

LOCAL PLANNING HANDBOOK

A guide and resources for Twin Cities regional municipalities preparing their comprehensive plans.

September 2005

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About the Local Planning Handbook

This Handbook is intended to help municipalities in the Twin Cities region update their local comprehensive plans, which – under state law – must be consistent with regional plans. The Metropolitan Council revised and redesigned the Handbook to reflect the needs and preferences identified by local planners and officials. The redesigned handbook features:

- a concise and user-friendly format
- web and print versions
- links to numerous online resources, including the latest forecasts and data
- many new forms, worksheets, and templates
- an extensive glossary of planning terms
- step-by-step descriptions of the comprehensive plan preparation and review processes

The Metropolitan Council will regularly update the Handbook with new planning information and enhanced features. New information and updates will be highlighted on the Handbook homepage at <http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/lph/handbook.htm>. The homepage also serves as an interactive Table of Contents with direct links to key content and tools.

The Metropolitan Council encourages local planners and officials to bookmark the Handbook homepage in their web-browser and to regularly check the online version of the Handbook to ensure access to the most current information, forecasts, forms, templates and worksheets.

Handbook documents are in Adobe PDF format and can be downloaded and printed. In order to best utilize all the interactive features of these PDF documents, we recommend using the free Adobe Reader software Version 7.0. See <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> to download it from the Adobe website.

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LOCAL PLANNING HANDBOOK

SECTION I

METROPOLITAN PLANNING OVERVIEW

THE FOUNDATION OF REGIONAL PLANNING

The continuing vitality of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan region depends in great part on planning for steady and coherent growth. The challenges inherent in planning for the region are met through cooperation between local and regional planners.

As the planning agency for the region, the [Metropolitan Council](http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/about.htm) supports and promotes communication with communities and the people responsible for planning them. This communication is the foundation of superior planning. It is in this spirit that we have created this handbook for persons involved with and interested in local and regional planning. State Law directs the Council to prepare and adopt guidelines and procedures relating to the requirements and provisions of the state law, including the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, to provide assistance to local governmental units and school districts in accomplishing the provisions of the comprehensive planning law. The Council adopted this version of the Local Planning Handbook on September 14, 2005.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/about.htm>

[Minn. Stat. 473.854](#)

Staff resources

The Metropolitan Council's [sector representatives](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm), assigned to specific units of government, are each municipality's key point of contact. These staff members provide specific information to municipalities and they serve as a liaison between the municipality and the Metropolitan Council.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

[Technical staff members](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm) who have expertise in specific areas of planning assist municipalities either directly or through their sector representatives.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

Where to mail documents for Council review

Mail paper copies and all relevant material of plans requiring Metropolitan Council review to the Reviews Coordinator:

Reviews Coordinator
Metropolitan Council
230 East Fifth Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1634

Policy documents and research materials

To order copies of the *2030 Regional Development Framework* or any of the policy plans, e-mail or phone the data center.
E-mail: data.center@metc.state.mn.us
Phone: 651-602-1140

data.center@metc.state.mn.us

[Articles, maps, tables and research reports](#) are available on the Metropolitan Council website. Most are also available in print.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/resources/resources.htm>

**THE METROPOLITAN
LAND PLANNING ACT
REQUIRES LOCAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLANS**

The local comprehensive plan is a public document that describes how a community wants to develop over a specified planning period. The plan also helps to clarify the relationships between the community and the region.

[Minn. Stat. 473.864 Subd. 1 & 2](#)

To ensure that coordination occurs between local municipalities and regional systems, Minnesota law requires municipalities in the region to submit their local comprehensive plans to the Metropolitan Council for review and, as necessary, for appropriate corrective actions.

[Minn. Stat. 473.175](#)

The Development Guide directs local planning

To achieve the goals of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, State law requires the Metropolitan Council to adopt a comprehensive Metropolitan Development Guide that establishes parameters for regional infrastructure and local planning. In framing the policies and strategies found in the Guide, the Council aims to optimize the effectiveness of regional infrastructure and to meet the challenges of growth.

The Metropolitan Development Guide is comprised of a Regional Development Framework and system plans for water resource management; parks and open space; transportation, including transit and aviation. Together, the Development Framework and system plans create a vision for the region and craft the goals, policies, standards and programs that bring the vision to life. These documents also include tools – maps, templates, forecasts, budgets and programs – that local planners need.

The Development Framework sets out goals and guides system expansion

The 2030 Regional Development Framework sets out four goals to guide the region's development. These goals shape development plans for the region's infrastructure, and they guide the pattern of growth in the region. The four goals are:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/timeline.htm>

- **Efficient Growth.** Work with local communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and efficient manner.
- **Multi-Modal Transportation.** Plan and invest in multi-modal transportation choices, based on a full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region's economic needs.
- **Housing Choices.** Encourage expanded choices in housing locations and types, and improved access to jobs and opportunities.
- **Natural Resource Protection.** Work with local and regional partners to conserve, protect and enhance the region's vital natural resources.

***System plans
implement the
Framework***

The system plans, also called policy plans, emerge from the 2030 Development Framework. The policy plans present strategies, policies and methods designed to implement the regional goals.

The 2030 Transportation Policy Plan, adopted in 2004, addresses the need to prepare for expected growth. Besides maintaining the road system, the region is challenged to develop a variety of transit options. For the first time, aviation is included in the transportation policy plan.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/summary.htm>

The 2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan, adopted in 2005, establishes policies to ensure the protection of water resources as the region continues to grow. It focuses on assessing the region's water supply, protecting surface water from pollution and ensuring that wastewater flowing into sewer systems is treated efficiently.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPP2005.htm>

The 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan, adopted in 2005, recognizes the need to maintain and expand the open spaces that promotes the quality of life in the region.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/ParksPlan.htm>

***Council staff work
with local planners***

The Council's [sector representatives](#) work closely with each community as it prepares its comprehensive plan. They analyze comprehensive plans and work with the local jurisdiction to ensure the plan meets the applicable requirements of State Law and Council policies.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

After the updated plan is submitted, and the plan has been reviewed, the Council planner who is designated as the principal reviewer will present the findings of the review to the local jurisdiction. Eventually, the findings are submitted to the Community Development Committee and to the Metropolitan Council. The Council staff report may include a recommendation for specific actions needed to correct or to clarify the plan before it is formally adopted by the Community.

[Members of the Metropolitan Council](http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/members.htm), are appointed by the Governor, and are responsible for determining that local plans are prepared in accordance with laws and policies that govern regional systems and comprehensive planning content.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/members.htm>

WHO SUBMITS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

[Minnesota Law](#) requires every municipality and county within the seven-county metropolitan area to prepare and to submit a comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council.

[Minn. Stat. 473.86-862](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/metromap.pdf>

Cities

To fulfill statutory requirements, every incorporated city within the seven-county region (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties) submits a comprehensive plan. The cities of Rockford, Hanover, Northfield and New Prague are exempt.

Townships

Every township is required to prepare and submit a comprehensive plan; however, communities that do not have the resources to do so may request assistance. Townships have two options:

- Request that their County Board prepare a comprehensive plan and implementation measures for the township, or
- Create a township planning unit and develop a comprehensive plan and ordinances for themselves.

***Counties: Anoka,
Carver, Dakota,
Scott and
Washington***

The counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington are required to prepare and submit local comprehensive plans that include plans for land use, transportation, and solid waste management and an implementation program. Counties must also prepare comprehensive plans for townships that do not or cannot prepare plans for themselves.

***Counties: Hennepin
and Ramsey***

Hennepin and Ramsey Counties must prepare implementation programs for their transportation and solid waste management plans. If a city or township within the jurisdiction of one of these counties requests it, the county is responsible for managing the maintenance program for that community's septic maintenance system.

**SCHOOL DISTRICTS
SUBMIT A CAPITAL
IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM**

School districts in the Metropolitan Area must prepare capital improvement programs; the statute requires the Council to review the programs to determine compatibility with the plans of other jurisdictions, conformity with metropolitan system plans, and consistency with adopted plans of the Council. The process is comparable to that used for municipal comprehensive plan updates and amendments. The statute defines the capital improvement program.

[Minn. Stat. 473.852, Subd. 4](#)

**STATUTE REQUIRES
SPECIFIC CONTENT
SECTIONS**

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act requires each comprehensive plan to address the four areas described below. Additional statutes and policies stipulate exactly what needs to be included in the discussions within each area.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 1
through 6](#)

***The background
section sets the
stage***

The ***background*** section of the plan delineates the community's vision and expectations. It includes the objectives, policies and forecasts that serve as the basis of the community's plans. Detailed requirements are identified in [Section 2 of this Handbook](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect2.pdf>

***The land use plan
allocates resources***

In the ***land use section*** the local comprehensive plan explains how the community has allocated and will allocate land use, how it will accommodate population growth, and how it protects special resources. Detailed information and requirements are identified in [Section 3 of this Handbook](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect3.pdf>

- Besides an inventory of existing land use, the ***land use*** section includes a description of the community's development plans, staging them in five-year increments.
- In the ***housing plan*** the community discusses plans for needed housing as these relate to housing needs throughout the region.
- In the ***special resources*** section the comprehensive plan identifies certain resources within the boundaries of the jurisdiction and outlines plans to ensure their protection.

***The public facilities
plans protect
infrastructure***

This section describes plans relating to transportation, water resources and parks. The expected population growth in the region places extraordinary pressures on these systems. For this reason, local plans relating to these systems must be thorough and appropriate.

- The ***transportation*** section must address the legal requirements for maintaining and developing roads, highways, transit, non-motor transportation and aviation. Detailed comprehensive plan requirements for roads and highways, transit and aviation are included in [Section 4 of this Handbook](#).
- The ***water resources*** section addresses wastewater, water supply and surface water management. Maintaining an adequate and safe water supply is critical as population grows. This means assessing resources and attending to safe and thorough treatment methods. Detailed comprehensive plan requirements for wastewater, surface water and water supply are included in [Section 5 of this Handbook](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect4.pdf>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect5.pdf>

- The ***parks and open space*** section must identify and describe parks and trails facilities within the jurisdiction. Detailed park plan requirements are included in [Section 6 of this Handbook](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect6.pdf>

The implementation programs carry out the plans

In the ***implementation*** section, the jurisdiction shows how local official controls will ensure the continued viability of plans outlined in other sections of the comprehensive plan. This section also outlines the community's capital improvement program. Detailed implementation program requirements are included in [Section 7 of this Handbook](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect7.pdf>

WHEN DOES THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REVIEW PLAN UPDATES OR AMENDMENTS?

Growth is dynamic in the region and its communities. The Metropolitan Development Guide requires amendment occasionally to reflect changes at the regional level. When this occurs, the Metropolitan Council notifies affected communities that they must review their plans. Communities also may initiate an **update** or **amendment** to their comprehensive plan.

Decennial review requires a comprehensive plan update

Local units are required to review and update their comprehensive plans **at least once every 10 years**, and the Metropolitan Council is required to review the updated plan. The current round of updates was launched with the release of the system statements on September 12, 2005. These updates are due in 2008, three years from the date the system statement was received.

[Minn. Stat. 473.864, Subd. 2](#)

A new system statement alerts each affected jurisdiction

Minnesota law specifies that a revision of the Regional Development Framework or a change in one or more of the policy plans will result in a new system statement that communicates the change. A system statement is created uniquely for each jurisdiction affected by the change. The system statement alerts the jurisdiction that the local comprehensive plan must be reviewed and an amendment may be required. If an amendment is required as a result of a revision of the Regional Development Framework or a change in a policy plan, the local jurisdiction has nine months to prepare the amendment and submit it to the Council for review.

[Minn. Stat. 473.856](#)

Comprehensive plan amendments

If a municipality changes any part or chapter of its comprehensive plan, it must submit a [comprehensive plan amendment and comprehensive plan amendment form](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/resources.htm) to the Metropolitan Council for review. Municipalities amend their comprehensive plans for various reasons including:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/resources.htm>

- Changes resulting from interim planning activities such as master plans, redevelopment plans or annexation
- A need to change a land use designation to allow a proposed development
- Routine update of a public facilities element, such as a parks plan
- A text amendment to revise a land use category, policy or other description
- A routine update to incorporate new information such as census figures

**STEPS FOR SUBMITTING
A PLAN FOR REVIEW:
OVERVIEW**

Minnesota law outlines a sequence for submitting a comprehensive plan to specific units of government before it is submitted to the Metropolitan Council. This ensures that the Metropolitan Council reviews only those plans that have been reviewed by affected jurisdictions and the comprehensive plan has been approved by the municipality's own governing body.

[Minn. Stat. 473.858](#)
[Minn. Stat. 473.854](#)

***Process overview
for updates and
amendments***

The review process and timeline are slightly different for comprehensive plan updates and comprehensive plan amendments. While the general steps are the same, the timeline for an amendment is usually shorter than for an update which is typically more complex and lengthy. [See the review process and timelines for both updates and amendments outlined in a table.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/reviews.pdf>

**STEPS TO TAKE BEFORE
SUBMITTING A PLAN FOR
REVIEW**

Before a municipality submits its updated or amended comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council it must take the following steps:

- Allow for adjacent governmental units and affected school districts to review and comment
- Planning Commission approval
- Local governing body approval (but not final adoption).

