designation they aspire to be. The Council will consider requests to redesignate communities through the local comprehensive planning process.



Metropolitan Urban Service and Rural Service Areas

The Council designates the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) as distinguished from the Rural Service Area. Communities and land within the MUSA receive a higher level of regional services. In return, the Council expects these jurisdictions to plan for and build the higher levels of development that economically support those regional services. Conversely, in the Rural Service Area, the Council discourages higher development densities to ensure the orderly development of the region, promote the efficient use of regional investments, and protect agricultural land, water resources, and the rural landscape. At the region's developing edge, some communities are split between the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and the Rural Service Area.

While the Metropolitan Urban Service Area constitutes about half of the land in the region, more than 90% of the population lives in this area. The Metropolitan Urban Service Area includes a diverse set of communities ranging from the urban cores of downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul to edge communities planning for staged growth and expansion. Developing at different times in the region's history, these communities include a variety of residential neighborhoods, housing types, and densities, as well as a varying mix of commercial and industrial areas. The Council supports the Metropolitan Urban Service Area through investments such as regional wastewater services, regional highways, transit service, the Regional Parks System, and programs that support redevelopment. In turn, the Council works with local communities to support growth that best capitalizes on regional infrastructure and systems. To respond to this variation in development patterns, the Metropolitan Urban Service Area is divided into five community designations:

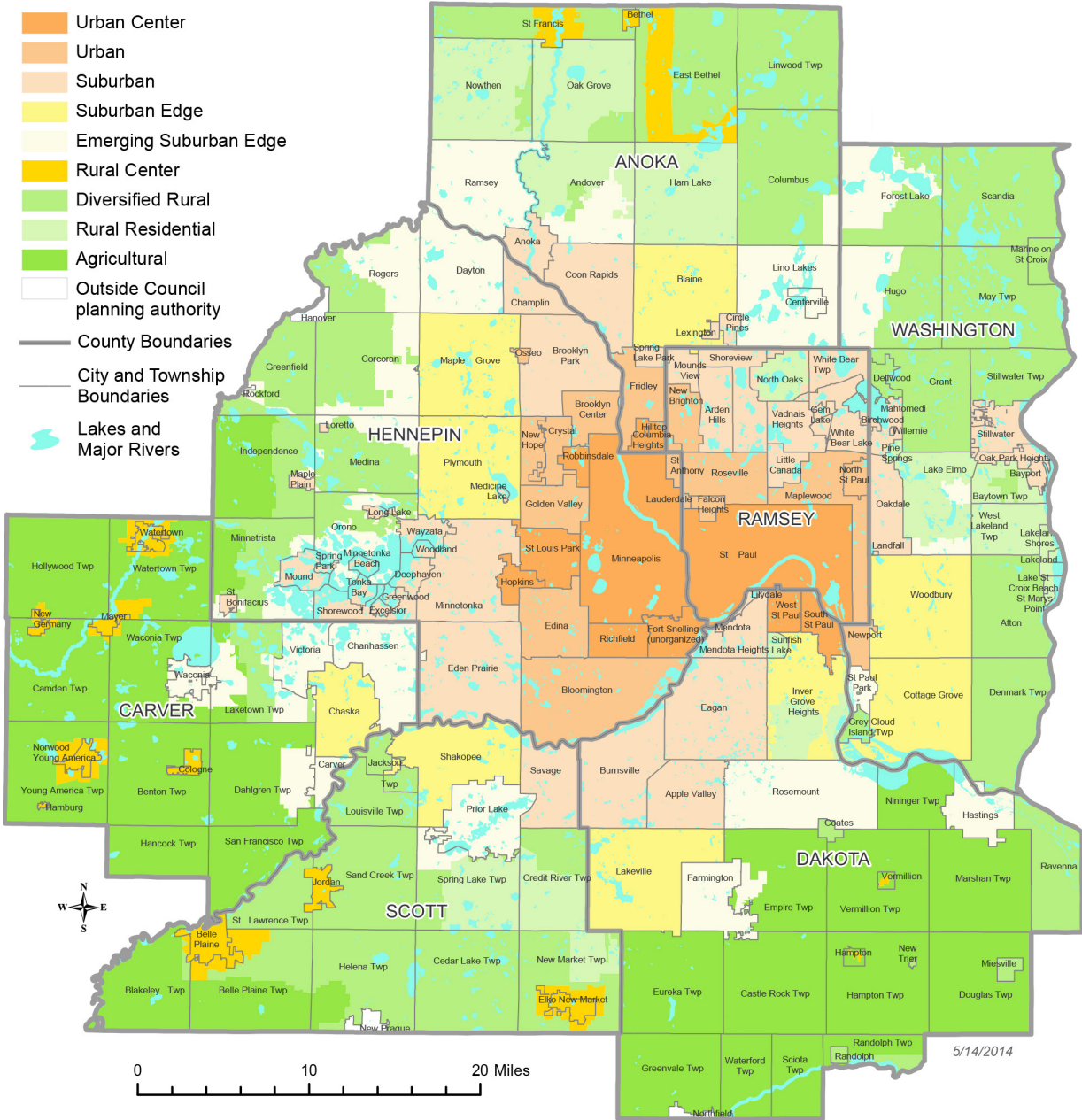
- Urban Center
- Suburban Edge
- Urban
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Suburban

