
MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee
FROM: Dusty Finke, City Planner
DATE: September 6, 2017
MEETING: September 18, 2017 Steering Committee Meeting
SUBJ: Review of Comments from Affected Jurisdictions

Background

On November 14, 2016, the Steering Committee finalized a draft of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update following a years' worth of public participation, five community meetings, a series of thirteen Steering Committee meetings and a lot of hard work from Committee members.

Since that time, the formal review process has continued and additional feedback has been received. The Planning Commission held the formal public hearing on the Update at the December 13, 2016 meeting. The City Council reviewed the draft Update at three meetings. Minutes from the hearing and Council discussion are attached.

State law requires that the City provide six months for affected jurisdictions to review and provide comments on the draft Plan Update before it can be submitted for review by the Metropolitan Council. The Update was routed for comments on April 21, 2017 and the City has received a number of comments. The City also received preliminary comments from the Metropolitan Council. These comments are attached, but staff has also summarized the most significant comments in this report.

Status of Review

The following jurisdictions have responded and stated that they have no comments:

1. City of Maple Grove
2. Wayzata Schools

The City is still awaiting comments from the following jurisdictions, but generally only expects potentially significant comments from a few cities and Hennepin County:

1. City of Plymouth
2. City of Orono
3. City of Independence
4. City of Maple Plain
5. City of Greenfield
6. Hennepin County
7. Three Rivers Park District
8. Orono Schools
9. Rockford Schools
10. Delano Schools

The City has received comments from the following jurisdictions, which are attached. Many of the comments are fairly technical in nature, especially from the watersheds and state agencies. Staff has summarized the more significant comments which have policy implications in the next section.

1. Metropolitan Council
2. City of Corcoran
3. City of Loretto
4. Elm Creek Watershed
5. Pioneer/Sarah-Creek Watershed
6. Minnehaha Creek Watershed
7. Minnesota Department of Transportation

The City also received a letter from an attorney representing a Medina property owner asking for their staging to be changed to allow development sooner. This letter is attached as well.

Summary of Significant Comments

City of Corcoran

- Timing of development in northwest portion of Medina.

The current draft Land Use Plan identifies that northwest area of the City north of Loretto as Future Development Area (FDA), which is not planned for development until after 2040. Corcoran urges the City to consider making this area available for development sooner, sometime within the next 20 years. Corcoran notes that the Metropolitan Council is planning significant regional sanitary sewer improvements which would serve this area of Medina as well as property in Corcoran.

One of the primary objectives discussed by the Steering Committee during the process of drafting the Update was to protect and preserve open space, rural vistas, and natural resources and to limit expansion of urban services to the amount necessary to accommodate forecasted growth.

Staff believes there are opportunities to work with Corcoran on regional and joint sewer improvements if Corcoran desires to develop its southwest area. Medina may be able to share such improvements when and if future development is planned within the FDA during future Comprehensive Plan reviews.

- Classification of Hackamore Road/Arrowhead Drive as collector roadway

Corcoran requests that Medina consider classifying Hackamore Road/Arrowhead Drive as a local roadway from Old Settlers Road to Bridgewater Road. Hackamore Road/Arrowhead Drive extends between two arterial roadways (Highway 55 and County Road 116) and acts as a collector for various local roadways (Bridgewater Road and Butterworth Lane, as well as Settlers Road, Medina Lake Drive, Foxberry Drive, and Snyder Road further to the east). While staff recognizes Corcoran's interest in attempting to limit traffic, especially in the current condition of Hackamore Road/Arrowhead Drive, both Medina and Corcoran are planning for development along this roadway and the street will function as a collector between two arterials. Staff does not recommend a change.

- Trail connections to Corcoran system on Willow Drive and Mohawk Drive
Corcoran indicates that it plans for trails along Willow Drive and Mohawk Drive and requests that Medina consider planning for connections between the trail networks of the two cities. Staff recommends adding the connections in the Comprehensive Plan. The City will need to determine when and if it would be appropriate to construct these connections based upon future activity in each city, potential shared costs and grants, and the like.

