

**C** Community Development Committee  
For the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 14, 2010

Item: 2010-231

**ADVISORY INFORMATION**

**Date Prepared:** June 22, 2010

**Subject:** Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Review File No. 20610-1

**Proposed Action:**

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached Advisory Comments and Review Record, and the following:

**Recommendation of the Community Development Committee:**

1. Authorize the County to put its 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update into effect.
2. The Update needs to include mapping of aircraft noise safety zones and notification to FAA regarding potential obstructions to air navigation.
3. Implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Forecasts and Land Use.

**Summary of Committee Discussion / Questions:**

Local Planning Assistance staff member, Tom Caswell, presented the report and the proposed actions to the Community Development Committee. The Committee asked about the relationship between the County and its townships' authority over land use and zoning. Jane Harper, Principal Planner for Washington County, explained that a developer must get approval from both the County and the township. The County and affected township address each proposal on a case-by-case basis.

The Committee unanimously adopted the proposed actions.

**C** Community Development Committee  
Meeting date: June 21, 2010

**ADVISORY INFORMATION**

<b>Date:</b>	June 14, 2010
<b>Subject:</b>	Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update Review File No. 20610-1
<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	District 11, Councilmember Georgeanne Hilker District 12, Councilmember Sherry Broecker
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	Minnesota Statutes Section 473.175
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Tom Caswell, Principal Reviewer (651-602-1319) Phyllis Hanson, Local Planning Assistance Manager (651-602-1566)
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development/Planning and Growth Management

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## ADVISORY COMMENTS

### Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update Review File No. 20610-1– Council Business Item No. 2010-231

The following Advisory Comments are part of the Council action authorizing Washington County to implement its 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update (“Update”):

#### Community Development Committee

1. The Council-adopted *Local Planning Handbook* states that the County must take the following steps:
  - (a) Adopt the Update in final form after considering the Council’s review recommendations; and
  - (b) Submit one electronic copy and one hard copy of the Update to the Council. The electronic copy must be organized as one unified document.

A copy of the County Board resolution evidencing final approval of the Update should be submitted to the Council.

2. The Council’s *Handbook* also states that local governments must formally adopt their comprehensive plans within nine months after the Council’s final action. If the Council has recommended changes, local governments should incorporate those recommended changes into the plan or respond to the Council before “final approval” of the comprehensive plan by the governing body of the local governmental unit. (Minn. Stat. § 473.858, subd. 3).
3. Local governmental units must adopt official controls as described in their adopted comprehensive plans and must submit copies of the official controls to the Council within 30 days after official controls are adopted. (Minn. Stat. § 473.865, subd. 1).
4. Local governmental units cannot adopt any official controls or fiscal devices that conflict with their comprehensive plans or which permit activities in conflict with the Council’s metropolitan system plans. (Minn. Stat. §§ 473.864, subd. 2; 473.865, subd. 2). If official controls conflict with comprehensive plans, the official controls must be amended within nine months following amendments to comprehensive plans. (Minn. Stat. § 473.865, subd. 3).

## Background

Washington County has six townships within its borders. The County provides general guidelines and policies for development and zoning in the unincorporated areas. The County also reviews development proposals. The Townships also have separate planning and zoning authority, but must be at least as restrictive as the County.

The County submitted its 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update (Update) to the Council for review to meet the Metropolitan Land Planning Act requirements (Minn. Stat. 473.175) and the Council's 2005 Systems Statement requirements.

## Rationale – Standard of Review & Findings

1. Does the proposed Update conform to Regional Systems Plans?
2. Is the Update consistent with Metropolitan Council policies?
3. Is the Update compatible with plans of adjacent governmental units and plans of affected special districts and school districts?

### Conformance with Regional Systems Plans:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Regional Parks   | Yes            |
| 2. Transportation including Aviation mapping of aircraft noise zones and notification to FAA regarding potential obstructions to air navigation is included in the Update before final adoption | Yes – provided |
| 3. Water Resources Management (Wastewater Services and Surface Water Management)  | Yes            |

### Consistent with Council Policy Requirements:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Forecasts  | Yes |
| 2. Housing  | Yes |
| 3. 2030 Regional Development Framework and Land Use   | Yes |
| 4. Individual Sewage Treatment Systems (ISTS) Program | Yes |
| 5. Water Supply                                       | Yes |

### Compatible with Plans of Adjacent Governmental Units and Plans of Affected Special Districts and School Districts

- |                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Compatible with other plans | Yes |
|--------------------------------|-----|

## Funding

The County did not receive planning funds.

## Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.

## REVIEW RECORD

### *Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update*

#### STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA) requires local units of government to submit comprehensive plans and plan amendments to the Council for review and comment (Minn. Stat. § 473.864, Subd. 2). The Council reviews plans to determine:

- *Conformance with metropolitan system plans,*
- *Consistency with other adopted Plans of the Council, and*
- *Compatibility with the Plans of other local jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Area.*

The Council may require a local governmental unit to modify any plan or part thereof if, upon the adoption of findings and a resolution, the Council concludes that the Plan is more likely than not to have a substantial impact on or contain a substantial departure from metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. § 473.175, Subd. 1).

Each local government unit shall adopt a policy plan for the collection, treatment and disposal of sewage for which the local government unit is responsible, coordinated with the Metropolitan Council's plan, and may revise the same as often as it deems necessary. Each such plan shall be submitted to the Council for review and shall be subject to the approval of the Council as to those features affecting the Council's responsibilities as determined by the Council. Any such features disapproved by the Council shall be modified in accordance with the Council's recommendations (Minn. Stat. § 473.513).

#### CONFORMANCE WITH REGIONAL SYSTEMS

##### Regional Parks

*Reviewer: Jan Youngquist, CD-Regional Parks System Planning (651-602-1029)*

The Update conforms to the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. The existing regional parks system facilities in Washington County include:

Big Marine Park Reserve	Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park
Hardwood Creek Regional Trail	Lake Elmo Park Reserve
Pine Point Regional Park	Square Lake Special Recreation Feature
St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park	

The planned and proposed regional parks system facilities include:

Afton Bluffs Regional Trail	Bruce Vento-Gateway (Lake Links) Regional Trail
Central Greenway Regional Trail	Glacial Hills Regional Trail
Grey Cloud Island Regional Park	Mississippi River Regional Trail

## Prairie View Regional Trail

## St. Croix Valley Regional Trail

State park and open space units within the County provide outdoor recreation opportunities and natural resource conservation for the public and are considered part of the regional recreation open space system. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources operates Afton State Park, William O'Brien State Park, the Gateway State Trail, Bayport Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Falls Creek Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), Grey Cloud Dunes SNA, Hardwood Creek WMA, Lost Valley Prairie SNA, Paul Hugo Farm WMA, and St. Croix Savanna SNA.

The Update acknowledges and plans for these regional parks system facilities. The Update proposes a new regional trail along the Mississippi River in Denmark Township as well as a regional trail search area along the St. Croix River from Stillwater to Lakeland. These trails were not identified as regional trails in the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*; however, the County is seeking regional status for these trails as part of the Council's update of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, which is currently underway.

### **Transportation**

*Reviewer: Ann Braden (MTS-Systems Planning (651-602-1711))*

The Update is in conformance with the *Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)* adopted in 2004, and fully addresses all the applicable transportation and transit requirements of a comprehensive plan.

Washington County is served by segments of five principal arterials: TH 36, TH 61, I-35E, I-94 and I-694. Although the segment of I-694 west of TH 36 was identified as an expansion project in the 2004 Transportation Policy Plan, the most recently adopted TPP indicates that the region will not have sufficient financial resources to build all of these expansion projects by 2030. The current plan identifies this segment of I-694 as one of the 12 projects that must be reassessed in an attempt to reduce its costs while still achieving substantial capacity expansion benefits. Construction of a new St. Croix River Bridge in Stillwater was also included in the 2004 TPP. Plans to construct this bridge are still in place and the project is included in the 2014 regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Areas of Washington County are within Market Areas II, III, and IV. Service options for Market Area II include regular-route locals, all-day expresses, small vehicle circulators, special needs paratransit (ADA, seniors), and ridesharing. Service options for Market Area III include peak-only express, small vehicle circulators, midday circulators, special needs paratransit (ADA, seniors) and ridesharing. Service options for Market Area IV include dial-a-ride, volunteer driver programs, and ridesharing. Proposed transit corridors located in Washington County include the Red Rock Line, the Rush Line, I-94 east corridor, TH 36/NE and I-35W and a potential High Speed Rail corridor between Chicago and the Twin Cities. Planning for these transit corridors are at different stages.