About half of the land in the Twin Cities region is in the Rural Service Area. This area includes a range of uses including cultivated farmland, vineyards, hobby farms, gravel mines, woodlands, small towns, scattered and clustered housing, open spaces, and significant expanses of the region's natural resources. Aside from the investments in the Regional Parks System, investments in regional service and infrastructure are limited in the Rural Service Area. To protect the vital agricultural lands and natural amenities and accommodate desires for rural and small-town residential choices, the Rural Service Area is divided into four community designations:

- Rural Center
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Residential
- Agricultural

Community Designations

- Urban Center
- Urban
- Suburban
- Suburban Edge
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Rural Center
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Residential
- Agricultural
- Outside Council planning authority
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- Lakes and Major Rivers



Urban Center: Growing vitality in the region's core

The Urban Center includes the largest, most centrally located, and most economically diverse cities of the region. Anchored by Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Urban Center also includes adjoining cities that share similar development characteristics such as street grids planned before World War II.

Downtown Minneapolis is a significant regional center of finance and business services; downtown Saint Paul is the seat of state government; and the University of Minnesota attracts tens of thousands of students, faculty and staff to its three campuses in the Urban Center. Centrally located industrial concentrations in the Urban Center are well-connected to export markets by river, railroad, highway, and air travel. Investments in transit and amenities have strengthened the Urban Center as an attractive place to invest, live, and do business.

The Urban Center also includes the most visited regional parks, such as the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and Como Regional Park, and is home to the region's premier cultural resources. While the Urban Center includes some of the region's wealthy and historically notable areas, like Summit Avenue, it also includes areas with significant challenges, including many of the region's Areas of Concentrated Poverty and Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty.

Neighborhoods throughout the Urban Center grew outward along a system of streetcars. Because of more limited automobile use during their initial development,

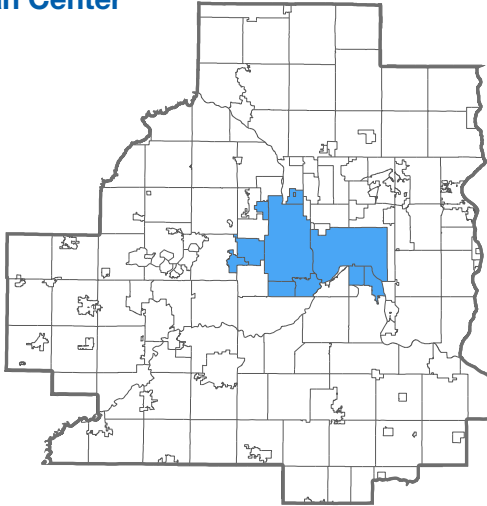


neighborhoods are more conducive to transit use and walking for daily needs. Streets are narrow and interconnected, sidewalks are relatively common, and buildings are oriented toward pedestrians, with smaller-scale commercial uses often within a short walking distance. Travel by transit, walking, and bicycling remains common here. Redevelopment, reinvestment, and intensification are occurring in areas where people have multiple transportation options and commercial, cultural, and recreational amenities are nearby.

Urban Center communities are experiencing redevelopment attracted to their vitality and amenities, often at significant densities. However, they face many challenges including pollution cleanup costs, land availability for development and infrastructure improvements, congestion, conflicting or competing land uses, and the costs of retrofitting, replacing, or new infrastructure.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Urban Center area will add 162,000 residents, 80,000 households, and 142,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 19% in population, 23% in households, and 25% in employment over the three decades.