***Adjacent and
affected
governmental units
review the plan***

Minnesota law requires each municipality to submit its proposed comprehensive plan to adjacent governmental units and affected school districts before submitting it to the Metropolitan Council. It is advisable to also provide copies of the plan materials to other units such as counties, watershed districts, and the like.

Review Period

The municipality must allow adjacent and affected governmental units up to:

- 6 months to review and comment on an updated comprehensive plan
- 60 days for comprehensive plan amendments.

This waiting period allows interested parties to review and comment on the plan before Metropolitan Council review.

Submit comments to the municipality and Metropolitan Council

The comments of adjacent communities and school districts and the subsequent response should be included with the comprehensive plan submitted to the Metropolitan Council. Communities are encouraged to make it a regular practice to communicate with adjacent governmental units and affected school districts about all plans and development proposals being considered by the planning commission and governing body.

Updated plan sent to Council goes to adjacent units

[State law](#) requires that a copy of the comprehensive plan update submitted to the Metropolitan Council including any interim changes or notice that “no change” has been made, be re-submitted to adjacent units and school districts when the plan is submitted to the Metropolitan Council.

[Minn. Stat. 473.858, Subd. 2](#)

Local government gives preliminary approval

The planning commission of the municipality approves the updated comprehensive plan after review by adjacent communities and affected school districts. Next, the governing body considers the updated comprehensive plan, acts to give it preliminary approval, subject to Metropolitan Council review, and authorizes submittal of the plan to the Metropolitan Council. Local governing units must not confer final approval of the plan or implement any part of it before the Metropolitan Council has reviewed and, if necessary, commented on it.

**SUBMITTING A
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
UPDATE OR AMENDMENT
FOR REVIEW**

The Metropolitan Council encourages submission of planning documents in a digital format (CD or disk) because it reduces the number of paper copies required. **Note, however, the review process begins only after the Metropolitan Council receives the paper copies of the official transmittal.**

***Submitting in a
digital format to
reduce number of
paper copies***

To submit materials that include a digital component, follow the procedures below:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

1. Notify the Metropolitan Council's [sector representative](#) for the municipality of the coming digital submittal.
2. Mail disk(s), paper copies (see below) and all relevant material to the Reviews Coordinator.
 - Comprehensive plan **update**: Three (3) complete paper copies
 - Comprehensive plan **amendment**: Three (3) complete paper copies
 - Surface water management plan, water supply plan, comprehensive sewer plan, Critical Area and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Plan: Two (2) copies

Reviews Coordinator
Metropolitan Council
230 East Fifth Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1634

***Submitting paper
copies only***

To submit paper copies only, mail the comprehensive plan and related documents to the Metropolitan Council's Review Coordinator as follows:

Reviews Coordinator
Metropolitan Council
230 East Fifth Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-1634

- Comprehensive plan update or amendment: Five (5) complete paper copies
- Surface water management plans, water supply plan, comprehensive sewer plan, CA/MNRRRA plans: Two (2) copies

**METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL'S REVIEW
CRITERIA**

In its review of a local comprehensive plan, the Metropolitan Council views a jurisdiction's intended actions from the perspectives of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act and the interests of both adjacent jurisdictions, and the regional system plans. The review is designed to determine how the community's planned actions relate to the interests of the region over the long term. Local comprehensive plan updates and amendments are evaluated relative to three criteria:

[MLPA overview](#)

- **Conformance** with all metropolitan systems policy plans for transportation, water resources and parks
- **Consistency** with requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act and Metropolitan Council policies
- **Compatibility** with the plans of other local jurisdictions, including school districts

[Minn. Stat. 473.175](#)***Conformance to
system plans***

One of the Metropolitan Council's key functions is to ensure regional systems are managed and used effectively. Therefore, an extensive system plan has been crafted for each of the major systems: wastewater; parks; and transportation, including transit and aviation.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859](#)

In order to be considered complete, the comprehensive plan must include specific information regarding the community's or county's conformance with the requirements of these system plans.

A local comprehensive plan conforms to the systems plans if it includes adequate and complete information as described in the system statement, and does not present a substantial impact on, or contain a substantial departure from, metropolitan systems plans.

The Metropolitan Council may require a plan modification if the plan is more likely than not to have a substantial departure from or impact on a regional system or plan.

[\(Handbook, page 1-15\)](#)

Consistency with statutory requirements and regional policies

The basic content required in a local comprehensive plan is specified by laws, Executive Orders, and the Metropolitan Council's regional plans and policies. A key criterion in a comprehensive plan review is consistency with the statutes and regional plans.

Consistency means that the comprehensive plan includes every major section required by statute and meets the expectations outlined in the *2030 Regional Development Framework* and system plans.

Consistency with special rules

Other state and federal rules and statutes require municipalities to address specific regional planning issues.

Communities adjoining the Mississippi River must prepare and submit **Critical Area and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (CA/MNRRRA)** plans.

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/116G/15.html>

Local units of government with a public water supply must prepare a **water supply plan**. Municipalities serving over 1,000 residents need to submit **emergency and conservation plans** to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) every 10 years.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3](#)
[Minn. Stat. 103G.291](#)
[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 6](#)

Compatibility with adjacent and affected jurisdictions

Comprehensive plan updates and amendments must be reviewed by adjacent and affected jurisdictions. If an objection or concern is expressed, the documentation resulting from the ensuing exchange must be included in the plan submitted to the Metropolitan Council.

[Minn. Stat. 473.858, Subd. 2](#)

THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL CAN REQUIRE A PLAN MODIFICATION

To ensure coordination of regional systems, state law gives the Metropolitan Council authority to require a local governmental unit to modify its plan. A plan modification may be required if an aspect of the comprehensive plan has the potential of resulting in a substantial impact on a metropolitan system, or if it represents a substantial departure from one or more metropolitan system plans.

The regional system plans identify the comprehensive plans contents required to ensure conformance with the regional plans. Deviation from the regional policy plans will more likely than not result in a departure from or impact on the regional systems:

- [*2030 Transportation Policy Plan*](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter1_Final.pdf#page=6

- [*2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan*](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_RegionalFramework.pdf#page=8

- [*2030 Parks Policy Plan*](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=15>

If the Metropolitan Council requires a plan modification, the Council must adopt findings and a resolution concluding that the comprehensive plan or a part of it is more likely than not to have a substantial impact on or contain a substantial departure from metropolitan policy plans.

[Minn. Stat. 473.175 subd. 1](#)

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE REVIEW PROCESS

The reviewer determines completeness

Within 60 days after the Metropolitan Council resolves to require a plan modification, the community or county government must respond with either a letter of agreement or notification that it intends to contest the requirement. Minnesota law specifies a course of action for contesting a required plan modification.

[Minn. Stat. Sec. 483.866](#)

The [Metropolitan Council's sector representative](#) assigned to each municipality works closely with the community's planning staff as the local unit develops a comprehensive plan update that meets the criteria of statute and Metropolitan Council policy and meets with the approval of affected jurisdictions.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

[See the review process and timelines for both updates and amendments outlined in a table.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/reviews.pdf>

The initial review determines if the comprehensive plan update includes all the elements required by statute and Metropolitan Council policy in sufficient detail to determine conformance with regional systems and consistency with Council policies. The Metropolitan Council staff strives to do this within 15 days after the Council receives the plan update.

- If the submittal contains all the information required to review a comprehensive plan, the municipality is notified that the plan is complete.
- If the submittal does not contain all the information required to review a comprehensive plan, the municipality is notified that the plan is incomplete. The notification to the municipality will identify the missing information.

If information must be added, it is submitted directly to the Principal Reviewer and the determination of the plan's completeness is repeated.

***Metropolitan Council
staff members
conduct the review***

Once a local comprehensive plan update is deemed complete, Metropolitan Council planning and technical staff review it for conformance with the regional system plans, consistency with the Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirements and Metropolitan Council policies, and compatibility with adjacent communities.

[Minn. Stat. 473.175, Subd. 2](#)

The Metropolitan Council has 120 days to complete its review of and comments on the local comprehensive plan.

***Extension of the
review period***

The Metropolitan Council may extend the review period if it is mutually agreed to by the municipality.

***The plan goes to full
Metropolitan Council
for action***

Metropolitan Council staff will prepare a report and present the findings and recommendations to the [Community Development Committee](#) for deliberation before the matter is taken to the full Council.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/committees.htm>

[Members of the Metropolitan Council](#) consider the report and the findings. If the comprehensive plan conforms to the regional systems policy plans, the Council will direct that the municipality may put its comprehensive plan into effect. If the plan does not conform or otherwise is not in order, per the law and policies, the Council shall send the local unit a resolution, with its decision to require modifications to assure conformance with the metropolitan system plans.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/members.htm>

Local citizens, staff, local officials and other interested parties are welcome to attend meetings of the full Metropolitan Council or of any of the standing committees, including the Community Development Committee. Most presentations and discussion occur at committee meetings.

**METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL'S
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
AMENDMENT REVIEW
PROCESS*****The reviewer
determines
completeness***

The following steps outline the Metropolitan Council process for reviewing comprehensive plan **amendments**. The process is similar to that used for comprehensive plan updates.

[See the review process and timelines for both updates and amendments outlined in a table.](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/reviews.pdf)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/reviews.pdf>

The initial review determines if the plan includes all the elements required by statute and Metropolitan Council policy. This review for completeness occurs within 15 days after reviewers receive the plan amendment. When the review is completed, the municipality is notified.

- If the comprehensive plan amendment contains all the information required for review, the municipality is notified that the plan is complete.
- If the comprehensive plan amendment does not contain all the information required for review, the municipality is notified that the amendment is incomplete. The notification to the municipality will identify the missing information.

If information must be added or changed, it is submitted directly to the Principal Reviewer and the determination of the application's completeness is repeated before the review process begins.

***Metropolitan Council
staff members
conduct the review***

Once a comprehensive plan amendment is deemed complete for review, Council staff reviews it for conformance with the regional system plans, consistency with the Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirements and Metropolitan Council policies, and compatibility with adjacent communities.

The Council strives to review proposed amendments within 60 days.

Extension of the review period

The Council may extend the review period to 120 days if needed. The Council may also extend the review period beyond 120 days if it is mutually agreed to by the municipality. There are occasions when complex amendments require the extra time for review. Local units are advised regularly during the process if it appears more time will be needed.

Metropolitan Council may respond with an administrative review or...

Metropolitan Council staff may [administratively review](#) and respond to comprehensive plan amendments, surface water management plans, and water supply plans if these meet certain conditions. In general, small changes that do not affect a metropolitan system plan or involve a change to the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) can be handled administratively. Communities should refer to the complete list of criteria adopted by the Metropolitan Council (most recently on May 11, 2005).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/AdministrativeReview.pdf>

If the plan review is conducted administratively, Council staff will issue a letter indicating that no modification of the proposed amendment is required and that the community may put the amendment into effect. If the application does not meet the administrative review criteria, it will be handled in the usual way.

The amendment may go to full Metropolitan Council for action

If the comprehensive plan amendment does not qualify for the administrative review process, staff will prepare a report. The report findings and recommendations are presented to the [Community Development Committee](#) for deliberation before they are taken to the full Metropolitan Council.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/committees.htm>

[Members of the Metropolitan Council](#) consider the report and the findings before taking final action. If the amendment conforms to the regional systems policy plans, the Metropolitan Council will direct that the municipality may put its comprehensive plan amendment into effect. If there are no issues, the amendment may be placed on the Community Development Committee and Council consent agendas.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/members.htm>

Local citizens, staff, local officials and other interested parties are welcome to attend meetings of the full Metropolitan Council or of any of the standing committees, including the community development committee. Most presentations and discussion occur at committee meetings.

**STEPS TO TAKE AFTER
THE METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL REVIEWS THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
UPDATE OR
AMENDMENT**

After the Metropolitan Council has taken action on the comprehensive plan update or amendment, the Metropolitan Council will provide written notification of the action. Following this notice, the municipality must take the following steps:

- respond to plan modifications, if applicable
- adopt the comprehensive plan in final form after considering Metropolitan Council review recommendations
- submit two final copies to the Metropolitan Council

***Local government
adopts the
comprehensive plan***

Minnesota law requires each local governmental unit to formally adopt the comprehensive plan, along with any required modifications, within nine months after the Metropolitan Council's final action. If the Metropolitan Council has recommended changes, the local government should incorporate them into the plan or respond to the Council before the governing body adopts the comprehensive plan.

[Minn. Stat. 473.864](#)

***Send two copies to
Metropolitan Council
and the process is
finished***

Once the local governmental unit formally adopts its comprehensive plan, two copies of that plan and the official controls implementing the plan must be submitted to the Council.

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

Statute identifies additional elements that may be included in the comprehensive plan. These are additional elements are discussions of economic development, intergovernmental coordination, and urbanization and redevelopment.