### **Aviation**

*Reviewer: Chauncey Case, MTS-Systems Planning (651-602-1724)*

The Update is in conformance, but not fully consistent, with the *2030 TTP* (2004) for aviation. The Update needs to include mapping of aircraft noise zones and notification to FAA regarding potential obstructions to air navigation. Consistency with the Council's plans and policies, as well as compatibility with the plans and implementation tools of the townships in Washington County, is important to ensure consistent uniform protection of regional airspace. These changes must be made prior to County adoption of the final document.

## **Water Resources Management**

### ***Wastewater Service***

*Reviewer: Kyle Colvin, ES – Engineering Services, (651-602-1151)*

The Update is in conformance with the *Water Resources Management Policy Plan (WRMPP)*.

The County has agreed to participate in a long term service study for the St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant, along with Baytown Township, Stillwater Township, and the City of Grant. Grant and Stillwater Township have retained land use guiding at densities no greater than one unit per 10 acres. Baytown Township proposes to re-designate areas of the community from Rural Residential to Single Family Estates (SFE) prior to the completion of the sewer study. Baytown is willing to develop and implement flexible development standards in the re-designated SFE area until the study is completed, but no later than December 31, 2012.

### ***Tier II Comments***

Washington County does not have any jurisdictional control over centralized wastewater collection or treatment issues; therefore, the County is not required to submit a Tier II Plan.

### ***Surface Water Management***

*Reviewer: Judy Sventek, ES-Water Resources Assessment (651-601-1156)*

The Update is in conformance with the *WRMPP* for local surface water management.

The County Update does a good job of integrating activities, strategies, goals and policies related to the protection of the water resources within the County. While the County is not mandated to prepare a local surface water management plan, it does have a significant role in water management within the County. Its roles include enforcement over activities in the floodplain and shoreland; its partnership with others to protect wetlands and serve as technical advisors for wetland issues; monitoring the water quality of lakes and streams within the County; and its role in overseeing and coordinating watershed management within the County.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH COUNCIL POLICY**

### **Forecasts**

*Reviewer: Todd Graham, CD-Research (651-602-1322)*

The Update is consistent with Council expectations and regional policy for forecast-related content (see Table 1, below).

Tables 2.1 through 2.4, and Appendices 2A through 2C of the Update are consistent with the Metropolitan Council's currently published forecasts, as of December 31, 2009.

### **Table 1 – Council Forecasts**



	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	201,130	257,932	318,603	363,190
Households	71,462	97,449	123,584	144,347
Employment	67,649	88,060	111,560	130,620

Advisory Comments:

The County is advised that city-level forecasts may be revised in consultation with municipalities. Forecasts have been revised in January-May 2010 for Bayport, Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Paul Park, and Stillwater with the approval of each City's Update. Associated with Plan Updates, four other municipalities and townships in Washington County have revisions pending. The forecast revisions will be very minor at the county-level, and represent minimal change in County totals.

**2030 Regional Development Framework and Land Use**

*Reviewer: Lisa Barajas, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1895)*

The Update is consistent with the *2030 Regional Development Framework (RDF)*. The County retains land use authority for the six townships in the County: Baytown Township (Review File No. 20447-1), Denmark Township, Grey Cloud Island Township, May Township, Stillwater Township, and West Lakeland Township. The County provides general guidelines and policies for development and zoning in the unincorporated areas. The County also reviews development proposals.

Each of these Townships has taken on local planning responsibilities and has developed and submitted individual comprehensive plan updates to the Council for review. To date, the Council has reviewed all of the plans for the individual townships except for West Lakeland Township, which is scheduled for review in July 2010. The RDF designates all of the townships as Diversified Rural, except for specific areas within Baytown Township that were amended to Rural Residential through the official review of their plan. The Council's reviews of each of the Township plans found those individual plans to be consistent with the RDF for land use.

