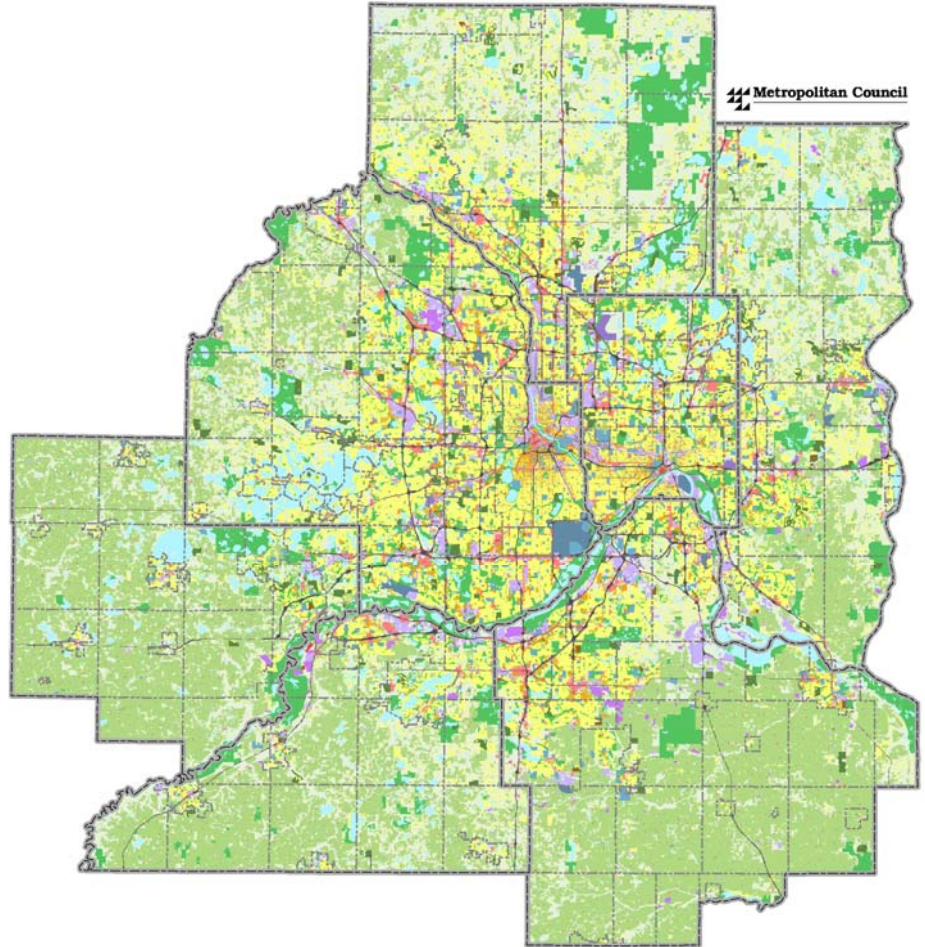


This *MetroStats* uses data from the Generalized Land Use dataset created by the Metropolitan Council every five years. Council staff interpret land use data from aerial photography and other source data including county parcel data and assessor's information. Historical data are available for 1984, 1990, 1997, 2000 and 2005.

The 24 use categories are intended to represent the current land use – not planned use, tax classifications, or natural resources. (Alternative representations are available elsewhere, e.g., Metropolitan Council's Planned Land Use data or the Department of Natural Resources Minnesota Land Cover Classification System.) Over the years, the Council has refined its classifications and definitions; the 2010 classifications are consistent with those used in 2000 and 2005.

Aerial photography was taken in April 2010 to coincide with the decennial Census.

Highlights



Every year the Minneapolis-St. Paul region develops land to meet the residential and employment needs of its growing population. Every five years the Metropolitan Council takes a snapshot of existing land use, interpreted and classified from region-wide aerial photography. Developed uses¹, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and major highways, cover 575,000 acres or 30 percent of the geographic area in 2010, compared to 553,000 acres in 2005.

