

C Community Development Committee
Meeting date: August 17, 2009

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Subject:	Ramsey County Comprehensive Plan Update Review File No. 20571-1
District(s), Member(s):	District 10, Kris Sanda District 11, Georgeanne Hilker District 13, Richard Aguilar District 14, Kirstin Sersland Beach
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minnesota Statutes Section 473.175
Staff Prepared/Presented:	LisaBeth Barajas, Principal Reviewer, 651-602-1895 Phyllis Hanson, Local Planning Assistance Manager, 651-602-1566
Division/Department:	Community Development / Planning & Growth Management

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached Advisory Comments and Review Record and take the following recommended actions:

Recommendation of the Community Development Committee:

Authorize Ramsey County to put its 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update into effect.

ADVISORY COMMENTS
Ramsey County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update
Review File No. 20571-1 – Council Business Item No. 2009-281

The following advisory comments are part of the Council action authorizing the 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 plan within nine months after the Council's final action. If the Council has recommended changes, local governments should incorporate those recommended changes into the Update or respond to the Council before "final approval" by the governing body of the local governmental unit (Minn. Stat. § 473.858, subd. 3).
3. Local governmental units must adopt official controls and described in their adopted comprehensive plan and must submit copies of the official controls to the Council within 30 days after the 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 plan or which permit activities in conflict with the Council's metropolitan system plans (Minn. Stat. § 473.864, subd. 2; 473.865, subd. 2).

Background

Ramsey County is located in the center of the metropolitan region, and encompasses all or part of the following 19 cities: Arden Hills, Blaine (part), Falcon Heights, Gem Lake, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood, Mounds View, New Brighton, North Oaks, North St. Paul, Roseville, Saint Anthony (part), Saint Paul, Shoreview, Spring Lake Park (part), Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake (part), and White Bear Township.

The County is the second largest county in Minnesota in terms of population, having an estimated population of 517,074 in 2007. The County is also the smallest county in the State, covering 155.8 square miles. Combined, this leaves the County with the highest county population density in the State, with 3,318 people per square mile. Between 1990 and 2000, the County's population increased by 25,252 people. The County is forecasted to continue to grow, with a projected population increase of 89,465 people between 2000 and 2030.

The County does not exercise land use authority, as each of the municipalities, including White Bear Township, is responsible for local planning decisions. This limits the required items for the County's comprehensive plan to conformance to system plans for regional parks, transportation, and aviation; consistency with Council policy requirements for forecasts and individual sewage treatment systems program; and compatibility with the plans of adjacent governmental units and plans of affected special districts and school districts.

Rationale – Standard of Review and 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 the 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 | Yes |
| 3. Water Resources Management
(Wastewater Services and Surface Water Management) | Not Applicable |

Consistent with Council Policy Requirements:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Forecasts | Yes |
| 2. Housing | Not Applicable |
| 3. <i>2030 Regional Development Framework</i> and Land Use | Not Applicable for Land Use |
| 4. Individual Sewage Treatment Systems (ISTS) Program | Yes |
| 5. Water Supply | Not Applicable |

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

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

Funding

None.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.

REVIEW RECORD

Review of the Ramsey County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (MLPA) requires local units of government to submit comprehensive plans (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 Update 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 Update acknowledges and plans for regional park system facilities. The existing regional parks in the County include Bald Eagle-Otter Lake, Battle Creek, Keller, Long Lake, and Vadnais-Snail Lake. The existing regional trails include Birch Lake, Bruce Vento, Highway 96, Rice Creek North, and Rice Creek West. There are a number of proposed regional trails in Ramsey County including Afton Bluffs, Bruce Vento-Greenway, Chain of Lakes-Bald Eagle, and the St. Anthony Railroad Spur (Northeast Diagonal). In addition, the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* recognized the conversion of Tony Schmidt Regional Park, Lexington Parkway Regional Trail, and Trout Brook Regional Trail to regional trail status. Ramsey County is the implementing agency for regional parks in the County.

Transportation

Roads and Transit

Reviewer: Ann Braden, MTS – Systems Planning, (651-602-1705)

The Update conforms to the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* and addresses all applicable transportation and transit requirements of a comprehensive plan.

The County is served by segments of a number of principal arterials: I-35E, I-35W, I-694, I-94, TH 280, TH 61, TH 52, and Shepherd Road. Areas of the County are within Transit Market Areas I, II, III, and IV, as shown in Figure 4-3 in the Update. Service options for Market Area I include regular-route locals, all-day expresses, special needs paratransit (ADA, seniors), and ridesharing. 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, special needs paratransit (ADA, seniors), and ridesharing.

Service options for Market Area IV include dial-a-ride, volunteer driving programs, and ridesharing.