[Minn.Stat.473.859 subd. 2 \(b\)](#)

The contents of the comprehensive plan are not limited to the content requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act and Council policies. A municipality may choose to include additional information in its comprehensive plan, such as master plans, redevelopment plans, other public facilities plans such as hospitals or schools, or special studies.

The community may also choose to describe the planning process and the roles of community residents, the business community, Planning Commission members and others in developing the local comprehensive plan. Goals, objectives, and criteria that are developed with community visioning activities can be referenced in the comprehensive plan.

Economic development

The economic development element identifies types of mixed use development, expansion facilities for businesses, and methods for developing a balanced and stable economic base.

Intergovernmental coordination

By discussing intergovernmental coordination, the community formally acknowledges its relationship with other communities, adjacent and nearby local government units, the region and the state. This acknowledgement is especially appropriate when communities participate in joint planning and decision-making in order to site public schools, build public facilities or share public services.

Urbanization and redevelopment areas

The timing and sequence of development and redevelopment may be discussed here. This discussion assists the municipality in its plans for improving local infrastructure. It also provides an overview of regional infrastructure needs.

[Minnesota Statutes 473.859, Subd 6](#)

SECTION 2

FOUNDATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The background chapter sets the stage for the rest of the comprehensive plan. It presents the municipality's vision of itself: what distinguishes it, what it values and how it will develop in concert with the whole region.

[Minnesota Statutes 473.859](#)

Overview of plan requirements

The foundation of the comprehensive plan:

- includes the municipality's **policies and objectives** ([Handbook, page 2-2](#))
- identifies the Metropolitan Council's **planning area designation** for the municipality ([Handbook, page 2-2](#))
- includes the Metropolitan Council's municipality level **forecasts** for population, household numbers, and employment ([Handbook, page 2-4](#))

Resources

The Metropolitan Council's staff provides information and tools to assist the municipality in its local planning efforts. Print resources include Metropolitan Council policy information as well as research.

The Metropolitan Council's [Community Development Division staff](#) is committed to helping local planners directly. Staff members can provide such information as Geographic Information System (GIS) maps, forecasts and demographic data, names of local planning consultants and excerpts from other local comprehensive plans.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

The municipality's assigned Metropolitan Council [sector representative](#) can direct local planners to appropriate staff and print resources. Technical staff with expertise in specific areas may also be reached directly. Planning staff and their areas of expertise are listed on the Metropolitan Council's website.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

**POLICIES AND
OBJECTIVES
REQUIREMENTS**

Policies and objectives establish the municipality's direction and guide general land use decisions. This chapter describes the municipality's objectives and sets out the policies, standards and programs that constitute the overall approach the municipality intends to follow to reach those objectives.

Include policies and objectives

The focus is on policies and objectives that guide land use, development, redevelopment and preservation of land and water within the municipality's jurisdiction. Specific policies relating to particular systems and exact implementation strategies are included in later chapters of the comprehensive plan.

Describe standards and programs for implementing the plan

The background chapter must include a description of standards and programs to be used in implementing the comprehensive plan. These standards provide broad direction for the municipality in establishing its official controls. Programs, such as the capital improvement program, are included here to the extent that they identify the timing and financing mechanisms for implementing the comprehensive plan.

**REGIONAL PLANNING
DESIGNATION
REQUIREMENTS**

Strategies for regional development relate directly to growth patterns within the region. In the *2030 Regional Development Framework*, municipalities are identified according to their ***regional planning area designation***. Depending on that designation, a municipality may choose within a range of strategies for accommodating expected growth.

See the Framework's "Planning Areas" map of planning area designations throughout the region.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FWPlanningAreas8x11.pdf>

The Metropolitan Council also provides a [table that identifies each municipality's planning area designation or designations](#).

[Table of municipalities' planning designations](#)

The planning area designation and related policies identify the Metropolitan Council's expectations for the amount, location and standards for development. The community's designation therefore guides local plans, policies and forecasts. As part of the background section, the comprehensive plan should identify the community's regional planning area designation and relate its growth expectations to it.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf#page=20>

What do regional planning area designations represent?

A community's planning area designation is based on its geographic location, amount of land available for development, existing development patterns, planned land uses and availability of infrastructure. The *2030 Regional Development Framework* places each municipality in one or more of the following designations:

Definitions of planning area designations

- **Developed communities** are those in which more than 85% of the land within the borders identified in 2000 is developed.
- **Developing communities** are those in which more than 15% of the land within the borders identified in 2000 is vacant or available for development.
- **Rural centers** are small towns located throughout the rural area.
- **Rural growth centers** are those rural centers that are both interested in and showing a potential for growth.
- **Rural residential areas** are areas currently developed at one unit per 2½ acres or less. These areas have no plans to provide urban infrastructure such as centralized wastewater treatment.
- **Diversified rural communities** are the sparsely developed parts of the region that host the widest variety of farm and non-farm land uses. They include a mix of clustered and large-lot residential areas in limited amounts.
- **Agricultural areas** are large contiguous land areas planned and zoned to maintain agriculture as the primary land use.

Some municipalities have more than one designation

The *2030 Regional Development Framework* assigns some municipalities on the developing edge of the metropolitan area more than one planning area designation. The double designation reflects a division within the municipality between areas planned for urban growth and served by the regional sewer system and areas maintained for either agricultural or rural land use and served by septic systems.

Planning area designation guides growth strategies

Strategies to accommodate expected growth depend in great part on the growth patterns reflected in the community's planning area designation. [The *Planning Areas Map*](#) in the *2030 Regional Development Framework* illustrates regional growth patterns by planning area designation. The Framework also includes [strategies appropriate to each planning area designation](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FWPlanningAreas8x11.pdf>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf#page=16>

GROWTH FORECAST REQUIREMENTS

The background chapter must include total population, household and employment forecasts. These serve as the foundation for the rest of the comprehensive plan. The *2030 Regional Development Framework* includes [forecasts for household number, population and employment for the years 2010, 2020 and 2030](#). The Metropolitan Council, with input from municipalities, calculates these forecasts using regional statistics. Forecasts are updated periodically as new information becomes available. The Metropolitan Council's website contains the most current version of the forecasts.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FrameworkAppendixA.pdf#page=1>

The Metropolitan Council's forecasting methodology considers historic trends, 2000 census data, current demographic data, annual monitoring of building permits and employment data and local comprehensive plans. Appendix A of the *2030 Regional Development Framework* provides detailed information on the methodology used in preparing the regional forecasts.

How are forecasts used?

Forecasts at the regional, county and municipal levels are expressed in the *2030 Regional Development Framework*. At the regional level, the Metropolitan Council forecasts that, between 2000 and 2030, the metropolitan area will grow by nearly 1 million people in almost half a million households and 563,000 jobs. [Forecasts by municipality are available online in Excel format.](#)

[http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/2030RDF_forecasts\(082405\).xls](http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/2030RDF_forecasts(082405).xls) (Excel)

In addition to the growth forecasts, the Metropolitan Council provides [annual estimates](#) of the previous year's population, household number, and employment.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/stats.htm>

The Metropolitan Council translates the forecasts into regional infrastructure needs for roads and highways, transit service, wastewater infrastructure, water supply and parks. The forecasts also become the basis for each municipality to plan for water, wastewater, roads, and parks. **The comprehensive plan must demonstrate congruence among key systemic elements:**

- forecasted growth
- planned land use
- residential and employment densities, and
- infrastructure plans.

What forecast information must be included?

The **forecast tables** included in Appendix A of the *2030 Regional Development Framework* include [total projected population, household number, and employment growth for each municipality.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FrameworkAppendixA.pdf>

These numbers must be used in updating the comprehensive plans.

**Why use
Metropolitan Council
forecasts?**

If a municipality bases its comprehensive plan on forecasts other than those provided by the Metropolitan Council, the plan will likely not be in conformance with the regional system plans and may represent a departure from, or impact to, the regional policy plans.

If a comprehensive plan includes a forecast that is lower than the *2030 Regional Development Framework* forecasts, the regional systems will be underutilized and the unplanned growth will need to be accommodated elsewhere in the region. A comprehensive plan that is inconsistent with Metropolitan Council policy results in the inefficient use of infrastructure.

If a comprehensive plan includes a forecast that is higher than planned in the *2030 Regional Development Framework*, adequate infrastructure may not be available to accommodate the growth.

Contact your [sector representative](#) with questions.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

**What if the system
statement includes
sewered and
unsewered
forecasts?**

The **system statements** of municipalities with existing and planned development served by more than one wastewater treatment method will include a table that separates the forecasted growth areas into “sewered” and “unsewered.” Comprehensive plan documents for these municipalities must also include a forecast table for the sewered and unsewered areas of growth.

Separating these areas assists municipalities with planning for both urban and rural land uses. The forecast for the sewered area is the basis for planning land uses at urban density levels served by public facilities. The forecast for the unsewered area is the basis for maintaining agricultural uses or rural character while allowing some growth.

**Forecasts and
demographic
resources**

The municipality's **system statement** includes the municipality's total population, household numbers and employment figures. These are divided into sewerage and unsewered groups.

The forecasts in the **regional system policy plans** are based on the [forecasted growth included in the 2030 Regional Development Framework](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FrameworkAppendixA.pdf>

The Metropolitan Council's current municipality level forecasts are available online along with the current estimates of population, households and employment and other demographic trends relevant to forecasting.

[See the forecasts online in Excel format.](#)

[http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/2030RDF_forecasts\(082405\).xls](http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/2030RDF_forecasts(082405).xls)

Appendix A of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* [provides growth forecasts for municipalities served by the regional wastewater system](#). These numbers, which are broken down by total population, household and employment, serve as the basis for decisions regarding the regional wastewater (sewer) system.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices-a.pdf#page=7

[County level demographic information and forecasts](#) are included in the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPPAAppendixE.pdf>

The Metropolitan Council website shows [the most current population, household and employment estimates, as well as historical information and demographic trends](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/stats.htm>

[Additional demographic data from the 2000 census](#) is also available on the Metropolitan Council's website.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/Census/census2000.htm>

SECTION 3

LAND USE PLAN

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

State law requires all municipalities to include a land use plan that assesses how land and water is used now and in the future. Land use planning begins with forecasts of growth in population, household number and employment. Once those figures are established for the region and the municipality, local planners must identify where residents will live, work, play and shop. Based on these assessments, they create plans for development and redevelopment.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 2](#)

Overview of plan requirements

The development and redevelopment anticipated in the land use plan drives the need for local and regional infrastructure, including sanitary sewer, water, roads and parks. For infrastructure planning to occur effectively at the regional level, the local land use plan must contain complete and accurate information in the following areas:

- Inventory of **existing land** and water within the municipality showing current land use in terms of standard categories ([Handbook, page 3-3](#))
- Plan **future land use** ([Handbook, page 3-4](#)) and **stage development to accommodate forecasted growth** including location, intensity and extent of development ([Handbook, page 3-7](#))
- **Housing plan** ([Handbook, page 3-8](#))
- Strategies for **protecting special resources** including solar access, historic preservation, aggregate and Critical Area ([Handbook, page 3-10](#))

Resources

[Metropolitan Council staff](#) are available to answer questions related to land use, mapping, housing, natural resources and Critical Area and Minnesota National River and Recreation Area plans. Planning staff and their areas of expertise are listed on the Metropolitan Council's website.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

The Metropolitan Council encourages local units of government, staff and local officials to contact their Metropolitan Council [sector representative](#) with general questions regarding Metropolitan Council land use policies.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

**EXISTING LAND USE
REQUIREMENTS**

To plan for regional infrastructure, the Metropolitan Council needs accurate information about how each municipality allocates its land for residential, commercial, industrial, public, parks and open space, institutional and mixed uses. **The land use inventory map** shows the extent of land and water within the municipality. It also describes land use in terms of standard categories.

Map surface water

The map identifies all surface water resources including lakes, wetlands, rivers, streams and drainage courses. It also shows adjoining lands that affect these water resources. Mapping these resources helps the municipality identify areas to be maintained for less intense land uses or for public open space. Mapping may also help planners to evaluate the effect of increased intensity on the water resource.

<http://gis.metc.state.mn.us/landuse2k/maps2000.asp>

Map existing land use

The inventory map must also show the location and extent of land used for residential, commercial, industrial, public, parks and open space, institutional and mixed uses. Text and a table associated with this map should describe each of the categories identified on the map and identify the amount of existing acreage.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

Use Metropolitan Council standard land use categories

Regional planning is made more efficient when local municipalities use the Metropolitan Council's standardized land use categories and definitions. Doing so facilitates review of the municipality's comprehensive plan and simplifies the compilation of regional land use maps and geographic information system datasets. Nonetheless, municipalities may choose to use their own land use categories and definitions if they prefer to do so.

<http://gis.metc.state.mn.us/>

http://www.datafinder.org/metadata/landuse_2000.htm

Mapping resources

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) work unit at the Metropolitan Council provides maps and data about every aspect of the region, including both natural and constructed features. Information is presented through interactive and scalable GIS maps and related sets of data.