The County's land use plan is generally consistent with the land use plans of the individual townships, using the same density restrictions and use designations in most areas. However, there are two areas in which the County's Update differs from the individual Township update: in Baytown Township and in a small area of West Lakeland Township.

West Lakeland Township

In West Lakeland Township, the Township's plan shows a future land use guiding of Highway Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial along the south side of I-94, which is consistent with the Township's current zoning for those areas. However, the County Update guides this area as Semi-Rural, which allows residential units at a maximum density of 1 unit per 2.5 acres. The Update also contains policies to locate commercial and industrial growth where urban services are available and to continue to prohibit commercial and industrial land use in unsewered areas.

The Township's plan has not been officially reviewed by the Council at this time, but the County is aware of the Township's planned land uses along the interstate corridor. The County Update discusses the planned land use inconsistencies, noting

that these areas might be suitable for commercial uses once sewer and water become available. Council staff has communicated these inconsistencies and policies to the Township.

#### Baytown Township

The Council's *2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan* (WRMPP) designated the central portion of Baytown Township as a post-2030 long-term sewer service area to be served with regional wastewater through the St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant. Through the Township's comprehensive plan update review, the Township had re-designated land in the central portion of the community from Rural Residential (1 unit per 5 acres) to Single Family Estates (1 unit per 2.5 acres), provided that development was consistent with the Council's Flexible Residential Development Ordinance Guidelines. This designation was put into place to allow for the reservation of land for the potential extension of urban services to this area, pending a sewer feasibility study for the St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant in Stillwater.

The County's plan retains the Rural Residential designation for this area, with an allowable residential density of 1 unit per 5 acres. The Update provides a thorough discussion of the Baytown Township comprehensive plan review process and outcome, but does not indicate further action steps in this regard. The Update also contains a "Priority Action" to continue working with the townships to conform to the overall county plan and policies.

#### Advisory Comments

The County is advised to continue to work with West Lakeland and Baytown Township to resolve differences in land use guiding and policy. As discussed in the Wastewater section above, the County is also encouraged to participate in the long-term service study for the St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant located in Stillwater.

#### **Housing**

*Reviewer: Linda Milashius, CD-Livable Communities (651-602-1541)*

The Update fulfills the housing planning requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. The Update provides a county-wide assessment of the housing stock, identifies affordable and life-cycle housing issues and needs, provides goals and strategies to address those needs, as well as implementation tools and programs that the County will use or make available to assist its cities and townships in addressing local housing needs.

The County, collaborating and partnering with the Washington County HRA shall provide affordable housing opportunities for county residents through continued use of financing programs such as CDBG, HOME and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, in addition to pursuing additional funding sources provided by agencies such as Minnesota Housing, Metropolitan Council and HUD.

Washington County is committed to providing a balanced housing supply to meet the varied needs of residents of all ages, lifecycle stages, household sizes, and socio-economic circumstances in all geographic areas of the county. Washington

County through its HRA is an active participant in the Livable Communities Local Housing Incentives Account Program and has partnered with several communities who have been awarded LCA grants. In addition, the County HRA also received a \$1 million Land Acquisition for Affordable New Development (LAAND) grant in 2009.

### **Individual Sewage Treatment Systems (ISTS)**

*Reviewer: Jim Larsen, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1159)*

The Update is in conformance with the *WRMPP* for ISTS.

Community Sewer Systems and ISTS are widely used throughout Washington County. The County's Ordinance regulates the location, design, installation, use, and maintenance management for both types of systems in all Washington County cities and townships with the exception of the Cities of Dellwood, Lake Elmo, and Stillwater. Current County records indicate that there are 11,252 ISTS under County oversight. The County is in the process of implementing its recently revised Ordinance No. 128 to be consistent with recent MPCA Rule updates.

The County uses a geodatabase to track and maintain all ISTS information. Design, inspection, and maintenance records from 1972 to present are linked to parcel records and available to homeowners, compliance inspectors, real estate agents, and County staff for purposes of determining compliance with the County's Ordinance.

### **Water Supply**

*Reviewer: Sara Bertelsen Smith, ES-Water Supply Planning (651-602-1035)*

The County is not required to have a water supply plan since it does not own or operate a water supply system. The Council commends the County on its effort to monitor and improve groundwater quality as well as promoting efficient use of water.