Advisory Comments

The County needs to be aware of recent changes to the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* (TPP). Segments of three metropolitan highways (I-35E, I-694, and TH 36) were identified as expansion projects in the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* adopted in 2004. However, the January 2009 TPP indicates that the region will not have sufficient financial resources to build all of these expansion projects by 2030. The TPP identifies these three highway segments among the 12 projects that must be re-assessed in an attempt to reduce costs while still achieving substantial capacity expansion benefits.

Aviation

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

The Update conforms to the *2030 Transportation Policy Plan* and is consistent with the Council's aviation policy.

Water Resources Management

Wastewater Service

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

The Update conforms to the *2030 Water Resources Management Policy Plan* (WRMPP).

Tier II Comments

The County does not provide centralized wastewater service, and therefore is not required to prepare a Tier II wastewater plan.

Surface Water Management

Reviewer: Judy Sventek, ES – Water Resources Assessment, 651-602-1156

The Update conforms to the WRMPP for local surface water management. The County is not required to prepare a local surface water management plan, but it does have a significant role in water management. The Update does a good job of integrating activities, strategies, goals, and policies related to the protection of water resources within the County.

CONSISTENCY WITH COUNCIL POLICY

Forecasts

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

The Update's forecast-related material is consistent with Council forecasts. The County's System Statement forecasts are shown in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. Ramsey County Forecasts

	2010	2020	2030
Population	547,700	571,260	600,500
Households	219,170	231,820	246,940
Employment	372,630	404,980	430,040

Advisory Comments

As the County is aware, City-level forecasts may be revised in consultation with municipalities during the review of their individual updates. Forecasts for St. Anthony were revised with the approval of the City's Update in March 2009. Five additional municipalities in suburban Ramsey County have revisions pending associated with their Updates.

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*. The Metropolitan Land Planning Act specifically exempts Ramsey County from the land use planning requirement, since the County does not have land use authority. The Update, however, does include policies regarding land use as it relates to transportation and transit planning and natural resources, calling for the coordination of planning efforts among jurisdictions to ensure the protection of natural resources and efficient utilization of land within the County. The Update emphasizes the importance of existing neighborhoods, the enhancement of community through improved appearance and conditions, the prevention of deterioration of existing structures and land use, the efficient use of sites and existing structures, the protection of natural resources, and the provision and accessibility of public services.

Housing

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

The Update fulfills the affordable housing planning requirements of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. Because the County does not have land use authority, the County is not required to submit a Housing Implementation Plan. However, the Update does include a section on Housing and Economic Development, which cites the County's role in preserving, expanding, and improving the supply of affordable housing throughout the County.

The Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) works with other county departments and suburban jurisdictions to address current and ongoing housing and community development needs. The HRA priorities include owner-occupied housing rehabilitation/weatherization, rental rehabilitation and new construction, and home-ownership and mortgage foreclosure counseling and assistance. The HRA also issues conduit mortgage revenue bonds to help private developers preserve and build affordable housing.

Community and Individual Sewage Treatment Systems (ISTS)

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

The Update is consistent with the WRMP for ISTS. At present, the County is not required to have an ISTS ordinance because all of the cities and towns within the County have ordinances in place that comply with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Rules. However, the MPCA recently adopted revised rules pertaining to septic systems and the County Health Department staff, per changes to Minnesota Statute 115.55, is in the process of preparing an ISTS ordinance for adoption by February 2010, consistent with MPCA timeline requirements.

Water Supply

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

The County does not own or operate a water supply system, and so is not required to complete a water supply plan.

Resource Protection

Historic Preservation

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

Because the County does not have land use authority, it is not required to prepare an historic preservation element.

Solar Access Protection

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

Because the County does not have land use authority, it is not required to address solar access protection.

Aggregate Resources Protection

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

As the County has no land use planning authority, the Council’s aggregate resource protection requirements do not apply. The Update does not address the presence of absence of aggregate resources in the County.

Mississippi River Critical Area Plan

Reviewer: Tori Dupre, CD – Local Planning Assistance, (651-602-1621)

The Update includes a Critical Area component and does not propose changes to the Mississippi River Critical Area policies or to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA) policies.

The Metropolitan Council reviewed the County’s 2020 Mississippi River Critical Area Plan on May 30, 2001 (Business Item 2001-229, Review File No. 18298-1) and found that it addressed the Critical Area standards, guidelines, and voluntary MNRRA policies. The Council recommended that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) find the plan consistent with regional objectives and Executive Order 79-19-defined Critical Area standards.