¹ Includes all Residential categories (Single-Family Detached, Single-Family Attached, Multifamily, Farmsteads, Seasonal/Vacation and Manufactured Housing Parks), Commercial (Retail, Office), Mixed Use (Mixed Use Residential, Mixed Use Industrial, and Mixed Use Commercial), Industrial (Industrial and Utility, Extractive), Institutional, Major Roadways, Railways, and Airport.

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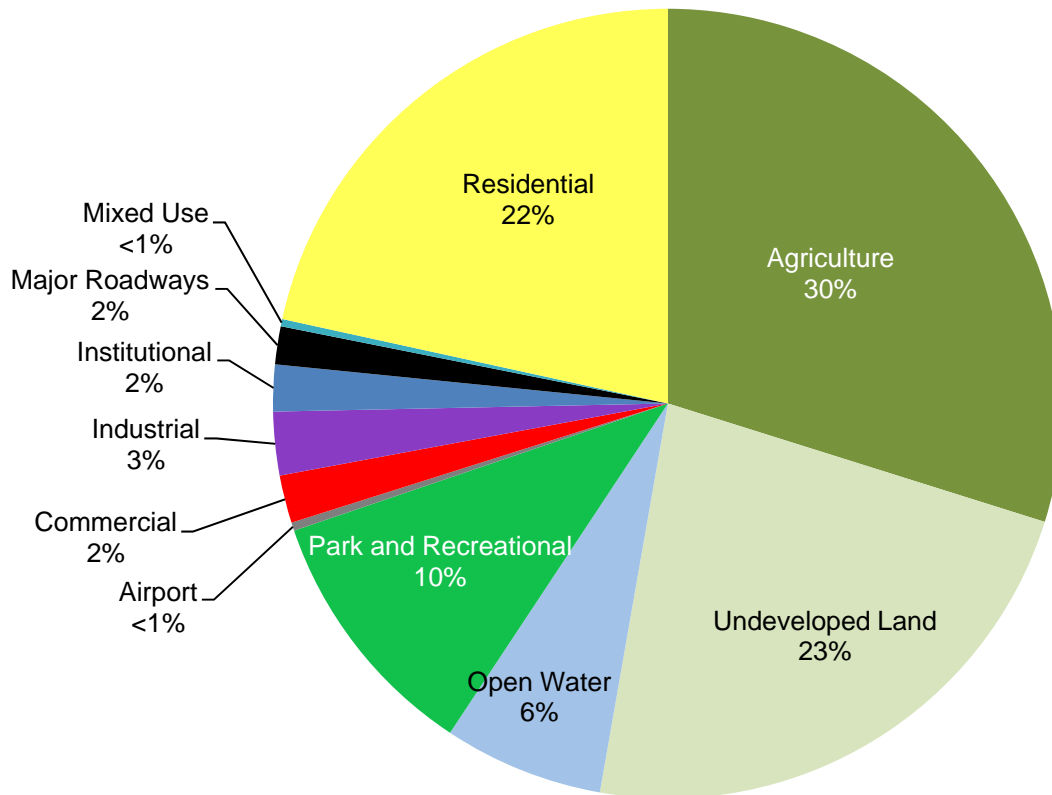
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Regional findings

Overall, the seven-county Twin Cities geographic area is 1.9 million acres – 1.78 million acres of land and 125,000 acres of open water representing 6.5 percent of the region’s area.

Figure 1: Generalized Land Use, Twin Cities Area, 2010



Developed uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and major highways, cover 575,000 acres or 30 percent of the Minneapolis-St. Paul seven-county geographic area in 2010, compared to 553,000 acres in 2005. Residential uses, overwhelmingly the single largest use of developed land, cover 411,000 acres or 22 percent of the region. Within the rest of the Twin Cities region’s developed land, industrial land represents 49,000 acres, commercial 37,000 acres, and institutional 36,000 acres. Major roadways are two percent of the region’s area at 30,000 acres.

