



2030 Regional  
Development  
**FRAMEWORK**

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# Metropolitan Council

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## Foreword

In the mid-1960s, the Twin Cities metropolitan area faced a host of serious urban challenges. Inadequately treated sewage was being released into public waters and contaminating groundwater supplies. The region's privately owned bus system was rapidly deteriorating – a victim of rising fares, declining ridership and an aging fleet. Development was threatening vital open spaces, a central feature of this region's prized quality of life. And growing fiscal disparities among communities were making it difficult for some cities to provide essential public services.

With some 272 separate local units of government – including seven counties and 188 cities and townships – the region was ill equipped to deal with problems that transcended local boundaries.

The Minnesota Legislature responded in 1967 by creating the Metropolitan Council to plan and coordinate the orderly development of the seven-county area. In quick order, the Legislature also created regional wastewater and transit systems, strengthened the region's land-use planning process and enacted a unique tax-base sharing law to reduce fiscal disparities among communities.

More than three decades later, this region is confronted with a new set of challenges revolving around growth, transportation, housing and resource protection. While the Legislature has provided important tools and resources to meet these challenges, the Twin Cities metropolitan area will need the same kind of unity, commitment and spirit of innovation that led to the creation of the Council and our regional systems.

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# Chapter 1/Opportunities and Challenges

## Our Region

During the 1990s, the Twin Cities metropolitan area gained more population – 353,000 people – than in any previous decade in its history. With this growth has come increased prosperity – new jobs, rising incomes, added tax revenue, higher property values and the highest rate of home ownership in the nation.

But, as many Twin Citians have already discovered, accommodating growth is not always easy. Traffic congestion and commuting times have increased. Prices for new and existing housing have risen faster than incomes. And new development has meant increased demand for costly urban services and increased pressure on vital natural resources.

And the Twin Cities will keep growing. By the year 2030, we expect the region to add nearly 1 million people – the equivalent of two Denvers plunked down within the boundaries of the seven-county metro area.

From Woodbury to Waconia and Lino Lakes to Lakeville, this growth will bring opportunities and challenges. How do we accommodate growth while maintaining the quality of life for the 2.6 million people who already live and work here? How do we preserve and revitalize the communities and neighborhoods we prize – the buildings, parks, shared spaces and streets that tell us we’re “home” – while building new communities with their own character and sense of place? How do we capitalize on our opportunities for economic development while preserving our vital natural assets and abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation?

The purpose of this *2030 Regional Development Framework* is to provide a plan for how the Metropolitan Council and its regional partners can address these challenges. The Framework is prepared under the authority of state statutes, which direct the Council to:

*...prepare and adopt... a comprehensive development guide for the metropolitan area. It shall consist of a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, programs, and maps prescribing guides for the orderly and economical development, public and private, of the metropolitan area. The comprehensive development guide shall recognize and encompass physical, social, or economic needs of the metropolitan area and those future developments which will have an impact on the entire area including but not limited to such matters as land use, parks and open space land needs, the necessity for and location of airports, highways, transit facilities, public hospitals, libraries, schools, and other public buildings.... (Minnesota Statutes, section 473.145)*

The Development Framework is the initial “chapter” and the unifying theme of the Council’s Metropolitan Development Guide. It is the umbrella statement of regional policies, goals and strategies that will inform the Council’s metropolitan system plans for airports, transportation, regional parks and wastewater service, as well as other policy plans adopted by the Council.

Under state law, each city and township in the seven-county metropolitan area is required at least every 10 years to prepare and submit to the Metropolitan Council a local comprehensive plan that is consistent with the Council’s metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. 473.864). The next round of updated plans will be due in 2008.

## Our Forecast

During the last three decades, the Twin Cities metropolitan area grew by nearly 800,000 people. By the year 2030, we forecast that the region will add another 966,000 people and 471,000 households. However, we expect to see a slower rate of job growth as large numbers of Baby Boomers retire.

**Metropolitan Area Growth, 1970-2030**

	1970	2000	2030	1970–2000 Increase	2000–2030 Projected Increase
Households	573,634	1,021,454	1,492,000	448,000	471,000
Population	1,874,612	2,642,056	3,608,000	767,000	966,000
Jobs	779,000	1,563,245	2,126,000	784,000	563,000

This growth will mean further changes in the demographic makeup of the metropolitan area. The number of people per household, which has been shrinking since 1950, will continue to drop. The average, which was 2.75 in 1980 and 2.59 in 2000, is expected to dip to 2.41 by 2030. The region’s population also will continue to age. Between 2000 and 2030, the population under age 55 is expected to increase by 19 percent while the number ages 55 and over is expected to grow by 111 percent. Finally, the population is likely to grow more diverse. In the 1990s, the minority population in the region grew from 9.2 percent to about 16 percent and accounted for about 60 percent of the region’s total population growth.

While such growth and demographic changes will bring challenges, this metropolitan area – with its well-established system of regional and local planning – is better prepared than many regions to meet these challenges.

## Our Goals

The Metropolitan Council was created in 1967 to help ensure the “coordinated, orderly and economical development” of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area – consisting of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington Counties (1967 Minnesota Laws, chapter 896). Our goals are very much in keeping with that legislative directive:

- **Working collaboratively with regional partners to accommodate growth within the metropolitan area.** This Framework recognizes that “one size does not fit all” –

that different communities have different opportunities, needs and aspirations. But it also is grounded in the belief that all communities have a shared responsibility to help accommodate the region's growth, use market forces to help expand housing choices and ensure connected, efficient land-use patterns.

- **Maximizing the effectiveness and value of regional services, infrastructure investments and incentives.** We must take full advantage of the enormous investment we have made in regional systems – transportation, airports, wastewater treatment and regional parks – as well as ensure that future resources are used in a cost-effective manner.
- **Enhancing transportation choices and improving the ability of Minnesotans to travel safely and efficiently throughout the region.** Traffic congestion is worsening at a disturbing rate, affecting all modes of travel, making it more difficult for workers to get to their jobs and more costly to get goods to market. Meanwhile, highway and transit funding are falling far short of the needs. We need to make the most of available resources to improve mobility and avoid gridlock.
- **Preserving vital natural areas and resources for future generations.** This metropolitan area boasts a unique combination of assets: three majestic rivers, 950 lakes, rolling hills, extensive wetlands, native prairies and woodlands, aggregate and a multi-layered aquifer system – assets that are essential to our region's quality of life and continued economic well-being. Maintaining compliance with federal air quality standards will ensure that citizens will benefit from cleaner air and avoid costly federal pollution control requirements.

## New Directions

Our region cannot rely solely on what has made it a success in the past. We need new approaches that are shaped by emerging trends, market forces, community values and current, accurate regional data – all integrated into an overall, comprehensive strategy.

This effort means:

- **Focusing attention on the pattern of land uses.** Previously, the regional growth strategy focused on *how much* development occurred in growing communities at the region's developing edge. This Development Framework pays more attention to *how* development occurs — such as the mix of land uses, the number of housing units per acre, the integration of transit and the connection of local streets.
- **Recognizing that transportation and land use influence each other.** The Framework emphasizes the need for intensified development in centers with convenient access to transportation corridors and in rural centers that want to grow and that lie along major highways. Regional investments can create a transportation system that includes transit solutions that support attractive, walkable neighborhoods with homes, green space, public places and other amenities.

- **Offering greater flexibility in the location of new development in growing communities.** This Framework will provide growing cities the flexibility to decide where development occurs within broader areas that are planned and staged for development, consistent with regional perspectives. It is vital that these cities will make efficient use of infrastructure and develop in a manner that conserves natural features and provides transportation options. This is intended to help local officials build communities in a more strategic and holistic way.
- **Emphasizing reinvestment in older areas throughout the region.** By reinvesting in underused land and maintaining existing infrastructure, the region can accommodate growth on a smaller urban “footprint,” slow the rate of increase in traffic congestion, ease development pressures on rural land, save billions of dollars in local sewer, water and road construction costs, maintain the housing stock and strengthen the vitality of older areas.
- **Encouraging increased market-based housing production that reflects shifting demographics, employment locations and a diversity of incomes.** New home construction has been skewed in favor of single-family housing over such alternatives as townhomes and condominiums. But the oldest baby-boomers are now in their 50s, and newcomers to the metropolitan area are likely to expect a variety of housing types and prices. The market demand for single-family detached housing is expected to decline in the next 30 years, even as the overall demand for housing remains strong. A mix of housing types and prices enables more people to work, raise a family and retire in the same community, attracts jobs and improves local economic competitiveness. Affordable units, incorporated into attractive market-rate developments, can expand housing opportunities for lower-income families and households.
- **Encouraging the use of the metro-wide natural resources inventory and assessment to foster development that is more sensitive to the environment.** An inventory and assessment of the region’s natural resources, now documented in overlays of computerized maps, can help local governments plan development that respects the integrity of natural areas and incorporates environmental features into development projects. Conserving and restoring natural resources of regional or local importance contributes to a healthy natural environment and enhances our quality of life. Connecting regional and local features by natural-resource corridors helps sustain wildlife and plant habitat and shapes how development looks on the ground.

## Learning from Our Partners

The Metropolitan Council doesn’t have a monopoly on new ideas for guiding growth and development. Many of the policies and strategies contained in this Framework grew out of efforts already underway in communities throughout the region – many of which the Council has participated in through the Livable Communities grants program.

Cities such as Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Maple Grove, Plymouth, Ramsey and St. Louis Park are working to create town centers with a mix of housing, commercial and civic uses to provide a gathering place and focal point for their community. Meanwhile,

older suburbs such as Chaska, Hopkins, New Brighton, Robbinsdale and White Bear Lake have brought new life to their more traditional downtowns through similar development efforts.

St. Paul and Minneapolis both have been working aggressively to reclaim their riverfronts, protect a prized natural asset and respond to market demands for a range of housing types located near job, entertainment and recreational opportunities. Similarly, both the Phalen corridor project in St. Paul and the Heritage Park project in Minneapolis are restoring natural features – a wetlands area and a creek – as essential components of redevelopment projects that also include housing, infrastructure improvements and other revitalization efforts.

And coalitions of communities along the Interstate 494 and 35W corridors have been actively exploring the connections between transportation and land use as part of their efforts to deal with traffic concerns.

The Metropolitan Council is learning from such initiatives, and will share that information with other communities in the region and provide technical assistance as local officials respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by the growth that is taking place in our region.

## **Working with Our Neighbors**

Partnerships with neighboring communities and counties will be crucial to the region's future success. The Twin Cities are part of a larger regional economy, one that extends well beyond the seven-county metropolitan area.

While the seven-county share of households within the larger 19-county region has remained around 85 percent since 1970, there have been some notable changes. Much of the growth in the adjacent counties can be attributed to their proximity to the Twin Cities area. For example, 39 percent of respondents to a Council survey of residents in Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne and Wright Counties reported that they worked near or inside of the I-494/I-694 beltway. Most of the growth in adjacent counties has occurred in areas just outside the borders of the seven metro counties. For example, Elk River, St. Michael and Hudson are the three fastest growing cities in the adjacent counties.

The Metropolitan Council and regional partners must build closer relationships with local governments and their associations in the adjacent counties. We need to be sensitive to mutual impacts of decisions relating to development, transportation, water quality and other natural resources.

## Chapter 2/Policy Directions and Strategies

Decisions relating to transportation, sewers, housing, natural resources and other land uses cannot be made in isolation from one another. Transportation and sewers help shape growth patterns; housing location and types affect mobility options and travel patterns; unplanned growth can put a strain on natural areas, groundwater quality and other resources.

This Framework seeks to carefully integrate growth, transportation, housing and natural resource policies – to achieve regional goals in each area and avoid working at cross-purposes. Our policies also acknowledge the partnerships that will be essential to our success and continued economic vitality.

### **Policy 1: Work with local communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.**

#### *Strategies for all communities*

- Support land-use patterns that efficiently connect housing, jobs, retail centers and civic uses within and among neighborhoods.
- Encourage growth and reinvestment in adequately sewered urban and rural centers with convenient access to transportation corridors.
- Promote development strategies that help protect and sustain the regional water supply.

