

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND ELEMENT

The development of Farmington occurred originally because of the railroad. The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad helped to establish a town site at the junction of the two lines and a business district was established adjoining the train station. Until the 1990's Farmington's commerce and industry was focused upon agricultural production. The major evidence remaining of this economy includes Feely grain elevators and the Kemps plant, both are located downtown.

Based upon estimates provided by the Metropolitan Council in February 1978, the population of Farmington totaled 3,104 with 957 households in 1970. These totals included the area of Lakeville which was annexed to Farmington following the census. When this ten square mile area became part of the community, an existing ninety-seven housing units were added to Farmington. This immediately created a large gap of undeveloped land between the originally established downtown core residential area and the residential housing that was annexed from Lakeville in the 1970's at the northern border of the City. In the early 1980's, the City allowed the construction of the initial phase of Dakota County Estates immediately east of Pilot Knob Road. By allowing this type of development to occur, a disconnect between the residents of the established downtown area of Farmington and the residents in the northern portion of the City was created. In large part, the housing stock in the downtown core area was built prior to 1950. In contrast, much of the housing in the northern portion of the City, beyond Dakota County Estates, was constructed long after the 1970's.

During the mid to late 1990's Farmington's physical characteristics continued to change at an alarming rate. With Farmington's location on the edge of the Twin Cities' metropolitan area, it experienced an unprecedented growth rate of 300-350 new dwelling units per year during the mid 1990's. New housing developments, in addition to the ones previously mentioned in the paragraph above, were constructed in the northern section of the City adjacent to Lakeville. These new developments resemble typical suburban subdivisions-homogenous, single family homes laid out on curvilinear streets. This enhanced the disconnection mentioned above while further intensifying the development contrast between the northern and southern sections of the City. As a result, Farmington as a whole appears to have two separate communities, one north and one south.

In the 2020 Comprehensive Plan update Farmington identified as a priority the unification of the city image with meaningful connections between its northern and traditional downtown sections. Farmington accepted its share of the metro area's forecasted growth in 1998, but indicated a desire for quality-controlled growth to be executed by strong City direction and management. Also identified as a priority of the City in the 2020 update, was not to lose the historic, small town character while still allowing growth to occur.

Over the past ten years a considerable amount of development has occurred in the central portion of the City to connect the northern section of the City with the downtown. In large part this was accomplished with the development of the Charleswood, Middle Creek, and Vermillion Grove areas.

GROWTH TRENDS PAST TEN YEARS

The City of Farmington has been growing at an average of 332 housing units per year since 1999, adding 3,016 housing units from 1999 through the first half of 2007. With the increase in housing units, the population of the City is continuing to increase as well. The population of Farmington in 1998 was 10,641. The Metropolitan Council’s certified population for Farmington is 18,589 residents as of April 1, 2007. The City of Farmington is assuming that the community will continue to expand, forecasting an estimated growth rate between 200 to 250 households constructed per year between 2007 and 2030. Therefore, the population of Farmington in 2030 is forecasted at approximately 32,700 as illustrated in Table 2.1.

CITY OF FARMINGTON 2030 FORECASTS

Table 2.1

	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	5,940	12,365	20,500	27,510	32,700
Households	2,065	4,169	7,500	10,500	12,500
Employment	2,342	3,986	6,600	8,400	9,900

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL FORECAST METHODOLOGY

Forecasts of population, households and employment are a major quantitative element of long-range planning. The Metropolitan Council’s forecasts are the basis for the development of the Council’s regional system plans. They are also quantitative parameters provided to local communities to guide local comprehensive plans, but are used with flexibility. The City of Farmington has agreed to use the 2030 Metropolitan Council’s forecasts to prepare its plan.

The Metropolitan Council’s regional forecasts start with an age-based population forecast, which is then converted to households and labor force. The Metropolitan Council’s forecast process has continuously evolved in response to Council policy direction and available data. Generally the forecast process consists of two parts. The first step is to prepare forecasts for population, households and employment for the region as a whole. These overall forecasts are then allocated to subareas within the region: quadrants, planning areas, cities and townships and ultimately traffic analysis zones (TAZs).

The purpose of the Metropolitan Council’s forecasting is to provide a reasonable forecast of future growth in the region to:

- Engage stakeholders in analysis and discussion about issues related to regional growth.
- Prepare long range plans for regional systems.
- Guide local communities in preparing their comprehensive plans.
- Provide other agencies, businesses and market researchers forecast data for their planning work.
- Provide a basis for monitoring growth in the region.
- Better understanding the forces influencing regional growth in order to more effectively respond to unexpected change.

A description of the methodology for each forecast is listed below:

Population Forecasts

For population forecasts the Metropolitan Council uses birth, death and migration assumptions by age to project future age distributions for five-year intervals for three to five decades into the future depending on planning needs.

Household Forecasts

The population forecasts by age are converted to number of households. Households are the key element in the Metropolitan Council's allocation to cities and townships because they are the major consumer of land. The household trends diverge from the population trends as a result of the demographic impacts of the continued aging of the baby-boom generation.