Over one million acres – 53 percent of the region – are agricultural and undeveloped land while an additional 199,000 acres, 10 percent of the region’s area, are in park and recreational use. Note that an additional 7,000 acres currently in extractive use, a category within industrial, are likely to be available for future redevelopment.

From 2005 to 2010, the total quantity of developed land in the Twin Cities region increased by nearly 23,000 acres, almost 36 square miles.

Coding improvements implemented with the 2010 inventory reclassified about 9,000 acres of land that had previously been considered developed into agricultural or undeveloped uses. Over the last five years, the region converted over 31,000 acres of land that had been either agricultural or undeveloped in 2005 into developed uses observed in 2010.

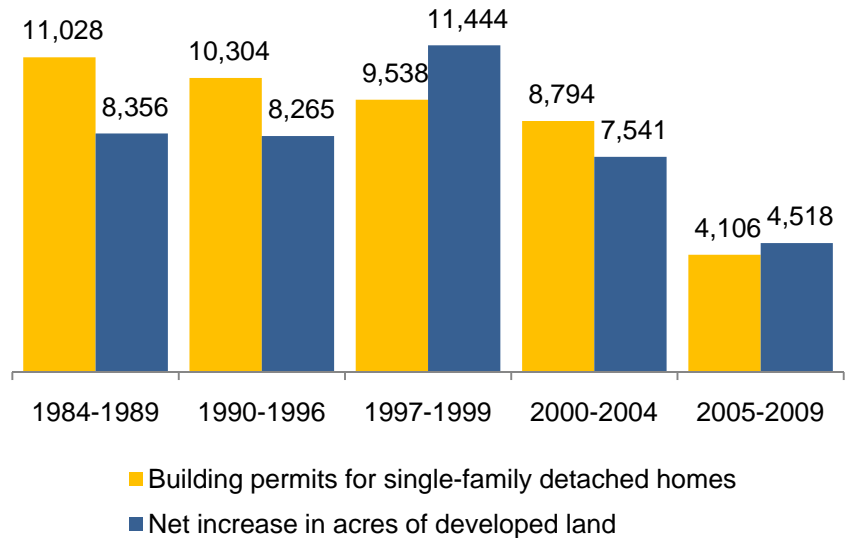
During the last half of the decade, the Minneapolis-St. Paul seven-county area added developed land at a rate of 4,500 net acres per year, down from 7,500 additional acres of developed land per year between 2000 and 2005.

The recent economic slowdown tempered the growth in developed land from 37,000 acres – an area the size of the City of Minneapolis – from 2000 to 2005, to 23,000 acres – an area the size of the City of Plymouth over the last half decade. This reduction in the growth of land development mirrors the Twin Cities region’s slowing population growth and record low levels of residential construction in the last half of the decade. The region’s building permits for new residential construction dropped from 99,129 in the first half of the decade to 48,259 in the second half.

The Twin Cities region added over 15,000 acres in residential use, 67 percent of the growth in developed land from 2005 to 2010. At 19.5 percent, roughly one in five net new residential acres from 2005 to 2010 is in multifamily use, down slightly from the 21.4 percent seen in the first half of the decade. Since 2000, residential development added nearly 42,000 acres to accommodate 96,000 new households (2.27 households per acre of additional residential development land). For comparison, over the course of the 1990s, residential development added nearly 68,000 acres to accommodate 146,000 new households (2.16 households per acre developed) as Baby Boomers in their 30s and 40s created a bubble in demand for single-family houses on larger lots in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. During the 1990s, 67 percent of all residential units permitted by Twin Cities municipalities were single-family detached houses. During the 2000s, only 44 percent of all residential units permitted were single-family detached houses. This transition to denser residential development led to the reduced rate of land consumption for residential uses. Had the region added residential land this past decade at the same overall density as the previous decade, housing would have consumed an additional 2,250 acres, 3.5 square miles, the acreage of the City of Columbia Heights.