Urban Center



Designated Urban Center communities are: Columbia Heights, Fort Snelling, Hilltop, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Richfield, Robbinsdale, South St. Paul, St. Louis Park, Saint Paul, and West St. Paul.

Urban: Redeveloping to meet the needs of new generations

Urban communities developed primarily during the economic prosperity between the end of World War II and the economic recession of 1973-75. These cities, adjacent to the Urban Center communities, experienced rapid development to house the growing families of the Baby Boom era.

Highway accessibility led to the development of Urban communities as centers of office, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses, including many of the region's early major indoor shopping malls. Many Urban communities are served by highways that predate the interstate system (e.g., Highways 100 and 36).

The development patterns of Urban communities show the growing influence of the automobile as miles and miles of



new limited-access highways accelerated further automobile-oriented growth. After World War II, the region's two-lane roads that extend out from the Urban Center were improved and expanded, and new roads and highways were built, making large tracts of land available for development. Streets are wider and include more curves. Lots are

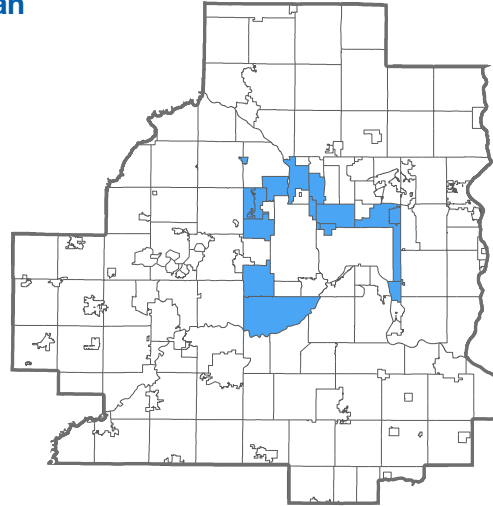
larger, parking is plentiful, alleys and sidewalks are less common, and residential parking is accessed via streets instead of alleys. In many cases, local streets do not intersect with higher volume roadways as more emphasis is placed on traffic movement and circulation.

Over time, transit service has been extended into these communities from local routes originating in the Urban Center. Some new services were introduced such as circulator services often centered on the regional malls and express buses serving major park-and-rides that transport commuters to the downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Urban communities face the challenge of redeveloping in ways that accommodate a greater mix of uses, incorporate better facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and lay the groundwork for pedestrian-friendly districts and improved transit services. Examples include the Penn-American district in Bloomington and the I-394 mixed-use district in Golden Valley.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Urban area will add 56,000 residents, 29,000 households, and 87,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 15% in population, 18% in households, and 29% in employment over the three decades.

Urban



Designated Urban communities are: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Crystal, Edina, Falcon Heights, Fridley, Golden Valley, Lauderdale, Maplewood, New Brighton, New Hope, Newport, North St. Paul, Osseo, Roseville, and St. Anthony.

Suburban: Cultivating places where people can gather

Suburban communities saw their primary era of development in the 1980s and into the early 1990s as the Baby Boomers formed families and entered their prime earning years. Many of these cities fall along freeway corridors and include growth along and outside the I-694/I-494 beltway. This development pattern also reached and incorporated places that were once resort destinations connected from Minneapolis and Saint Paul by streetcar, such as communities along Lake Minnetonka and White Bear Lake. Similarly, communities along the St. Croix River, such as Stillwater, have development patterns in their downtown and core areas that are similar to other communities settled early in the region's history. Like other Suburban communities, these cities experienced continued growth and expansion during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Many of the region's corporate headquarters are located in the Suburban area. These include Thomson Reuters in Eagan, UnitedHealth Group in Minnetonka, and Land O'Lakes in Arden Hills.