City of Loretto

- Timing of development in northwest portion of Medina.
The City of Loretto, similar to Corcoran, requests that the City consider planning for development in the northwest corner of the City within the next 20 years. This subject is summarized above under the City of Corcoran.

Metropolitan Council

- Long-term Sewer Service Area
The Metropolitan Council identifies the southern 1/3 of Medina in the “Long-term Sewer Service Area” (LTSSA) of the Blue Lake treatment plant. The Met Council identifies these areas for potential urban service in future planning processes (potentially sometime after 20 years).

During review of the Update, the Steering Committee had expressed an interest in reducing the property within the City which is identified by the Met Council in the LTSSA. The City included only a small area south of Loretto within the LTSSA, and the Met Council comments noted that this is inconsistent with their sanitary sewer system statement.

Staff has had a number of discussions with Met Council staff related to the City’s interest in reducing the LTSSA. At the least, staff anticipates being able to remove property from the LTSSA in an area equal to the property in the northwest corner of the City which was shifted from the Metro Treatment Plant to the Blue Lake Treatment Plant. Staff has also provided additional information to the Met Council related to the difficulties with serving much of the southern 1/3 of the City with sewer and water service (slopes, wetlands, lack of transportation infrastructure, etc.).

Staff intends to work with Met Council staff to reduce the LTSSA as much as possible over the next 1.5 months before the Steering Committee meets again. The Steering Committee should discuss if this is still the direction it desires to provide.

- Staging of High-Density Residential Development
The City has identified approximately 13 acres of property in the southwest corner of the City for high density residential development. The City has also staged this area for development immediately in 2018. Metropolitan Council staff has indicated that if the City allows for development prior to 2020, the acreage cannot be used to account towards the City’s 2021-2030 affordable housing allocation. As such, Met Council staff has indicated that the City’s Update is not consistent with the Housing statement.

Staff believes allowing development of the high density residential property immediately is consistent with Met Council policies, even if there is a chance that some housing may be developed prior to the Met Council's 2021-2030 timeframe. Staff has attempted to convince Met Council staff, but they have held their position. Staff will continue to work with them, but if they do not relent by the October 26 meeting, the Steering Committee could consider the following alternatives:

- 1) Staging high density residential development after 2020. This is perhaps the most straight-forward means to deal with the comment. At least one of the property owners is interested in beginning development in 2018. Staff would anticipate that making this change would cause a good deal of concern for the owners.
- 2) Remove the 2018-2020 staging period. It appears that part of the complication is that the City anticipates being completed with the Update comparatively early, in 2018, when the Met Council's planning documents look forward to the time after 2020. As a result, the City has created a 2018-2020 staging period. The City could consider removing the 2018-2020 staging period and incorporating this land into the 2020-2025 staging period. Language could be added into the Plan which states that 2020-2025 property would be available for development upon the effective date of the Update. All of the relevant tables would then be adjusted accordingly, which would result in the high density residential property being projected in 2020-2025. Staff believes this would help meet the Met Council requirements. The potential downside to this change would be that property currently slated for 2020-2025 would also be immediately available. Approximately 47 acres of low density residential property south of Bridgewater would be available for development in 2018-2025 rather than 2020-2025.
- 3) Add additional arguments and leave property staged for 2018. Staff believes staging the property for immediate development is not inconsistent with Met Council policies, even if the timeframes between the City's plan and the Met Council affordable housing allocation do not match exactly. In fact, it seems like this action would be more supportive of Met Council objectives. Nonetheless, staff has inquired how the Met Council would respond if the City submitted as-is. Met Council staff has indicated that they may deem the submittal incomplete, but would likely proceed forward with review if this was the only outstanding issue. Met Council staff indicated that they would likely call out the fact as an "inconsistency" in its review. However, the indication was that they would likely not hold up approval because it does not affect the overall conformance with the Met Council systems. However, Met Council staff noted any City which the Met Council deemed as inconsistent with the Housing Policy would likely cause concern with affordable housing advocacy groups. Staff again does not believe this should be a concern, since the City is actually proposing to be more flexible in the timing of the property (not less).