Residential land is not only the major component of regional growth but also a catalyst for additional development. From 2005 to 2010, the Minneapolis-St. Paul region added 7,500 acres of commercial, industrial, institutional and other developed non-residential land, compared to 10,600 acres added from

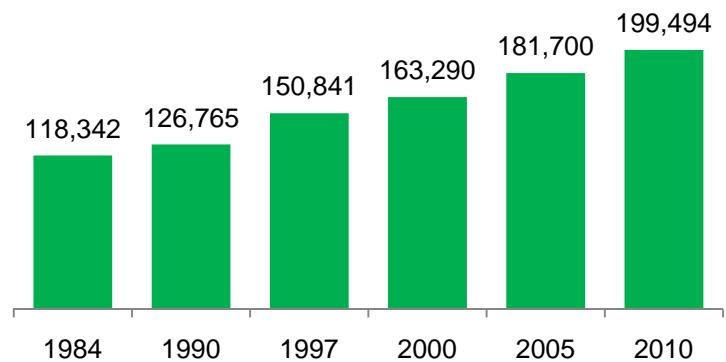
Figure 2: Average annual increases in developed land and single-family detached residential permits



2000 to 2005. From the 1980s through 2005 in the Twin Cities region, the region had seen a fairly consistent 34 to 39 acres of additional non-residential development for every 100 acres of residential development. Over the past five years, however, every 100 acres of new residential land was accompanied by nearly 50 acres of non-residential development. In other words, while residential development has traditionally been 72 percent or more of net total development, the increase in residential land was only 67 percent of net developed land in the area over the last five years. With residential permitting in the last five years less than half of the region’s total from 2000 to 2004, residential construction and the resultant land consumption slowed relatively more than other types of development. Land with mixed-use development increased 16 percent from 2005 to 2010 and is up 64 percent since 2000. While mixed-use development remains less than 1 percent of the region’s developed land, this increase reflects the growing trend toward intensifying land use.

Over the last five years, the Minneapolis-St. Paul region added nearly 18,000 acres in park and recreation uses for a total of 200,000 acres, 10 percent of the region’s area. The Twin Cities area has had a fairly constant pace of adding about 3,600 acres per year since 1990 as cities allocate new park land to serve new residential development. In contrast, during the late 1980s, the region added 1,400 acres per year to parks and recreation uses. In 1990, the region had 0.42 acres of parkland for every residential acre; by 2010, the region had 0.49 acres of parkland for every residential acre. Had the region continued its 1980s pattern of parkland preservation, the Twin Cities area would have nearly 19,000 fewer acres in parkland, 30 square miles or an area comparable to the size of the City of Ramsey.

Figure 3: Acreage of Parks and Recreation Land



With 41,000 net acres developed or preserved in park and recreation uses, agricultural and undeveloped land in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area decreased by a corresponding amount from 2005 to 2010. Conversions to development or parkland reduced the Twin Cities region’s agricultural acreage by 18,000 acres, or 3 percent, and undeveloped land by 23,000 acres, or 5 percent, over the five-year period. These conversions compare to reductions of over 21,000 acres of agricultural land and nearly 35,000 acres of undeveloped land from 2000 to 2005 for a decade-long decrease of a combined 97,000 acres. During the 1990s, 141,000 agricultural and undeveloped acres were converted to developed uses or parkland.

Four out of every ten acres of net new developed land in the Twin Cities area from the last five years are in the Council’s developing area – suburban areas that are rapidly growing and transitioning from undeveloped to developed. 69 percent of the acres added for multifamily housing from 2005 to 2010 are in the developing area as well as 65 percent of additional commercial acres and 48 percent of additional institutional land. Half the region’s acreage added in mixed use is in the developed area of the region as fully-developed communities use redevelopment to maximize the use of existing infrastructure.