#### *Discussion*

The full potential of investments in transportation, housing, natural resource preservation and other factors is best realized when they are considered together in well-conceived land use patterns. For example, if more communities have mixed uses—retail and commercial, as well as residential—more people have the option of working in the same community in which they live.

If the land use patterns cluster housing, businesses, retail and services in walkable, transit-oriented centers along transportation corridors, the benefits increase: Improved access to jobs, open space, cultural amenities and other services and opportunities. Fewer—and shorter—auto trips, more housing options and more choices for reaching local and regional destinations. A significant reduction in the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, slower growth in traffic congestion, improved air quality and a healthier environment compared with a more spread-out, single-use pattern of development. There are personal benefits as well—shorter daily commutes provide more time for personal or family activities. Transit connections among home, work and other destinations mean cost savings for many households.

There is also a hard-edged practical aspect to these land use strategies—they will save public money. For the metropolitan transit and transportation system, putting growth

where the infrastructure to support it already exists means roads that *don't have to be built*. Providing transportation options that include fast, convenient transit services means freeway lanes that *don't have to be added*. And, where new infrastructure is necessary, investments in more connected land-use patterns will be the most fiscally responsible use of limited public resources for transportation.

Efficient use of capacity in the metropolitan wastewater disposal system, which provides wastewater treatment services to 90% of the region's population and most of its commerce and industry, will ensure the most cost-effective operation of both the current wastewater system and the service provided to future urban areas. The system is an essential ingredient for urban development.

An adequate supply of water is another essential ingredient for growth. The region currently uses 400 million gallons of water per day for drinking and other personal uses, irrigation, commercial and industrial needs, as well as other miscellaneous purposes. An additional 774 million gallons per day are used for cooling power plants. (The water used for cooling power plants is considered a non-consumptive use, since most of the water is returned directly to the source at a slightly higher temperature.) The regional groundwater aquifer system and the Mississippi River provide a relatively abundant water supply, but there are questions about the ability of that supply to meet increasing demands. Both the Council and all communities with a municipal water supply system are required to develop plans to address those concerns (Minn. Stat. 473.156-.157; 473.859). Cities must consider the implications of their water supply for future growth and indicate how they will protect the current and planned supply source that provides the community with water. Land use patterns affect water supply. For instance, incorporating natural areas in the mix of land uses will help reduce surface water runoff and recharge aquifers for water supply.

While the above strategies for accommodating growth apply to all of the region's communities, implementing the *Regional Development Framework* is not a one-size-fits-all process. The Council has tailored growth strategies for different community types – Developed Communities, Developing Communities and four types of communities within Rural Areas (see further detail in the chapter “Strategies for Geographic Planning Areas,” beginning on page 16).

#### *Strategies for Developed Communities*

- Work in partnership with developed communities to encourage reinvestment and revitalization.
- Provide grants and other incentives to cities and businesses to reclaim, infill and redevelop underutilized lands and structures.

#### *Discussion*

The Developed Communities are the cities where more than 85% of the land is developed, infrastructure is well established and efforts must go toward keeping it in good repair. These communities have the greatest opportunities to adapt or replace

obsolete buildings, improve community amenities, and remodel or replace infrastructure to increase their economic competitiveness and enhance their quality of life.

Developed Communities are taking advantage of their assets. New households and jobs are being added in Minneapolis, St. Paul and adjacent older suburbs, and these communities are identifying opportunities to attract more such investment. Their plans indicate potential sites, they have proven market interest and they concur with—and, in some instances, have requested increases in—Council forecasts for continued growth. Developed Communities are now the expected locations for approximately 30 percent of new households and about half of new jobs through 2030. It makes economic sense for the Council to make investments in and offer incentives for reinvestment and infill to these communities to assist them with their efforts.

### *Strategies for Developing Communities*

- Invest in regional systems (wastewater treatment, transportation, parks and open space, and airports) to help ensure adequate services to communities as they grow.
- Implement standards for extending urban services to help local governments plan for and stage development within a rolling 20-year land supply (local plan evaluation to be based on inclusion of measures that address transportation connections, housing production, surface water management and natural resource conservation).
- Encourage communities to plan for post-2030 areas for future urban services.
- Use natural resource conservation strategies to help protect environmentally sensitive areas and shape development.

### *Discussion*

Developing Communities are the cities where the most substantial amount of new growth—about 60 percent of new households and 40 percent of new jobs—will occur. The amount of infill and redevelopment and the way in which new areas are developed directly influence when and how much additional land in Developing Communities will need urban services—services that will call for substantial new regional and local investments.

Local comprehensive plans for Developing Communities already designate sufficient land to accommodate forecasted growth through 2020. Within the 20-year land supply, the Council will support flexible staging of growth, recognizing that development opportunities do not always occur in a contiguous manner. The community must demonstrate that the development will support a connected land use pattern and can be served in an efficient and economical manner.

When a change in urban service area staging is requested, the Council will expedite the review through a comprehensive plan amendment. Standards for changing the staging of urban services will be identified in the Council's Local Planning Handbook.

The 2020 metropolitan urban service area was established through the 1998 comprehensive plan review process. During the next comprehensive plan update process, the Council will work with local communities to ensure there is enough land to accommodate forecasted 2030 growth, developing plans that extend staging to continue

to maintain a 20-year land supply over time. Developing Communities should consider their entire jurisdiction when proposing long-term staging and development patterns, protecting land for post-2030 urbanization.

The Council will determine its ability to provide needed regional services such as interceptor and treatment plant capacity. Each city, in turn, will need to consider how it will locally serve the planned-for growth.

The flexibility to stage growth locally also offers Developing Communities the opportunity to incorporate natural resources into their local plans. They can build on the regional Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment by identifying additional locally important resources. Then staging plans can incorporate these regional and local resources, developing local infrastructure (wastewater systems, roads, parks and open space, and airports) in a way that conserves natural resources and avoids or protects sensitive natural areas.

#### *Strategies for Rural Areas*

- Support rural growth centers in their efforts to concentrate growth as a way to relieve development pressure in rural parts of the metropolitan area.
- Provide technical and/or financial support for wastewater services in rural growth centers where feasible.
- Support development in rural areas in clusters or at low densities to preserve these areas for future growth and to protect the natural environment.

#### *Discussion*

Roughly half of the 3,000 square miles in the seven-county Twin Cities area are rural. That includes cultivated farmland, nurseries, tree farms, orchards and vineyards, scattered individual home sites or clusters of houses, hobby farms, small towns, gravel mines, woodlands, and many of the region's remaining important natural resources. About 5% to 8% of new growth is forecast for the rural area—most of it in Rural Growth Centers. To acknowledge its diversity, the rural area is categorized into four geographic planning areas:

- **Rural Centers** are the small towns, like Belle Plaine and St. Francis, located throughout the rural area. **Rural Growth Centers** are those Rural Centers both interested in and showing a potential for growth.

Growth in Rural Centers offers the opportunity to take advantage of existing infrastructure, provides municipal services as an alternative to individual wells and septic systems whose continued proliferation causes environmental concerns, and provides more households with the opportunity for small-town living.

- **Rural Residential Areas** are those places in Ham Lake, Andover, Inver Grove Heights and Credit River Township that are currently developed at one unit per 2 to 2 ½ acres or less, with no plans to provide urban infrastructure such as centralized wastewater treatment.

Additional development of this type will increase the potential for damage to the environment from many individual sewage treatment systems located close together, and will preclude providing urban infrastructure in efficient ways. It should be limited to infill or carefully considered expansion only within the boundaries of communities where it already exists.

- **Diversified Rural Communities** are the sparsely developed parts of the region, such as Burns Township and Stillwater Township, that host the widest variety of farm and non-farm land uses. They include a mix of a limited amount of large-lot residential and clustered housing, agriculture, and facilities and services requiring a rural location.

Continuing the diversified rural land use pattern in the region saves the costs of extending infrastructure, protects the natural environment and provides groundwater aquifer recharge areas. Currently, lands in the Diversified Rural Communities are not needed for urban development, but should be preserved for post-2030 development. Therefore, only limited growth is forecast for this planning area. Wastewater services to these areas will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine feasibility.

- **Agricultural Areas** are large contiguous land areas planned and zoned to maintain agriculture as the primary land use. They are found mostly in Dakota, Scott and Carver Counties in communities such as Greenvale Township and San Francisco Township and total about a half-million acres of the region's best soils. Many of these communities have taken additional steps to preserve agricultural lands. The Council supports local efforts by forecasting only very small amounts of household and employment growth for agricultural areas and by strictly limiting its investments in regional infrastructure in those areas, focusing instead on investing in efficient and fiscally prudent urban growth.

**Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices, based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region's economic needs.**

#### *Strategies*

- Focus highway investments on maintaining and managing the existing system, removing bottlenecks and adding capacity.
- Make more efficient use of the regional transportation system by encouraging flexible work hours, telecommuting, ridesharing and other traffic management efforts, and by employing a variety of pricing techniques such as FAST lanes and HOT lanes.
- Expand the transit system, add bus-only lanes on highway shoulders, provide more park-and-ride lots and develop a network of transitways.

- Encourage local governments to implement a system of fully interconnected arterial and local streets, pathways and bikeways.
- Promote the development and preservation of various freight modes and modal connections to adequately serve the movement of freight within the region and provide effective linkages that serve statewide, national and international markets.
- Support airport facilities investments to keep pace with market needs and maintain the region's economic vitality.

### *Discussion*

To a growing number of metropolitan area residents, highway congestion ranks as the region's No. 1 concern. The average daily commute in the 1990s grew from 21 minutes to 23 minutes, with a 62 percent increase in commutes requiring 40 minutes or longer. The portion of peak-period travel occurring under congested conditions increased more than fivefold between 1982 and 2000 – an increase that tied with Atlanta's for the second fastest rate of congestion growth in the nation. In 2000, traffic tieups cost the average Twin Cities commuter more than \$1,000 a year in wasted fuel and lost time, and cost the business community more than \$300 million in comparable penalties for distribution of goods.

The region's congestion problems will continue to worsen in the coming decades. The nearly 1 million new residents projected by 2030 are expected to generate an additional 4 million daily trips, and the number of congested highway miles is expected to double during the same period.

The enormous costs associated with building new transportation facilities mean that the region will have to make targeted investments, recognizing that “one size does not fit all” and carefully weighing the options in every corridor. The first priority for highway improvements must be to maintain the existing metro highway and roadway system, reducing the dozens of bottlenecks that impede travel, implementing new strategies to improve the efficiency of the system and adding capacity where possible.

But the region also must look for new ways to make more effective use of the existing system. This means stretching out peak-period travel through flexible work hours, exploring pricing strategies that discourage unnecessary freeway travel in peak periods, providing greater incentives for transit use, and reducing travel demand through expanded ridesharing, telecommuting and other measures. Various pricing techniques recently employed around the world have been successful in maximizing the use of the existing highway capacity, adding capacity and raising revenue to pay for implementation and operations. These strategies also can be a new source of revenue for transit, as well as help make transit more cost-competitive and more efficient if operating in mixed traffic conditions.

Transit will continue to play a critical role in many individuals' daily lives, and can significantly relieve the need to expand highways and local streets. By investing in improved transit, the region can provide more people with realistic alternatives to traveling by car. This requires expanding the existing system of regular-route and express bus service, adding more bus-only lanes on highway shoulders and park-and-ride lots, supporting more local circulator bus service, and continuing the effort to develop a

network of transitways in heavily traveled corridors. This network should include a range of possibilities – light rail, commuter rail and exclusive busways – making mode selections based on a thorough cost-benefit analysis. In making transit investment decisions, the Council will evaluate the cost-effectiveness of LRT, commuter rail and busways, using data from the operation of the Hiawatha LRT line and the cost-effectiveness index developed by the Federal Transit Administration.

In the longer term, the region also can slow the growth in congestion by encouraging development and reinvestment in urban and rural centers that combine transit, housing, offices, retail, services, open space and connected streets that support walking and bicycle use. Such development enables those who wish to reduce their automobile use to meet their daily needs and makes it possible for those who are unable to drive to live more independently.