Employment Forecasts

Employment forecasts have historically been done by projecting the region's share of national forecasted growth (from the Bureau of Economic Analysis), which has been quite stable.

A separate process projects the future labor force using age/gender inputs from the Metropolitan Council's population forecast model, applying assumptions that include workforce participation rates for each group. Other assumptions are necessary to convert the projected future labor force to regional employment, including unemployment, self-employment, multiple job-holding, and net in-commuting.

On July 13, 2008, the City received Metropolitan Council estimates for population, housing, and employment as of April 1, 2007. The Metropolitan Council's estimates are shown in Table 2.2.

**METROPOLITAN COUNCIL’S POPULATION & HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES –
APRIL 1, 2007**

Table 2.2

Category	Date	Estimate
Met Council Population	April 1, 2007	18,589 people
Met Council Households	April 1, 2007	6,915 households
Met Council Household Size	April 1, 2007	2.68 persons per household

Transportation Analysis Zone Allocations

For transportation planning purposes, the region has been divided into approximately 1,200 transportation analysis zones (TAZ’s). The Council asks cities and townships (where there is more than one TAZ) to allocate their overall forecast to TAZs within their community. The Council provides the community with the most current base year TAZ data for population, households and employment and the previous TAZ allocation. The Council determines the allocations for cities and townships that are unable to do them. The Council also adjusts the city numbers to meet Council forecasts if there are differences in community totals from Council forecasts.

THE METROPOLITAN LAND PLANNING ACT

The Metropolitan Council oversees the regional infrastructure and local planning in the seven county metro area in accordance with Minn. Stat. 473.86-862. To understand the requirements of this statute, the following information are excerpts from the *Local Planning Handbook*.

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. 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.

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 resources management; parks; 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 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:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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. 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 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.
- 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.
- The *parks and open space* section must identify and describe parks and trails facilities within the jurisdiction.

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.

Local governmental 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.

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.

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

- Allow for adjacent governments, affected special districts, 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 a proposed comprehensive plan “ to adjacent governments, affected special districts lying in whole or in part within the metropolitan area, and affected school districts for review and comment”, prior to submission to the Council. Special districts typically include school districts, park

districts, watershed districts and watershed management organizations, transit providers, commissions such as the Metropolitan Airports Commission, and federal and state agencies.

Review Period

The municipality must allow adjacent governments, affected special districts, and affected school districts up to 6 months to review and comment on an updated comprehensive plan. This waiting period allows interested parties to review and comment on the plan before Metropolitan Council review. The City of Farmington will submit copies to Lakeville, Eureka Township, Castle Rock Township, Empire Township, ISD # 192, and the Vermillion River Watershed.

Submit comments to adjacent and affected jurisdictions and Metropolitan Council

The comments of adjacent governments, affected special districts, and affected 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 these groups about all plans and development proposals being considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Updated plan as sent to Council goes to adjacent and affected jurisdictions

State law requires that when the comprehensive plan update is submitted to the Metropolitan Council, a copy also be re-submitted to adjacent governments, affected special districts and affected school districts when the plan is submitted to the Metropolitan Council.

Local government gives preliminary approval

The Planning Commission of the municipality approves the updated comprehensive plan after review by adjacent and affected jurisdictions. Next, the City Council 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.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL’S REVIEW CRITERIA

The 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 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:

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 jurisdictions, including school districts.

The reviewer determines completeness

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. **The Metropolitan Council has 120 days to complete its review of and comment 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. 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. 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.

PLANNING PROCESS FOR 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 2008 UPDATE

The planning process for the 2008 update began on September 12, 2005, when the City of Farmington received its System Statement from the Metropolitan Council requiring an update to the 2020 Comprehensive Plan to 2030. These customized documents inform each community how it is affected by the Council's policy plans for transportation, aviation, water resources, regional parks and open space. The City has three years to complete its update and submit it to the Metropolitan Council. The City has agreed to meet the submittal date of September 12, 2008.

Forecasts

The following forecasts are part of the 2030 *Regional Development Framework* (adopted January 14, 2004 and updated on August 24, 2005). They are used by the Council to plan for regional systems. The City of Farmington will base planning work on these forecasts as shown in Table 2.1.

The Council forecasts growth at appropriate densities for communities in order to protect the efficiency of wastewater, transportation and other regional system investments and to help ensure the metropolitan area can accommodate projected growth by the year 2030.

Growth Management

The Regional Development Framework sets an overall minimum residential density standard of 3 to 5 units per acre in developed and developing areas where urban service is located or planned. The average minimum standard of 3 units per acre is important to the efficient use of regional systems, including wastewater system investments. Communities that significantly over-utilize or under-utilize regional systems can cause inefficiencies in the use of regional resources. Additionally, achieving housing at these density levels may help communities meet their obligations under the Metropolitan Land Planning Act to plan to and address their housing needs. As illustrated in the Plat Monitoring Program between 2000 and 2006, the City of Farmington has achieved an overall net density of 3.5 du/ac.