Development in Suburban communities occurred at significantly lower densities than in previous eras. Many residential subdivisions include cul-de-sacs. Retail areas often include big-box stores and multi-tenant retail developments. Because of the automobile-orientation of this area's development patterns and high automobile ownership, walking or bicycling for daily travel is less common, but trails are often used for recreation and commuting. Suburban area cities include large regional parks such as Bunker Hills Regional Park in Coon Rapids



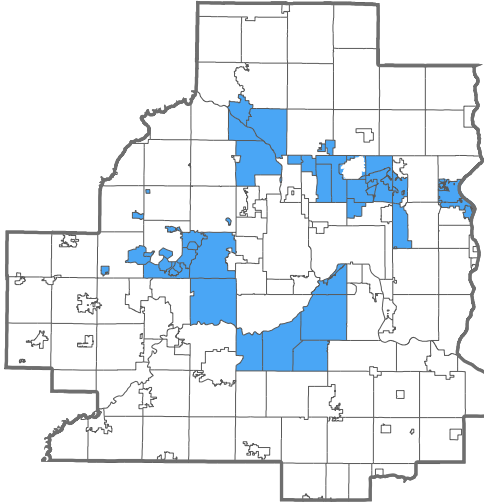
and Andover and regional assets like the Minnesota Zoo in Apple Valley. Regular-route bus service is generally less cost-effective in the Suburban communities than in the Urban Center and Urban communities, but express bus service connects Suburban area park-and-rides to Job Concentrations in the Urban Center, such as downtown Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul, and the University of Minnesota.

As the Suburban communities have grown and as market preferences have evolved, many of these cities are focusing attention on developing places where people can gather. These include town centers like downtown Stillwater, Burnsville's Heart of the City, Minnetonka's Village Center, downtown White Bear Lake, and Apple Valley's downtown. These locations are intended to be more walkable and include a mix of retail, higher density housing, and civic, institutional, and open space amenities.

Another new challenge for some Suburban communities is realigning development patterns around existing and emerging transitways.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Suburban area will add 159,000 residents, 76,000 households, and 161,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 22% in population, 27% in households, and 43% in employment over the three decades.

Suburb



Designated Suburban communities are: Anoka, Apple Valley, Arden Hills, Bayport, Birchwood Village, Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Champlin, Circle Pines, Coon Rapids, Deephaven, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Excelsior, Gem Lake, Greenwood, Landfall, Lexington, Lilydale, Little Canada, Long Lake, Loretto, Mahtomedi, Maple Plain, Medicine Lake, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Minnetonka, Minnetonka Beach, Mound, Mounds View, North Oaks*, Oak Park Heights, Oakdale, Savage, Shoreview, Shorewood, Spring Lake Park, Spring Park, St. Bonifacius, Stillwater, Tonka Bay, Vadnais Heights, Wayzata, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township, Willernie, and Woodland.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.

Suburban Edge: Managing rapid growth and change

The Suburban Edge includes communities that have experienced significant residential growth beginning in the 1990s and continuing to the 2010s. At least 40% of the land in these cities is developed, but significant amounts of land remain for future development. These communities generally no longer contain large-scale agricultural areas.

The Suburban Edge includes region-serving retail centers, like Maple Grove's The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes, as well as more local and small scale centers, like downtown Chaska, that serve the local population.

The Suburban Edge tends to have auto-oriented development and transportation patterns. Neighborhoods are often self-contained subdivisions characterized by cul-de-sacs and limited access to major thoroughfares for traffic movement. Recent development has included both subdivisions of single-family detached homes, as well as townhome developments offering more options for housing affordability. Most cities in the Suburban Edge have access to regional trails and include some existing residential neighborhoods with sidewalks and connection to trails. Suburban Edge cities are seeing increasing demand for transit service from park-and-rides to regional destinations.

An emerging challenge for some Suburban Edge communities is aligning today's development patterns in preparation for future transit expansions and potential transitways.

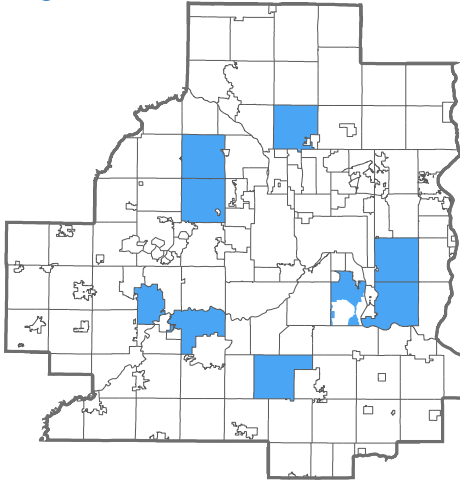


The balance of proximity to more developed areas and a significant supply of developable land presents an opportunity for the Suburban Edge to develop new workforce housing. Locating future development close to existing urban services and infrastructure will use regional investments efficiently. Connections via roadway, transit, and trails to centers in adjacent Suburban and Urban communities will further integrate the Suburban Edge into the regional fabric. Addressing walkability and expanding local trail networks is important for residential neighborhoods in order to increase connectivity in existing and new neighborhoods.