We also must pay greater attention to the challenges of moving resources and goods within and through the region to North American and world markets. The importance of a coordinated regional and state system is key for increasing the economic competitiveness of businesses, industries and their customers. Regional transportation investments – coordinated with investments by local governments and the private sector where feasible – must provide sufficient access to freight facilities, business and industrial concentrations, and distribution centers.

The aviation industry is suffering from the lingering effects of a poor economy, the 9/11 attacks, the SARS scare and structural changes within the industry. To remain economically competitive, our region must continue to implement the MSP 2010 improvement plan to increase runway and terminal capacity at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, as well as maintain, improve and expand our system of reliever airports. At the same time, we must carefully monitor changes within the industry to ensure that adequate airport capacity is available in the years ahead. In addition, we must work with local communities to mitigate the adverse impacts of airports and ensure compatible land uses in adjacent areas.

### **Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.**

#### *Strategies*

- Work to ensure an adequate supply of serviced, developable land to meet regional needs and respond to demographic trends.
- Work with regional partners to increase housing options that meet changing market preferences.
- Support the production and preservation of lifecycle and affordable housing with links to jobs, services and amenities accessible by auto, transit, biking and walking.

#### *Discussion*

The challenge of maintaining a sufficient supply of urban-serviced land is to balance the costs of providing services to new development while not unduly restricting available

land supply. Achieving this balance means that the region needs to monitor its land supply, make the best use of existing infrastructure as it develops, and increase the supply to accommodate efficient development. The public and the private sectors are committed to regularly monitoring available land supply and comparing actual land uses with those indicated in regional and local plans—including designation of urban reserve lands for development post-2030—to respond appropriately to changing markets. New housing developments will need transportation, sewers and water supply; and providing these services requires continued coordination of planning and implementation between regional and local governments.

The marketplace, supplemented by public-private partnerships, is key to this effort. Since the year 2000, the market has produced both rental and ownership units in response to heavy consumer demand, boosted by changes in state tax policy. At the same time, the expansion of low-income housing tax credits and increased state authority to issue housing revenue bonds has eased the market squeeze on affordable rental units. Somewhat fewer renter households now bear an inordinate housing-cost burden than in 1990, even though the region saw a large increase in total households. But the situation for lower-income households has improved little — eight out of 10 continue to pay more than they can afford for housing costs, while the 2003 study *The Next Decade of Housing* presents data suggesting the affordability problem for many of the region’s lower income households may not be resolved during this decade.

The region will, of course, need much more housing in the next 30 years, but population changes are shifting consumer preferences for various types of units. During the 1990s, the leading edge of the baby-boom generation moved into the 45-to-54-year-old age group, producing the biggest gain in any age category.

The new-housing market, which has historically favored single-family housing, is responding with a shift toward attached homes, such as townhouses and condominiums. The trend will strengthen in future years as baby-boomers grow older. The growing share of attached housing—attractive to singles, young couples without children, “empty nesters” and others—enriches the stock of available housing, makes available single-family homes to first-time and “move-up” buyers, and offers opportunities to improve connections with work places, retail, services and entertainment.

A growing number of employers – including Best Buy, Medtronic, Wells Fargo and US Bank – have demonstrated that they recognize the benefits of linking job sites and housing by easily accessible transportation options. Cities are seeing the economic advantages of encouraging a mix of housing that provides choices for a range of ages and incomes. Many cities are planning for mixed-use areas in their comprehensive plans and making changes to local ordinances and official controls to encourage those types of land uses. The result can be shorter daily commutes, reduced business costs related to congestion delays and less strain on the transportation system during peak-travel periods.

Coalitions of interested organizations, public agencies, businesses and foundations continue to strive to expand housing choices. Promising approaches include streamlining approval processes for new construction techniques, residential re-use and rehabilitation; providing cities with more information about land trusts and other ways of preserving housing affordability; creating more local options for funding affordable housing;

supporting information-sharing among cities; and encouraging them to review land use controls and regulations, zoning policies and practices, and approval processes to foster development, preservation and rehabilitation of more affordable housing.

For its part, the Council will use its programs and resources—including negotiated housing goals, planning and technical assistance, regional investments, and incentive programs—to encourage communities to provide for a diversity of housing types and costs. In addition, the Council will give funding priority to communities and community projects that increase the variety of housing types and costs, appropriately mix land uses, increase transportation choices and leverage private investment.

**Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to reclaim, conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.**

*Strategies*

- Encourage the integration of natural-resource conservation strategies in regional and local land-use planning decisions.
- Work with other regional partners to protect regionally important natural resources identified as unprotected in the Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment.
- Work to preserve the quality of the region's water resources.
- Work with our regional partners to remain in compliance with federal air quality standards for carbon monoxide, ground level ozone and fine particulate pollution.
- Designate additional areas for the regional park system that enhance outdoor recreation opportunities and serve important natural-resource functions.

*Discussion*

Our region is endowed with rich natural assets that enhance its quality of life and provide significant economic benefits. Natural areas recharge aquifers for water supply. They clean stormwater runoff and slow its flow, reducing flood damage and improving the quality of rivers, lakes and streams. They clean the air by “filtering” it through tree and vegetative cover.

Taking advantage of natural air- and water-filtration systems is far less expensive than replacing lost natural functions with costly technology. Natural areas also increase the local tax base by providing amenities that raise the value of nearby properties, and they boost the economic attractiveness of the area.

The 2002 Twin Cities Area Survey reported that 92 percent of those polled agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “As areas develop, governments should do more to protect natural features, such as wetlands, woodlands, lakes and streams.” Making natural resources an integral part of the planning and development process will help protect highly prized natural features for current and future generations.

The Council and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have completed an initial inventory and assessment of regionally important natural resources—the Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment (NRI/A). Local governments can use this large database as a starting point to identify locally important resources and then take

appropriate conservation measures. New development can be located and designed in a way that preserves and benefits from the natural environment.

The regional parks and open space system represents a major, well-established conservation effort for land and water resources. The system includes about 55,000 acres within park boundaries, drawing more than 30 million visits a year (2002). But the area's growing population will need additional large-scale park and open space lands in the future. The region needs to identify natural areas that could be added to the regional park system and plan for their acquisition before the opportunity is lost.

Although the region is a water-rich area, the quality of its rivers, lakes and streams is affected by stormwater runoff containing phosphorus, other nutrients, oils, road salt and other pollutants. Loss of natural areas contributes to increased runoff and lowered water quality. Best management practices are needed to keep pollutants out of the region's surface- and groundwater. Proper management of on-site septic systems is needed to minimize impacts on groundwater.

Air quality is a key indicator of the quality of life in the region. Maintaining and improving air quality will enhance the region's ability to continue growing economically.

Aggregate—sand, gravel and crushed rock—is another resource vital to the area. The regional transportation systems and the building industry need large volumes of aggregate for construction and maintenance. But the metropolitan area is losing access to its aggregate resources and rapidly depleting the supply. Development located on or near aggregate deposits has shut off access to about 45% of the aggregate originally available in the metropolitan area.

To deal with this issue, the Minnesota Legislature directed each local unit of government in the metropolitan area to amend its local comprehensive plan to address issues related to aggregate, when such resources are present in the community (Minn. Stat. 473.859). This is a step toward preserving sources of aggregate for the future, but additional protections and incentives are needed to ensure their continued availability.

Prime agricultural soils are important not only to farming communities but also to the region as a whole. They have been identified in the Natural Resources Inventory. About a half-million acres in the region are planned and zoned to maintain agriculture as the primary long-term land use, most of it located in a crescent-shaped arc through the region's southern and southwestern counties—Dakota, Scott and Carver. For many rural communities, these soils are an important natural resource. The Council supports local communities in their determination of how best to use this land. (Minn. Stat. 473.859).

## Chapter 3/Strategies for Geographic Planning Areas

Implementing the *Regional Development Framework* is not a one-size-fits-all process. There are different strategies for communities based on the types of growth that are expected. These variations are reflected in “Geographic Planning Areas” designated by the Council and illustrated on the Regional Growth Strategy Map (attached at the end of this document).

This map, which incorporates the current land use plans of the region’s communities, also will serve as the foundation for the next round of comprehensive plan updates. It identifies an urban area and a rural area, each of which occupies approximately half of the region. The urban area is divided into two specific geographic planning areas: the Developing Communities and the Developed Communities. The rural area is divided into four specific geographic planning areas: Rural Centers/Rural Growth Centers, the Diversified Rural Communities, the Rural Residential Areas and the Agricultural Areas.

One of the primary differences among these planning areas is the density at which they develop. The Council has established benchmarks indicating the overall densities that planned development patterns in each of the geographic planning areas can be expected to achieve. The Council negotiates a share of the regional forecasts with each community based on its geographic planning area designation(s), development trends, expected densities, available land, local interests and Council policies. The cumulative results of the community-accepted distribution of the forecasts among planning areas becomes the basis for determining the required land supply, and for the Council’s plans for and investments in regional systems such as highways and wastewater service.

Approximately 91% to 95% of new growth is forecast to be located in the urban area—in land use patterns that make efficient use of regional infrastructure—with the rest, 5% to 9%, in the rural area, particularly in small towns to be designated as Rural Growth Centers.

The Regional Growth Strategy Map – together with the overall strategies in Table 1 and the Geographic Planning Area Table specific to each planning area shown on the map – outlines the roles of individual communities and strategies for accommodating expected growth. At times, planning area designations may change. The Council will work with communities through the comprehensive planning process and within the parameters of the Framework to implement such changes.

Each community will determine how to implement the strategies in the geographic planning area tables. The range of choices provides considerable local flexibility. For example, a Developed Community could—as the table for Developed Communities states—accommodate growth forecasts through reinvestment at appropriate densities by adopting innovative zoning techniques for compatible mixed-use development or shaping new projects at an appropriate scale. In addition, a community in any part of the region may choose to develop and/or expand centers that work for their city. Centers vary in scale – from the downtowns of the region’s two central cities to small centers that provide services to neighborhoods or rural areas. Centers integrate land-use patterns, mixing jobs, housing, retail, services and – potentially – open space and connect them

with streets, sidewalks and trails. They can be planned as part of new development or created incrementally by adding the “missing pieces” – be they housing, jobs, services or street connections-to existing places in all parts of the region.

The Council will provide technical assistance, such as the Local Planning Handbook, to help local governments implement community-appropriate practices like these to achieve regional objectives rather than using a checklist of expectations every community must meet.

Many of the Council’s tools for helping communities accommodate growth apply to all communities. For example, the Council works with all communities to plan and stage regional services. The regional infrastructure becomes the framework upon which communities add local services. The Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment provides a valuable database of natural resources of regional importance across the metro area. Every community can use the information as a starting point from which to build more detailed maps of local resources. The first table in this chapter summarizes the strategies that apply to all the region’s communities. Table 2 addresses the Developed Communities, Table 3 the Developing Communities and Tables 4-7 the Rural Areas.