<http://gis.metc.state.mn.us/>

<http://www.datafinder.org/catalog.asp>

**FUTURE LAND USE
REQUIREMENTS**

To maintain the viability and economic efficiency of the region's infrastructure, it is essential that each municipality accommodate its share of population growth. Metropolitan Council forecasts for each municipality provide the targets the comprehensive plan must meet.

***Map and describe
future land uses***

The comprehensive plan must include a **map and table showing how the municipality plans to accommodate growth** in its population, households and employment. To be complete, the plan for future land use must include accurate and complete information in the following areas:

- map showing surface water areas the municipality plans to maintain
- map showing the municipality's planning area designation
- map showing the location and extent of planned land uses
- [table identifying the acreage of each land use category](#) in 2010, 2020 and 2030
- description of the land use categories shown in the planned land use map including the types of buildings or uses allowed within each land use designation

Land Use Category Table:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

***Use Metropolitan
Council planning
strategies***

Every municipality needs to follow the [regional plan strategies listed under "Community Role" in the 2030 Regional Development Framework](#). Incorporating these strategies into the comprehensive plan ensures that land use patterns accommodate growth, make efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure, provide a mix of housing opportunities and protect natural resources.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf#page=21>

Use the municipality's planning area designation

The *2030 Regional Development Framework* assigns each municipality a **planning area designation** (such as developed, developing, rural residential, etc.). The designation is based on the municipality's location in the region, forecasted growth, availability of infrastructure and existing land uses. [See the Framework's "Planning Areas" map of planning area designations throughout the region.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FWPlanningAreas8x11.pdf>

Ensure conformance to system plans and forecasts

The municipality's planning area designation indicates the location, intensity and extent of development that must be incorporated into its land use plan. The *2030 Regional Development Framework* identifies [specific strategies that municipalities within each planning area designation must incorporate into their land use plans.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf#page=20> (Ch. 3, pages 19-29]

A municipality's growth capacity depends on its available land supply and planned density. The municipality must document that its land use plan is consistent with the *2030 Regional Development Framework* forecasts and conforms to the *System Plans*. To do so, the municipality must consult:

- the municipality's planning area designation and corresponding policies relative to density
- forecasts expressed in the municipality's system statement

Calculate the capacity to accommodate development

Use the Metropolitan Council's [standard calculation of net development acre and net density](#) to measure the municipality's capacity to accommodate residential development. The minimum density requirement is three units per net developable residential acre. Net residential acreage is calculated by subtracting from gross acres wetlands and water bodies, public parks, arterial streets and natural resources mapped and protected by ordinance in the comprehensive plan update.

Net Density Worksheet (MS Word and/or Excel):
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

The Metropolitan Council calculates the capacity to accommodate residential growth by multiplying the lowest allowed density in the planned land use density range by the net residential acreage. A municipality should not use “zero” as a lowest allowed density for sewered development.

Ensure conformance regarding residential development

To conform to the region’s *system plans*, the land use plan must demonstrate residential development at appropriate densities to accommodate the growth forecasted for the municipality.

The *2030 Regional Development Framework* and *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* require municipalities to plan for **an average net residential density of at least three units per net residential acre**. A plan that fails to establish the intention to achieve a minimum average residential density of three units per net residential acre in sewered development areas lacks conformance with Metropolitan Council policy.

For municipalities along regional transportation corridors

To be consistent with the *2030 Regional Development Framework*, municipalities that include:

- a regional transportation corridor
- transit route or
- transit facility

should plan for development that links land uses to transportation service.

Locations near transit hubs or transportation corridors, and especially locations near rail stations, represent high-level service opportunities. These areas are best suited to mixed land use, more intense commercial development or high-density housing.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=25

http://metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter2_Final.pdf#page=5

http://metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=15

**STAGE DEVELOPMENT
REQUIREMENTS**

Besides mapping and tabulating development overall, the land use plan must show **stages of development in five-year increments** (existing, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025, and 2030). Using the Metropolitan Council's templates simplifies the task of staging development and land use. [The land use and development staging tables show the number of acres allocated within each land use category.](#)

Land Use Table in 5-year Stages worksheet:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

***Evaluate adequacy
of local
infrastructure***

For each five-year stage, the plan must include **an evaluation of the implications for all local infrastructure**. The tables and discussion must demonstrate that the municipality is capable of providing necessary local facilities and services to accommodate its planned growth.

Sect. 2 Background - Forecasts:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect2.pdf#page=5>

For more information, see [Forecasts \(Handbook, Sect. 2\)](#) and [Sewer Flow \(Handbook Sect. 5\)](#)

Sect. 5 Water Resources:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect5.pdf#page=3>
(sewer flow section)

***Consider impact on
sewer system***

Of particular importance is the impact of growth on the region's sewer system. For that reason, **the staging tables must show the volume of anticipated sewer flow**. This volume must correspond with the five-year increments in the plans of the municipality's interceptor service area.

Worksheet that calculates sewer flow based on land use:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

***Metropolitan
Council commits to
provide sewer
service***

Once a comprehensive plan is approved, the Metropolitan Council will provide sufficient sewer infrastructure capacity to meet 20-year growth projections and long-term service area needs identified in the plan. Any capital improvements that the Metropolitan Council needs to provide will be scheduled so that the infrastructure is available at least two years prior to the need identified in the approved comprehensive plan.

**HOUSING
REQUIREMENTS**

By law, the comprehensive plan must include a housing element and an implementation program that address existing and projected housing needs. The housing plan:

[Minn. Stat. 473.859 Subd. 2\[c\]](#)

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd 4](#)

- inventories the municipality's existing housing stock
- identifies existing housing needs based on demographic data
- evaluates future housing needs based on forecasted growth

The evaluation of future housing needs assists a municipality in planning for a mix of residential land uses at various densities that will meet current and forecasted needs.

***Assess current
housing stock***

Assessment of the current housing stock should include the number, types, tenure, value, monthly rent, age and condition of residential structures. Where appropriate, sub-regional or broader comparisons with other municipalities should be included to better explain the existing housing conditions. [Templates are available to assist municipalities in preparing this assessment.](#)

Housing template:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

***Assess housing
needs***

Assessment of housing needs should be based on demographic and economic indicators such as household age and composition, income and employment data, job expectations and wage expectations, now and in the future. [Templates for assessing future needs are available.](#)

Template for assessing future housing needs:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

***Include goals,
policies and
programs***

Goals and policies should address the need to add low- and moderate-income affordable housing between 2011 and 2020. The goals and policies discussion also needs to include residential development and redevelopment, maintenance, preservation, density and diversity of housing.

***Use Metropolitan
Council regional
housing needs
projections***

The Metropolitan Council is currently determining the regional and local need for low and moderate income housing in the decade beginning 2011. Figures reflecting each municipality's share of the region's need for additional low and moderate income housing for 2011 through 2020 will be available in January, 2006.

Include a housing implementation program

The comprehensive plan must include a housing implementation program that identifies official controls, programs and fiscal tools the municipality will use to implement its housing goals and policies. Local controls may include zoning and subdivision ordinances, building codes, design requirements and the approval process itself. These impact both the type and cost of new housing.

In its housing implementation program, the municipality identifies the range of efforts intended to facilitate construction of affordable housing and thus to expand local housing options. Included in this section are such programs as:

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 4](#)

- affordable housing assistance through development and preservation programs
- home improvement and housing assistance programs through the local housing and redevelopment authority
- fiscal tools, such as tax abatement, bonding or tax increment financing
- official controls and land use regulation aimed at facilitating construction of affordable and lifecycle housing
- guide land for development at densities that may facilitate greater housing affordability

**RESOURCE PROTECTION
REQUIREMENTS**

Law requires that local comprehensive plans address the protection of historical sites, solar access, and aggregate deposits. The Metropolitan Council has developed a specific policy regarding protection of aggregate deposits, but not for historical preservation or solar access.

***Historic preservation
and solar access***

Requirements for an historic preservation element and "an element for the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems" are spelled out in statute.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 2\[b\]](#)

Aggregate resources

Municipalities must consult the [Minnesota Geological Survey, Aggregate Resources Inventory of the Seven-County Metropolitan Area](#) for the location of identified aggregate resources.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd 2\[d\]](#)

If an [aggregate resource has been identified](#) within the municipality, its land use plan must show:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

- areas and type of aggregate on the existing and planned land use map
- land use plans that address and minimize potential land use conflicts
- planning and regulatory measures to ensure that aggregate resources are extracted prior to urbanization of an aggregate-rich site

The Metropolitan Council and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed a report that inventories aggregate resources.

This report is the *Minnesota Geological Aggregate Resources Inventory of the Seven-County Metropolitan Area*. It is Survey Information Circular No. 46 (IC-46). [See the DNR link to this report on the Metropolitan Council's resources web page.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

***Mississippi River
corridor***

If any portion of a municipality is located within the metropolitan Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor, that portion must be managed in such a way that land use meets federal and state guidelines.

Affected municipalities should review their Critical Area plans to ensure consistency between the guidelines and their land use plans and updates. Municipalities may also review and reconsider the protection and enhancement requirements of [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area \(MNRRA\) Plan as part of the comprehensive plan update process](#).

[The Metropolitan Council's resources web page](#) contains resources relating to the Mississippi River Critical Area and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area programs (CA/MNRRA) and a link to the DNR website's material on this subject.

[Critical Areas Act of 1973](#)

[Minn. Stat. 116G](#)
<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/116G/15.html>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

SECTION 4

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The public facilities plan receives particular scrutiny because it covers areas that fall within the Council's key function, overseeing the economical and rational development of the region's infrastructure, including transportation. The transportation plan is a critical part of the public facilities plan.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd 3](#)

The transportation plan must encompass existing and planned modes of transportation, both public and private. All modes of transportation are included: transit, highways and roads, passageways for non-motorized vehicles, freight movement and aviation.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3, \(1\)](#)

Transportation Policy Plan

[The 2030 Transportation Policy Plan](#) emphasizes a multi-modal transportation system that includes transit, highways and roads, non-motorized transportation, aviation and freight movement. The transportation plan needs to include policies and strategies for developing a multi-modal transportation system.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04CoverContentsPreface_Final.pdf

Overview of plan requirements

The local transportation plan must describe, designate and schedule the location, extent, function and capacity of facilities for all transportation modes within the municipality. To ensure the rational and economical development of the regional transportation system, the local transportation plan must include or address the following components:

- an assignment of socio-economic forecasts to **Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ)** ([Handbook, page 4-3](#))
- a **highway and roads** plan that maps and describes existing roads and planned improvements, analyzes traffic volumes, addresses safety and capacity issues ([Handbook, page 4-3](#))
- a **bike and pedestrian** plan ([Handbook, page 4-6](#))
- **special situations**, as applicable, such as land use planning in high density subareas of the region, corridor studies and right of way preservation ([Handbook, page 4-7](#))
- a **transit plan** for facilities and service ([Handbook, page 4-8](#))
- an **aviation plan** that identifies aviation related facilities, addresses airspace protections ([Handbook, page 4-10](#))

Requirements and resources for addressing each of these components are outlined on the pages specified above.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS ZONES (TAZ) REQUIREMENTS

The Metropolitan Council's [Transportation Policy Plan](#) addresses the need to provide services for a growing population that demands more transportation options. To develop regional forecasts and plan for regional roads and highways, the Metropolitan Council needs to know the demographic forecasts for smaller geographic areas known as **Traffic Analysis Zones**.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPPAppendixK.pdf#page=12>

The transportation plan must include the municipality's allocation of the Metropolitan Council's 2030 population, household and employment forecasts. These must be allocated, in turn, to each of the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) to reflect planned land use. A [Traffic Analysis Zone map](#) and related demographic data based on the 2000 Census are available to use in preparing the municipality's estimates of future traffic volumes.

http://www.datafinder.org/metadata/taz_ext.htm

The allocation may be displayed in either map or [table format](#).

See TAZ template:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

HIGHWAY AND ROADS REQUIREMENTS

The Metropolitan Council allocates an appropriate portion of forecasted regional growth to each municipality, [but the distribution of that growth within the municipality depends on local land use decisions](#). The intensity and extent of existing and planned development impacts how jobs and households are distributed in the municipality. That distribution determines traffic flow.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FrameworkAppendixA.pdf>

The local transportation plan must

- map the road and highway system
- assign forecasted growth to Traffic Analysis Zones
- relate the transportation system to land use
- address capacity and safety issues

Transportation problems and opportunities resulting from land use decisions need to be identified.

Identify functional classification

The comprehensive plan must map the functional classification of existing and proposed roads within the municipality. [A map of the principal and "A" Minor arterials recognized by the region](#) may be found in the Metropolitan Council's GIS Datafinder. [The criteria and assumptions used to define functional classification](#) are included in Appendix F of the Transportation Policy Plan. The principal arterial system, also known as the metropolitan highway system, was adopted by the Metropolitan Council as part of the *Transportation Policy Plan*. The "A" Minor arterial system is maintained by the Transportation Advisory Board. If a municipality determines that a change in the "A" minor arterial system is warranted, a request for the change can be made to the Transportation Advisory Board.