The City of Farmington is designated as a “developing community” geographic planning area in the *2030 Regional Development Framework*. As Farmington plans for current and future residents, it should focus on protecting natural resources, ensuring sufficient public infrastructure, and developing transition strategies to increase density and

encourage infill development. Developing communities are also encouraged to preserve areas for post-2030 growth, where appropriate.

In March 2006, the Metropolitan Council started a series of eight monthly planning workshops called “On Course”, which Planning staff attended. The goal of the workshops was to help local officials, planning staff, engineers and consultants prepare comprehensive plan updates. Topics included highways, transit, water resources, demographics, forecasting, natural resources, housing and rural issues.

Additionally, in the summer of 2006, Planning staff assisted Dakota County in its Comprehensive Plan visioning sessions by representing the City of Farmington on a number of advisory panels. The Advisory Panels explored issues that Dakota County would face in coming decades. Staff, regional, and national experts asked the Advisory Panel to weigh in on how Dakota County might apply best management practices, new ideas, and "stretch" thinking. On August 2006, a kick-off meeting was held to start the County’s visioning process. The representation of Farmington on the Advisory Panels and attending four months of Dakota County visioning sessions was valuable in assisting the City in preparing its own Comprehensive Plan Update.

In late 2006, it was determined that most of the Comprehensive Plan Update would be prepared “in-house” by the Planning, Parks & Recreation, and Economic Development staff. In early 2007, Bonestroo was hired to prepare the Water, Sewer, and Transportation plans for the update.

Planning staff prepared an outline and schedule in December of 2006 for the upcoming months in order to start the visioning process for the community. The following logo was included on all documents concerning the update:



The first visioning session was held on January 31, 2007, with 53 people in attendance to talk about the future development of Farmington. A questionnaire was circulated in order to start discussions on the issues that attendees were aware of in Farmington. A second meeting was held on February 7, 2007, where the participants learned about the most common issues identified in the 1998 visioning sessions that produced the 2020 Comprehensive Plan compared to the most common issues identified from the visioning session held on January 31st. The issues will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this document. The following shows the meeting dates and upcoming meeting dates concerning the update of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan:

January 10, 2007 – Planning Commission and City Council Workshop
January 31, 2007 – Visioning Workshop
February 7, 2007 – Visioning Workshop
February 15, 2007 – Neighborhood Meeting – Western Parcels
February 21, 2007 – Neighborhood Meeting – Northern Parcels
February 22, 2007 – Neighborhood Meeting – Downtown Parcels
March 20, 2007 - Planning Commission Workshop
April 9, 2007 – City Council/ Planning Commission Workshop
May 2, 2007 - Planning Commission Workshop
June 11, 2007 – City Council/ Planning Commission Workshop
July 19, 2007 - Planning Commission Workshop
June 26, 2007 – Community Meeting on Land Use Plan
August 9, 2007 – Land Use Plan – Western Parcels
October 17, 2007 - City Council/ Planning Commission Workshop – Action Plans
November 8, 2007 – Community Meeting on Land Use Plan
December 11, 2007 – Planning Commission Meeting to discuss MUSA Staging Plan
January 15, 2008 – Planning Commission reviews Draft of 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update
February 4, 2008 – City Council reviews Draft of 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update
February 12, 2008 – Draft of 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update sent to adjacent jurisdictions for 6 month review

Upcoming Meetings

October 28, 2008 – Approval of 2030 Comprehensive Plan by Planning Commission
November 17, 2008 – Approval of 2030 Comprehensive Plan by City Council
November 24, 2008 – 2030 Comprehensive Plan sent to the Metropolitan Council

The visioning workshops included elected officials, business owners, citizens and City staff and provided the foundation for the creation of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

After the draft of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan – 2008 Update has been submitted to the adjacent jurisdictions for review and comment; the Planning staff will begin discussions with the Planning Commission concerning a work plan in order to implement the strategies in Chapter 3 of this document. The work plan will consist of the following items:

- Issues: Concerns and ideas gathered by public input.
- Policy: Recommendations to meet the issues based on data.
- Strategies: Methods to implement the policies.
- Implementation: Who, what, when, and how the strategies will be done.
- Measures: Identifiable progress and results taken monthly and yearly to determine the completion of the strategies.

The implementation program will involve revising the current Zoning Map to make it compliant with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan – 2008 Update. The Zoning and Subdivision Codes will also need to be updated upon revision of the Zoning Map. The Zoning Map and City Code updates will occur within nine months of the approval of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan – 2008 Update by the Metropolitan Council.

The City will also update the Capital Improvement Program discussed in Chapter 11 of this document along with the Housing Programs listed in Chapter 5 in accordance with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan – 2008 Update.

Finally, the City will review this plan every 2 to 3 years in accordance with the updated forecast numbers that the Metropolitan Council provides in 2-3 year intervals, thereby, making comprehensive plan updates as needed.