With water supply issues facing many Suburban Edge communities, planning efforts should focus on how to protect water supply resources and identify viable alternative sources of water. Similarly, with much of their development yet ahead, Suburban Edge communities can protect and preserve open spaces, natural areas, and water recharge capacity within future development patterns.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Suburban Edge area will add 181,000 residents, 79,000 households, and 92,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 42% in population, 49% in households, and 52% in employment over the three decades.

Suburban Edge



Designated Suburban Edge communities are: Blaine, Chaska, Cottage Grove, Inver Grove Heights*, Lakeville, Maple Grove, Plymouth, Shakopee, and Woodbury.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.

Emerging Suburban Edge: Transitioning from rural to developed

The Emerging Suburban Edge includes cities, townships, and portions of both that are in the early stages of transitioning into urbanized levels of development. Strategically located between Suburban Edge and Rural communities, the Emerging Suburban Edge communities offer both connections to urban amenities and the proximity to open spaces that characterizes a rural lifestyle. Often, the cities and townships in the Emerging Suburban Edge are in more than one Community Designation. In the majority of Emerging Suburban Edge communities, less than 40% of the land has been developed.

Communities in the Emerging Suburban Edge have a mix of residential, rural, and agricultural areas, often including lower-density single-family neighborhoods and small downtown service centers. The growth patterns in these communities demonstrate the challenges of changing from rural to suburban. New developments are typically built in a traditional suburban pattern, characterized by large curving streets, limited through-roadways, and auto-oriented street design. Emerging Suburban Edge communities have access to regional wastewater services (either municipally owned or regional services), access to the metropolitan highway system, and include existing or planned Regional Parks System facilities.

The Emerging Suburban Edge communities provide a variety of commercial activities along the main transportation corridors, and most encompass historic small downtowns with small town characteristics. These communities benefit from their proximity



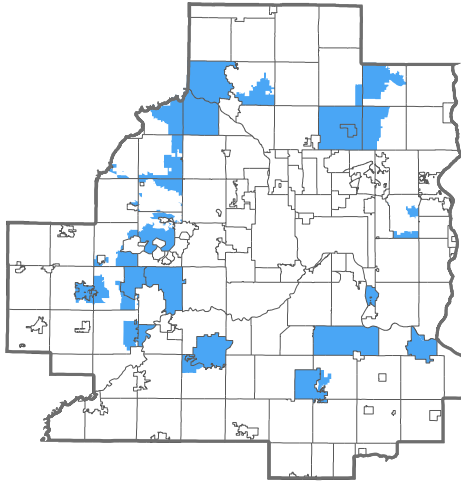
to more developed areas while retaining their local rural character and protecting natural resources. Commercial areas in the Emerging Suburban Edge tend to be individual large employers and smaller-scale commercial centers serving the local population.

Although these communities have some redevelopment potential in older areas such as historic downtown districts, the focus in the Emerging Suburban Edge is on greenfield development. Greenfields present opportunities to integrate natural resource preservation into site planning prior to development. Some of these communities have land available within their jurisdiction staged for future development, while others are expanding through orderly annexation agreements with neighboring townships. This mix of uses, availability of undeveloped land, and rich access to natural resources is a characteristic unique to Emerging Suburban Edge communities.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Emerging Suburban Edge area will add 201,000 residents, 93,000 households, and 58,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 66% in population, 87% in households, and 66% in employment over the three decades. Because most Emerging

Suburban Edge communities also have areas designated as rural, these numbers are approximations. These numbers may change during the upcoming comprehensive planning process, which will more precisely delineate how much community growth belongs inside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area.

Emerging Suburban Edge



Designated Emerging Suburban Edge communities are: Andover*, Carver, Centerville, Chanhassen, Columbus*, Corcoran*, Dayton, Empire Township*, Farmington, Forest Lake*, Greenfield*, Hastings, Hugo*, Independence*, Lake Elmo*, Lino Lakes, Medina*, Minnetrista*, Orono*, Prior Lake, Ramsey, Rogers*, Rosemount, St. Paul Park, Victoria, and Waconia.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.