<http://www.datafinder.org/catalog.asp#Transportation>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPAppendixF.pdf>

Map streets and highways

For each of the principal and A-minor arterials, the map must show:

- existing and proposed number of lanes
- current daily traffic counts according to the [Minnesota Department of Transportation's traffic volume maps](#)
- forecasted 2030 traffic volumes

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/tda/maps/trafficvol.html>

Options for displaying traffic allocation

The comprehensive plan should include narrative explaining how the local traffic forecasts were developed. Two traffic forecasting options are available, depending on the municipality's planning area designation.

- Developing communities may use the Metropolitan Council's regional traffic forecasts as long as they reflect the municipality's expected growth.
- Developed and rural communities where traffic growth is limited may need only a trend analysis to forecast traffic.

Include planned improvements to regional highways

The municipality's comprehensive plan should include the [planned improvements to the metropolitan highway system listed in Tables 4-9 and 4-10 of the *Transportation Policy Plan*](#).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=35

***Connect land use
and transportation***

The *Transportation Policy Plan's* policies 1 and 18 address the interdependence of land use, natural resource protection and transportation planning as these relate to reducing congestion.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf

***Document the need
to expand facilities***

In its transportation planning for the region, the Metropolitan Council's goal is that locally generated trips will not exceed the capacity of local or regional transportation facilities. The Metropolitan Council relies on local information regarding forecasted growth and traffic impact to plan for appropriate expansions to the existing system.

The local transportation plan must identify the design capacity of the local, county and regional road network and document whether anticipated growth will exceed capacity. If the land use plan includes expansion to accommodate regional growth, the transportation plan should document the need to provide new or expanded transportation facilities and capacity.

***Identify potential
safety issues***

The plan must identify safety problems that the municipality anticipates as the comprehensive plan is implemented and development occurs. Correctable causes of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian accidents are considered in allocating resources to highway and roadway improvement projects.

The governmental unit responsible for each road should include an inventory of safety issues and a plan for improvement in its transportation plan. Possible improvement strategies include access management, intersection changes and signal timing.

***Incorporate "access
management"
guidelines***

The Minnesota Department of Transportation and county jurisdictions have authority to deny access to principal and minor arterials where access rights have been purchased. However, counties and municipalities have authority regarding access to "A" minor arterials and local streets. The *Transportation Policy Plan's* policy 13 addresses access management of regional highways and "A" minor arterials as a way for municipalities to address safety and capacity issues.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf#page=15

**BICYCLE AND
PEDESTRIAN
REQUIREMENTS**

The [access management guidelines of the Minnesota Department of Transportation](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf) or of the county need to be incorporated into the transportation plans of these municipalities. Access management guidelines also need to be incorporated into subdivision and zoning ordinances.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

Because trips by bicycle or on foot are short, accommodations for these forms of travel are planned at the local rather than the regional level. Therefore, the *Transportation Policy Plan* does not include a map of bicycle and pedestrian passageways. It does, however, include [policies encouraging municipalities to plan for these modes of travel and to coordinate their plans with neighboring municipalities](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=46).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=46

In order to be eligible to apply for federal transportation funds to construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities, municipalities must include in their transportation plans:

- a description of the municipality's policies and plans regarding bicycle and pedestrian systems and programs
- a map showing on-road and off-road bikeways such as signed routes, striped on-street bicycle lanes, and off-road bicycle or multi-use paths
- a description of bicycle and pedestrian accessibility to transit corridors and transit facilities

The Metropolitan Council and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have compiled a [map of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the region](http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/bikemap/bikemap.htm).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/bikemap/bikemap.htm>

**SPECIAL TRAFFIC
SITUATIONS
REQUIREMENTS**

Additional information is required from areas with the most compact land use, those with specific right of way responsibility, and those participating in corridor or sub-area studies.

***Core cities, U of M
and Airport South***

Four specific areas within the region have the most compact land use and the greatest number of trip destinations. These areas are:

- Downtown Minneapolis
- Downtown Saint Paul
- University of Minnesota
- Airport South / Mall of America in Bloomington

These areas require transportation facilities and services that are significantly different from others. Therefore, the transportation plans of these municipalities and counties [must include an analysis of and strategies for moving people and freight into, out of, and within these areas.](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf#page=24)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf#page=24

***Municipalities
needing to preserve
right of way***

Local governments are responsible for identifying and preserving rights of way for transportation uses, such as roads, transit, bikeways and walkways. [Policy 16 in the Transportation Policy Plan identifies the need to preserve the rights of way of planned transportation corridors.](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf#page=19) The transportation plan must identify future right of way needs and describe procedures to preserve them, including official mapping.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter3_Final.pdf#page=19

***Municipalities
involved in corridor
and sub-area studies***

The Metropolitan Council regularly participates with other agencies and jurisdictions in highway corridor studies, transitway studies and some "A" minor arterial studies. These studies examine concerns about land use, access capacity, level of service, geometrics, safety and impacts to the environment. The completed study recommendations are generally adopted by all participants and may be implemented as funding becomes available.

Appendix G of the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* lists [the studies adopted by the Metropolitan Council as of December 2004](#). Recommendations from these studies should be incorporated into the transportation plans of participating cities and counties and should be used by implementing agencies to guide improvements in the corridor.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPAppendixG.pdf>

TRANSIT REQUIREMENTS

The *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* includes strategies for reaching the regional transit goals of increasing current ridership by 50 percent by 2020 and doubling it by 2030. To meet these goals in a cost effective manner, [the Transportation Policy Plan outlines policies and standards for developing transit service, transitways and transit facilities](#).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=1

Describe and map transit service

The transit component must include the following information in order to identify transit service available to local residents and employers:

- [Description of existing transit routes and paratransit services](#). These are found in the Metro Transit website.
- [Identification of the municipality's transit market area](#) as shown in Figure 4-3 and Table 4-1 in the Transportation Policy Plan.
- [A policy that the municipality will work with the Metropolitan Council or with an opt-out transit provider](#) to determine future transit services consistent with the municipality's transit market area and its associated service standards and strategies.
- [Illustration of existing and planned transit corridors](#) shown in Figure 4-1 and 4-2 of the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*. Planned station locations for transitways shown in Figure 4-2 should also be shown.

<http://www.metrotransit.org/serviceInfo/mapSystem.asp>

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=9

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPAppendixM.pdf>

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=3

Map transit facilities

In its planning for expansion of the transit system, the Metropolitan Council identifies the locations of existing and future facilities in the *Transportation Policy Plan*. Facilities include shelters, transit stations and park-and-ride lots, as well as support facilities such as bus garages and layover facilities.

To be consistent with the *Transportation Policy Plan*, the land use map and transportation related maps in the comprehensive plan must identify the location of:

- Existing park-and-ride facilities in the municipality. Figure 2-1 of the Transportation Policy Plan shows [existing and programmed park-and-ride facilities funded and located through 2008](#).
- [Potential park-and-ride facility sites](#) identified in Figures 5-1 through 5-4 of the Park and Ride Facility Site Location Plan.
- [Existing and planned passenger facilities such as transit centers and stations](#) identified in Figure 4-5 and in the corresponding text in the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- [Transit support facilities such as maintenance facilities and garages](#) identified in Figure 4-6 of the Transportation Policy Plan.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/parkridefacilitysitelocation/Fig2-1_RegionalParkandRideSystem2008Final.pdf

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/parkridefacilitysitelocation/plan.htm>

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=14

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=17

**AVIATION
REQUIREMENTS**

Aviation is considered a regional system; state legislation in 2005 requires that policies relating to aviation be considered a component of the regional transportation policy plan. The *1996 Aviation Policy Plan* remains in effect as part of the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*. The *Land Use Compatibility Guidelines* have been updated and are included in Appendix H of the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TP04Chapter4_Final.pdf#page=45

Airspace protection

The Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan reflects [Federal Regulation Title 14, Part 77](#) which establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace. All municipalities must protect airspace from potential electronic interference and obstructions to air navigation. As proof that they have done so, they must include a policy and text regarding their notification to the Federal Aviation Agency.

www.faa.gov/arp/ace/part77.cfm

To notify the Federal Aviation Agency, municipalities must submit Form 7460. They must also demonstrate that they have adopted local codes and ordinances for control of objects affecting navigable airspace including construction exceeding 200 feet above ground level at certain distances from aviation facilities. [Links to information on these requirements are available in the Resources section of this Handbook.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

Airports

Figure 2-15 of the *Transportation Policy Plan* identifies the one major international airport, one intermediate airport that serves corporate users, six reliever airports and three special purpose airports.

Municipalities within the Airport Influence Area of one of these airports [must identify it in their transportation and land use maps and address additional planning and development considerations.](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TP04Chapter2_Final.pdf#page=25

Airport influence areas

Appendix H of the *Transportation Policy Plan* includes updated land use compatibility guidelines for airports. In addition to these, the local transportation plan of a municipality within an airport influence area must address these guidelines:

- Height and safety zoning
- Aircraft noise impacts and mitigation
- Airport development and operation
- Environmental and infrastructure needs

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPAppendixHRevised.pdf>

Heliports

Municipalities with heliports, or those desiring to regulate establishment of heliports, must adopt ordinances and guidelines for these sites. The unique operational characteristics of helicopters allow them to land and take off at airports or locations such as hospitals or industrial parks.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPAppendixHRevised.pdf#page=12>

The *Twin City Regional Heliport Feasibility Study* provides guidelines for preparing and adopting ordinances for heliport sites. The report (Metropolitan Council Publication No. 559-90-089) may be requested from the Council Library and [Data Center](#).

data.center@metc.state.mn.us

Appendix H of the *Transportation Policy Plan* also includes updated land use and noise compatibility guidelines for heliports. It also offers guidelines for preparing and adopting ordinances for heliport sites.

Seaplane activities on surface waters in the metropolitan area are regulated by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. [A link to that site's discussion of seaplane activities is available in the Resources section of this Handbook.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

Municipalities having lakes designated for seaplane activity must identify these lakes in the transportation plan. Use of designated waters is seasonal and can vary considerably. For purposes of safety and compatible land use, municipalities should recognize these areas on land use and transportation plan maps.

Special aviation facilities

Facilities such as radio beacons or other air navigation aids sited at off airport locations are usually owned or controlled by the federal or state government. However, areas around these facilities must be protected through local ordinance and notification processes.

If a facility that requires protection is identified in the municipality's system statement, the municipality must identify the facility in its transportation plan and land use map. It must then affirm that surrounding land is protected against physical encroachment that could affect security or cause impacts to electronic signals.

Resources

Further details regarding these requirements may be found in pages 59 through 76 of the 1996 Aviation Policy Plan. The *1996 Aviation Policy Plan* is not available online. However, paper copies are available from the Metropolitan Council's Data Center, and they may Data.center@metc.state.mn.us be requested by email.

SECTION 5

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Management of the region's water supply, protection of the surface water resources, and treatment of its sewage directly affect the health of citizens of all municipalities. For this reason, statutes and Metropolitan Council policies specify exact standards and requirements that must be met in this section of each municipality's comprehensive plan.

A growing population and increasing demand present a challenge to the Metropolitan Council's mission that is reflected in the [2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPP2005.htm): protect the region's ground and surface water resources so that the growing population of the region will continue to have a safe and adequate water supply.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPP2005.htm>

OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENTS

The local water resources management plan typically appears within the public facilities section of the comprehensive plan.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3\(2\), 3\(4\)](#)

Minnesota law requires all municipalities to develop three chapters that constitute their water resources management plan:

- A wastewater and comprehensive sewer plan that specifies areas to be seweraged by the public system, sets standards of operation for private systems and identifies areas that are not suitable for public or private systems. ([Handbook, page 5-3](#))
- A surface water management plan that protects water quality and addresses water quantity issues. ([Handbook, page 5-11](#))
- A water supply plan that ensures a safe and sufficient water supply now and in the future. ([Handbook, page 5-17](#))

Use Metropolitan Council forecasts

In crafting the local water resources management plan, municipalities must use the Metropolitan Council's forecasts for population, household and employment growth. They must also ensure that the forecasts used in this chapter correspond with those in the comprehensive plan's background and land use plan chapters. The contents of these chapters are described in [Section Two](#) and [Section Three](#) of this handbook.

Requirements listed in the WRMPP

Appendix B-2 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* outlines [specific requirements for each of the three sections of the plan](#).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=15

WASTEWATER AND COMPREHENSIVE SEWER PLAN OVERVIEW

Minnesota statute requires local governments to submit both a wastewater plan and a comprehensive sewer plan that describe service needs that the Metropolitan Council will be expected to fill.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3\(2\)](#)

[Minn. Stat. 473.513](#)

To simplify the process of preparing this portion of the water resources management chapter, the Metropolitan Council has combined the requirements for the wastewater and comprehensive sewer plans. The municipality's **system statement** specifies which portions of this plan must be included in the comprehensive plan's decennial plan update.

