

Regional housing policy in the Twin Cities

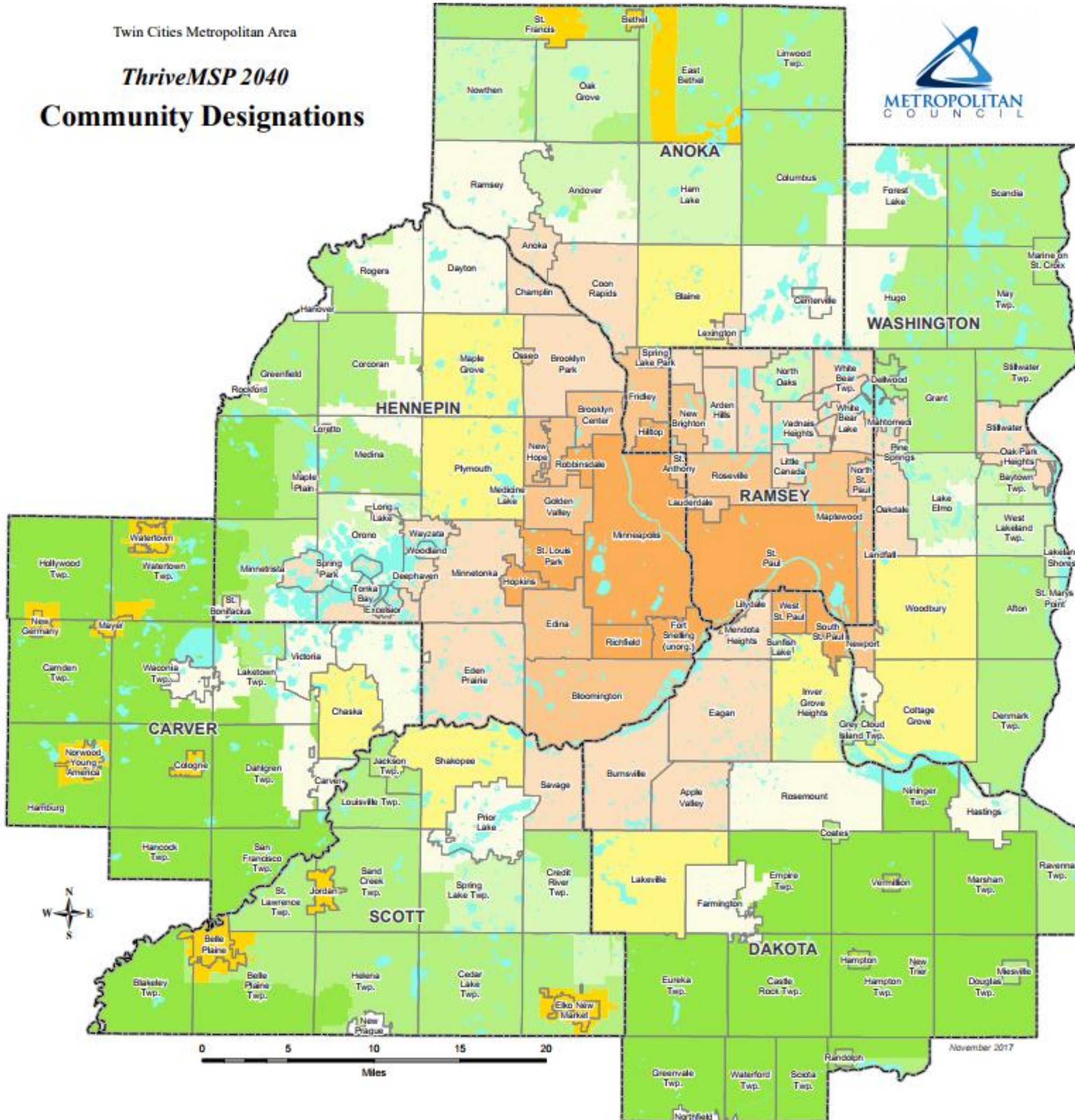
Housing Land Advocates Conference
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What is the Metropolitan Council?