The Council will forward the Update Review Record in this report to the DNR and to the National Park Service for their records.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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

The Update includes a description of and schedule for any necessary changes to:

- Capital Improvement Program Yes
- Zoning Code Not Applicable
- Subdivision Code Not Applicable
- ISTS Code Yes
- Housing Implementation Program Not Applicable

The Update contains an implementation section, which describes the official controls and fiscal devices that the County will employ to implement the Update. The Updates details the specific powers that the County has as they relate to comprehensive plan and implementing the Update and also includes a detailed list of formal actins that the County Board has taken that affect specific portions of the Update. Because the County does not have land use authority, it is not required to develop or employ a zoning code, subdivision code, or housing implementation program.

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

The County submitted it’s Update to the adjacent communities, affected school districts, affected watershed districts, and other special districts for comment on October 1, 2008. There do not appear to be any compatibility issues with the Update.

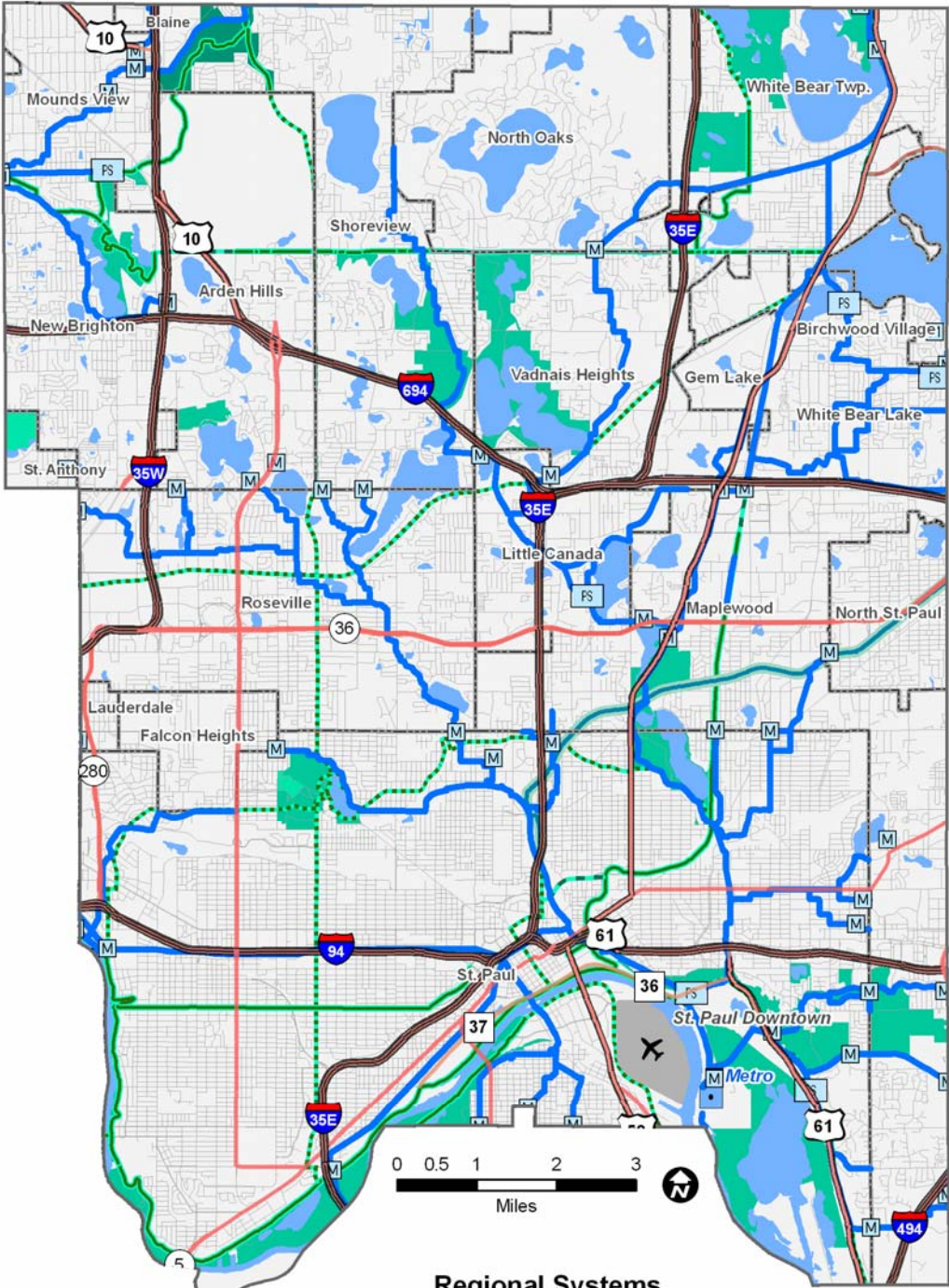
DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW

- Ramsey County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update (May 14, 2009)
- Revised language for Individual Sewage Treatment Systems, Aviation, and Forecasts (July 6, 2009)