Sewer plan overview

The Metropolitan Council reviews the local wastewater and comprehensive sewer plan to ensure conformance with *the 2030 Regional Development Framework* and the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_RegionalFramework.pdf

The sewer plan must describe, designate and schedule the areas to be sewered by the public system whether that system is regional or local. The sewer plan must also describe the existing and planned capacities of the public system.

Before a local government may proceed with a sewer extension or modification to its local sanitary sewer system, the municipality must have a comprehensive sewer plan showing the extension in service approved by the Metropolitan Council.

Use Metropolitan Council forecasts

The wastewater and sewer plan must be designed to accommodate the population, household and employment forecasts provided in the municipality's *system statement*. Each of these forecasts must be allocated to sewered and unsewered service.

Sewer flow calculation template:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm>

SEWER PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR MUNICIPALITIES SERVED BY A PUBLIC SYSTEM

The wastewater plan of a municipality served by the regional sewer system or by locally owned and operated treatment plants must include the information listed below.

Content overview

A [detailed list of requirements](#) is included on pages 81 through 83, Appendix B-2a of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*. The municipality's system statement includes the specific requirements needed by the Metropolitan Council. Below is a general overview of the required elements:

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=15

- **Tables that include population, household number and employment *forecasts*** for areas served by the public sewer system, capacity and design flows for existing trunk sewers and lift stations, information on the existing and potential connections by local sewer service. ([Handbook, page 2-3](#))
- **Projection of sewer flow volume in five-year increments** through 2030, and other elements described in the [Water Resources Management Policy Plan Appendix B-2b](#). ([Handbook, page 5-4](#))
- Description of **system capacity and planned improvements**. ([Handbook, page 5-5](#))
- **Maps** showing the location of all sewer-related facilities including pipes, lift stations, pumps, meters, treatment plants, waste disposal sites, existing and proposed future connections, private wastewater treatment plants and public wastewater treatment plants. ([Handbook, page 5-6](#))
- The municipality's policies and programs to prevent and reduce excessive ***infiltration and inflow***. ([Handbook, page 5-6](#))

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=17

Project the sewer flow volume

Include sewer flow volume projections based on the forecasted growth for 2010, 2020 and 2030. For municipalities served by the Metropolitan Disposal System, these projections are provided in Appendix B-1 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=7

Since there is no preferred method for projecting sewer flows, each municipality may use the method that is most appropriate. However, the methodology and assumptions used must be explained in the plan.

Describe system capacity

The description of the system's capacity includes all local, regional and private wastewater systems operating in the municipality and specifies all planned improvements. To meet these requirements, the plan must include:

- **Capacity and design flows** for existing trunk sewers and lift stations.
- **The number of existing and potential connections** for each sewer service district in the municipality.
- **Projected sewer flow volume in five-year increments** through 2030.
- **The maximum projected sewer flow volume** at whatever point the municipality is designated as a fully developed municipality.
- **Proposed timing for the expansion of existing trunk sewer pipes or construction of new trunk sewer pipes** to be connected to the Metropolitan Disposal System or to the locally owned and operated wastewater system.
- Information on the **type and capacity of all municipally or privately owned treatment facilities**, including a copy of the municipality's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) or State Disposal System (SDS) permits.

Map the system

Maps of the existing and planned sanitary sewer system must show the following:

- **The existing sanitary sewer system** with identification of lift stations and waste disposal sites.
- **The geographic boundaries** of the local sewer service districts.
- Location of **existing or planned connection points** to the Metropolitan Disposal System for each local sewer service district.
- **All inter-community connections.**
- **Proposed changes in the municipality's boundaries,** including areas designated for orderly annexation.
- **Information on onsite sewage disposal systems,** including known non-conforming systems and systems with known problems.

Address Infiltration and Inflow

During major rainfall, infiltration and inflow tax the capacity and operation of the Metropolitan Disposal System. Therefore, [the Water Resources Management Policy Plan includes policies for reducing infiltration and inflow.](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WastewaterService.pdf#page=9)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WastewaterService.pdf#page=9

The [infiltration and inflow toolbox](http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/ProjectTeams/I-I-Home.htm) on the Metropolitan Council's website explains exactly what each municipality must do to comply with these requirements. Municipalities need to include at least the following elements:

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/ProjectTeams/I-I-Home.htm>

Infiltration and Inflow Requirements

- Present the **objectives, policies and strategies** for preventing and reducing excessive infiltration and inflow. Sump pumps and drain tile in the local sewer system are among the issues that need to be addressed.
- Discuss the **mechanisms for minimizing inflow and infiltration**. Provide copies of ordinances prohibiting the discharge of foundation drains and roof leaders into the sanitary disposal system and requiring the disconnection of existing foundation drains, sump pumps and roof leaders from the sanitary disposal system.
- Provide information on the **extent, source and significance of existing inflow and infiltration problems** along with an analysis of costs for remediation.
- Present the **implementation plan** for eliminating and preventing excessive infiltration and inflow. Include strategies, priorities, scheduling and financing mechanisms.

**SEWER PLAN
REQUIREMENTS FOR
ALTERNATIVE
WASTEWATER
TREATMENT**

Additional information is required from municipalities that use wastewater treatment alternatives other than the regional system. Included in this list are municipalities with systems described by one or more of the following:

- **Septic systems** or individual sewage treatment systems. ([Handbook, page 5-8](#))
- **Community treatment systems** such as package treatment plants and municipal drainfields. ([Handbook, page 5-11](#))
- Locally owned and operated **wastewater treatment plants**. ([Handbook, page 5-11](#))
- **Rural Centers** intending to change their designation to “rural growth center” and to request that the Metropolitan Council acquire and operate the local wastewater treatment plant. ([Handbook, page 5-12](#))

**Septic system
management**

Municipalities with onsite sewage treatment facilities, also known as septic systems or individual sewage treatment systems (ISTS), [must demonstrate that their system conforms to the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency \(MPCA\) Rule 7080.](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WastewaterService.pdf#page=19

***ISTS management
program
requirements***

The local wastewater section must include an ISTS management program that:

- Requires **inspections or pumping** of all systems no less frequently than every three years.
- Requires **repair or replacement of failing systems** within five years.
- Requires **replacement of systems that pose an imminent public health or safety threat** within 10 months.
- Includes **current number of systems**.
- Establishes a **tracking and notification database** that includes the year the system was built, the date each ISTS was inspected, the condition of the system, the volume and date the contents were pumped out and whether the system was compliant with 7080 rules.
- Has an **enforcement provision** that allows the municipality to address failing systems or systems found to be imminent public health threats.

The Metropolitan Council's [access database](http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/watershed/ists.htm) is available for municipalities to use to manage and track the condition of their septic systems.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/watershed/ists.htm>

***Community
treatment system
plans***

Municipalities that include a public or private treatment system must include the following:

- **A map showing the location of existing public and private treatment systems** that serve more than one home or business. These may include such systems as package treatment plants and group on-site systems.
- **A description of conditions under which the municipalities allow community treatment systems** such as package treatment plants and municipal drainfields. This should include discussion of allowable land uses, installation requirements, management requirements and local government responsibilities.

***Local wastewater
treatment plant
plans***

Municipalities with a locally owned and operated wastewater treatment plant must include the following additional information:

- **Projected wastewater flows** in 2010, 2020 and 2030.
- **Local objectives, policies and strategies** for preventing and reducing excessive infiltration and inflow including a discussion of sump pumps and drain tile in the local sewer system.
- **Proposed timing and financing** of any expanded or new treatment facilities.
- **Copies of facility planning reports** for the upgrading of the treatment plants.

**RURAL CENTERS
REQUESTING
METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL ACQUISITION
AND OPERATION**

If a municipality is a rural center, it must request and receive approval of a change in its designation to “rural growth center” before requesting that the Metropolitan Council acquire and operate its local wastewater treatment plant. A municipality making such a request needs to address [the criteria outlined in the Water Resources Management Policy Plan \(pages 4 and 5\)](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WastewaterService.pdf#page=4):

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WastewaterService.pdf#page=4

1. As part of the comprehensive planning process, the municipality must utilize the Metropolitan Council’s 2030 growth projections as well as preserve areas for growth post-2030.

- Counties with land-use planning authority must preserve areas surrounding the Rural Growth Centers for future growth.
- Surrounding townships and cities that have land-use planning and zoning authority must preserve areas surrounding the Rural Growth Center for future growth.
- A mechanism must be in place at the time of acquisition that provides for staged orderly growth in the surrounding area.

2. The wastewater treatment plant must be determined to be expandable.

- The existing WWTP site must provide an opportunity for expansion, or there must be an acceptable site available for a new wastewater treatment plant.
- There must be feasible and economical discharge options.

**SURFACE WATER
MANAGEMENT PLAN
OVERVIEW**

The local surface water management plan shows how the municipality protects the quality and quantity of surface water and ground water. [Nonpoint source pollution is a serious issue as it has a direct impact on wastewater treatment costs.](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_SurfaceWaterManagement.pdf

The Metropolitan Council considers the municipality's plan to control the cumulative impacts of nonpoint source pollution as critical to the overall local water resources plan. Control of nonpoint source pollution is considered in determining conformance with the Regional Water Resources Policy Plan.

Process overview

Minnesota rules specify the order in which the standards and processes for protecting surface and ground water are drafted and ratified. The Board of Water and Soils Resources, the watershed management organizations, the Metropolitan Council, and the local municipalities all play a part in the process.

The Board of Water and Soils Resources is required to adopt rules that establish minimum standards for local surface water management.

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/8410/>

Each Watershed Management Organization (WMO) prepares and formally adopts a watershed management plan based on the rules established by the Board of Water and Soils Resources.

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/data/revisor/statutes/2004/103B/201.html>

Within two years from the date that the WMO has adopted the watershed plan, each municipality with land located within the watershed must prepare a local surface water management plan that is consistent with all applicable WMO plans.

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/data/revisor/statutes/2004/103B/235.html>

All municipalities must submit their local water management plans to the Metropolitan Council for review and comment. The Metropolitan Council's review is intended to ensure that the local plan conforms to the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* and is consistent with the Metropolitan Council's policies for reducing nonpoint source pollution.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 2](#)

Within 45 days after receiving the plan, the Metropolitan Council must submit its review comments to the WMO and municipality. The WMO has 60 days to review the plan and approve it. [The local governing unit then adopts the plan and, within 30 days, forwards a copy of the adopted plan to the WMO and Metropolitan Council.](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_RegionalFramework.pdf#page=8

**SURFACE WATER PLAN
REQUIREMENTS**

A list of content and process requirements compiled from a number of Minnesota statutes, Minnesota rules and Metropolitan Council policies is found on pages 83 and 84 in Appendix B-2 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*. The local water management plan must address the following to meet the requirements identified in the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*:

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=17

General requirements

- A section titled “Purpose” that outlines the purposes of the municipality’s water management programs.
- An executive summary that summarizes the content of the water management plan.
- An outline of all the water resource management agreements that have been entered into by the local municipality.
- A land and water resources inventory which includes information required by the WMO plans such as precipitation, geology, topography, surface water resources, groundwater, soil data, pollutant sources, fish and wildlife habitat and water based recreation areas.
- The policies and goals relating to the purpose of the plan and consistent with policies and goals of the WMO (e.g., policies for improving groundwater and surface water quality, managing wetlands, controlling erosion and protecting recreational areas and wildlife).
- An outline of the municipality’s implementation program.

- A financial impact analysis of regulatory controls and programs. At a minimum, the plan must include the estimated cost of adopting, implementing and enforcing the plan, and it must describe the anticipated sources of revenue.
- An assessment of existing and potential water resource-related problems, including those identified in the WMO plans for the municipality, along with planned solutions for these problems.
- A description of procedures for amending the plan with statement of the year through which the plan is in effect and description of procedures for interim minor amendments.

SURFACE WATER PLAN ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Additional information is required for municipalities to meet the requirements identified in the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

Reduce nonpoint source pollution

Municipalities must comply with Metropolitan Council policies by adopting goals and methods to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Doing so requires the municipality to [identify and control such things as runoff from development and construction activities](#).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_SurfaceWaterManagement.pdf#page=8

Local ordinances

The plan must include ordinances intended to reduce nonpoint source pollution. These may include erosion and sediment control, storm water management, wetland protection, buffers, shoreland or flood plain protection, and critical area management. [A list of resources on the Metropolitan Council's website provides links to sample ordinances](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourceLinks.pdf>

Stormwater management

The municipality must identify ways to reduce stormwater quantity and improve its quality. Information regarding the following actions should be included in the water management chapter:

- Control runoff rates so that land-altering activities, such as construction or road building projects, do not result in an increase in peak storm water flow.
- Adopt criteria such as those of the [Nationwide Urban Runoff Program \(NURP\)](#) to protect and improve stormwater runoff quality.
- Promote a stormwater plan that increases filtration and decreases impervious areas
- Identify and adopt management practices such as those described in the [Metropolitan Council's Urban Small Sites Best Management Practice Manual](#) to reduce storm water runoff.
- Incorporate requirements for presettlement to precede stormwater discharge into lakes and streams.
- Identify and adopt methods for minimizing the effects of thermal pollution, especially in vulnerable environments such as trout streams and fens.
- Include strategies and techniques adopted to contain spills that could potentially contaminate the surface water resources or the ground water supply.
- Adopt a wetland management plan that incorporates a function and value assessment for wetlands consistent with the wetland policies of the WMOs.
- Establish measurable water quality goals for each body of water identified in the municipality's local water management and land use plans. Include information on how surface water protection will also protect groundwater.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=17

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/BMP/manual.htm>

***Thermal pollution
and spill
containment
strategies***

***Wetland
management plan***

***Water quality goals
and protection***

MPCA requirements

Municipalities that have one or more bodies of water identified in the MPCA's list of impaired waters [must provide information relating to their compliance with the MPCA's Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\) program.](#)

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_SurfaceWaterManagement.pdf#page=6

Municipalities identified in Appendix A-3 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* must meet the [MPCA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System \(NPDES\) requirements for a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System \(MS4\) permit.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourceLinks.pdf>

Nondegradation goals

The Metropolitan Council policy is that there will be no adverse impact on the quality of water moving through the region. Municipalities must adopt policies to reduce the effects of stormwater runoff so that lakes, rivers and streams are not degraded.