<b>Table 1: Growth Accommodation in All Communities</b>	
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest Council resources—infrastructure improvements, grant programs and technical assistance – to accommodate regional growth while using regional systems and land efficiently.</li> <li>• Conserve natural resources—particularly water resources--and protect vital natural areas when planning and constructing regional infrastructure (wastewater systems, roads, transit, parks and open space, and airports).</li> <li>• Update regional plan for water supply and coordinate with public and private entities on regional water supply issues, source protection and conservation practices.</li> <li>• Pursue environmentally sound and cooperative water use practices, conservation initiatives, and joint planning and implementation efforts to maximize surface water infiltration to recharge groundwater supplies.</li> <li>• Maintain or replace regional wastewater facilities as they age or become obsolete.</li> <li>• Promote the inclusion of best practices for stormwater management, habitat restoration, and natural resource conservation in development plans and projects.</li> <li>• Promote proper management of individual sewage treatment systems (consistent with Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080).</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for development that accommodates growth forecasts at appropriate densities.</li> <li>• Adopt and implement a Council-approved comprehensive plan.</li> <li>• Maintain, replace or expand local facilities and infrastructure to meet growth and development needs.</li> <li>• Conserve natural resources—particularly water resources— and protect vital natural areas when designing and constructing local infrastructure and planning land use patterns.</li> <li>• Prepare local water supply and wellhead protection plans as required by the MLPA.</li> <li>• Develop and implement environmentally sound and cooperative water use practices, conservation initiatives, and joint planning and implementation efforts, including wellhead protection plans, designed to protect and ensure an adequate supply of water for the region.</li> <li>• Incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques, natural resources conservation practices, and habitat restoration projects into development plans and projects.</li> <li>• Adopt Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) management ordinances and implement a maintenance program (consistent with Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080).</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region’s economic needs.</b></p>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan a multi-modal, interconnected transportation system in cooperation with state agencies, counties and local governments.</li> <li>• Expand the capacity of the regional transportation system to slow the growth of congestion. Support improvements to principal arterials and A-minor arterials, including county roads. Expand the regional trails system.</li> <li>• Support implementation of the most appropriate and cost effective technologies to manage and optimize the use of both the highway and transit systems (examples: HOT lanes, ramp metering).</li> <li>• Support a variety of freight transport modes to link the region with state, national and international markets.</li> <li>• Help communities comply with MN/DOT’s access management guidelines.</li> <li>• Coordinate with communities, the Metropolitan Airports Commission, and the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure planned land uses in areas surrounding airports are compatible with <i>Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Aircraft Noise</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and develop an interconnected local transportation system that is integrated with the regional system.</li> <li>• Develop local land uses linked to the local and regional transportation systems.</li> <li>• Plan for connections between housing and centers of employment, education, retail and recreation uses.</li> <li>• Coordinate with business and other public agencies congestion-reduction measures such as collaboration with employers, provision of information or incentives to minimize or decrease peak-period impacts.</li> <li>• Adopt improved design principles to support better access and traffic management.</li> <li>• Use MN/DOT’s access management guidelines to prepare local plans and ordinances.</li> <li>• Use <i>Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Aircraft Noise</i> to plan appropriate land uses for areas surrounding airports.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b></p>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance and negotiate lifecycle and affordable housing goals in implementing the Livable Communities Act (LCA) and Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA).</li> <li>• Invest Council resources to assist communities and community projects that increase the variety of housing types and costs, appropriately mix land uses, increase transportation choices, and leverage private investment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement comprehensive plans that provide land appropriate for a variety of affordable and life-cycle housing options.</li> <li>• Adopt local housing goals and implementation plans.</li> <li>• Use local official controls and resources to facilitate development of a range of housing densities, types and costs.</li> <li>• Approve and permit proposed housing developments in light of population forecasts, existing housing stock, and current and future community and regional needs, as appropriate.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b></p>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with state agencies, counties, communities, builders and developers, and non-profits to conserve, maintain and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into regional system plans for infrastructure improvements and development and to restore degraded natural resources of regional importance to support an interconnected network of natural resources.</li> <li>• Coordinate and provide technical assistance to communities as they develop local stormwater management plans consistent with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410 and the MLPA.</li> <li>• Expand the regional park system, as appropriate, to conserve, maintain and connect natural resources identified as high quality or of regional importance. Invest in acquisition and development of land for the regional park system.</li> <li>• Develop and promote the use of best management practices for abating, preventing and removing point and nonpoint source pollution; reducing soil erosion; protecting and improving water quality; and maximizing groundwater recharge.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance to communities regarding the adoption and enforcement of environmental preservation and conservation techniques and ordinances.</li> <li>• Work with public and private entities to maintain the quality of regional water resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete local natural resource inventories as they deem appropriate. Give strong consideration to integrating natural resources, including aggregate, identified in regional and local natural resources inventories into local land use decision-making.</li> <li>• Adopt and enforce erosion control ordinances and other environmental preservation and conservation techniques and ordinances.</li> <li>• Prepare and implement local stormwater management plans consistent with Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410 and the MLPA.</li> <li>• Include as a part of local park systems natural resources that are identified as high quality or of local and regional importance.</li> <li>• Implement surface water management practices geared to protecting and maintaining the quality of local water resources.</li> <li>• Adopt and implement best management practices for abating, preventing and removing point and nonpoint source pollution; reducing soil erosion; protecting and improving water quality; and maximizing groundwater recharge through surface water infiltration.</li> </ul>

## Developed Communities

Council investments in regional systems and incentives for the Developed Communities are to maintain current infrastructure; renew and improve infrastructure, buildings and land to provide for additional growth, particularly at centers along transit corridors; and support developments that integrate land uses.

### Developed Communities

**Anoka County:** Anoka, Circle Pines, Columbia Heights, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Hilltop, Lexington, Spring Lake Park

**Dakota County:** Apple Valley, Burnsville, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, South St. Paul, West St. Paul  
**Hennepin County:** Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Champlin, Crystal, Deephaven, Edina, Excelsior, Fort Snelling, Golden Valley, Greenwood, Hopkins, Long Lake, Loretto, Medicine Lake, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Minnetonka Beach, Mound, New Hope, Osseo, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony, St. Louis Park, Spring Park, Tonka Bay, Wayzata, Woodland

**Ramsey County:** Arden Hills, Falcon Heights, Gem Lake, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood, Mounds View, New Brighton, North St. Paul, Roseville, Saint Paul, Shoreview, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township

**Washington County:** Birchwood, Landfall, Mahtomedi, Newport, St. Paul Park, Stillwater, Willernie

<b>Table 2: Growth Accommodation in Developed Communities</b>	
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest Council resources to facilitate reinvestment (infill, adaptive reuse and redevelopment).</li> <li>• Maintain and expand existing regional infrastructure to adequately support reinvestment as identified in local comprehensive plans.</li> <li>• Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater treatment system.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodate growth forecasts through reinvestment at appropriate densities (5 units plus in developed areas and target higher density in locations with convenient access to transportation corridors and with adequate sewer capacity).</li> <li>• Approve and permit reinvestment projects that make cost effective use of infrastructure and increase density.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to accommodate growth and use land and infrastructure efficiently (examples: innovative zoning techniques for mixed use development, transit oriented development, overlay districts, planned unit development provisions, and traditional neighborhood development overlay zones.)</li> <li>• Support the conversion or reuse of underutilized lands in order to accommodate growth forecasts, ensure efficient utilization of existing infrastructure investments and meet community needs.</li> <li>• Reduce infiltration and inflow into the local and regional wastewater treatment system.</li> </ul>	
<b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region’s economic needs.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan regional highway and transit systems, pedestrian and bicycle investments to improve connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities to accommodate growth and reinvestment.</li> <li>• Plan to complete 6-lane ring route, eliminate bottlenecks, make select capacity improvements and improve system management.</li> <li>• Provide and improve transit connections by coordinating planning for infill and redevelopment projects with state agencies, counties and local communities.</li> <li>• Implement, maintain and operate (along with the opt-outs) transitways, transit stations and transit service; plan appropriate station-area land uses with local governments and business.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make local transportation, transit, pedestrian and bicycle investments to improve connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to improve transportation connections and address transportation issues such as travel demand management, access management, safety and mobility when planning infill and redevelopment projects.</li> <li>• Plan land use patterns that support transit service and development.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to support integrated land use (examples: ordinances encouraging or allowing shared parking; centers, transit oriented developments).</li> <li>• Coordinate with business and other public agencies congestion-reduction measures such as collaboration with employers, provision of information or incentives to minimize or decrease peak-period impacts.</li> </ul>	

<b>Table 2: Growth Accommodation in Developed Communities</b>	
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use regional system investments and incentives to help developed communities maintain and preserve the existing housing stock and to add new higher density housing that responds to changing demographic and market trends.</li> <li>• Maintain and expand existing regional infrastructure to adequately support reinvestment.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for and guide infill development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of structures to diversify housing, connect housing and jobs, and integrate new development into existing neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Adopt and pursue reinvestment strategies to achieve MLPA/LCA housing goals.</li> <li>• Encourage the preservation of existing neighborhoods and expansion of housing choices within the city..</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to increase lifecycle and affordable housing (examples: increased multi-family use, reduced front and interior setback requirements; cluster development ordinances).</li> </ul>	
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the reclamation of contaminated lands for redevelopment and restore natural resources.</li> <li>• Work with communities to implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve and permit projects designed to reclaim contaminated lands and restore natural resources where appropriate.</li> <li>• Implement best management practices to control and treat stormwater as redevelopment opportunities arise.</li> </ul>	

## Developing Communities

Council investments in regional systems and incentives for the Developing Communities focus on accommodating growth, supporting centers along corridors, encouraging connected land use patterns for new development and encouraging the development of communities where shopping, jobs and a variety of housing choices co-exist by design.

Local 2020 comprehensive plans already designate sufficient land to accommodate this growth through 2020. However, to accommodate household growth projected to 2030, assuming 30% of regional residential growth will occur in the Developed Communities, the region will need to add 15,000 residential acres. Further, the Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment identifies approximately 5,000 acres of unprotected natural resources of regional importance in areas planned for development. Protection of these natural resource lands would require the designation of additional acres for residential development. Finally, the region will also need to provide urban services to an estimated 14,000 acres (about 40% of the total land demand) to accommodate other land uses such as commercial and industrial development. Based on these numbers, the Council must plan regional infrastructure to provide services to 35,000 acres, in addition to the existing 2020 staged development as shown in local plans.

### Additional Land Needed for 2030 Metropolitan Urban Service Area

Assumptions	Residential		Commercial, Industrial, Other	Total
	Residential Not Affected by Natural Resource Areas	Replacement Residential for Natural Resource Areas Needing Protection		
Expected housing mix, land patterns, reinvestment achieved	15,000 acres	Up to 5,000 acres	14,000 acres	34,000 acres

Flexibility will be a hallmark of the Council and Developing Communities’ long-term growth planning and staging. Achieving connected land use patterns that can be served efficiently and economically with urban services will be more important than adherence to regulatory requirements such as making new growth contiguous with existing development. Decisions to extend regional infrastructure for Developing Communities will be made based on evidence of efforts to mix and connect land use patterns at appropriate densities. Communities can choose among a variety of actions to do that. For instance, they could adopt innovative zoning techniques (e.g. overlay districts or planned unit development provisions), implement context sensitive designs or adopt conservation subdivision ordinances.

Many Developing Communities contain older, developed areas where strategies listed for the Developed Communities are more appropriate to address land use changes. In addition, Developing Communities are encouraged to plan for the entire communities and, as appropriate, use strategies to preserve areas for Diversified Rural or Agricultural to maintain areas for post-2030 urbanization. (Appropriate additional geographic planning areas and strategies are shown in parenthesis after each community name.)