Rural Centers: Serving the rural area as small town centers of commerce

Rural Centers are local commercial, employment, and residential activity centers serving rural areas in the region. These small towns are surrounded by agricultural lands and serve as centers of commerce to those surrounding farm lands and the accompanying population. Although smaller in scale than more urban communities, Rural Centers provide similar development patterns and locally accessible commercial services for the surrounding area.

Rural Centers have wastewater treatment services, some municipally owned and others connected to the regional system provided by the Council. The availability of either local or regional wastewater treatment supports denser land uses and development patterns in these cities and distinguishes them from neighboring rural townships and other small towns.

Rural Centers provide a range of services appropriate to serve a limited population within a compact geographical area. Rural Centers generally have a mix of housing densities, strong commercial service districts in a traditional downtown district or along transportation corridors, and residential neighborhoods surrounded by farmland and agri-businesses. Growth in Rural Centers should be orderly and economical so as to best utilize existing infrastructure and investment prior to extension of new services outside of Rural Centers.

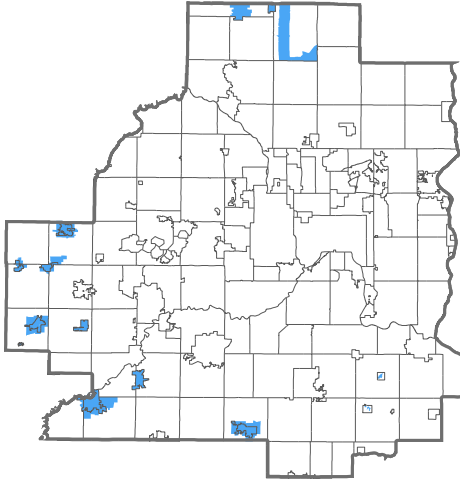
At times, Rural Centers can connect travelers and residents to other communities in and outside the region, particularly those that are well-served by existing transportation infrastructure



such as in Scott County along U.S. Highway 169. Largely situated along the edges of the seven-county region, these Rural Centers are often visited by travelers with a destination in another part of the region. This spatial connection to other locations in the region supports the commercial and activity functions of Rural Centers and provides growth opportunities unique to these communities.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that Rural Centers will add 45,000 residents, 21,000 households, and 9,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 93% in population, 123% in households, and 95% in employment over the three decades. These numbers may change during the upcoming comprehensive planning process, which will more precisely delineate how much community growth belongs inside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and inside each rural designation.

Rural Centers



Designated Rural Centers are: Belle Plaine, Bethel, Cologne, East Bethel*, Elko New Market, Hamburg, Hampton*, Jordan, Mayer, New Germany, Norwood Young America, St. Francis*, Vermillion*, and Watertown.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.

Diversified Rural: Protecting land for rural lifestyles and long-term urbanization

Diversified Rural communities are home to a variety of farm and non-farm land uses including very large-lot residential, clustered housing, hobby farms and agricultural uses. Located adjacent to the Emerging Suburban Edge of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area, the Diversified Rural Area protects rural land for rural lifestyles today and potential urbanized levels of development sometime after 2040.

Large areas of high-quality natural resources are located in these communities with some of these natural areas protected in state lands and regional parks, like Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area in Anoka County and Carver Park Reserve in Carver County.

While these communities contain a mix of uses, large portions of communities in the Diversified Rural area contain prime agricultural soils, located primarily in Scott and Washington counties. Although these communities are not designated Agricultural communities, the Council supports the preservation of agricultural land in these areas.



Agricultural uses in Diversified Rural communities benefit from their proximity to the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and Rural Centers, but face challenges to their long-term continued use, including incompatible uses developing nearby and increased development pressures.