- Regional government organization with the mission to foster efficient and economical growth for the 7-county metro
- The Council makes plans and policies, and provides essential services, including:
 - Adopting a regional development framework
 - Operating regional transit
 - Operating regional wastewater services
 - Administering a regional Housing and Redevelopment Agency
 - Coordinated water quality and supply

Community Designations



The Twin Cities region

- 7 counties
- 181 cities and townships
- 1,192,467 Households (2016)



Regional demographics

- Median household income: **\$71,236**
 - \$77,136 for White households
 - \$45,626 for households of color
- **69.2%** homeownership rate
 - **75.1%** for White residents
 - **40.4%** for residents of color
- Median home value*: **\$220,700**
- Median gross rent*: **\$963**
- **21%** of *owner* households are housing cost burdened
- **48%** of *renter* households are housing cost burdened

* These data reflect the Minneapolis – St. Paul MSA, which is larger than the 7-county region within the Metropolitan Council's jurisdiction

Council's policies and roles to expand viable housing options

- Oversee local comprehensive planning, including reviewing housing chapters for consistency with Council policy and state statute
- Funding housing development through the Livable Communities Act programs
- Technical assistance and special projects
 - Data and research
 - Mixed income housing feasibility calculator
 - Planning for housing with school districts in mind
 - Affordable homeownership strategies

Housing element requirements

Provide "adequate housing opportunities to meet **existing and projected** local and regional housing needs."

Utilize "land use planning to promote the **availability of land** for the development of low- and moderate-income housing."

Identify tools "to **implement land use plan housing elements** that will ...meet the local unit's share of the metropolitan area need for low- and moderate-income housing."

Housing element structure

Existing housing needs

- Existing housing assessment
- Identification of needs and priorities



Future affordable housing needs

- Allocation of affordable housing need
- Promoting the availability of land



Implementation program

- Public programs, fiscal devices, and specific actions to meet existing and projected needs

Allocation of Affordable Housing Need for 2021-2020

Regional need for low and moderate income housing



Local need for low and moderate income housing:

- Forecasted growth
- Existing affordable housing
- Ratio of low-wage jobs to low-wage workers



Local need for affordable housing by band:

- Below 30% AMI
- 31-50% of AMI
- 51-80% of AMI

Cities address their share of regional need through land use

- Metropolitan Land Planning Act: “...land use planning to promote the availability of land for the development of low- and moderate-income housing.”
- Very little new affordable housing is built at lower densities
- The need may exceed the resources, but opportunities to address it should be equitably distributed

Implementation program

- Plans must identify existing and future housing needs
 - We try to align regional housing needs with local housing priorities, opportunities and challenges
- Plans must directly acknowledge all widely recognized tools that address housing needs, and state if/when they would be deployed
 - We provide a comprehensive list of widely recognized tools and additional tools to go above and beyond minimum efforts

Regional needs, local authority

- Some communities feel they have done their share and shouldn't have to plan for more housing options
- Some communities feel they should be allowed to maintain their community's character and not expand their housing options
- Some communities feel left out of the post-recession development boom, and are struggling to define a viable future
- Some communities experiencing a strong development boom struggle with cultural and financial displacement

Both, and

- The Council maintains that we need to ***invest in lower-income communities***, including preserving and creating new housing options
- The Council maintains that we need to ***increase housing options in areas of wealth*** in the region, especially where access to jobs, transit, and good schools are available



Easier said than done...

- With complex, contextual, and limited resources, how do we balance both efforts?
- How can we improve our ability to anticipate and mitigate unintended consequences?
- How do we encourage communities to see their role in meeting regional, not just local, housing needs?
 - Changing the narrative: “You Don’t Have to Live Here”

“You Don’t Have to Live Here”

Why Housing Messages Are Backfiring and 10 Things We Can Do About It



We focus on *choice*

- Can anyone of any background and means find reasonable housing choices in almost every city or township in the region?
- Can any worker at any wage find affordable housing within a reasonable distance of their job?
- What tools and strategies can be used to increase those choices?

Thanks for listening!

Tara Beard, AICP
Housing Policy Analyst

tara.beard@metc.state.mn.us

www.metrocouncil.org