ATTACHMENTS

- Figure 1: Location Map with Regional Systems
- Figure 2: 2030 Regional Development Framework Planning Areas
- Figure 3: Critical Area / MNRRA Corridor

Figure 1. Location Map with Regional Systems



Regional Systems

Transportation

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

Wastewater Services

- Meters
- FS Lift Stations
- Interceptors
- Treatment Plants

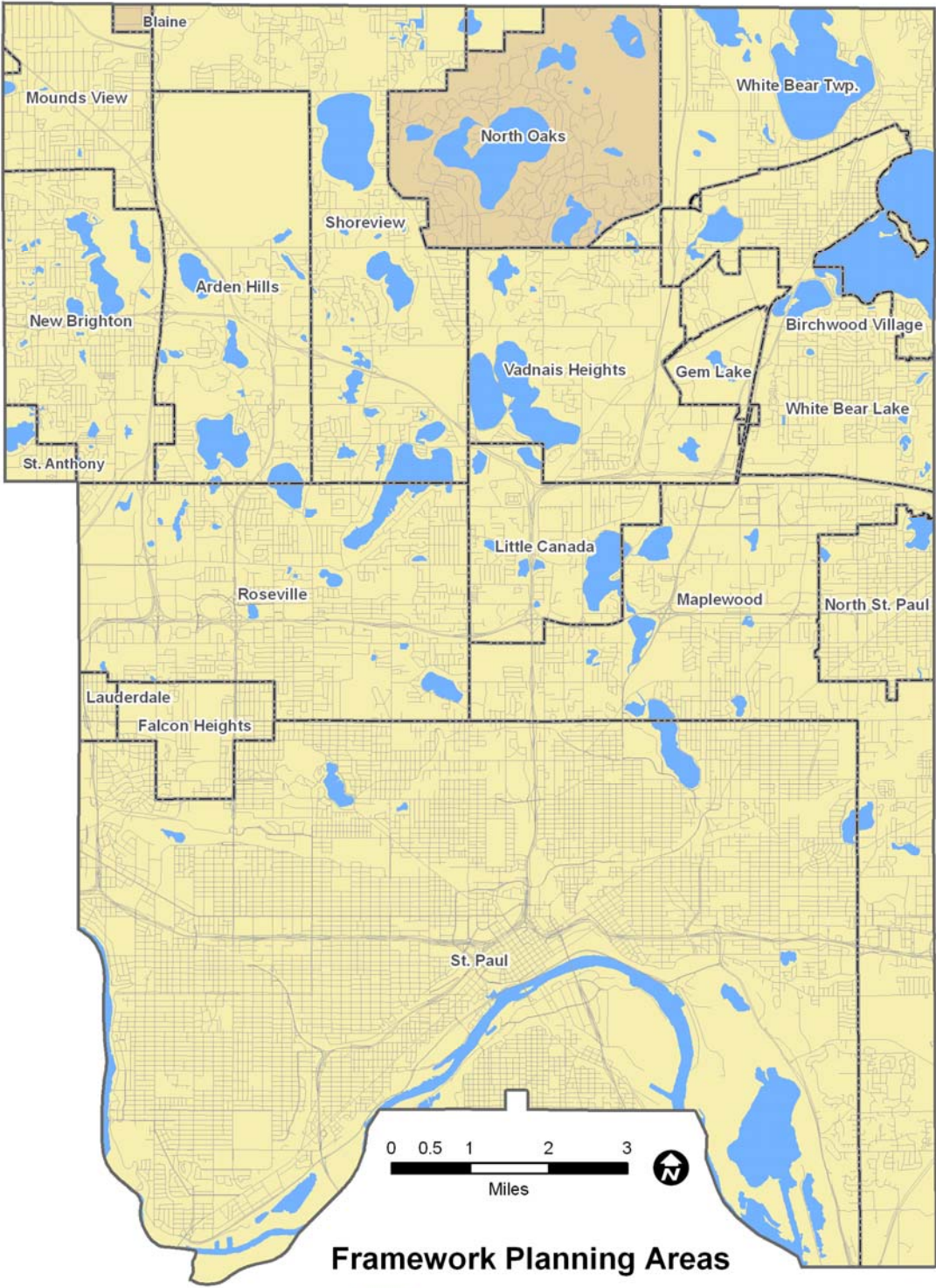
Regional and State Trails

- Regional Existing
- Regional Planned
- Regional Proposed
- Existing State Trail
- TLG Street Centerlines, 2009

Recreation Open Space

- Regional Park Reserve
- Regional Park
- Special Recreation Feature

Figure 2. 2030 Regional Development Framework Planning Areas



Framework Planning Areas

- Agricultural Area
- Developed Area
- Developing Area
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Rural Residential
- Non-Council Area
- TLG Street Centerlines, 2009

Figure 3. Critical Area / MNRRA Corridor