Surface water resources

The Metropolitan Council provides [resources related to surface water and watershed planning, including sample ordinances and links to other websites.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/water/planning/index.htm>

The Metropolitan Council's *Urban Small Sites Best Management Practice Manual* provides [implementation strategies for reducing storm water runoff from smaller construction sites.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/BMP/manual.htm>

Metropolitan Council reports available online include [Annual Water Quality Reports and Watershed Management Reports.](#)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/environment.htm>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/reports/index.htm>

**WATER SUPPLY PLAN
OVERVIEW**

Every municipality with a public water supply must complete a water supply plan. Information to be included in this plan is specified by Minnesota statute.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3\(4\)](#)

The *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* identifies the sources, level of demand and potential limits of the region's water supply. It then describes [policies and strategies to protect this valuable resource](#).

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_WaterSupply.pdf

***Process for
municipalities >1,000
residents***

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) notifies communities serving more than 1,000 residents regarding the submittal date of their water supply plan. The plan is then submitted to both the DNR and the Metropolitan Council. **If the water supply plan was completed before the full comprehensive plan update, the comprehensive plan update needs to include only a summary of changes made since the water supply plan was submitted to the DNR and Metropolitan Council.**

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/data/revisor/statutes/2004/103G/291.html>

***Process for
municipalities <1,000
residents***

Municipalities serving fewer than 1,000 residents submit their water supply plans to the Metropolitan Council as a part of the comprehensive plan amendment or update.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 6](#)

WATER SUPPLY PLAN REQUIREMENTS

The Metropolitan Council and Minnesota DNR developed common guidelines for all the required sections of the water supply plan. As a result, a single plan may be submitted to meet the requirements of both agencies.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Water/supply/Emergency-Conservation-Plan-Template.doc>

The Metropolitan Council reviews the local water supply plan for consistency with DNR plan requirements as well as *Water Resources Management Policy Plan* requirements.

Content Overview

The Water Resources Management Policy Plan also includes the [14-page form that, when completed, meets all the requirements of the water supply portion of the local water resources management plan](#). The municipality may either complete this form or use it as a guide to draft text containing all the following information:

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=19

- Supply system description and evaluation
([Handbook, page 5-21](#))
- Emergency response procedures
([Handbook, page 5-22](#))
- Conservation plan
([Handbook, page 5-23](#))
- Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirements
([Handbook, page 5-23](#))

***Part I: Supply
system description
and evaluation***

Part I of the water supply form requires a description and evaluation of the existing water supply system and current demand. The contents of this section consist of the following:

- Table of historic water demand,
- List of large volume users,
- Description of treatment and storage capacity facilities,
- Identification of groundwater and surface water sources, and
- Table of 10 year demand projections.
- Assessment of resource sustainability including contingency plan that meets the requirement of the [Minnesota Department of Health's Wellhead Protection Plan](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/resourcelinks.pdf).
- Summary of planned capital improvements.
- [A detailed list of requirements for Part I](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=19) may be found on page 85-90 of the Water Resources Management Policy Plan.

Part II: Emergency response procedures

Part II of the water supply form requires the preparation of a water emergency plan that contains the following information:

- Contacts for emergency situations,
- Emergency response procedures,
- Current water sources and service areas,
- Procedures for augmenting water supplies such as interconnections with public and private systems that can provide water in an emergency,
- Allocation and priority of water supply for emergencies and periods of gradual water supply decrease,
- Procedures for reducing demand,
- Enforcement of water use restrictions, and
- [A detailed list of requirements for Part II](#) may be found on page 91-94 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=25

Part III: Conservation plan

Part III of the water supply form requires a water conservation plan that contains conservation goals that measure unaccounted for water use, residential per capita demand, total per capita demand, and peak demand.

The conservation plan should also include programs aimed at conserving water or reducing demand. Such programs may include metering and tracking unaccounted water; implementing conservation billing rates, regulations and education programs; and retrofitting or replacing inefficient plumbing.

[A list of requirements for Part III of the water supply form and details related to the DNR approval process](#) may be found on pages 95-100 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=29

**Part IV: Metropolitan
Land Planning Act
requirements**

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act identifies three additional elements that must appear in the local water supply plan. These are listed in Part IV of the water supply form. These elements are:

- A list of local policies relating to water supply,
- A discussion of the impact of the water supply plan on the rest of the comprehensive plan, and
- Projections of demand based on the municipality's allocation of the Metropolitan Council's 2010, 2020 and 2030 forecasts for population, households and employment.

A detailed list of requirements for Part IV and details regarding the [Metropolitan Council review process](#) may be found on page 101 of the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf#page=35

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Water/supply/index.htm>

**Water Supply
Resources**

The Metropolitan Council provides [resources to assist with water supply planning](#) including:

- Tables with projected water demand,
- Information about water conservation,
- Links to statutes and other state agencies online resources, and
- MPCA's regional groundwater model.

SECTION 6

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The presence of legislation that protects parks and open space in the Metropolitan area demonstrates that these are deemed essential to the quality of life of our region's residents.

[Minn. Stat. 473.147 Subd. 1](#)

[Minn. Stat. 473.302](#)

The definition and value of parks and open space are codified in Minnesota statute. Minnesota statute defines *regional recreation open space* and lists the variety of parks and facilities included.

[Minn. Stat. 473.121 Subd. 14](#)

Regional Parks Policy Plan

That value translates into the [requirements specified in the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan](#).

<http://metro council.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=18>

The entire [2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan](#) is available on the Metropolitan Council's website.

<http://www.metro council.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf>

Maps

The Metropolitan Council's [2030 Regional Parks System Map](#) identifies existing regional parks and trails.

[http://www.metro council.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf #page=60](http://www.metro council.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=60)

Another map of the 2030 Regional Parks System shows the location of [search areas for new facilities](#).

<http://metro council.org/planning/parks/ParksPlanMap.pdf>

Resources

[The Metropolitan Council's Parks staff](#) are available to answer questions about the comprehensive plan requirements or specific park facilities.

<http://www.metro council.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Municipalities are required to identify, map and plan for regional park, open space, and trails when any portion of these falls within their jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan, in turn, must identify these. The intent of these requirements is to ensure that the region's parks and trails, that often span more than one municipality, are connected and coordinated.

[Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 3 \(3\)](#)

If no portion of a regional park, trail, facility or recreation area falls within the municipality's boundaries, the comprehensive plan must assert this fact.

If a regional facility, or any part of such an area, falls within a municipality's jurisdiction, the comprehensive plan must include the following information.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=5>

[See a map of existing and planned parks and trails in the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan.](#)

Your System Statement provides park information

The municipality's *system statement* contains specific information from the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* regarding information about regional parks that must be present in the municipality's comprehensive plan. Each municipality's *system statement* contains a map that illustrates the park and trail boundary or park and trail search area.

It also contains contact information regarding the regional park agency or agencies that manage regional parks and trails within the municipality. Contact the [regional Park Agency staff in your area](#) with specific questions relating to the master plans of park facilities within their jurisdiction.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/parks/parks.htm>

Show boundaries of parks and trails

The boundaries of existing and planned regional parks, park reserves, special recreation features and regional trails must be identified in the comprehensive plan land use map.

Park and trail boundary information is available in approved park and trail master plans. The master plans, and detailed boundary information from them, are available through the regional park implementing agency that owns or manages the park or trail. Each municipality's *system statement* provides contact information for the regional park implementing agency or agencies.

***If true boundaries
are not available***

If it is not clear whether a master plan has been prepared for a regional park or trail, [contact the regional park implementing agency for up-to-date information](http://metrocity.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=24) on the likely location of the park or trail and its status relative to master planning.

<http://metrocity.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=24>

If no master plan has been prepared, the municipality's *system statement* will identify the search area instead of specific boundaries. The comprehensive plan's land use map must then illustrate the likely location of the regional park or trail. The search area must appear in the comprehensive plan, along with acknowledgement that the search area has been proposed for a park, or the general corridor has been proposed for a trail.

[The Regional Parks Policy Plan identifies all search areas in the region, and includes a list of maps.](http://metrocity.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=76)

<http://metrocity.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf#page=76>

SECTION 7

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Most components of the comprehensive plan indicate *what* the municipality intends to do. This section tells *how* the municipality intends to do it. Here the municipality describes the official controls and public programs that ensure implementation of the comprehensive plan and protection of public infrastructure.

Minnesota statute outlines three areas the implementation program chapter of the comprehensive plan must include: [Minn. Stat. 473.859, Subd. 4](#)

- official controls
(Handbook, page 7-1)
- a capital improvement program
([Handbook, page 7-3](#))
- a housing implementation program
([Handbook, page 3-8](#))

Each of these is further addressed by Metropolitan Council policies.

The implementation component of the comprehensive plan must include:

- a description of all relevant ordinances, public programs and fiscal devices that ensure protection of the infrastructure and implementation of the comprehensive plan, and
- a current zoning map and a description of zoning districts that include allowable densities/intensity of use, and lot sizes.

OFFICIAL CONTROLS

Official controls include ordinances, fiscal devices and other actions the municipality uses to implement the comprehensive plan. Official controls may include zoning and subdivision ordinances, mixed use development ordinances, natural resource conservation ordinances, and the like.

Which official controls are relevant?

Official controls are required to guide zoning, subdivision, water supply and private sewer systems. To be consistent with the *2030 Regional Development Framework*, the municipality should adopt official controls to:

[Minn. Stat. 473.865](#)

- accommodate levels of growth consistent with *2030 Regional Development Framework* forecasts,
- provide land use and transportation connections,
- protect natural resources, and
- implement the comprehensive plan.

Resources for official controls

[Local Planning Assistance staff](#) can provide sample ordinances developed by the Council or other state agencies, as well as examples of ordinances from other metropolitan area municipalities.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm>

The Handbook's Section 5, Water Resources Management, contains [resources for managing the municipality's water supply, surface water and wastewater](#).

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/LPHSect5.pdf>

The Metropolitan Council's Natural Resources Task Force has prepared a list of [strategies intended to help municipalities identify and protect their significant natural resources](#). Municipalities may use these in updating their comprehensive plans and drafting ordinances.

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/landuse/NRProtectionStrategy.pdf#page=16>

The Local Government Environmental Assistance Network provides [an extensive Web site on protecting the environment and public health](#).

<http://www.lgean.org/html/toolbox.cfm>

**THE CAPITAL
IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM (CIP)**

Comprehensive plans are required to include a capital improvement program (CIP) for four areas: [Minn. Stat. 473.859 Subd. 4\(2\)](#)

- transportation,
- wastewater,
- water supply, and
- parks and open space facilities.

The CIP shows how the municipality will support and implement the timing and financing of public improvements necessary for the municipality's planned growth.

***CIP relates to land
use and
infrastructure***

In the CIP component, the municipality specifies the timing and sequence of major local public facilities that will ensure development of the municipality occurs in accordance with the plan.

CIP requirements

To meet statutory requirements, the comprehensive plan must include the municipality's five-year CIP. That CIP, in turn, must include budgets and expenditure schedules for transportation, sewers, water supply, and parks and open space facilities.

[Minn. Stat. 473.852 Subd. 4](#)

The Metropolitan Council reviews the five-year CIP to determine that it implements the comprehensive plan and coordinates the planned projects with the development financing schedule.

***School districts
required to prepare a
CIP***

State law requires each metropolitan school district to prepare a CIP and to submit it to the Metropolitan Council for review and comment. The process is similar to that for municipal comprehensive plans.

[Minn. Stat. 473.175](#)

[Minn. Stat. 473.856](#)

**REVIEW, UPDATE AND
SUBMIT OFFICIAL
CONTROLS**

With each comprehensive plan amendment or update, including the decennial review in 2008, the municipality needs to review its official controls. This review must establish that official controls

- are consistent with the *2030 Regional Development Framework*,
- conform to the metropolitan system plans, and
- are congruent with all other elements of the comprehensive plan.