### **Resource Protection**

#### ***Historic Preservation***

*Reviewer: Tom Caswell, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1319)*

The Update contains a section on Historic Preservation as required by the MLPA.

#### ***Solar Protection***

*Reviewer: Tom Caswell, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1319)*

The Update contains a section on Solar Access Protection as required by the MLPA.

#### ***Aggregate Resource Protection***

*Reviewer: Jim Larsen, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1159)*

The Update contains a section on aggregate resources protection as required by the MLPA. The Update acknowledges that aggregate resource materials are vital to the economic well-being of the region. The County has policies in place to protect and

preserve the resources for extraction, minimize impacts to the environment and adjacent land uses, and require reclamation plans. The County's Mining Ordinance allows mining in commercial, agricultural, and rural residential zones through a conditional use permit process.

## **Plan Implementation**

*Reviewer: Tom Caswell, CD-Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1319)*

The Update includes a description of:

- Capital improvement Program Yes
- Zoning Code Yes
- ISTS (referenced) Yes
- Housing Implementation Programs Yes

The Update includes a description of the future land use categories and related residential densities, the zoning map and the capital improvement program.

## **COMPATIBILITY WITH PLANS OF ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS AND PLANS OF AFFECTED SPECIAL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

The County submitted the draft Update to adjacent local units of government, school districts, counties and special districts for comment on June 1, 2009. As discussed in the Land Use Section above, the County's planned land use for Baytown Township and West Lakeland Township is inconsistent with the individual township plans. Baytown Township has expressed concern regarding the inconsistency between the plans. As discussed above, the County and the Townships are encouraged to collaborate to resolve the land use guiding inconsistencies.

## **DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW**

- The Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan, May, 2009
- Supplemental material, March 18, 2010
- Supplemental material, April 23, 2010

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Figure 1: Location map of regional systems
- Figure 2: 2030 Regional Development Framework
- Figure 3: Existing Land Use Map
- Figure 4: 2030 Future Land Use Map