**Developing Communities**

**Anoka County:** Andover (urban reserve, Rural Residential), Blaine, Centerville (urban reserve), Lino Lakes (urban reserve), Ramsey (urban reserve)

**Carver County:** Chanhassen, Chaska, Laketown Township (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Victoria (urban reserve), Waconia

**Dakota County:** Coates (Agricultural Preservation), Eagan, Empire Township (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Farmington (urban reserve), Hastings (urban reserve), Inver Grove Heights (Rural Residential), Lakeville (urban reserve), Rosemount (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Sunfish Lake

**Hennepin County:** Brooklyn Park, Corcoran (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Dayton (urban reserve), Eden Prairie, Hassan Township (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Maple Grove, Maple Plain, Medina (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Minnetrista (urban reserve, Agricultural Area, Diversified Rural), Orono (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Plymouth (urban reserve), Rogers (urban reserve), St. Bonifacius, Shorewood

**Ramsey County:** North Oaks

**Scott County:** Prior Lake (urban reserve), Savage, Shakopee (urban reserve)

**Washington County:** Bayport, Cottage Grove (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Forest Lake (Diversified Rural), Grey Cloud Township (Diversified Rural), Hugo (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Lake Elmo (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Oakdale, Oak Park Heights, Woodbury (urban reserve)

**Table 3: Growth Accommodation in Developing Communities**

<p><b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b></p> <p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan, coordinate and invest in regional infrastructure (roads, transit, wastewater treatment, airports, and parks and open space) and resources to support staged development, and centers with convenient access to transportation and transit corridors.</li> <li>• Commit to provide regional system infrastructure to support local development consistent with approved local comprehensive plans.</li> <li>• Reduce infiltration and inflow into the regional wastewater treatment system.</li> <li>• Promote development practices and patterns that protect natural resource areas and the integrity of the region’s water supply.</li> <li>• Work with communities to identify and protect an adequate supply of land within the region to accommodate urban development that will occur after 2030.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance to developing communities to establish and implement strategies to protect lands for future urban development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and stage development that accommodates the forecasts for local growth through 2030 at appropriate densities (3-5 units plus per acre overall in developing communities for areas outside the current staged development as shown in local plans and target higher density in locations with convenient access to transportation corridors and with adequate sewer capacity).</li> <li>• Stage local infrastructure and development plans to accommodate 20 years worth of forecasted growth.</li> <li>• Select and implement local controls and tools for timing and staging of development throughout the community.</li> <li>• Reduce infiltration and inflow into the local and regional wastewater treatment system.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to accommodate growth and use land and infrastructure efficiently (examples: innovative zoning techniques for mixed use development, transit oriented development, overlay districts, planned unit development provisions, adequate public facilities ordinances, community impact statements and traditional neighborhood development overlay zones.)</li> <li>• Plan for the conversion or reuse of declining or underutilized lands in order to accommodate growth forecasts, ensure efficient utilization of infrastructure investments and meet community needs.</li> <li>• Plan for the entire community and consider the need for additional serviceable land for growth beyond 2030.</li> <li>• Identify areas reserved for future urban development and develop strategies to minimize development in those areas that could preclude future urban development.</li> <li>• Plan land use patterns that will facilitate groundwater recharge to protect the region’s water supply.</li> <li>• Plan for necessary infrastructure improvements including, as appropriate, executing orderly annexation agreements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region’s economic needs.</b></p> <p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for regional highway and transit systems, pedestrian and bicycle investments to improve connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities and to accommodate growth.</li> <li>• Work with the Transportation Advisory Board to ensure the efforts of cities and counties that coordinate their development and transportation planning are recognized in the competition for federal transportation funds.</li> </ul>
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<b>Table 3: Growth Accommodation in Developing Communities</b>	
<b>Community Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make local transportation, transit, pedestrian and bicycle investments to build connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities and to support the transportation needs of the planned build out of the community.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to improve transportation connections and address transportation issues such as commuting (park and rides, express bus service), access management, safety and mobility when planning new development.</li> <li>• Coordinate development planning with the county to ensure highway capacity is available when and where needed.</li> <li>• Plan land use patterns to support transit development and service expansion.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to support integrated land use (examples: ordinances encouraging or allowing shared parking; centers; transit oriented developments).</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance to assist developing communities to devise ordinances and projects for lifecycle and affordable housing that respond to changing market and demographic trends.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate proposed housing developments in light of population forecasts, existing housing stock, and current and future community and regional needs; approve and permit developments as appropriate.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances designed to encourage lifecycle and affordable housing (examples: increased multi-family zoning, reduced front and interior setback requirements; cluster development ordinances).</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>	
See Table 1.	

## Rural Area: Rural Centers and Rural Growth Centers

Rural Centers are the small towns located throughout the Rural Area. The 17 Rural Centers include residential neighborhoods surrounding a center that provides basic consumer services and community activities. These are older communities, many of them established more than a century ago to serve surrounding farms. Rural Centers that are interested in growing are identified as Rural Growth Centers. Council will use regional investments and incentives to help Rural Growth Centers accommodate growth as an alternative to scattered development in the rural area. (Appropriate additional geographic planning areas are shown in parenthesis after each community name.)

### Rural Centers and Rural Growth Centers

**Anoka County:** Bethel (Diversified Rural), East Bethel (Diversified Rural), St. Francis (Diversified Rural)

**Carver County:** Carver (Agricultural Area), Cologne, Hamburg, Mayer (Agricultural Area), New Germany, Norwood Young America, Watertown

**Dakota County:** Hampton (Agricultural Area), Vermillion (Agricultural Area)

**Scott County:** Belle Plaine, Elko, Jordan, New Market

**Washington County:** Marine on St. Croix (Diversified Rural)

<b>Table 4: Growth Accommodation in Rural Centers and Rural Growth Centers</b>
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <p><b><u>Rural Growth Centers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Rural Growth Centers, surrounding townships and counties to provide for the orderly expansion of these cities and to preserve low densities in the surrounding rural areas (e.g., not to exceed 1 unit per 40 acres in agricultural areas and 1 unit per 10 acres in diversified rural areas).</li> <li>• Plan for improvements to regional infrastructure to support expected growth at residential densities of 3-5 plus units per acre; for wastewater services consider acquiring and operating the plant or locating a new wastewater treatment facility in the rural growth center if doing so would be more efficient and cost effective, and provide other regional benefits.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Rural Centers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance to Rural Centers to preserve and maintain existing development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <p><b><u>Rural Growth Centers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request the Council to consider acquiring and operating its wastewater treatment plant or locating a new wastewater treatment facility in the rural growth center if doing so would be more efficient and cost effective, and provide other regional benefits.</li> <li>• Execute orderly annexation agreements.</li> <li>• Identify areas that will accommodate post-2030 growth forecasts and implement strategies to preserve these areas for future growth (e.g. clustered development not to exceed 1 unit per 10 acres in Diversified Rural Areas and clustered development not to exceed 1 unit per 40 acres in agricultural preservation areas). Plan for necessary infrastructure improvements.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances that time development with infrastructure availability.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Rural Centers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for the preservation and maintenance of the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region’s economic needs.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <p><b><u>Rural Growth Centers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide park-and-pool or park-and-ride and express-bus links to urban areas based on demand and the availability of resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for an interconnected system of local streets, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>
See Table 1.
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>
See Table 1.

**Rural Area: Rural Residential Areas**

Rural Residential Areas are immediately adjacent to Developing Areas and have large numbers of individual sewage treatment systems at densities of 2.5 acres or less. Rural Residential Areas face challenges in making the transition from rural unsewered development to sewer development. As the Council updates its system plans, the feasibility of providing regional wastewater services, in conjunction with local water supply and transportation system improvements, will be examined. The Council will partner with each community to explore strategies that would allow some or all existing

Rural Residential Areas to make the transition to densities that can be served efficiently with public services.

Four communities have areas designated as the Rural Residential Area. As the four communities consider providing for current and future residents, they should focus on protecting the environment and natural resources, ensuring sufficient public infrastructure, and discouraging this type of land use pattern. Infill development should be carefully considered.

**Rural Residential Areas**Anoka County: Ham Lake

Scott County: Credit River Township

Portions of Andover and Inver Grove Heights are designated Rural Residential.

<b>Table 5: Growth Accommodation in Rural Residential Areas</b>	
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within available resources, provide technical assistance to communities to plan for adequate infrastructure to address current needs and to accommodate forecast growth using development practices that protect the integrity of the region’s water supply and natural resources identified in regional or local inventories.</li> <li>• Discourage rural residential patterns (unsewered areas of 2 ½ acre lots) elsewhere in the region.</li> <li>• Within available resources, provide technical assistance about alternative wastewater treatment systems and share specific information, as it becomes available, about the performance of such systems in the region.</li> <li>• Support the MPCA’s regulatory approach to community treatment systems, which requires permits for systems that generate at least 10,000 gallons per day of wastewater (about 35 homes) on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• Advocate that the local government should be the permit holder for alternative wastewater treatment systems to ensure accountability for the proper functioning and maintenance of the systems.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and develop interconnected local streets, adequate water supply, and properly managed individual sewage treatment systems to accommodate local growth forecasts.</li> <li>• Plan land use patterns that will facilitate groundwater recharge to protect the region’s water supply.</li> <li>• Protect the rural environment. Locally oversee the management and maintenance of alternative wastewater treatment systems such as community drainfields to avoid the environmental and economic costs from failed systems.</li> <li>• Ensure financial and environmental accountability for installation, maintenance, remediation and management of any permitted private wastewater treatment systems.</li> </ul>	
<b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for regional transportation infrastructure consistent with a rural level of service.</li> <li>• Support the limiting of access points to state and county roads systems (consistent with state and county access management policies) and emphasize construction of an interconnected local public street system.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure sufficient to serve local needs.</li> <li>• Construct an interconnected local public street system.</li> <li>• Adopt improved design techniques for access management.</li> </ul>	
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>	
See Table 1.	
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>	
<b>Council Role</b>	
See Table 1.	

**Table 5: Growth Accommodation in Rural Residential Areas**

<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt conservation subdivision ordinances, cluster development ordinances, or environmental protection provisions in land use ordinances.</li> </ul>
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**Rural Area: Diversified Rural Communities**

The Diversified Rural Communities host the widest variety of farm and non-farm land uses in patterns that include a mix of a limited amount of large-lot residential and clustered housing with agriculture and other uses, including facilities and services requiring a rural location. Regional infrastructure investments in the Diversified Rural Communities will consist of expenditures for parks, open spaces and green corridor connections—including acquisition and development of regional parkland to serve the residents of the region. Investments in wastewater treatment and transportation infrastructure will be consistent with the Council’s intent to limit the amount of development occurring in the Diversified Rural Communities and serve broader regional needs. Growth in Diversified Rural Communities should be consistent with regional forecasts.

**Diversified Rural Communities**

**Anoka County:** Burns Township, Columbus Township (Developing Community), East Bethel (Rural Growth Center), Linwood Township, Oak Grove

**Dakota County:** Miesville (Agricultural Area), New Trier (Agricultural Area), Randolph (Agricultural Area), Ravenna Township (Agricultural Area)

**Hennepin County:** Greenfield, Independence (Agricultural Area),

**Scott County:** Cedar Lake Township, Helena Township (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Jackson Township (urban reserve), Louisville Township (urban reserve), New Market Township. (urban reserve), St. Lawrence Township (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Sand Creek Township (urban reserve, Agricultural Area), Spring Lake Township (urban reserve)

**Washington County:** Afton (Agricultural Area), Baytown Township, Dellwood, Denmark Township (Agricultural Area), Grant (Agricultural Area), Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, Lake St. Croix Beach, May Township (Agricultural Area), New Scandia Township, Pine Springs, St. Mary’s Point, Stillwater Township, West Lakeland Township

**Table 6: Comprehensive Planning Strategies for Diversified Rural Areas**

<p><b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b></p> <p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with communities to plan development patterns that will: protect natural resources; preserve areas where post-2030 growth can be provided with cost-effective and efficient urban infrastructure; and accommodate forecasted growth through 2030 without requiring the provision of regional urban services.</li> <li>• Within available resources, provide technical assistance about alternative wastewater treatment systems and share specific information, as it becomes available, about the performance of such systems in the region.</li> <li>• Support the MPCA’s regulatory approach to community treatment systems, which requires permits for systems that generate at least 10,000 gallons per day of wastewater (about 35 homes) on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• Advocate that the local government should be the permit holder for alternative wastewater treatment systems to ensure accountability for the proper functioning and maintenance of the systems.</li> <li>• Promote development practices and patterns that protect the integrity of the region’s water supply</li> </ul>
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<b>Table 6: Comprehensive Planning Strategies for Diversified Rural Areas</b>
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodate growth not to exceed forecasts at clustered development not to exceed 1 unit per 10 acres.</li> <li>• Plan development patterns that will protect natural resources. Preserve areas where post-2030 growth can be provided with cost-effective and efficient urban infrastructure and accommodate growth without requiring the provision of regional urban services.</li> <li>• Protect the rural environment. Locally oversee the management and maintenance of alternative wastewater treatment systems such as community drainfields to avoid the environmental and economic costs from failed systems.</li> <li>• Ensure financial and environmental accountability for installation, maintenance, remediation and management of any permitted private wastewater treatment systems.</li> <li>• Adopt conservation subdivision ordinances, cluster development ordinances, or environmental protection provisions in land use ordinances</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan regional transportation infrastructure consistent with a rural level of service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure including trails sufficient to serve local needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>
See Table 1.
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with state agencies, counties and communities to conserve, maintain and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into plans for infrastructure improvements and development</li> <li>• Develop additional tools for resource protection including model conservation easements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve, maintain and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into development plans.</li> </ul>

**Rural Area: Agricultural Areas**

The Agricultural Areas—found mostly in Dakota, Scott and Carver Counties—contains about half a million acres planned and zoned by local communities to maintain agriculture as the primary long-term land use. In the Agricultural Areas, the Council will focus existing regional incentives and assist with local initiatives to preserve high-quality soils for existing or future agricultural use. Investments in regional infrastructure such as roads, wastewater treatment, and parks and open space will be for rural levels of service consistent with the intent to maintain agriculture. Growth in the Agricultural Areas should be consistent with regional forecasts.