- Affordable Housing Programs

Met Council staff requested additional specificity related to under what circumstances the City would consider utilizing the various programs to support the development of affordable housing in the City. Staff has provided some potential language.

- Distinction between Future Development Area and Future Stages

Met Council staff noted that the previous draft of the Update had included property staged for development in 2025, 2030, or 2035 within the "Future Development Area" row in the

land use tables. This had introduced confusion because the City identified a “Future Development Area” land use north of Loretto to identify property which may be considered for development during future planning processes. As a result, the acreage amounts of this land use in the tables do not match the maps. In order to make it clearer, staff added a separate row for “Future Staged Growth,” as distinct from the “Future Development Area.”

- Uptown Hamel Use Estimate

Metropolitan Council staff requested an estimate of future land uses within the Uptown Hamel area. The draft Plan Update purposefully leaves a fair amount of flexibility in terms of uses and density, so providing an accurate estimate is difficult. Steering Committee members can feel free to provide their thoughts, but staff would estimate 40% residential/ 40% retail/ 20% office.

- Private Recreation Residential Component

The Private Recreational land use within the draft Update states: “Private Recreation (PREC) identifies areas that are currently used for outdoor recreational uses which are held under private ownership, but are not publicly maintained. Limited numbers of residential uses may be included, or have previously been developed within this land use designation.”

The language allowing “limited number of residential uses” was added to the current Comp Plan largely to allow residential development along the Medina Golf and Country Club.

Met Council staff seeks additional information related to the City’s intent for residential uses in the land use. Staff’s belief is that the Villas at Medina Golf and Country Club accounted for the “limited number” of residential that the City desired to approve on the property. Staff has proposed an amendment to the language limiting residential to 10% of the land area, at a density of 2-3 units/acre.

Summary of Changes

Staff has proposed changes to Chapters 4, 5, and 7 of the draft Plan to address the comments above, which staff found appropriate to change. Staff has presented Chapters 1-7 again for review, but has not printed the sewer, water, transportation, and surface water management plans. These plans will be updated following the September 18 meeting and presented at the October 26 meeting. Staff seeks feedback from the Steering Committee on the draft Chapters.

In addition to addressing the comments, staff made the following changes:

2390 Pioneer Trail – Rural Residential

The property owner of 2390 Pioneer Trail requested that their 12 acres be guided rural residential instead of rural commercial. This property is owned by the residential owner to the east, and currently contains a storage shed. The property owner has requested that the property be guided for rural residential, consistent with their house to the east. Staff believes this makes sense and incorporated the change.

Park and Trail Plan – Park Search Areas shifted

Staff noted that the Park Search area circles on the original draft had shifted approximately ¼ mile from where they were intended. Staff corrected this on the updated version.

Woodridge Church – adjacent 8 acres to Institutional

Earlier this spring, Woodridge Church (1500 County Road 24) combined 8 acres adjacent to their church property together with their main parcel. This 8 acres was reguided to Institutional to match the church property, which was also changed in the draft Update.

Attachments

- 1) Comments Received from Affected Jurisdictions
 - a. Metropolitan Council – 6/5/2017
 - b. Metropolitan Council follow-up – 8/31/2017
 - c. Metropolitan Council – Surface Water – 5/26/2017
 - d. City of Corcoran – 8/23/2017
 - e. City of Loretto – 6/14/2017
 - f. Elm Creek Watershed – 7/17/2017
 - g. Minnehaha Creek Watershed – 6/20/2017
 - h. Pioneer/Sarah-Creek Watershed – 7/25/2017
 - i. MnDOT – 5/11/2017
- 2) Comment Received from attorney for Elaine Roy Property – 6/2/2017
- 3) Excerpt from 12/13/2017 Planning Commission Public Hearing
- 4) Excerpts from City Council meeting minutes
 - a. 1/3/2017 Meeting
 - b. 2/7/2017 Meeting
 - c. 2/21/2017 Meeting
 - d. 4/4/2017 Meeting
- 5) DRAFT Comprehensive Plan (Chapters 1-7)