## Regional Systems

### Transportation

-  Interstates
-  US Highways
-  State Highways
-  Other Main Roads
-  Airports

### Wastewater Services

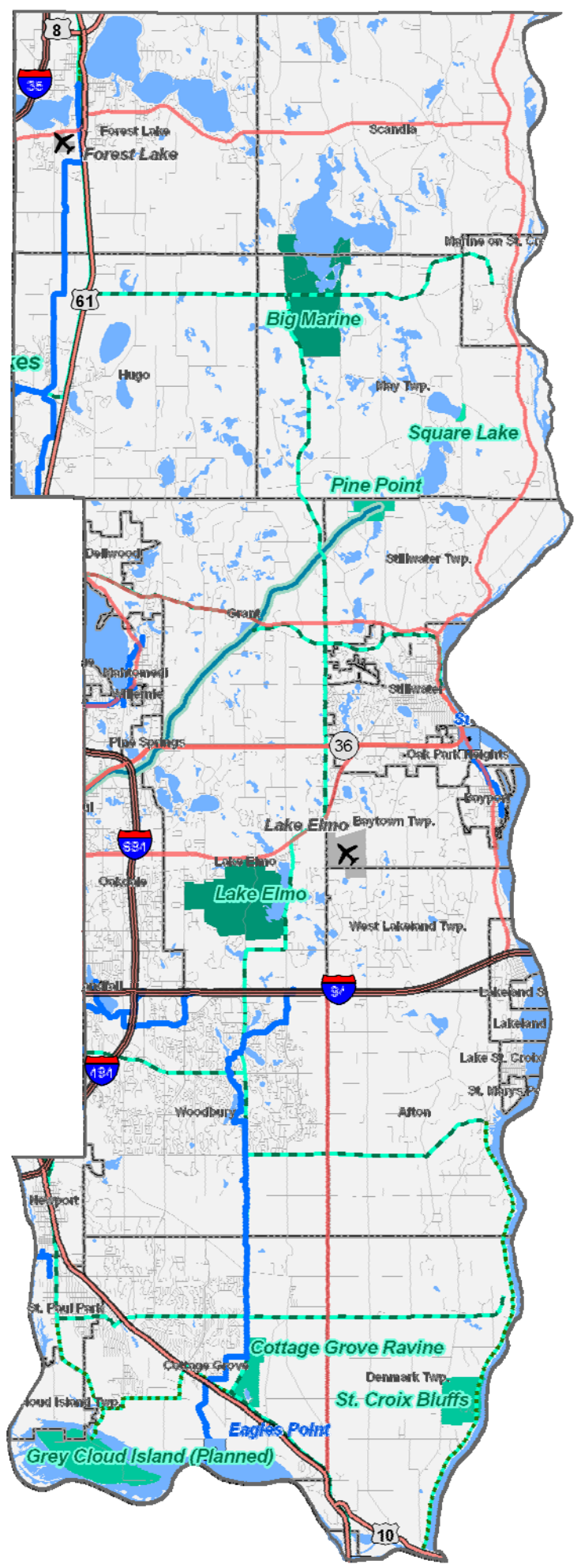
-  Treatment Plants
-  Interceptors

### Regional and State Trails

-  Regional Existing
-  Regional Planned
-  Regional Proposed
-  Existing State Trail

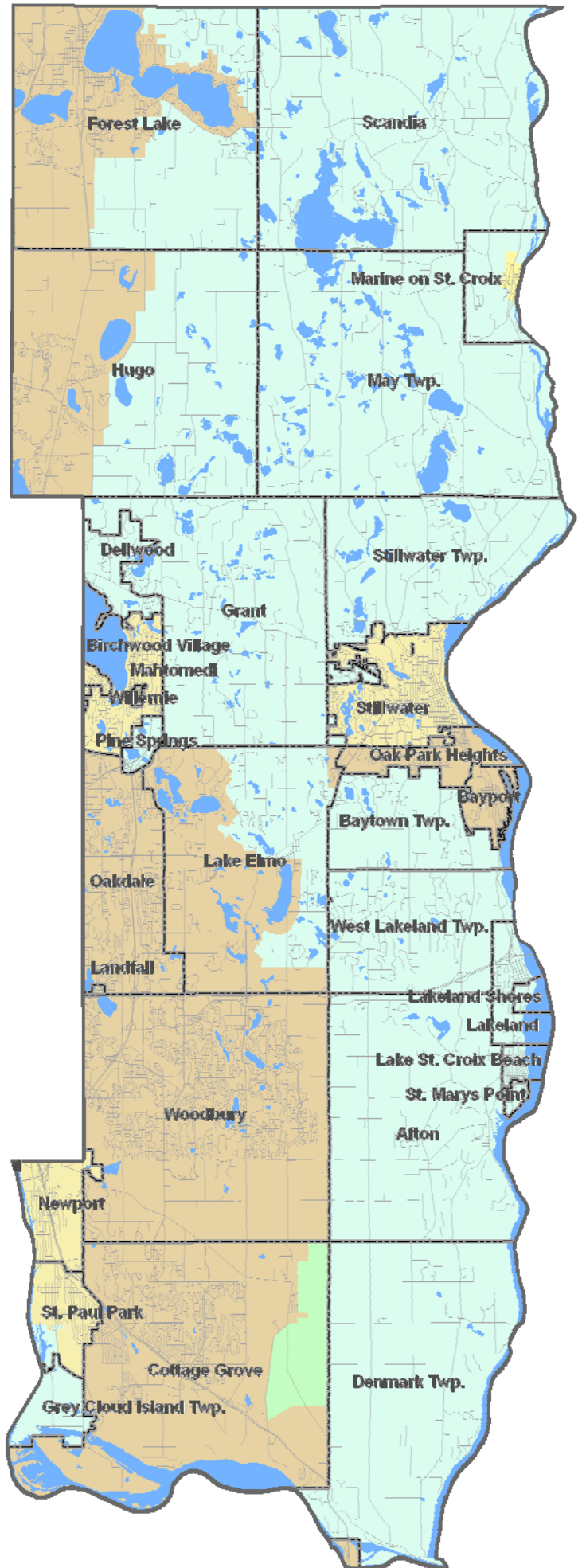
### Recreation Open Space

-  Regional Park Reserve
-  Regional Park
-  Special Recreation Feature
-  TLG Street Centerlines, 2009