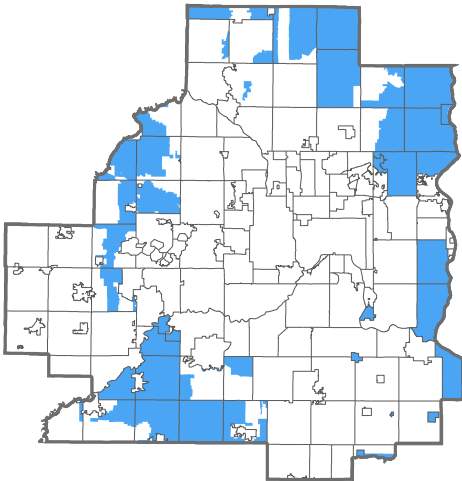
The Council discourages urbanized levels of residential development in Diversified Rural communities to avoid the premature demand for expansion of metropolitan systems and other urban public services.

Regional investments in infrastructure, such as roads, focus on rural levels of service, while recognizing the need to include transportation infrastructure consistent with market access and the business needs of the area. Some Diversified Rural communities are also located within the Long-term Wastewater Service Area. These areas are designated to ensure land availability to accommodate growth post-2040 at the edge of the urbanizing area. The remaining Diversified Rural communities are considered long-term rural areas.

There is a portion of the region’s population that is interested in rural and small-town living. For communities in the Diversified Rural area, the Council supports the clustering of homes to meet that demand, designed in a manner that protects high-quality and locally prioritized natural areas and open spaces and also preserves lands in areas identified for potential post-2040 urban development.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Rural Service Area outside of Rural Centers—including Diversified Rural, Rural Residential, and Agricultural areas—will add 16,000 residents, 12,000 households, and 7,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 14% in population, 31% in households, and 50% in employment over the three decades. These numbers may change during the upcoming comprehensive planning process, which will more precisely delineate how much community growth belongs inside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and inside each rural designation.

Diversified Rural



Designated Diversified Rural communities are: Afton, Andover*, Baytown Township*, Belle Plaine Township*, Blakeley Township*, Cedar Lake Township, Coates, Columbus*, Corcoran*, Credit River Township*, Dellwood, Denmark Township, East Bethel*, Forest Lake*, Grant, Greenfield*, Grey Cloud Island Township, Helena Township*, Hugo*, Independence*, Jackson Township, Laketown Township*, Linwood Township, Louisville Township, Marine on St. Croix, May Township, Medina*, Miesville, Minnetrista*, New Market Township*, New Trier, Nowthen*, Oak Grove*, Orono*, Randolph, Randolph Township*, Ravenna Township, Rogers*, Sand Creek Township, Scandia, Spring Lake Township*, St. Francis*, St. Lawrence Township, and Stillwater Township*.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.



Rural Residential: Limiting unsustainable growth patterns

Rural Residential communities have residential patterns characterized by large lots and do not have plans to provide urban infrastructure, such as centralized wastewater treatment.

Many of the communities in the Rural Residential Area have topographic development limitations and a historic development pattern with lot sizes that generally ranged from 1 to 2.5 units per acre. These residential densities do not support economical extension of wastewater services. In Anoka County, the Rural Residential Area includes communities that have a large number of wetlands and existing lot sizes of 2.5 acres or less. These areas are typically portions of a community, while the remaining part of the community is usually Emerging Suburban Edge, Suburban Edge, or Diversified Rural. Some communities are split between community designations where wastewater services are available (typically Suburban Edge and Emerging Suburban Edge) and the Rural Residential area where neither the Council nor the city plans to provide wastewater services. In most cases, the Rural Residential area is existing single-family residential housing within a residential portion of a community. If the Rural Residential area includes the whole community, other uses typically have developed such as agricultural uses, including sod farming and horticulture, commercial uses to serve local needs, and commercial and light industrial along transportation corridors.

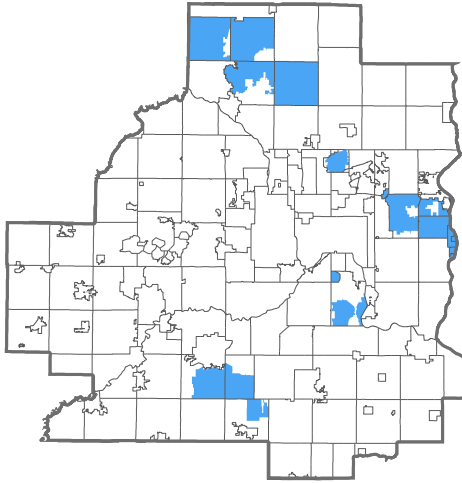
Rural Residential development precludes providing urbanized infrastructure in an effective, connected, and efficient manner. Rural Residential development does not advance the Council mission of ensuring orderly and economical development and in some cases increases the potential for damage to the environment. These areas need



to accommodate minimal growth while protecting natural areas, water quality and quantity, and ensuring sufficient public infrastructure. The Council discourages the expansion of the Rural Residential areas.