Municipalities have nine months after updating or amending their comprehensive plan to update the corresponding official controls. If a revision is required to bring the local controls into alignment with the comprehensive plan, the municipality must submit one of the following:

[Minn. Stat. 473.865, Subd. 3](#)

- a copy of the original official control and a copy of the revision which has been approved by the local unit of government, or
- a copy of the original control with changes approved by the local unit of government marked.

Municipalities may not adopt any new official controls that conflict with the comprehensive plan, and they may not permit activity that conflicts with the metropolitan system *Policy Plans*.

Staff Support for Comprehensive Planning

The Council staff listed below are available to assist municipalities in developing and amending their local comprehensive plans. The listings below reflect the organization/sections of the [Local Planning Handbook](#).

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Contact your **Sector Representative** with comprehensive planning questions

Email
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

Phone

Submit plans to the **Reviews Coordinator**

Cheryl Olsen, Reviews Coordinator cheryl.olsen@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1616

SECTION 2: FOUNDATION

Research Staff

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/keycontacts.htm>

Employment Forecasts

Regan Carlson, Senior Research

regan.carlson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1407

Household and Population Forecasts

Michael Munson, Research Analyst

michael.munson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1331

Demographic Changes and Trends

Kathy Johnson, Research Analyst

kathy.johnson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1332

Economic Data

Debra Detrick, Research Analyst

debra.detrick@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1327

Annexations

Jim Uttley, Planning Analyst

jim.uttley@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1361

SECTION 3: LAND USE

Sector Representatives

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorreps.htm>

Land Use/Urban Service Expansions

Phyllis Hanson, Manager

phyllis.hanson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1566

Geographic Information System

Mark Kotz, System Admin.

mark.kotz@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1644

MetroGIS

Randall Johnson, Coordinator

randy.johnson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1638

Housing

Guy Peterson, Director

guy.peterson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1418

Linda Milashius, Planner

linda.milashius@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1541

Livable Communities

Guy Peterson, Director

guy.peterson@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1418

Aggregate Resources

Marcel Jouseau, Manager

marcel.jouseau@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1145

Critical Area/MNRRRA

Tori Dupre, Senior Planner

victoria.dupre@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1621

SECTION 4: TRANSPORTATION***Transportation Planning Staff***<http://www.metrocouncil.org/services/roster.htm>***Highway planning***Connie Kozlak, Manager connie.kozlak@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1720***Traffic Forecasts***Mark Filipi, Forecast Analyst mark.filipi@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1725***Traffic Analysis Zones***Bob Paddock, Planner bob.paddock@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1340***Right of Way Acquisition***Ann Braden, Senior Planner ann.braden@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1705***Roadway Classification***Dave Vessel, Planner dave.vessel@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1646***Transit and Park and Rides***Elaine Koutsoukos, Senior Planner elaine.koutsoukos@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1717***Aviation***Chauncey Case, Senior Planner chauncey.case@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1724**SECTION 5: WATER RESOURCES*****Environmental Services Staff***<http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/contactUs/>***Sewer Plans***Don Bluhm, Manager donald.bluhm@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1116Kyle Colvin, Sr. Engineer kyle.colvin@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1151***Septic Systems***Jim Larsen, Senior Planner jim.larsen@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1159***Surface Water***Jack Frost, Planning Analyst jack.frost@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1078Judy Sventek, Planning Analyst judy.sventek@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1156***Water Supply***Christopher Elvrum, Sr. Planner christopher.elvrum@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1066**SECTION 6: PARKS**Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst arne.stefferud@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1360**SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION*****Natural Resources***Ann Beckman, Manager ann.beckman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1669***Low Impact Development***Karen Jensen, Planner karen.jensen@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1401***Metropolitan Significance***Jim Uttley, Planning Analyst jim.uttley@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1632

Planning Resources

The resources below are provided to assist municipalities in developing and amending their local comprehensive plans. The listings reflect the organization/sections of the [Local Planning Handbook](#).

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Regional Policy Plans	2030 Regional Development Framework	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/documents.htm
	Transportation Policy Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/summary.htm
	Water Resources Management Policy Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMP/WRMPP2005.htm
	Parks Policy Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/ParksPlan.htm
Contact information	General Contact Information	http://www.metrocouncil.org/contact/contact.htm
	Council Members	http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/members.htm
	Sector Representatives	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/sectorrepresentatives.htm
Statutes	Planning and Technical Staff	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/staff.htm
	Metropolitan Land Planning Act	http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/statutes.pdf
Glossary	Minnesota Office of Revisor of Statutes	http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp
Templates and Forms	Glossary of frequently used terms	http://www.metrocouncil.org/resources/glossary.pdf
Planning Consultants	Forms and tables related to comprehensive planning	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/LPH/forms.htm
	Minnesota Department of Administration	http://server.admin.state.mn.us/resource.html?Id=1916

SECTION 2: FOUNDATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

<i>Planning Areas</i>	2030 Regional Development Framework - Planning Area Map	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FWPlanningAreas8x11.pdf
	2030 Regional Development Framework – Strategies for Planning Areas	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf#page=20
<i>Forecasts</i>	2030 Regional Development Framework – Forecasts (Adobe Acrobat file)	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/FrameworkAppendixA.pdf
	2030 Regional Development Framework – Forecasts (Microsoft Excel file)	http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/PopHouseholdEmploymentForecasts.xls
	Water Resources Management Policy Plan – Sewered Forecasts	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPPMay2005_Appendices2.pdf - #page=7
<i>Demographic Data</i>	Demographic data	http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/stats.htm
	2000 Census data	http://www.metrocouncil.org/Census/census2000.htm

SECTION 3: LAND USE

Mapping Resources

GIS resources

<http://gis.metc.state.mn.us/>

MetroGIS Datafinder

<http://www.datafinder.org/catalog.asp>

Housing

Metro Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/housing/housing.htm>

Livable Communities Act Fund

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/services/livcomm.htm>

Family Housing Fund – Reports

http://www.fhfund.org/educational_materials_reports.asp

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

<http://www.hud.gov/>

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency - Reports

http://www.mhfa.state.mn.us/about/about_reports.htm

Office of the Legislative Auditor - Affordable Housing

<http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/2001/pe0103.htm>

Solar energy

Minnesota Department of Commerce – Energy Information

<http://www.state.mn.us/cgi-bin/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?subchannel=-536881511&id=-536881350&agency=Commerce>
<http://www.moea.state.mn.us/energy/index.cfm>

Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance - Energy Resources

Aggregate

Aggregate and Agricultural Resources Map (JPEG file)

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/AgriAgg.jpg>

Department of Natural Resources - Minnesota Geological Aggregate Resources Inventory of the Seven-County Metropolitan Area, Information Circular No. 46 (IC-46).

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/metroaggregate.html

Historic Preservation Critical Area

Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
 Department of Natural Resources – Critical Area Map

<http://www.mnhs.org/preserve/shpo/index.html>

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/critical_area/map.html

SECTION 4: TRANSPORTATION

<i>Regional Policy Plan</i>	Transportation - Policy Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/summary.htm
<i>Streets and Highway</i>	Minnesota Department of Transportation - Access Management Program	http://www.oim.dot.state.mn.us/access/
	Minnesota Department of Transportation - Traffic Volume Maps	http://www.dot.state.mn.us/tda/maps/trafficvol.html
<i>Bicycle Facilities</i>	Bike Map	http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/bikemap/bikemap.htm
<i>Transit</i>	Regional Park and Ride Facility Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/parkridefacilitysitelocation/plann.htm
	Transit System Map	http://metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPPtransitsystemway_map.pdf
	2020 Transit Plan	http://metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/regtransit.htm
<i>Aviation</i>	1996 Aviation Policy Plan	Paper Copies available from the Data Center
	Builders Guide – Acoustical Analysis	Paper Copies available from the Data Center
	Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Aircraft Noise (2030 TPP, Appendix H)	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2004/TPPAppendixH.pdf
	Heliport Ordinances Publication No. 559-90-089	Paper Copies available from the Data Center
	Federal Aviation Agency - Form 7460	www.faa.gov/arp/ace/part77.cfm
	Minnesota Department of Transportation - Aeronautics and Aviation	http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/
	Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) or Master Plan for each airport	Paper copies available for review at the Data Center

SECTION 5: WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Regional Policy Plan	Water Resources Management - Policy Plan	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/WRMPP/WRMPP2005.htm
Wastewater	Infiltration and Inflow Task Force	http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/ProjectTeams/I-I-Home.htm
Surface Water	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Individual Sewage Treatment Systems Program	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/ists/index.html
	Watershed management planning	http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/water/planning/index.htm
	Nonpoint Source Pollution and Urban Small Sites Best Management Practices Manual	http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/water/BMP/index.htm
	Watershed management reports	http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/reports/index.htm
	Environment reports	http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/environment/environment.htm
	Board of Water and Soils – Resources	http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/watermgmt/complocalwatermgmt/index.html
	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA)– TMDL	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/index.html#tmdl
	Minnesota PCA – NPDES	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/inpdes_p.html
	Minnesota PCA – Stormwater Program	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/stormwater/index.html
	Minnesota PCA – Best Management Practices Manual	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/pubs/sw-bmpmanual.html
	Minnesota PCA – Model ordinances	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-strm2-06.doc
	Minnesota Planning - Model ordinances	http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/pdf/2000/eqb/ModelOrdWhole.pdf
	Northland NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials)	http://nemo.uconn.edu/national/stateprograms/mn_wi.htm
Water Supply	Water supply planning including a link to the Water Supply Plan Template	http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/water/supply/index.htm
	Department of Natural Resources - Water supply planning resources, incl. Water Supply Template	http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/appropriations/eandc_plan.html
	Department of Health - Wellhead protection	http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/whp/

SECTION 6: PARKS***Regional Policy Plan***

Parks - Policy Plan

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/ParksPlan.htm>

Regional Parks System Map

<http://metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/ParksPlanMap.png>

Classification system for local and regional facilities

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/parks/2005/2030RegionalParksPolicyPlan.pdf> - #page=55***Link to park agencies***

Regional Park Agencies contact information

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/parks/parks.htm>

Trust for Public Land - Economic Benefits of Parks

www.tpl.org/tier2_rp2.cfm?folder_id=727

SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION

Natural Resources Protection

Natural Resources Task Force - Report and
Recommendations
Conservation Design Models

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/landuse/NRProtectionStrategy.pdf>

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/assistance/NaturalResourcesSystems.pdf>

<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/uf/techguide/toc.htm>

<http://www.epa.gov/greenacres/index.html>

U.S. Department of Agriculture Forestry Service
U.S Environmental Protection Agency - Native
landscaping

Department of Natural Resources - Shoreland
management

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/index.html

Department of Natural Resources – Metro
Greenways

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/greenways/index.html>

Department of Natural Resources – Reports and
case studies

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological_services/pubs.html

Department of Natural Resources – GIS data

<http://deli.dnr.state.mn.us/>

Department of Natural Resources – Habitat
preservation

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/neighborhood_wilds/index.html

Minnesota Planning – Sustainable Development
Initiative

www.eqb.state.mn.us/SDI/index.html

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Brownfields
Local Government Environmental Assistance
Network

[Http://www.pca.state.mn.us/cleanup/brownfields.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/cleanup/brownfields.html)

<http://www.lgean.org/html/toolbox.cfm>

Financial Assistance

Minnesota Dept of Administration

www.lpa.state.Mn.us/links/grants.html

Minnesota Council of Foundations Grant Resources

www.mcf.org/mcf/grant/resource.htm

Minnesota Department of Employment and
Economic

www.deed.state.Mn.us/Community/assistance/financial.htm

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

www.dnr.state.Mn.us/grants/index.html

Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance

www.moea.state.Mn.us/grants/index.cfm

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

www.pca.state.Mn.us/programs/index.html

Comprehensive Plan Review Timelines

This table identifies the timelines for review of comprehensive plan **updates** and comprehensive plan **amendments** by adjacent governmental units and affected school districts and the Metropolitan Council. The same timelines apply to school district capital improvement programs.

Definition	Adjacent governmental units and affected school districts review and comment...	Council reviews for conformance, consistency & compatibility...	The Council may extend the review period ...
Comprehensive plan update as required by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minnesota Statutes 473.864, Subd. 2; the release of the system statements; or notice of revision to a metropolitan system plan. 	...6 months prior to submitting plans to the Council. Satisfaction of this requirement is one of the criteria for determining whether an application is deemed complete for review.	...120 days upon receipt of the complete plan.	...beyond 120 days if agreed to by the municipality.
Comprehensive plan amendment to any part or chapter of a comprehensive plan. Municipalities amend their comprehensive plans for various reasons including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes resulting from interim planning activities such as master plans or annexation; a need to change a land use designation to allow a proposed development; routine update of a public facilities element; or a text amendment to revise a land use category, policy or other description. 	...60 days prior to submitting plans to the Council. Satisfaction of this requirement is one of the criteria for determining whether an application is deemed complete for review.	...60 days upon determination by the Council that the application is complete for review.	...an additional 60 days if need, and beyond 120 days if agreed to by the municipality.