### Framework Planning Areas

- Agricultural Area
- Developed Area
- Developing Area
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Rural Residential
- Non-Council Area
- TLG Street Centerlines, 2010





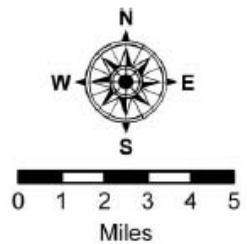
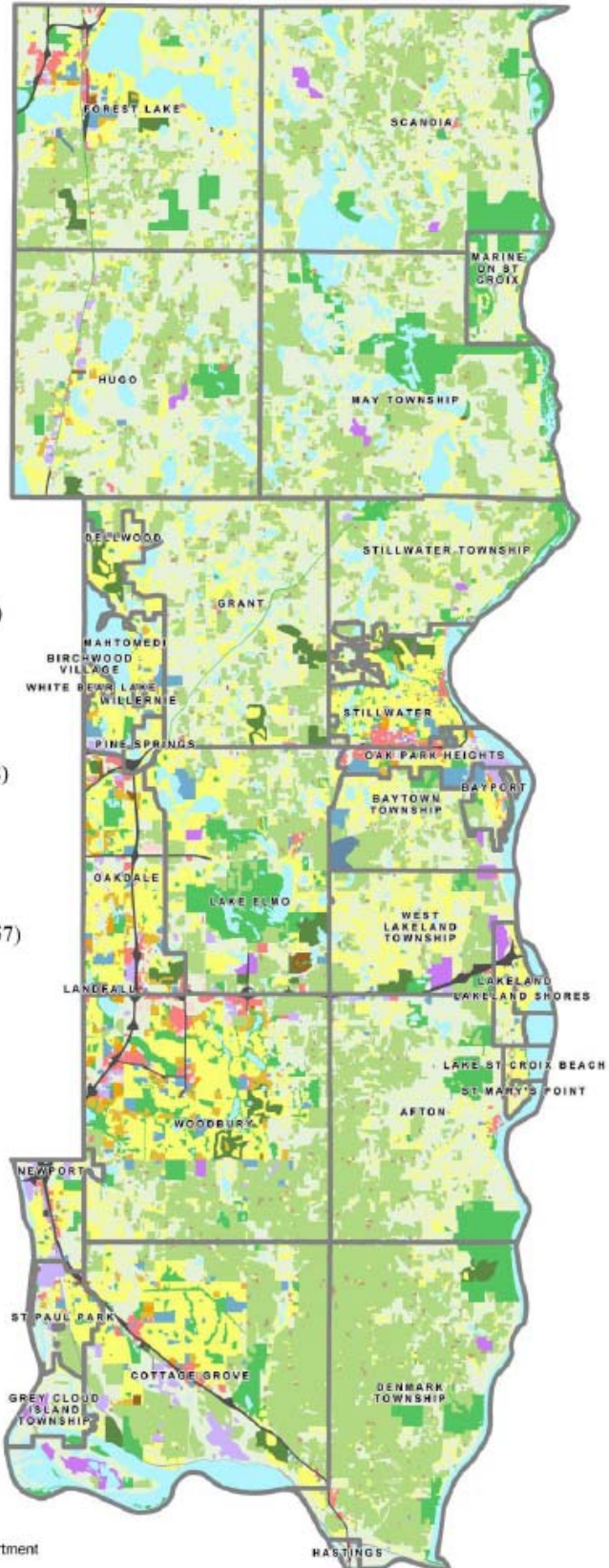


**Figure 3-1**

**Generalized  
Land Use 2005**

**Land Use (area in acres)**

-  Farmstead (2,055)
-  Seasonal/Vacation (252)
-  Single Family Detached (44,297)
-  Manufactured Housing Park (303)
-  Single Family Attached (2,369)
-  Multifamily (724)
-  Retail and Other Commercial (2,993)
-  Office (347)
-  Mixed Use Residential (42)
-  Mixed Use Industrial (37)
-  Mixed Use Commercial and Other (8)
-  Industrial and Utility (2,659)
-  Extractive (1,684)
-  Institutional (3,597)
-  Park, Recreational or Preserve (19,257)
-  Golf Course (3,473)
-  Major Highway (2,851)
-  Railway (251)
-  Airport (315)
-  Agricultural (68,708)
-  Undeveloped (88,691)
-  Water (25,842)