As the Council updates its system plans, the feasibility of providing regional services in response to potential development of agricultural areas post-2030 will be examined. The Council will partner with these communities to ensure that the feasibility analysis meets community and regional needs.

**Agricultural Areas**

**Carver County:** Benton Township, Camden Township, Chaska Township, Dahlgren Township (urban reserve), Hancock Township, Hollywood Township, San Francisco Township, Waconia Township, Watertown Township (urban reserve), Young America Township (urban reserve)

**Dakota County:** Castle Rock Township, Douglas Township, Eureka Township, Greenvale Township, Hampton Township, Marshan Township, Nininger Township, Randolph Township (Diversified Rural), Sciota Township, Vermillion Township, Waterford Township

**Scott County:** Belle Plaine Township (urban reserve, Diversified Rural), Blakeley Township (urban reserve, Diversified Rural)

<b>Table 7: Comprehensive Planning Strategies for the Agricultural Areas</b>
<b>Policy 1: Work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support local efforts to preserve prime agricultural soils and land uses by supporting township and county activities that maintain agricultural land uses through at least 2030. Should post-2030 growth forecasts indicate a need to develop some agricultural lands at urban densities, agricultural land uses will enable the efficient expansion of regional urban infrastructure. Wastewater services to these areas will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine feasibility.</li> <li>• Promote agricultural practices that protect the integrity of the region’s water supply.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain agricultural land uses through at least 2030 to preserve prime agricultural lands and to preserve land for efficient expansion of post-2030 regional urban infrastructure, limit residential development.</li> <li>• Promote best management practices for agricultural activities in order to protect the integrity of the region’s water supply.</li> <li>• Adopt zoning ordinances and/or other official controls to maintain densities of no more than 1 housing unit per 40 acres in areas designated for agricultural use.</li> <li>• Develop and implement strategies for protecting farmlands, such as exclusive agricultural zoning, agricultural security districts, and lower densities such as 1 housing unit per 80 acres.</li> <li>• Minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-farm land uses through local ordinances and official controls.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 2: Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region’s economic needs.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan regional transportation infrastructure consistent with market access and the agribusiness needs of the area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for and construct local transportation infrastructure sufficient to serve local and agricultural needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy 3: Encourage expanded choices in housing location and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.</b>
See Table 1.
<b>Policy 4: Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.</b>
<p><b>Council Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote agricultural practices that protect the quality of the region’s water resources.</li> <li>• Partner with state agencies, counties and communities to conserve, maintain and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into plans for infrastructure improvements and development.</li> <li>• Provide information to communities about how to incorporate environmentally sensitive development techniques into farm-related construction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote best management practices for agricultural activities in order to protect the quality of the local and regional water resources.</li> <li>• Conserve, maintain and restore natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. Integrate natural resource conservation strategies into development plans.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of environmentally sensitive development techniques in farm-related construction, such as surface water management that includes using natural systems to drain, filter and retain stormwater.</li> </ul>

## Chapter 4/Implementation

The Metropolitan Council has a number of important tools to help shape the future growth of the seven-county metropolitan area and pursue the goals established in this *Regional Development Framework*. These tools include:

- The comprehensive planning process. Under the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, local communities are required to adopt comprehensive plans that are consistent with the Council’s Development Framework and its four metropolitan system plans – for transportation, aviation, wastewater treatment and regional parks (Minn. Stat. 473.858-.859; 473.864).
- The technical assistance the Council offers to local communities through our forecasts, local planning handbook, comprehensive plan reviews, sector representatives and various targeted programs (Minn. Stat. 473.175; 473.854; 473.867).
- The Council’s responsibilities for guiding capital investments in the four regional systems (Minn. Stat. 473.146), which are supplemented by federally mandated integrated planning for wastewater and stormwater (33 U.S.C. 1288) and transportation and air quality (42 U.S.C 7408).
- The Council’s incentive programs that provide grants to communities seeking to expand housing choices, promote connected development and clean up contaminated land for redevelopment (Minn. Stat. 473.25-.255).

But the success of these efforts hinges on the Council’s partnerships – with local communities, the Metropolitan Airports Commission, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, other state and federal agencies, and stakeholder groups such as builders, environmentalists, housing advocates and philanthropic organizations.

Insofar as state law permits, the Council also will strive to build closer working relationships with local officials in the counties immediately surrounding the metropolitan area, working with them on a voluntary basis to share information about plans and projects of mutual concern. The Council will invite the participation of policy and technical representatives from the adjacent counties in advisory committees, and seek other opportunities to work in partnership with representatives of the adjacent counties and the region.

The Council can play a key role as a convenor on regional issues in support of Development Framework policies. But local governments hold the key to land use decisions that make the difference “on the ground.” And state and federal resources and participation are essential in a wide range of areas – from highways and transit to park land acquisition and groundwater protection.

## Local Planning Process

### Metropolitan Land Planning Act

As communities in the Twin Cities area plan for their future, they are guided by the Development Framework and related plans and policies for regional systems. In this process, the Council and communities share responsibilities under the Metropolitan Land Planning Act.

The Council prepares forecasts of regional growth based on such information as U.S. Census data, regional growth trends and demographics (Minn. Stat. 473.146). With each community, the Council negotiates the share of growth for which that community will plan, taking into account Council policies, local land-use patterns, developable land supply and the community's current comprehensive plan.

The Council then revises its Development Framework to include regional policies and plans to accommodate the forecasted growth, with the participation of local governments, area organizations and citizens. The Framework sets the parameters for plans that guide the future development of the metropolitan systems—transportation, wastewater, airports and parks. Each local government is provided with a summary of how those regional plans will affect that individual community. The local government, in turn, takes responsibility for meeting local needs within the regional framework. If changes to the local plan are needed, the community undertakes a process to make those changes (Minn. Stat. 473.856-.857; 473.864-.865).

Once it revises its local plan, the community sends its plan to adjacent municipalities for them to consider the plan's impact and to the Council for its review based on requirements of the Land Planning Act and other state and federal guidelines, such as those dealing with transportation and the environment (Minn. Stat. 473.858). The Land Planning Act requires the Council to consider a plan's compatibility with the plans of other communities and its consistency with adopted Council policy plans, as well as its conformity with metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. 473.175). If the Council finds that a community's plan is more likely than not to have a substantial impact on or contain a substantial departure from metropolitan system plans, the Council can require the community to modify its local plan to assure conformance with the metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. 473.175).

Once a community adopts its comprehensive plan, state law does not allow it to adopt any zoning ordinance, fiscal device or other official control that conflicts with its comprehensive plan or which permits activity in conflict with metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. 473.858; 473.865). Any local zoning ordinance or other local control that conflicts with the community's local comprehensive plan or metropolitan system plans must be brought into conformance with the plan within nine months (Minn. Stat. 473.865).

## Metropolitan Significance

Sometimes a single development proposal might be large enough to cause a substantial impact on one or more regional systems or on an existing or planned land use of another local government. In such cases, the Metropolitan Significance Review process, established by state statute, can be initiated to review issues and consider possible solutions. A local unit of government, a state agency, a regional commission or a citizen petition can request the Council to undertake a review of the project. The Council itself may also initiate a review (Minn. Stat. 473.173).

If the process determines that the proposed project is of metropolitan significance, the Council is authorized to suspend the proposed project for up to one year. But the Council may also consider whether an amendment to a regional policy or a modification of proposed project will eliminate the determination of metropolitan significance (Minn. Rules part 5800.0130).

## Technical Assistance

The Council offers assistance to communities as they update, amend and implement their local comprehensive plans:

**Sector Representative Program.** This program is staffed by experienced and knowledgeable planners familiar with the Council and its various programs. They provide communities with planning and technical assistance as communities update, amend and implement their local comprehensive plans. These Council planners also help foster cooperative relationships with governmental units and other organizations in the metropolitan area (Minn. Stat. 473.191; 473.867).

**Watershed Coordinator Program.** This program is staffed by experienced and knowledgeable environmental planners. They provide communities, watershed organizations, and state agencies with planning and technical assistance related to watershed issues such as stormwater management. They work with local governments and watershed organizations during the development phase of their local surface water management plans and watershed plans (Minn. Stat. 473.191).

**Handbooks and Information Materials.** The Council's *Local Planning Handbook* guides communities through the Council's comprehensive plan review process. The Council's *Urban Small Sites Best Management Practices Manual* offers specific examples of how to develop and maintain various land uses to limit adverse effects such as soil erosion on the natural environment. *Planning More Livable Communities with Transit-Oriented Development* is a guidebook that shows how development can be organized around transit hubs (Minn. Stat. 473.854; 473.867).

**Model Ordinances.** Local ordinances are a primary means by which local governments implement their plans. Council staff can share information with communities about successful ordinances used elsewhere and provide copies of model ordinances prepared by the Council (Minn. Stat. 473.867).

**Workshops and Practicums.** The Council cosponsors workshops based on the theme of “learning by experience” that bring together local government representatives and others to discuss success stories around the region. The sessions have highlighted successful mixed-use developments, models of redeveloped retail strips, projects using innovative stormwater management and design of “livable streets.” The Council also holds workshops providing information to local officials on how to apply for grants under the Livable Communities program (Minn. Stat. 473.191; 473.867).

**Data from the Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment.** The Council and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources gathered and assessed data about land and water resources of regional importance in the seven-county area. The information is compiled into maps that are available to assist local governments with their plans to preserve natural resources while accommodating growth (Minn. Stat. 473.191).

**Geographic Information System Data.** The Geographic Information System (GIS) department of the Council facilitates the sharing of GIS data among government agencies in the region. GIS is a computerized system for creating and analyzing maps using digital data. The GIS department produces web-based maps, graphs, and tables to assist local communities with land use planning and implementation. It also provides staff support for the MetroGIS initiative, created to promote data-sharing among government organizations in the region (Minn. Stat. 473.191).

## **Regional Investments**

The Council’s responsibilities vary for the four regional systems—wastewater, transportation, regional parks and open space, and airports.

The Council has the most direct control over the wastewater treatment and transit systems. Through the Transportation Advisory Board process, the Council works closely with MnDOT and local communities in planning the regional highway system. The Council plans the regional recreation open space system, approves park master plans by the 10 regional park implementing agencies, seeks funds from the Legislature to support capital and operating needs for the parks, and awards Council bond funds for regional park capital needs. The Council provides long-term planning for the regional airports system and approves major capital projects proposed by the Metropolitan Airports Commission, which owns and operates most of the system.

The following table indicates the funding currently anticipated for the next 10 years for each of these systems:

**Regional System Capital Investments: 10-Year Plan**

Regional Systems Development Programs	Current Planned 10-Year Funding
Regional wastewater system	\$1,150M
Transit	\$1,400 M
Regional highways	\$4,210 M
Parks and open space	\$135 M
Airports	\$1,076 M

*Table Notes:*

**Regional wastewater system** – Most recent Council Capital Improvement Program  
**Transit** – Most recent Council Capital Improvement Program, extrapolated to 10 years.  
**Highways** – 2003-2006 Transportation Improvement Program, extrapolated to 10 years (includes principal and A minor roads).  
**Parks** – Most recent Council Capital Improvement Program, extrapolated to 10 years.  
**Airports** – Estimates based on Metropolitan Airports Commission (preliminary) 2004-2010 Capital Improvement Program, extrapolated to 10 years.