As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Rural Service Area outside of Rural Centers—including Diversified Rural, Rural Residential, and Agricultural areas—will add 16,000 residents, 12,000 households, and 7,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 14% in population, 31% in households, and 50% in employment over the three decades. These numbers may change during the upcoming comprehensive planning process, which will more precisely delineate how much community growth belongs inside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and inside each rural designation.

Rural Residential



Designated Rural Residential communities are: Andover*, Baytown Township*, Credit River Township*, Ham Lake, Inver Grove Heights*, Lake Elmo*, Lake St. Croix Beach, Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, New Market Township*, North Oaks*, Nowthen*, Oak Grove*, Pine Springs, Spring Lake Township*, St. Mary’s Point, Sunfish Lake, and West Lakeland Township.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.

Agricultural: Preserving large swaths of farmland

Agricultural communities encompass areas with prime agricultural soils that are planned and zoned for long-term agricultural use. These communities are home to the bulk of contiguous lands enrolled in the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves and Green Acres programs or cultivated for commercial agricultural purposes.

In the Agricultural area, agriculture is the development. The Council supports the preservation of agricultural land to protect the region’s agricultural economy, provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production. These long-term uses support the region’s economic competitiveness as they provide opportunities for local agricultural- and food-based industry clusters and production for local food consumption.

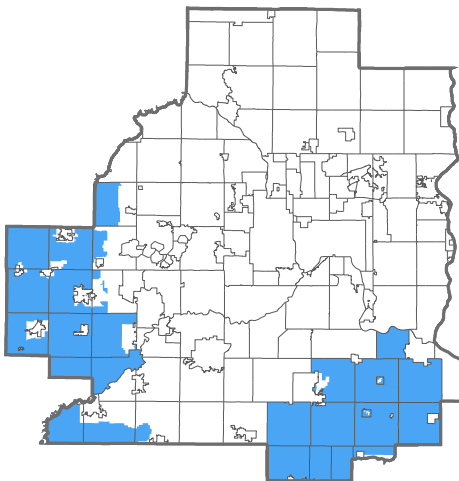


The preservation of long-term agricultural uses and the integration of best management practices in farm operations also contribute to regional sustainability. The incorporation of best management practices, such as conservation tillage and carbon sequestration, can improve soil fertility, reduce soil erosion,

and improve overall soil and water quality. Long-term agricultural uses can also contribute to the region's air quality by reducing local food transportation distances and related greenhouse gas emissions.

The Council discourages urban levels of development in rural areas to reduce development pressure on agricultural lands and to avoid the premature demand for expansion of metropolitan systems and other urban public services. Regional investments in infrastructure such as roads and wastewater treatment will focus on rural levels of service, while recognizing the need to include transportation infrastructure consistent with market access and the agricultural needs of the area.

Agricultural



As of May 2014, the Council forecasts that the Rural Service Area outside of Rural Centers—including Diversified Rural, Rural Residential, and Agricultural areas—will add 16,000 residents, 12,000 households, and 7,000 jobs between 2010 and 2040. This represents growth of 14% in population, 31% in households, and 50% in employment over the three decades. These numbers may change during the upcoming comprehensive planning process, which will more precisely delineate how much community growth belongs inside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area and inside each rural designation.

Designated Agricultural communities are: Belle Plaine Township*, Benton Township, Blakeley Township*, Camden Township, Castle Rock Township, Dahlgren Township, Douglas Township, Empire Township*, Eureka Township, Greenvale Township, Hampton*, Hampton Township, Hancock Township, Helena Township*, Hollywood Township, Independence*, Laketown Township*, Marshan Township, Minnetrista*, Nininger Township, Randolph Township*, San Francisco Township, Sciota Township, Vermillion*, Vermillion Township, Waconia Township, Waterford Township, Watertown Township, and Young America Township.

*Listed in this designation but also has areas in other designations.





The Council supports the preservation of agricultural land to protect the region's agricultural economy, provide economic opportunities for farmers, and to promote local food production.