Prepared By: Washington County GIS Support Unit, IT Department  
Data Source: Metropolitan Council - 2005



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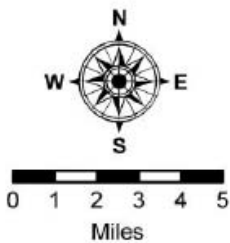
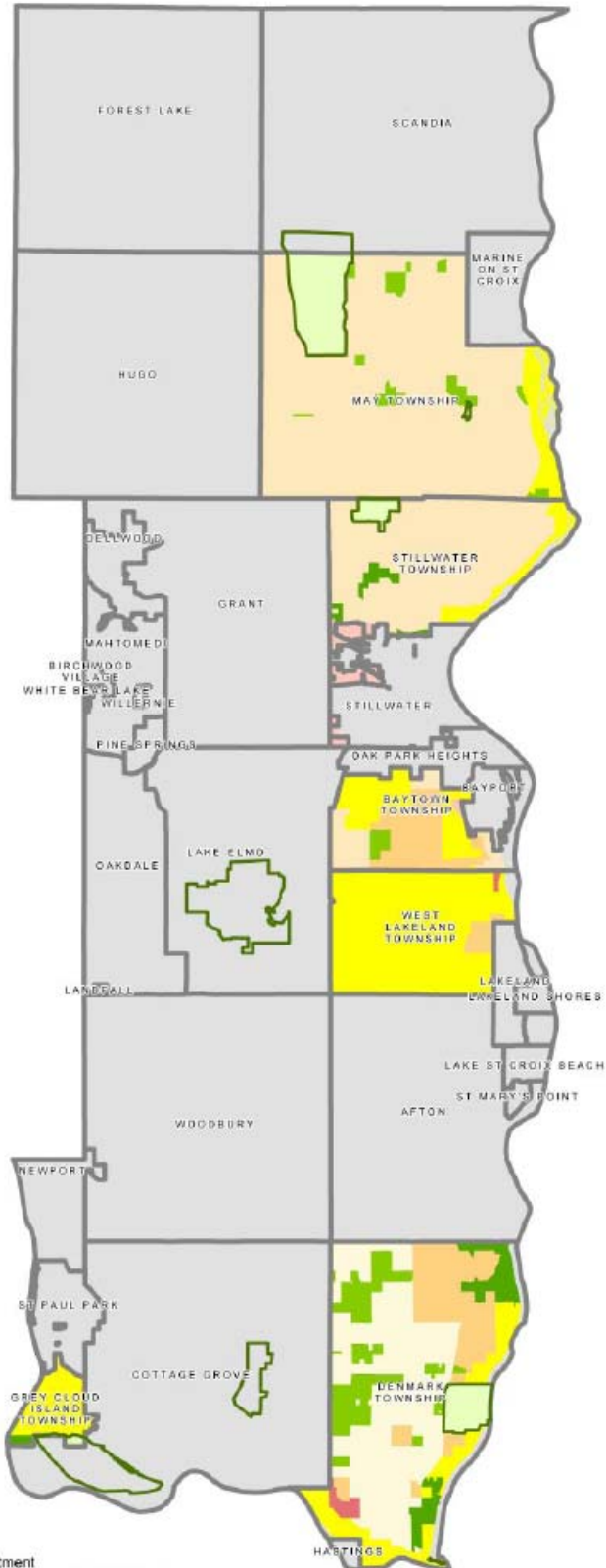




**Figure 3-11**

**Future Land Use**

-  Agriculture, Long-term
-  Agriculture Preserves
-  Commercial / Industrial - Rural
-  Conservancy
-  General Rural
-  Parks
-  Rural Residential
-  Semi Rural
-  Transition Zone
-  Planned Park Master Plan Boundary



Prepared By: Washington County GIS Support Unit, IT Department  
 Data Source: Washington County, Survey & Land Management Division, Public Works Department