**Wastewater.** The region is in a strong position to keep pace with its needs in the areas of wastewater collection and treatment. The Metropolitan Council owns and maintains 600 miles of regional sewers and eight regional plants that collect and treat up to 300 million gallons of wastewater per day from 103 communities. The system is funded entirely through user fees, with 78% of the revenues coming from municipal treatment charges (passed on by communities to homeowners and businesses), 16% from sewer availability charges paid by all new connections or businesses requiring increased capacity, and the remainder from other sources.

At present, our sewer rates are lower than 83 percent of other U.S. cities with similar-sized treatment systems, according to industry figures published in 2002.

For the decade 2004-2013, the Council plans a capital improvement program totaling slightly more than \$1.1 billion to accommodate the region’s projected growth, meet more stringent wastewater treatment requirements, and rehabilitate and repair facilities as they age. In addition, the Council is working with local communities to reduce the amount of infiltration and inflow of stormwater and ground water into the sanitary sewer system. Removal of excessive infiltration and inflow is necessary to avoid capacity problems in the regional waterwater system.

**Highways.** Over the next decade, the region is expected to receive about \$4.2 billion to preserve the existing metro highway system, improve the management of the system with the goal of moving more people on it, reduce the number of bottlenecks and fund modest expansions. Of the total highway revenues, about 60% comes from the federal government and 40% from the state, most of it from taxes dedicated to highway purposes.

These projected revenues fall far short of the region's highway needs. Just to keep pace with these needs would add \$4.7 billion to current plans for the next decade. Looking out 25 years, the region lacks funding for improvements that will be needed to alleviate anticipated congestion on such principal arterial highways as I-94 both east and west of the beltway, I-35W south of I-494, I-35E north of I-694, Highway 13 in Dakota and Scott Counties, and Highways 10, 65 and 242 in Anoka County.

In addition, the region will need about approximately \$50 million annually, or \$500 million over 10 years, for improvements to the "A" minor arterial system.

**Transit.** In previous transportation plans, the Council set a goal of doubling the bus system by 2020, expanding its capacity by 3.5% a year. Since then, the base ridership has declined due to service cuts and a weak economy. As a result, the goal of doubling the bus system must be pushed back to 2030. Previous plans also envisioned developing a network of transitways – busways, LRT lines and commuter rail lines. Corridors identified as possible candidates for busways included Riverview, Minneapolis Northwest, St. Paul Northeast and Minneapolis East, and Cedar Avenue. Potential corridors for LRT included Central or any transitway with enough ridership to justify LRT. Potential corridors for commuter rail included Northstar and Red Rock. The Minneapolis Southwest/Midtown Greenway corridor also is identified as a potential transitway with vehicle technology unspecified. (These goals and objectives are subject to review and change when the Transportation System Plan is revised following the adoption of this Framework.)

Over the next decade, the Council anticipates having \$1.4 billion available for transit capital investments. This would be sufficient to maintain the existing bus system, begin to purchase the vehicles needed expand the bus system and complete the construction of the LRT line in the Hiawatha corridor. Additional federal, state and local resources would be needed to undertake the construction of any new transitways. However, the operating funds currently provided for transit would not be adequate to expand the system.

Currently, state resources fund about 62% of all regional transit operating costs, with 26 percent coming from fare box revenues, 9% from the federal government and 3% from other sources.

Both the transit and highway systems suffer from the lack of an adequate, consistent source of funding to meet the needs of a growing region. The Council will work with the Governor, Legislature, business groups and other stakeholders in an effort to define adequate funding levels and develop funding solutions to help keep pace with these needs and achieve the benchmarks contained in the Framework.

**Regional Parks.** Over the next decade, the regional park system is expected to receive \$135 million in funding for its Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Of that amount, 40% (\$54 million) would be funded through Council bonds, and the remaining 60% (\$81 million) would be funded through a combination of state and federal funds. The CIP funds land acquisition of in-holdings and planned park lands, new development and rehabilitation of existing facilities and natural resources.

The Council distributes funds to the 10 implementing agencies based on park visitation and other factors to help rank the funding priorities. While the Council and the state will provide significant support for the regional park system, the 10 implementing agencies have indicated that their actual capital improvement funding need is about \$400 million over the next decade. Their need estimate includes \$44 million for acquisition, \$164 million for development, and \$192 million for rehabilitation. Some of the additional projects will be funded through the implementing agencies themselves, and/or through public/private partnerships. Other projects will be delayed beyond the 10-year time frame until funding is available.

Looking to the future, the Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment has identified resources of regional importance. As funding and opportunities become available, the Council and the implementing agencies will seek to incorporate some of these lands in the regional parks and trails.

**Airports.** The Metropolitan Airports Commission is in the process of implementing its \$3.1 billion MSP 2010 plan, which includes major improvements to terminal, runway and other facilities at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Projects now underway include the addition of a new north/south runway, cargo facilities, a fire station, tunnels and a new tower. The timing of additional improvements could change depending upon developments in the airline industry, which is struggling to recover from a poor economy, 9/11, the SARS scare and other factors.

Funding for airport operations and improvements comes entirely from user fees and federal grants. In 2003, about 42 percent of revenues came from airline rates and charges, 40 percent from parking and concessions, and 18 percent from other sources, such as building and ground rents and utilities. These revenue sources may not be adequate to help the MAC keep pace with its capital investment program, estimated at \$1.076 billion for the next 10 years. Some projects have been delayed at MSP while others have benefited from current low interest rates for bonding. Substantial changes in the airline industry and poor economy, however, have resulted in the need for cost reduction and reallocation of resources. Funding for reliever airport development needs is being questioned; funding philosophy and rates-and-charges at MAC airports are being re-examined, and potential system effects will be reviewed further as part of the update in the Council's transportation policy plan.

## **Regional Grants**

The programs authorized under the state Livable Communities Act are the Council's primary tool to support local communities in their efforts to grow efficiently and to reinvest to keep themselves vital.

Working in partnership with cities, counties and municipal development authorities, the Council awards grants to projects that (1) clean up contaminated land for redevelopment; (2) promote efficient, connected development; and (3) support the development and preservation of affordable and lifecycle housing (Minn. Stat. 473.25-.255). It's estimated that, since the launch of the program in 1996, Council grants totaling about \$100 million (as of July 2003) have resulted in commitments of \$3 billion in

private and other public investment. The source of funds is a state-authorized levy on the region’s tax base (Minn. Stat. 473.252-.254).

Communities that apply for funding through the program must first agree to participate in the Livable Communities housing incentives program and must work toward housing goals negotiated with the Council (Minn. Stat. 473.252-.255). As of 2003, 106 metropolitan area communities are participating in the local housing incentives program.

The programs and their annual funding levels are listed in the following table:

<b>Livable Communities Programs</b>	<b>Annual Funding Levels</b>
Tax-Base Revitalization Account	\$5,000,000*
Livable Communities Demonstration Account	\$8,200,000†
Local Housing Incentive Account	\$1,500,000*

\* Does not include dollars carried over year to year.

† Total for 2003. Amount varies annually.

**Tax-Base Revitalization Account.** This program helps cities clean up contaminated urban land and buildings for subsequent redevelopment. Since 1996, the Council has awarded 127 grants from this fund that total \$44.5 million to help clean up and redevelop 996 acres of contaminated land. These projects, in 26 communities, are expected to leverage an additional \$1.5 billion in private investment, potentially include more than 12,000 new and retained jobs, and increase net tax capacity in the region by an estimated \$29 million. Requests for well-qualified projects total roughly twice the available amount, and have been growing about nine percent each year.

**Livable Communities Demonstration Account.** This account funds grants for development and redevelopment projects that link housing, jobs and services. The Council has awarded 92 grants totaling \$42 million to projects in 36 cities and three multi-city coalitions since 1996. The grants are expected to leverage more than \$994 million in private investment and \$396 million in other public investment. It’s anticipated that the projects will include 6,860 new and 400 rehabilitated housing units. Under the Demonstration Account, the Council awards Development Grants, which account for most of the funds in this account, and Opportunity Grants, which make up a fraction of the total. Development Grants are awarded to cities to support construction of projects that cities have planned. Opportunity Grants help cities prepare projects in the predevelopment phase that could evolve into development projects. The number of well-qualified applications, which is growing at 20 percent per year, far exceeds the available funds.

**Local Housing Incentives Account.** This account provides grants that help expand lifecycle rental and ownership housing development and preservation. The Council has awarded 70 grants totaling \$11 million to help 45 communities foster the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing. The grants are expected to leverage \$284 million in total investments, with an estimated 1,414 new rental units, including 995 affordable to households with low incomes and 195 public housing units for people with very low

incomes. Other expected accomplishments include rehabilitation of 539 affordable rental units, development of up to 434 new affordable ownership units, rehabilitation of between 219 and 237 affordable ownership units, and home improvement loans to 1,100-plus homeowners.

Annual funds in the Local Housing Incentive Account are the Council’s contribution to the larger overall funding pool made available by the Metropolitan Housing Implementation Group. There are always more qualified projects than available funds to support them.

## Measuring Our Progress

Many of the goals and objectives established in the *Regional Development Framework* are ambitious. Our success will hinge on the efforts not only of the Metropolitan Council, but also those of local communities and our other regional partners. They also will require the commitment of additional resources – particularly in the areas of highways and transit – in the coming years.

Nonetheless, the Council is committed to tracking and measuring our progress toward the achievement of our goals relating to shaping development patterns, improving transportation and slowing the growth of congestion, expanding the housing supply and choices, and preserving vital natural resources. The Council intends to refine the benchmarks and issue annual updates on our progress.

## Regional Benchmarks

### Accommodating Growth

- Housing Unit Production
 

2000 Baseline:	1,047,240 housing units
2030 Target:	1,537,000 housing units
Annual Indicator:	16,000-18,000 units per year
  
- Housing Unit Location – 2030 Growth Targets
 

Developed Area:	133,000 units
Annual Indicator:	4,400 per year
Developing Area:	285,000 units
Annual Indicator:	9,500 per year
Rural Growth Centers:	27,000 units
Annual Indicator:	900 per year
Remaining Rural Area:	40,000 units
Annual Indicator:	1,300 per year
  
- Land Planned for Urban Services
 

2000 Baseline:	668,000 acres in 2020 urban service area
2030 Target:	No more than 702,000 acres in 2030 urban service area
Annual Indicator:	Acres added to MUSA (updated comprehensive plans)

## Transportation

- Highway Capacity
  - 2000 Baseline: 1,485 lane-miles of freeway
  - 2030 Trend Line: 300 additional lane-miles of freeway
  - 2030 Target: 1,786 lane miles of freeway
  - Annual Indicator: 10 lane-miles constructed per year.
- Roadway Usage
  - 2000 Baseline: 23.1 vehicle miles per capita per day
  - 2030 Trend Line: 25.15 vehicle miles
  - 2030 Target: 24.55 vehicle miles
  - Annual Indicator: Less than .02% growth per year
- Highway Congestion
  - 2001 Baseline: 28 hours spent in congestion per year
  - 2030 Trend Line: 40 hours
  - 2030 Target: 37 hours
  - Annual Indicator: 1% growth per year
- Transit Service
  - 2002 Baseline: 42.4 million vehicle revenue miles per year
  - 2030 Trend Line: 42 million miles (assuming no growth)
  - 2030 Target: 89 million miles
  - Annual Indicator: 3% growth per year (starting in 2006)
- Peak Hour Transit Capacity
  - 2002 Baseline: 2.34 million peak-hour seat miles
  - 2030 Trend Line: 2.34 million peak-hour seat miles (assuming no growth)
  - 2030 Target: 4.68 million peak-hour seat miles
  - Annual Indicator: 3% growth per year (starting in 2006)
- Transit Ridership
  - 2002 Baseline: 74.9 million riders per year
  - 2030 Trend Line: 75 million riders (assuming no growth)
  - 2030 Target: 150 million riders
  - Annual Indicator: 3% annual ridership growth (starting in 2006)
- MSP Airport Runway Congestion
  - 2002 Baseline: 7 minutes average annual aircraft delay
  - 2030 Trend Line: 3.2% average annual increase
  - 2030 Target: 2 minutes average annual aircraft delay
  - Annual Indicator: —

## Housing Choices

- Housing Units by Type – 2030 Growth Target
  - Single Family: 242,500 units
  - Annual Indicator: 8,000 to 9,000 per year
  - Townhouse/Multi-family: 242,500 units
  - Annual Indicator: 8,000 to 9,000 per year
- Affordable Housing – 2010 Goals (negotiated with local communities)
  - Affordable Owner: 60,000 units added
  - Annual Indicator: 4,000 per year
  - Affordable Renter: 12,000 units added
  - Annual Indicator: 800 per year

## Environment

Water Quality: The water quality leaving the metro area is as good as the water quality entering the metro area, and in compliance with federal and state regulations. .

Our benchmark indicators are determined by taking the sum of the loads from the Minnesota River at Jordan, the Rum River in Anoka, the Mississippi River in Anoka, and the St. Croix River in Stillwater and comparing them to the load at the Mississippi River at Red Wing. The indicators are based on a rolling 10-year median annual load and acknowledge sampling variability and the effects of natural processes, such as solids settling upstream of dams.

- Total Phosphorus
  - 2000 Baseline Input: 4,380 tons per year
  - 2000 Baseline Output: 3,840 tons per year
  - 2000 Baseline Difference: -540 tons (-12%)
  - 2030 Target: Output relative to inputs consistent with 2000 Baseline.
  - Annual Indicator: Council will measure the rolling 10-year median annual load for total phosphorus to determine where we are at in relation to our target.
- Total Nitrogen
  - 2000 Baseline Input: 80,800 tons per year
  - 2000 Baseline Output: 80,900 tons per year
  - 2000 Baseline Difference: 100 tons per year (0%)
  - 2030 Target: Output relative to inputs consistent with 2000 Baseline.
  - Annual Indicator: Council will measure the rolling 10-year median annual load for total nitrogen to determine where we are at in relation to our target.

- **Total Suspended Solids**

2000 Baseline Input: 1,320,000 tons per year  
 2000 Baseline Output: 956,000 tons per year  
 2000 Baseline Difference: -364,000 tons per year (-28%)  
 2030 Target: Output relative to inputs consistent with 2000 Baseline.

Annual Indicator: Council will measure the rolling 10-year median annual load for total suspended solids to determine where we are at in relation to our target.
  
- **Water Supply:** The metropolitan area's water resources are adequate to supply future water demands without adverse impacts.

Baseline Input: Past water use information will be used to project future demand and assess the ability of the resource to supply that demand.

Water Needs: Assessment of water supplies available to each community has been initiated for parts of the region and needs to be completed for the entire region.

  - Assessment of the volume of water available to meet the long-term demands without adverse impacts to the aquifer system, surface water bodies or other users of the supply.
  - Assessment of alternatives for meeting water demands in areas where there is a potential for adverse impact from future withdrawals.
  - Assessment of long-term impact of increasing impervious surface on reducing recharge to the ground water system.
  - Development of an institutional framework for coordinated regional and subregional water supply planning and management.
  - Continuation of regional planning for drought and emergency conditions.

Annual Indicator: The Council will assess water usage annually to measure progress on achieving the benchmark. In addition, the Council will assess progress on the work efforts identified above and determine additional work needed to address the adequacy of the region's water supply to meet future water use demands.
  
- **Air Quality:** Maintain federal ambient air quality standards for carbon monoxide, ground-level ozone and fine particulates.

2002 Baseline: Zero violations  
 2030 Target: Zero violations

## Next Steps

Adoption of the *Regional Development Framework* concludes a significant regional policy development effort. However, because regional and local land use planning is cyclical, completion of the Framework is just one milestone in a process repeated at least once every 10 years.

Following the adoption of the Framework in January 2004, the Council will revise systems plans for the transportation and aviation, wastewater, and parks and open space systems. These plans will be adopted in the late 2004 to mid 2005 timeframe. Systems statements, based upon the revised systems plans, will be issued to local communities in mid 2005 to assist them in preparing their 2008 comprehensive plans.

Comprehensive plans and amendments are reviewed by the Council for consistency with the Framework's policies, as well as the systems plans. Since the development of new systems plans follows adoption of the Framework, there will be a "transition period" during which the new 2030 Framework will apply, but the previous systems plans will still be in place. During the transition, the Council will review comprehensive plans and plan amendments for conformity with the existing system plans and their consistency with the adopted 2030 Framework, as provided for under Minn. Stat. 473.175. Any inconsistencies between the existing systems plans and the 2030 Framework can be resolved by amending the systems plans to conform with the policies of the Framework. The Council will narrowly focus any system plan amendments to deal with the needs of specific communities and avoid triggering another round of comprehensive plan updates before 2008.

Other steps in the process will include:

- Revising the *Local Planning Handbook* to assist communities with the preparation of local comprehensive plan amendments and the updates due in 2008.
- Providing each community in the region with specific information about how the new Development Framework and revised metropolitan system plans will affect that community.
- Offering technical assistance to communities as they review, revise and implement their local comprehensive plans and their plan updates.
- Continuing Council incentives, such as Livable Communities Act funding, to support local projects to expand affordable and lifecycle housing choices, clean up contaminated land for redevelopment, and implement projects that efficiently connect housing, jobs, services and amenities.

## Glossary

**adaptive reuse** – rehabilitation or renovation of existing buildings or structures for uses other than the current ones.

**adjacent counties** – counties bordering or lying near the seven-county metropolitan area: Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne, Wright, McLeod, Sibley, Le Sueur, Rice, Goodhue, Polk, St. Croix and Pierce.

**affordable housing** – housing that a **low-** or **moderate-income** household can occupy without spending more than 30% of **household** income. Also incorporates the idea of quality (safe and decent dwelling), choice of location, and an adequate supply.

**aggregate** – hard inert materials (such as sand, gravel, or crushed rock) used for mixing with cement to form concrete.

**aquifer** – a water-bearing underground formation that yields a sufficient quantity of water to serve as a private or public water supply.

**benchmark** – an indicator that shows progress toward meeting *Framework* goals.

**best management practices** – recommendations pertaining to the development and maintenance of varied land uses aimed at limiting the effects of development, such as soil erosion and stormwater runoff, on the natural environment. See the Council's *Urban Small Sites Best Management Practices Manual* for specific examples of best management practices.

**brownfield** – a piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused and environmentally contaminated, especially one considered as a potential site for **redevelopment**.

**center** – a place of sufficient scale, **density** and mix of uses, where there is convenient access to housing, jobs, daily services, shopping and recreation. (See **transit-oriented development**.)

**clustering** – a technique to allow a reasonable amount of land for development while conserving rural character, such as farmland, natural areas, and open views.

**commuter rail** – a mode of public transportation that uses passenger-type trains operating on railroad right-of-way. Generally, commuter rail systems are integrated with other regional transit providers to permit transfers throughout the metropolitan region.

**context sensitive design** – roadway standards and development practices that are flexible and sensitive to community values, balancing economic, social, aesthetic and environmental objectives.

**density** – the number of dwelling units per net **residential acre** of land.

**FAST (Freeing Alternatives for Speedy Transportation) lanes** – New, publicly owned highway lanes built by private entities, which are repaid by motorists who opt to drive on them.

**groundwater** – the supply of freshwater in an **aquifer**.

**HOT (High Occupancy Toll) lanes** – Underutilized bus and carpool lanes that single-occupant vehicles can use by paying a fee.

**household** – the group that consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit.

**individual sewage treatment system (ISTS), on-site septic treatment system** – a system for disposing and treating human and domestic waste, such as a septic tank and soil absorption system or other system allowed by the state and city. This includes community drainfields, where a common on-site system serves several properties.

**infill** – development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, remained vacant, and/or is underused.

**infiltration** – the seepage of groundwater and into sewers pipes through cracks or joints.

**inflow** – typically flow from a single point into sewer pipes, such as discharges from sump pumps and foundation drains, or stormwater that enters openings in sewer access covers.

**infrastructure** – fixed facilities such as sewer lines and roadways that serve existing and new development and redevelopment.

**Land Planning Act, Metropolitan Land Planning Act** – the sections of Minnesota Statutes directing the Council to adopt long-range, comprehensive policy plans for transportation, airports, wastewater services, and parks and open space. It authorizes the Council to review the comprehensive plans of local governments.

**lifecycle housing** – varied housing options that meet people’s preferences and circumstances at all of life’s stages, providing a balance of single-family homes, apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing for independent living or with a range of assisted-living services.

**local comprehensive plan** – plans prepared by cities, townships and, in some cases, counties, for local land use and infrastructure.

**low income** – **household** income that is 50% or less (\$38,350 for 2003, adjusted for family size) of the area **median income**, as defined by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

**median income, area median income** – an income measure used by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to define income categories. The 2003 area median income for the Twin Cities metropolitan area is \$75,300.

**Metropolitan Development Guide** – the collection of regional plans that includes the **Regional Development Framework** and the plans for the four regional systems: transportation, wastewater service, airports, and parks and open space.

**Metropolitan Urban Service Area, MUSA** – the area, in which the Metropolitan Council ensures that regional services and facilities under its jurisdiction are provided.

**“A” minor arterials** – roadways within the metropolitan area that supplement the major highways in the region.

**mixed use** – a single building containing more than one type of land use or a single development of more than one building and use, where the different land uses are in close proximity, planned as a unified, complementary whole, and functionally integrated with transit, pedestrian access and parking areas.

**moderate income – household** income that is 80% (\$61,360 for 2003, adjusted for family size) of the area **median income**, as defined by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

**Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment, NRI/A** – a database that catalogs natural **resources of regional importance**, such as major water bodies, habitat areas, regional parks and **aquifers**.

**natural resources of regional importance** – resources identified by the **NRI/A** that are particularly important in sustaining the region’s ecology, providing area residents with nature-based experiences, or supplying essential materials such as **aggregate** and water.

**park and ride** – an arrangement whereby people can drive an automobile to a transit hub, transfer station or terminal, park in the designated lot, and use a transit vehicle for their ultimate destinations.

**principal arterial** – the high-capacity highways, including freeways and expressways, that make up the metropolitan highway system. (See the appendix of the Council’s *Transportation Policy Plan* for functional classification criteria and characteristics.)

**redevelopment** – the process by which an existing building, structure or developed area is **adaptively reused**, rehabilitated, restored, renovated and/or expanded.

**regional systems** – systems for which the Metropolitan Council is the responsible planning and/or operating authority. Consist of wastewater services, transportation, parks and open space, and airports.

**reinvestment** – an investment in **redevelopment, infill** or **adaptive reuse**.

**residential acre** – an acre of residential land that includes local streets, alleys, parks and locally protected natural resources. Does not major transportation rights-of-way, major parks and open space, wetlands identified in the National Wetlands Inventory, and steep slopes steeper than an 18% grade.

**stormwater** – surplus surface water generated by rainfall and snow melt that does not seep into the earth but flows overland to rivers, lakes or streams.

**system plans** – long-range comprehensive plans for the regional systems—transportation, airports, wastewater services, and parks and open space.

**transit-oriented development** – the concentration of jobs and housing around transit hubs and daily conveniences. (Additional information about transit-oriented development can be found in the handbook published by the Council, *Planning More Livable Communities with Transit-Oriented Development*.)

**transitway** – corridors or lanes dedicated exclusively for transit use, such as bus-only shoulders on highways, high-occupancy vehicle lanes, exclusive busways, light rail transit, or commuter rail.

**Urban Area** – the area consisting of two *Framework*-defined planning areas— Developed Communities and Developing Communities—occupying about 50% of the region's land area.

**urban reserve** – a transition area beyond the current **MUSA** line identified in a **local comprehensive plan** that is being held in a rural condition until it is included in the urban area.

**very low income** – **household** income that is 30% or less (\$23,010 for 2003, adjusted for family size) of the area **median income**, as defined by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

**wastewater** – water carrying waste from homes and commercial and industrial facilities.